School Management Teams' Understanding of Collaborative Leadership in Primary Schools

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, I.N. September, who always believed in me and in everything I set my heart on to achieve.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DECLARATION

I, Phinias September (student number 04402588), hereby declare that this mini-dissertation for the degree Magister Education at the University of Pretoria has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that this is my own work in design and execution and that all material from published sources contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

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SUMMARY

Although the Task Team on leadership and development (DoE, 1996) has introduced the notion of shared (collaborative) leadership as embodied among others in school management teams, considerable doubt remains about its practical implementation (DoE, 1996). It seems that there may be widespread failure to implement the idea of collaborative (shared) leadership (DoE, 1996). The problem this research explores is whether, in the opinion of school management team members, the traditional approach to leadership has changed (DoE, 1996).

According to Grant (2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009), despite an enabling democratic policy framework the leadership at many South African schools seems to remain firmly entrenched within the formal, hierarchical management structure. During the period of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa government legislation perpetuated a society of inequality based on race, class and gender (Grant 2006 in Grant& Singh, 2009). To control and maintain this inequality, government policies promoted centralised, authoritarian control of education at all levels within the system (Grant 2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

Today, within a democratic South Africa, the South African Schools Act (1996), the Government Gazette of the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) and the Task Team Report on Education Management Development (DoE, 1996) challenge schools to review their management policies, which have traditionally been top-down, and create a whole new approach to managing schools where management is seen as an activity in which all members of education engage and should not be seen as the task of a few (DoE, 1996:27).

According to Moloi (2002 in Grant & Singh, 2009), although our education policies call for new ways of managing schools, many remain unresponsive and retain their rigid structures because educators are unable to make a shift away

from patriarchal ways of thinking. It is against this backdrop that I explore whether leadership has indeed shifted to become more participatory and inclusive. One form of leadership that would reflect this shift is termed collaborative leadership (Grant & Singh, 2009). This form of leadership is based on the premise that leadership should be shared throughout an organisation such as a school (Grant & Singh, 2009). This alternate form of leadership allows for the emergence of teachers as one of the multiple sources of guidance and direction (Grant & Singh, 2009).

According to Grant and Singh (2009), collaborative leadership offers a radical departure from the traditional understanding of leadership because it deconstructs the notion of leadership in relation to position in the school. It constructs leadership as a 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 the betterment of the school (Grant & Singh, 2009).

The general aim of this research is to investigate school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership in primary schools in Gauteng District 4 in Pretoria. In this research I discuss important issues relating to collaborative leadership. My findings reveal that schools management teams indeed understand and implement collaborative leadership in their schools but also that collaborative leadership is much more than just working together as a team. My argument is that there must be a radical reconceptualisation of the concept of collaborative leadership as well as an attempt to move towards more dispersed and democratic forms of it.

GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGY

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
DoE	Department of Education
EMD	Education Management Development
HOD	Head of Department
INSET	In-service Education and Training
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
JET	Joint Education Trust
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
NMLC	National Management and Leadership Committee
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SASA	South African Schools Act
SMT	School Management Team
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

KEY WORDS

Authorised distributed leadership

Collaborative leadership

Democratic distributed leadership

Dispersed distributed leadership

Distributed leadership

Education management development

Empowering

Participative leadership

School management team

Task Team Report

Transformative

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1   Statement of purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership in primary schools in the Gauteng Tshwane South District.

1.2   Introduction

Since the promulgation of the South African Schools Act (SASA) in 1996 the concept and rationale of school-based management is no longer new (Grant & Singh, 2009). Despite the challenges of putting it into practice effectively, the majority of stakeholders appear to have embraced its principles and objectives (Grant & Singh, 2009). Though the approach has been criticised widely for its limitations in the South African context, the concept appears to have found "rich soil" in the South African education system because of its objectives of redress, representivity and stakeholder participation (Grant & Singh, 2009).

As the Department of Education (2000), puts it since its adoption after the 1994 democratic elections school-based management has challenged some school level personnel in terms of guiding the school towards achieving its educative mission. Increased managerial responsibilities brought about by school-based management are so great and varied that it becomes difficult for school principals alone to lead and manage the school to achieve its purpose, which includes the successful implementation of policy (DoE, 2000). It becomes necessary for school principals to solicit and encourage the cooperation of other school management team members, effectively putting into operation the teaching and learning activities in their schools (DoE, 2000).

According to The Task Team on Educational Development and Leadership (DoE, 1996), changes to the system of education governance have resulted in principals being unprepared for their new role as chief executives (DoE, 1996). In large numbers of schools information systems have broken down (including basic communication between learners, teachers and communities, record keeping systems and financial management systems) and the necessary management competencies for professional growth, incentives and assessment are non-existent (DoE, 1996). Furthermore, the virtual collapse of the culture of teaching and learning in many urban and rural schools has eroded the confidence of school principals and heads of department (DoE, 1996).

According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996), principals and teachers have consistently been at the receiving end of top-down management structures. They work in a regulated environment and have become accustomed to receiving direct instructions from departmental officials (DoE, 1996). Circuits and lower level structures tend to function as administrative units only and are unable to respond to community needs (DoE, 1996). The "new" departments of education have inherited complex organisational structures and outmoded management styles from the apartheid public administration system (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) further contends that public administration used to be characterised by an approach which led to a rule-driven, secretive and hierarchical management structure, infused with authoritarian and non-consultative management styles and cultures (DoE, 1996). This approach made a sharp distinction between politics and administration (DoE, 1996). There was little recognition that the education environment is one characterised by a dynamic continuum of change; rather, the public administration legacy treated processes in education as being fragmented and static with little interrelationship between the different levels of activity (DoE,

1996). This approach according to The Task Team (DoE, 1996) still tends to dominate administration and management processes in the public service.

The Task Team (DoE, 1996), posits that within the historical context of apartheid the South African education system emerged as a peculiar mixture of centralisation and regional devolution. No single education department exerted effective authority over the whole system (DoE, 1996). Consequently, the capacity to carry out planning, research and management tasks varied from department to department and tended to reflect historical patterns of resource allocation (DoE, 1996). In addition there was little public access to the policy-making process. The Task Team contends that, despite the complexity of the system, basic management systems existed and continued to operate more or less efficiently and effectively in all departments of education (DoE, 1996). Most of the provinces continued to use the inherited management systems for personnel management and expenditure reporting (DoE, 1996).

The key challenge to education management relates to the inappropriate nature of many of the existing management systems, processes and structures. New education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery (DoE, 1996). In addition very little systematic thinking has been done to conceptualise the education management development strategies relevant to the South African experience (DoE, 1996). A key priority is the development of a shared understanding about education management development strategies through which to address these needs and priorities (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996), posits that, the picture that emerges from this brief overview is one of disjunction between vision and actual change, both because of the immensity of the challenge for fundamental transformation and because of the enduring influence of past management structures and relations

that do not support the desired change. In short, the situation is one in which, notwithstanding the will to change, existing structures and relationships are inappropriate to the achievement of the purpose of education transformation (DoE, 1996).

According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996), at the heart of the policy and legislative initiative of the South African education system is a process of decentralising decision-making about the allocation of resources to schools, and a significant process of democratisation of the ways in which schools are governed and managed. These processes are closely related to a trend towards institutional autonomy which is occurring in other parts of the world (DoE, 1996). In other countries the move to school self-management is based on the understanding that decisions should be made by those who best understand the needs of learners and the local community (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) posits that the move towards self-management in itself offers no guarantee of positive change. Real transformation still depends upon the nature and quality of internal management. Self-management must be accompanied by an internal devolution of power within the school and in transformational leadership. The approach to education management that the Task Team (DoE, 1996) proposes is an integrative and collaborative one: collaborative in that it involves all staff and stakeholders, and integrative in so far as it informs all management processes and outcomes in an organisational setting. Decisions related to concerns such as student learning, resource management, staff management and development derive from premises founded on common, agreed principles (DoE, 1996). In this approach management is shifted from an expedient response towards being a value-driven approach, founded upon consent and consensus (DoE, 1996). It links goal setting, policy making, planning, budgeting and evaluation at all levels of the school (DoE, 1996).

1.3   Background

According to Mestry, Joubert, Naidu, Ncobo and Mosoge (2008), competing demands that result from rapidly changing environments place huge challenges on the management of education in general and the leadership and management of schools in particular. This is true irrespective of whether a school is in an urban environment or an isolated rural area. It is important that school leaders and managers keep abreast of emerging trends if schools are to transform and provide all learners with maximum learning opportunities (Mestry et al., 2008). The challenge for many school leaders in the South African context is therefore to be aware of global educational demands as well as the need for transformation within the country (Mestry et al., 2008). School managers and leaders must thus understand the South African education arena and its historical context so that they are able to embrace issues of change and transformation and give effective direction to their institutions (DoE, 1996 in Mestry et al., 2008).

South Africa has, since the inception of the democratic government, focused on addressing the country's educational legacy (Mestry et al., 2008). As a result school leaders are faced with the challenge of transforming schools to comply with rapidly changing policies as well as ensuring that the full potential of every learner is unlocked to meet the needs of a changing society (DoE, 1996 in Mestry et al., 2008).

Mestry et al. (2008) asserts that although major attempts have been made to redress the legacies of the apartheid regime and although many schools have benefited from governmental and other interventions, schools still vary markedly both in terms of resources and with regard to the quality of teaching and learning (Mestry et al., 2008). For this reason a number of parents are moving their children to suburban schools in their quest for a perceived better education, leaving many township schools struggling for survival (Mestry et

al., 2008). School principals at both ends of the spectrum face challenges brought about by these changes (Mestry et al., 2008). One of the major challenges identified by McLennan and Thurlow (2003:16 in Mestry et al., 2008) is the increasing need for schools to become self-managing in response to new policies (McLennan and Thurlow 2003:16 in Mestry et al., 2008).

The report by the task team on education management development (DoE, 1996), set up by the then Minister of Education, Sibusiso Bhengu in February 1996 (DoE, 1996), sought to build on the new direction that had been clearly established by the policy framework and the new legislation, and proposed numerous strategic recommendations for a new approach to education management development (DoE, 1996). At the heart of these recommendations was a concern that the schools, as the centres of teaching and learning, be placed at the core of education management and education management development, rather than at the bottom of a hierarchical and bureaucratic management pyramid (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996), notes that the implications for the education system as a whole, and more specifically for the management and governance of education, are profound. Schools will require on-going assistance and support, including additional financial, professional and other resources if this vision is to be realised (DoE, 1996). Education departments, particularly those structures at district and circuit level, will need to reorient themselves to be able to provide the requisite assistance and support most effectively (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) contends that these structures in turn will need to draw on a wide and diverse resource base, including schools themselves. The Task Team's (DoE, 1996) report on education management development offers guidelines for achieving the goal of improved quality of learning and

teaching (DoE, 1996). The central thrust of this capacity building is developing the ability of institutions and individuals to perform effectively. Such capacity building must address five key components: (DoE, 1996) strategic direction; organisational structures and systems; human resources; infrastructural and other resources, and networking, partnerships and communication (DoE, 1996). The report proposes the establishment of a national institute for education management development, focusing largely on issues related to the mission and governance of such an institution (DoE, 1996). This proposal, however, has not been implemented (DoE, 1996). Finally, the report proposes an interim initiative in education management development which intends to function as a bridge between the work of the Task Team and the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report (DoE, 1996).

1.4   Rationale

Although the Task Team on Leadership and Development introduced the notion of shared leadership as embodied among others in school management teams, considerable doubt remains about its practical implementation (DoE, 1996). It seems that there may be widespread failure to implement the idea of shared leadership and participative collaborative leadership; the problem this research explores is whether in the opinion of school management team members the traditional approach to leadership has changed (DoE, 1996).

Careful scrutiny of the literature on collaborative leadership practices in South Africa has revealed that school management teams have a huge responsibility to ensure proper delivery of the curriculum and, for this to happen, school management teams have to understand why it is very important to work together as a team. Research on school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership in primary schools in South Africa is limited.

Data concerning the collaborative leadership functions of school management teams in primary schools is well recorded. One motivation for this research is to add to the already existing literature by exploring the collaborative leadership practices of the school management teams in four primary schools. The second motivation is to open up the debate concerning collaborative leadership responsibilities of the school management team in the implementation of the curriculum in order to improve learner performance. My third and final motivation is to help practising and prospective leaders and school management team members by offering potential strategies for implementing effective collaborative leadership, especially in public primary schools.

The idea of collective management and leadership has grown in South African schools through the concept of school management teams (Mestry et al., 2008:10). The implication is a shift from autocratic to shared management and leadership (Mestry et al., 2008). Education management literature increasingly refers to distributed leadership, shared management, team management and collective management (McLennan & Thurlow, 2003 in Mestry et al., 2008). A Shona proverb, "*Chara chemise hachitswane inda",* literally means "a thumb working on its own is useless" (in other words, it has to work collectively with the other fingers to have strength and be able to achieve anything). In the "new" South African democracy there is a strong commitment to collaboration and shared management. The increasing demands on management make it necessary to share the responsibilities involved in leading a school (Mestry et al., 2008).

1.5   Research problem

According to Mestry et al. (2008), the changing education environment in democratic South Africa has brought to the fore the need for management and leadership development in directing the complex new policy environment and

realising transformational goals. In line with this the Minister of Education in 1996 commissioned a Task Team (DoE, 1996) to explore the needs of education management development and make recommendations in relation to educators' transformation in the country. The Task Team (DoE, 1996) identified education management competence as a vital means of improving the quality of education in schools; it also recommended the establishment of a National Institute for Management and Leadership Development, but this did not materialise. Education management development has therefore remained fragmented and undertaken across the country in an *ad hoc* way (DoE, 1996 in Mestry et al., 2008).

According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996), in the previous education system school principals in South Africa were seen as facilitators of the state agenda. Schools were not self-managing and principals were administrators in a highly regulated environment (DoE, 1996). McLennan and Thurlow (2003:37 as cited by Mestry et al., 2008) characterise management in education in this era as being authoritarian, hierarchical, non-consultative and non-participative. Although the Task Team (DoE, 1996) introduced the notion of shared leadership as embodied among others in school management teams, considerable doubt remains about its practical implications (DoE, 1996). It seems that there may be widespread failure to implement the idea of shared leadership and participative leadership and the problem this research explores is whether, in the opinion of the school management teams, the traditional approach to leadership has changed (DoE, 1996).

1.6   Research question

What is school management teams' understanding and perception of the implementation of collaborative leadership in primary schools?

Supporting research questions

6.1   What is school management teams' ***understanding / perception*** of collaborative leadership?

6.2   What are school management teams' ***experiences*** of collaborative leadership?

6.3   What are the ***tasks*** engaged in by school management teams in the implementation of collaborative leadership?

6.4   What are ***strategies*** that school management teams use to implement collaborative leadership?

6.5   What are the ***challenges*** that school management teams need to address in order to implement collaborative leadership successfully?

6.6   What are the ***resources*** that school management teams need in order to implement collaborative leadership successfully?

1.7   Research aims and objectives

The proposed study is undertaken with the aim of ascertaining primary school management teams' understanding and implementation of collaborative leadership. The following objectives are addressed:

- To investigate school management teams' understanding/perception of collaborative leadership.

- To explore school management teams' experiences of collaborative leadership.

- To investigate the tasks in which school management teams engage in order to implement collaborative leadership.

- To discover the strategies that school management teams use to implement collaborative leadership.

- To explore the challenges that school management teams need to address in order to implement collaborative leadership.

- To determine the resources school management teams need to implement collaborative leadership.

1.8   Preliminary literature review

This topic is dealt with thoroughly in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. In this chapter I discuss collaborative leadership thoroughly under the following headings:

- Introduction
- Preparing new principals in South Africa: the ACE School Leadership Programme
- Leadership management and power sharing
- Professional development of school principals in South Africa
- Educational leadership and management
- Leading through distribution
- Reconceptualising education management development
- A collegial approach to understanding leadership
- What is the challenge
- Conclusion

1.9   Conceptual framework

The concept of theory relates to ideas and views, as formulated by individuals, on a certain scientific area (in this case school management). A theory usually consists of a number of assumptions and presuppositions (hypotheses), which are established as a theory by means of research. The concept of "model", on

the other hand, relates to the grouping or joining of a number of theories into a single model (Prinsloo, 1980:25-28).

An organisation like a school does not always represent a specific model: rather, very often there is a mixture or combination of models. Bush (1995:20) remarks as follows in this regard: "… it is rare for a single model to capture the reality of management in any particular school or college. Rather, aspects of several perspectives are present in different proportions in each institution."

A model is a representation of a matter in a reduced form (Prinsloo, 1980:25-28). According to Smit (1980:10) and Garbers (1983:32), a model is the ordering of a specific aspect or phenomenon so as to reveal the essential characteristics and to present it schematically so that the interrelatedness of the characteristics becomes evident. A management model therefore is a representation in reduced form of the characteristics of a management programme.

The education leadership and management model was partly developed from the management theory of Allen (1983), Stoner and Wankel (1986), Kroon (1991) and Van Niekerk (1992). These management theories were developed for application in business and industrial management but there are universal characteristics that could also be applied in an education management model. The education management theories of Van der Westhuizen (1990) and later education leadership theories of Bush and Glover (2002), and Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999), Bush (2007), Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) were used to define the following model developed by Prinsloo (2009).

According to Prinsloo (2009), this model indicates the importance of the educational leader directing the actions of people, giving direction and setting the pace at the school. Emphasis is placed on the role of the educational leader as a participative, transformational and an instructional leader. The model

further emphasises the importance of conceptual and human management skills, the creation of an internal school environment that is conducive to quality teaching and learning, the six managerial areas and the influence of the external school environment on the management of a school.
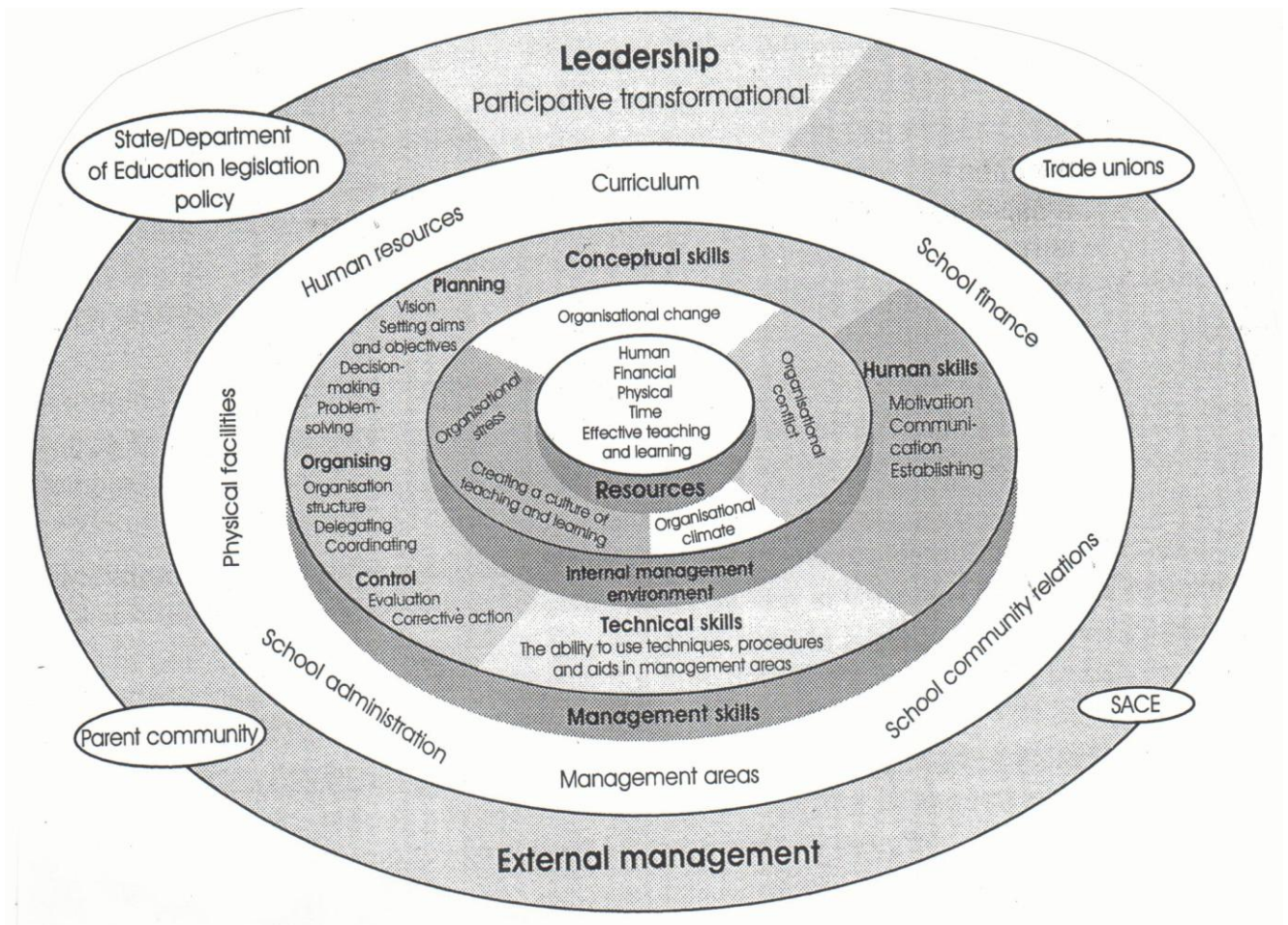
Figure 1.1:   **An educational leadership and management model**
                    (Adapted from Nieuwenhuis et al., 2007:135)

The following table outlines the different leadership and management models as identified by Bush (2003):

Table 1.1: Typology of management and leadership models (Bush, 2003)

Management model	Leadership model
Formal	Managerial
Collegial	Participative Transformational
Political	Transactional
Subjective	Post-modern
Ambiguous	Contingency
Cultural	Moral
	Instructional

For the purpose of this study I focused on the collegial (collaborative) management model and more particularly the participative and transformational leadership models and how they relate to concepts such as leadership, collaboration, school management teams, and understanding and implementation of policy.

I want to start by asking the question: What is leadership? Leadership is the process whereby one person influences individuals and group members towards goal setting and goal achievement with no force or coercion (adapted from Greenberg & Baron, 1993:444; Mosley, Meggins & Pietri, 1993:260; Van Fleet, 1991:157).

According to Kerry and Murdock (1993:221) leadership is not a matter of passive status, nor is it merely the possession of some combination of traits. It rather appears to be a working relationship among members of a group, in which the leader acquires status through active participation and demonstration of his or her capacity for carrying cooperative tasks through to completion (Kerry & Murdock, 1993:221). Regarded as one of the fundamental management functions, leadership is defined by Cronje, Du Toit,

Marais and Motlala (2004:174) as the process of directing the behaviour of others towards the accomplishment of predetermined goals. It involves elements such as influencing people, giving orders, motivating people, either as individuals or in groups, managing conflict and communicating with subordinates (Cronje, et al., 2004:174).

Collegial models of leadership

According to Bush (1995: 52-70), collegial models include all those theories that emphasise that power and decision-making should be shared among some or all members of the organisation (Bush, 1995). Collegial models assume that organisations determine policy and make decisions through a process of discussion, leading to consensus (Bush, 1995: 52-70). Power is shared among some or all members of the organisation who are thought to have a mutual understanding of the objectives of the institution. Bush (1995) further contends that the case for consensual decision-making rests in part on the ethical dimension of collegiality (Bush, 1995: 52-0). It is regarded as wholly appropriate to involve people in the decisions that affect their professional lives. Imposing decisions on staff is considered morally wrong and inconsistent with the notion of consent. In collegial models the style of leadership both influences and is influenced by the nature of the decision-making process (Bush, 1995: 52-70). The principal is typified as the facilitator of an essentially participative process. His or her credibility with colleagues depends on providing leadership to staff and external stakeholders while valuing the contributions of specialist teachers (Bush, 1995:52).

Participative and transformational leadership models

I will now briefly discuss the participative and transformational leadership models as outlined in Table 1. According to Leithwood et al. (1999:12 in

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Bush, 2007) participative leadership assumes that the decision-making processes of the group ought to be the central focus of the group (Leithwood et al., 1999:12 in Bush, 2007). According to Sergiovanni (1984:13 in Bush, 2007) the participative approach succeeds in bonding staff together and easing the pressures on school principals (Sergiovanni 1984:13 in Bush, 2007). The burdens of leadership are fewer if leadership functions and roles are shared and if the concept of leadership density emerges as a viable replacement for principal leadership (Bush, 2007).

According to Leithwood et al. (1999:9 in Mestry et al., 2008), Transformational leadership assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organisational members (Leithwood et al. 1999:9 in Mestry et al., 2008). High levels of personal commitment to organisational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity (Leithwood et al., 1999:9 in Mestry et al., 2008). Transformational leadership ensures commitment from the followers (Mestry et al., 2008). Both leaders and followers want to achieve and become the best and are united in the pursuit of the higher level goals common to both (Mestry et al., 2008). Both want to shape the school in a certain direction. The transformational approach seems to be more people-orientated (Mesrty et al., 2008).

According to Mestry et al. (2008), the idea of collective management and leadership has grown in South African schools through the concept of school management teams (Mestry et al., 2008). The implication is a shift from autocratic to shared management and leadership. In the new South African democracy there is a strong commitment to collaboration and shared management (Mestry et al., 2008).

This brings me to the concepts of understanding and implementation. According to Spillane (2006 in Mestry et al., 2008) individuals assimilate new experiences and information through their existing knowledge structures (Spillane 2006 in Mestry et al., 2008). Viewed from this perspective, what a policy comes to mean for teachers depends to a great extent on their repertoire of existing knowledge and experience (Mestry et al., 2008). Teachers' prior beliefs and practices can pose challenges not only because teachers are unwilling to adapt to new policies but also because their existing subjective knowledge may interfere with their ability to interpret and implement reform in ways consistent with policymakers' intent (Mestry et al., 2008).

1.10   Theoretical framework

According to Grant and Singh (2009), working within the theoretical frame of distributed leadership as practice, the three characterisations of distributed leadership offered by Gunter (2005) becomes pertinent when investigating how the practice happens. Gunter (2005 in Grant and Singh, 2009) suggests that distributed leadership in current research is being characterised variously as authorised, dispersed and democratic (Gunter 2005:51 in Grant & Singh ,2009). For Gunter (2005) questions about the location and exercise of power in an organisation are central to distributed leadership theory and she argues that researchers should be examining how and what is distributed (Gunter 2005:51 in Grant & Singh, 2009). She warns that it should not be just the technical aspects but possibly the authority, responsibility and hence legitimacy to do or not do the work (Gunter, 2005:51 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

(i)   Authorised distributed leadership

According to Gunter (2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009), the first characterisation, authorised distributed leadership (Gunter, 2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009), is where work is distributed from the principal to others and is usually accepted

because it is regarded as legitimate within the hierarchical system of relations and because it gives status to the person who takes on the work (Gunter 2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009). This type of leadership can also be termed *delegated leadership* and is evident where there are teams, informal work groups, committees and so on, operating within a hierarchical organisation (Woods, 2004: 6 in Grant & Singh, 2009). Teachers often accept the delegated work, either in the interests of the school or for their own empowerment. However, power remains at the organisational level and teacher leadership is dependent on those who hold formal leadership positions (Gunter 2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

(ii)   Dispersed distributed leadership

The second characterisation, according to Gunter (2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009), termed *dispersed distributed leadership* (Gunter, 2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009) refers to a process where much of the working of an organisation takes place without the formal working of a hierarchy (Gunter, 2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009). It is a more autonomous and bottom-up process, an emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise (Gronn, 2000:324 in Grant & Singh, 2009). It is based on trust (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 1988; Grant, 2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009) and requires letting go by senior staff rather than just delegating tasks. This type of leadership centres on spontaneity and intuitive working relations (Gronn, 2003 in Grant & Singh, 2009) and, as Gunter (2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009) explains, while formal structures exist with role incumbents and job descriptions, the reality of practice means that people may work together in ways that work best (Gunter, 2005:54 in Grant & Singh, 2009). Through sharing the leadership work more widely and redefining roles, the power relations in the school are shifted away from the formal leaders in the

accomplishment of the organisational goals Gunter, 2005 in Grant & Singh 2009.

(iii)   Democratic distributed leadership

According to Gunter (2005 in Grant and Singh, 2009), the final characterisation, *democratic distributed leadership* (Gunter, 2005 in Grant & Singh, 2009), is similar to dispersed distributed leadership in that both have the potential for concerted action (Gunter, 2005:56 in Grant & Singh, 2009) and both have an emergent character where initiative circulates widely (Woods, 2004 in Grant & Singh, 2009). However, democratic distributed leadership is different in that it does not assume political neutrality, but instead engages critically with organisational values and goals (Woods, 2004:7 in Grant & Singh, 2009). It raises questions of inclusion and exclusion in terms of how meaning is developed, how experiences are understood and how we work for change (Gunter, 2005:57 in Grant & Singh, 2009). In other words, democratic distributed leaders should embrace leadership for transformation for social justice (Phendla, 2004:53 in Grant & Singh, 2009) and should lay the groundwork for challenging social inequalities (Shields, 2006:77 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

1.11 Research design

A research design is a plan or strategy, which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques used and the data analysis done (Creswell et al., 2007:70). McMillan and Schumacher (1993:157) describe a research design as a strategy of selecting subjects, research sites and data collection procedures to answer the research question.

1.11.1   Type of design

I make use of a case study design because it assists me in gaining a clearer understanding of school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:50). The use of a case study design furthermore provides me with multiple sources of information and facilitates the process of exploring and describing the implementation of collaborative leadership in primary schools (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:50).

1.11.2   Epistemology

According to Mouton (1996:28) the goal or destination of all social inquiry is to produce knowledge that is as close as possible to the truth and in this study the goal is the same (Mouton, 1996:28). Although the notion of truth is complex, scientists are either explicitly or implicitly committed to its pursuit. Even though, more often than not, it is impossible to attain truth, the goal of truth acts as a regulative principle from which scientific inquiry derives its peculiar nature and which distinguishes science from other forms of knowledge production. The commitment to the search for truth is captured in what is known as the epistemic imperative (Mouton, 1996:28).

According to Mouton (1996:28) the epistemic imperative in the original Greek sense means truthful or certain knowledge, knowledge that is well substantiated, as opposed to opinion and the imperative implies a kind of moral contract willingly entered into for the greater good. The epistemic imperative hence refers to the intrinsic moral and binding character that is inherent in the pursuit of truthful knowledge regarding school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership in primary schools (Mouton, 1996:28).

According to Cohen et al. (2004) knowledge can be viewed in one of two ways (Cohen et al., 2004). It can either be seen as hard, real and objective (a positivist stance) capable of being transmitted in tangible form – a view which might lead to adopting an observer role and using the methods of natural science to consider the use of quantitative methods (e.g. standardised tests) (Cohen et al., 2004). Alternatively an interpretive, non-positivist stance may be adopted – of a softer, more subjective spiritual or even transcendental kind, which might lead to a more subjective participatory role, often rejecting the standard methods of natural science (Cohen et al., 2004).. Cohen further asserts that an interpretive paradigm is a view of social science, a lens through which one examines the practice of research (Cohen et al., 2004). In this study the latter approach is adopted.

According to Mouton (1996) the epistemology of qualitative research acknowledges an interactive relationship between the researcher and the participants as well as between the participants and their own experiences and how they have construct reality based on those experiences. These personal experiences, beliefs and value-laden narratives are biased and subjective, but qualitative research accepts them as true for those who have lived through the experience (Mouton, 1996). The stories, experiences and voices of the respondents are the mediums through which we explore and understand reality (Mouton, 1996).

1.11.3 Research paradigm

The proposed study follows an interpretive paradigm, which allowed me to interact closely with the participants to gain insight into and form a clear understanding of the phenomenon I wanted to study (Creswell, 2003:18). The ultimate aim of interpretive research is to offer a perspective of a situation and to analyse the situation under investigation to provide insight into the way in

which a particular group of people make sense of their situation or the phenomenon they encounter (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:60).

According to Mouton (1996) qualitative researchers believe that the world is made up of people with their own assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values, and that the way of knowing reality is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon – an attempt to see how others have constructed reality by asking about it (Mouton, 1996). In qualitative research we look at human events in a more holistic way that attempts to locate individual actions in terms of meanings (among others why people say this, do this or act in this or that way) which must be interpreted by linking them to other human events to enable greater understanding (Mouton, 1996).

1.11.4   Research approach

This study follows a qualitative research approach (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding, where a researcher develops a complex and holistic picture, analyses words and reports detailed views of information and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2007). The research questions seek to understand participants' experiences of the central phenomenon, which in this case is school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership in primary schools (Creswell, 2007).

1.11.5   Research methodology

1.11.5.1 Research method

The study follows a case study design (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:50) by means of semi-structured one-on-one interviews with individual school management team members. This type of design assisted me in gaining a

clearer understanding of school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership and it allowed me to gain valuable information on collaborative leadership in primary schools (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:50).

According to Bromley (1990:302 in Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007) case study research is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events, which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest. From an interpretive perspective the typical characteristic of case studies is that they strive towards a comprehensive, holistic understanding of how participants relate and interact with one another in a specific situation and how they understand the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:74).

1.11.5.2 Sampling

Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al. (2007:79) writes that sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for the study. He furthermore mentions that qualitative research is "generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling rather than probability sampling". I made use of convenience sampling because of time constraints and cost. Convenience sampling is a type of non-probability sampling that involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population which is close at hand (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:79). The sample population was selected because it was readily available and convenient. In this study the sample schools were deliberately selected on the basis of proximity and their capacity to provide valuable information because of their employment experience (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:79).

This study was conducted in four primary schools in the northern Gauteng District 4 in Pretoria. The sample comprised four principals, four deputy-principals and four heads of department from four different primary schools,

one from Mamelodi – a black township east of Pretoria, two from Eersterust – a coloured township east of Pretoria, and one from Silverton – a white suburb east of Pretoria.

1.11.5.3   Data collection procedures

Before embarking on the research I obtained permission from the Department of Education (Consult Annexure D) to undertake the research in public schools. Letters were sent to all sample schools (Consult Annexure B) requesting access to conduct research. A supporting letter from the researcher's supervisor was attached to the letter sent to the sample schools to authenticate the researcher's request for access (Creswell, 2008:218).

After receiving permission from the Department of Education in February, 2010 I made appointments with the principals of the sample schools to introduce myself to them as well as to the teachers who would be participating in the study. I discussed the project with them and explained it to them and also looked at ethical issues such as anonymity and confidentiality. I provided all the participants with a consent letter (Consult Annexure C) to give permission to participate in the study. I considered logistical issues such as possible and suitable dates, times and venues (Creswell, 2008:218).

1.11.5.3.1   Literature review

Extensive review of literature on educational leadership development was undertaken and more specifically on collaborative leadership (shared leadership, distributed leadership, collegial leadership) to inform me of what on the topic has been researched (Cohen & Manion, 2009). In order to conduct a sound and useful literature review I used various sources to help me locate material that is relevant and up-to-date. In this respect I used recent articles, books, dissertations, journals, research reports, and policy and legislative documents (Cohen & Manion, 2009).

1.11.5.3.2 Interviews

The primary data source was personal interviews with the participants. These interviews consisted of semi-structured, face-to-face open-ended questions. Denzin (2005 in Maree et al., 2007) writes that the interview is a favourite methodological tool for qualitative research, while for Greef (in De Vos, 2002) qualitative interviews are:

> *attempts to understand the world or phenomena from the participants' point of view, to unfold the meaning of the people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations.*

This approach was chosen so that I could present accurate descriptive data in the participants' own words. I used a video-recorder to record the interviews. This information was later transcribed verbatim. I took notes during the interview sessions. This was done to ensure accuracy of the data collection process (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

Cohen and Manion (2009) point out that interviews are used to convert into data information "directly obtained from a person, by providing access to what is inside a person's head, what a person likes and dislikes and what a person thinks". This study is framed in the qualitative paradigm and employed interviews as part of the data gathering instruments and I believe that this served as a good source of primary information (Cohen & Manion, 2009).

In reviewing the literature, three types of interview associated with qualitative research were identified: (1) structured interviews, (2) unstructured interviews and (3) semi-structured interviews. As indicated, semi-structured interviews were used because they focus on collecting and capturing details about individuals' feelings and experiences (Cohen & Manion, 2009). Semi-

structured interviews were suitable for this study because they revealed the understanding and experiences of school management team members regarding collaborative leadership (Cohen & Manion, 2009). Open-ended questions enabled me to use prompts and probing questions to obtain deeper data from the participants, and to move from designed questions to unplanned prompts that emerged from the interview process (Cohen & Manion, 2009).

1.11.5.3.3 Document analysis

Document analysis is one of the methodological tools for verifying information contained in texts (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:361). This approach enabled me to analyse national and school policy documents. Consequently I examined documents such as the school time table, the notice boards, the school vision and mission statements, minutes of meetings and the principals' circulars and memoranda to staff (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:361). This instrument was used as a data gathering instrument because it has the potential of revealing vital information that may not necessarily be supplied by participants during the interview process. The method, apart from being a data-gathering instrument, was very useful in the study's triangulation process. This means that this process of analysing documents was also used as a cross-check on other data to enhance the study's reliability (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:361).

1.11.5.3.4 Observation

Observation is one of the most common methods of qualitative research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:350), observation is a way for the researcher to see and hear what is occurring naturally in the research site. Often observation is prolonged by observing naturally occurring behaviour over many hours or days. The researcher hopes to obtain a rich understanding of the phenomenon being studied (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:350). Consequently I decided on non-participant observation as an approach to data-

collection to be able to match theory and practice in relation to the coordination and implementation of collaborative leadership practices of school management teams. I observed how the school management team is involved in the planning and decision-making processes of the management of the school (Cohen & Manion, 2009).

1.11.5.4 Data analysis and interpretation

According to De Vos (2002:339 in Maree et al., 2007) data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data during a research process. Thus data analysis entails breaking down the mass of data into constituent parts, the purpose of which is to enable the researcher to attach meaning to the data and to assist him in addressing the research problem.

In this study I made use of content analysis to analyse the data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) observe that there is insufficient literature outlining the pragmatic process of thematic analysis, but acknowledge that it is one of the ways of putting information received from participants into meaningful and usable forms for easy interpretation and understanding.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:367) the first step after collecting the mass of data was to code the data. Coding is the process of reading carefully through the transcribed data and dividing it into meaningful analysed units (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). After the transcribed data had been coded, I moved on to the next phase in the data analysis process where I organised or combined related codes into themes or categories (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). The next step was to interpret the data. Lastly, in interpreting the analysed data, I searched for emerging patterns, associations, concepts and explanations from the data with the ultimate aim of drawing conclusions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:367).

1.11.5.5   Trustworthiness, validity and reliability

The term *trustworthiness* refers to the way in which the inquirer is able to persuade the audience that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to and that the research is of high quality (Lincoln & Guba in Johnson & Turner, 2003 in Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

The questions of reliability and validity are crucial and very important in qualitative research (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). There are as many and varied ways of addressing reliability and validity as there are different approaches to the research process but triangulation is one of the more important ones (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Since no single approach is entirely adequate for data-gathering for the investigation, I employed more than one research instrument and this optimised the validity and reliability of the results of the study (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

According to Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., (2007) triangulation plays an essential role in ensuring reliability and validity as it assists in corroborating data from the different data sources and ensures that the weaknesses of one method are compensated for by the strengths of others (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). The utilisation of the methods of data collection, namely literature review, interviews and document analysis was useful for data triangulation purposes (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). These methods were useful in the sense that the same information was solicited from using three different methods. This also served to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the data obtained (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

Last but not least, Richardson (2000: 934 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007) proposes the concept of crystallisation. Crystallisation refers to the practice of validating results by using multiple methods of data collection and analysis. What I describe as my findings are those that crystallised from the

data. I also did member checking to check my findings with the participants to determine if my transcriptions were accurate (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

1.11.5.6   Ethical considerations

De Vos (1998:240 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007) stipulates that ethics are a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group. Furthermore, he mentions that these are widely accepted rules of behaviour and expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects, respondents, employer, sponsors and other researchers, assistants and students (De Vos, 1998:240 in Maree et al., 2007). It is the view of Somo (2007:17) that ethical guidelines are standards and the basis upon which the researcher ought to evaluate his/her own conduct. Maree et al. (2007:298) further stipulate that it is essential that throughout the research process the researcher should follow and abide by ethical guidelines (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

In order to abide by the strict ethical obligations I implemented the following safeguards to protect the rights of the participants:

- The aim and intention of the research were articulated both verbally and in writing so that participants understood them;
- Written permission to proceed with the study was obtained from each participant;
- All audio-tapes and transcriptions were made available to the participants for verification;
- The rights and wishes of the participants were considered when writing the research report;
- For the purpose of anonymity neither the names of the participants nor of the schools were disclosed in the research report; and

- Last but not least, my non-judgemental and non-interfering role as the researcher was explained to all participants.

In addition I applied for ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria (Consult Annexure E) in order to be able to do the research in the field. This was a very rigorous and strict process.

1.11.5.7 Limitations

Marshall and Rossman (1999:24 in Maree et al., 2007) state that no research project is without its limitations and that there is no such thing as perfect research. My research is situated in a particular context which makes the generalisability of the findings impossible. However, this study may be broadly applicable to similar settings. Furthermore, this study can be repeated in future using a larger sample (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

As with most case study research, the major limitation of this study is its small size, which makes it difficult for the findings to be generalised to a larger population because only four primary schools were used in this study. The use of interviews can also be regarded as a limitation (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Some researchers have registered their disapproval of the use of interviews as a tool for information gathering in research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). They point out that interviews have a greater potential for influencing the findings and assert that the researcher might receive false information as his/her presence may have an influence (positive or otherwise) on the responses of the participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

1.12 Working assumption / hypothesis

According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kajees (2006) a hypothesis is a suggested answer to a problem which has to be tested empirically before it can be accepted and incorporated into a theory (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kajees,

2006). Through research we develop and accumulate the results to answer research questions and gain a deeper understanding of research problems (Creswell, 2005).

The research question in this particular study is:

> *What is school management teams' understanding/perception of collaborative leadership?*

According to Grant and Singh (2009), during the period of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, government legislation perpetuated a society of inequality based on race, class and gender. To create and maintain this inequality, government policies promoted centralised, authoritarian control of education at all levels within the system (Grant, 2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009). Today, within a democratic South Africa, SASA (1996), the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000), and the Task Team Report on Education Management Development challenge schools to review their management practices, which have traditionally been top-down, and create an entirely new approach to managing schools. In this new approach, management should be seen as an activity in which all members of educational organisations engage and not as the task of a few (DoE, 1996:27).

In light of the statement above it is therefore my assumption that:

- school management teams fully understand the concept of collaborative leadership;
- school management teams implement collaborative leadership in their schools to improve teaching and learning in their schools;
- school management teams use different tasks to implement collaborative leadership in their schools;

- school management teams use different strategies to implement collaborative leadership in their schools;

- school management teams experience certain challenges in their implementation of collaborative leadership; and

- school management teams need certain resources to implement collaborative leadership in their schools.

1.13 Significance of the research

When looking at the significance of this study I think that there are two very important questions we need to ask. The first major question we need to ask is: "What don't we know about collaborative leadership at this stage?" We do not know if school management teams understand the concept of collaborative leadership. We also do not know if they are implementing collaborative leadership in their schools. I believe that this study is very significant because, if we can find answers to these questions, we can determine if school management teams need training to enhance their capacity to manage schools in order to improve the practice of management.

Secondly, "Why would it be useful for us to get knowledge about collaborative leadership?" I believe that it would be very useful for us to get knowledge about this management style because of the following:

- Empirical evidence suggests that successful collaborative leadership creates conditions that support effective teaching and learning and builds capacity for professional learning and change;

- Hallinger and Heck (2010) suggest that collaborative leadership focuses on strategic school-wide actions that are directed towards school improvement that is shared among the principal, teachers, administrators and others;

- According to Hallinger and Heck (2010) increasing the school's capacity for improvement represents a key target of leadership efforts designed to impact teacher practice and student learning;

- According to Hallinger and Heck (2010), collaborative leadership entails the use of governance structures and organisational processes that empower staff and students encourage broad participation in decision-making and foster shared accountability for student learning.

1.14 Chapters

Chapter 1: General orientation

In this chapter I provide a general overview of leadership development practices in general. I briefly highlight the recent changes in the education system in South Africa that have given rise to school-based decision-making. This chapter also focuses on the challenges and functions of school management teams resulting in the reforms in the education sector.

Chapter 2: Collaborative leadership

In this chapter I review the body of literature that deals with leadership development in South Africa. Backed by the methodological issues associated with this research topic, I examine the notion that, as a result of school self-management, it is no longer sufficient for school principals to take decisions unilaterally.

Chapter 3: Research design

This chapter describes the research process, discussing the qualitative case study methodology and data-collection instruments that I employed to address the issues raised in the literature and most importantly to answer the research question.

Chapter 4: Data analysis and interpretation

In this chapter I focus on the analysis of the accumulated data. I use three steps to analyse the data: I scan, clean and represent the data. I make use of content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises message content (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). It is a process of looking at the data from different angles with a view to identifying keys in the text that help one to understand and interpret the raw data. I make use of thematic analysis to analyse the data. Thematic analysis is one of the ways of putting information received from participants into meaningful and usable forms for easy interpretation and understanding (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Chapter 5: Overview, findings, conclusion and recommendations

In this chapter I provide an overview of the study. I reveal the findings of the study and draw conclusions regarding school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership. I also acknowledge the limitations of this study and make recommendations for possible future studies on this topic.

1.15   Conclusion

In this chapter I have supplied a general overview of the proposed study. The various aspects of the study were briefly presented, followed by a brief outline of the different chapters as well as what is covered in each chapter.

In conclusion, according to Edwards and Smit (2008), schools are essentially concerned with people and the development of knowledge and skills (Edwards and Smit, 2008). Schools are also tasked to be relevant in contemporary society, for the present and for the future. Like any other societal institution,

schools require sound leadership that is appropriate for the business of teaching and learning (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Even though school leadership structures are historically hierarchical in nature, more modern trends suggest moving away from rigid command leadership approaches to leadership styles that are more participative and collaborative in nature (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Edwards & Smit (2008) further contend that, woven into the fabric of organisation structure and relevance is the premise that leadership exists in a form that requires further consideration and examination (Edwards Smit, 2008). Against this backdrop of the changing context of leadership they examined if curriculum implementation was possible by using collaborative leadership (Edwards & Smit, 2008). They (Edwards & Smit, 2008) argue that, while there are certain desirable conditions required, it is indeed possible to use collaborative leadership to implement the curriculum successfully.

Chapter 2 deals with the literature review on collaborative leadership.

CHAPTER 2: COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

2.1   Introduction

It was only in the 1960s that scholars began to conceptualise and study school leadership as directed explicitly towards improvement in the quality of teaching (Gross & Herriott, 1965 in Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Subsequently this focus was expanded to include the effects of principal leadership on student learning (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982 ,Hallinger & Heck, 1996 in Hallinger & Heck, 2010). In 1988 Pitner proposed several conceptual models that sought to explain the means by which leadership could have an impact on student learning (Hallinger & Heck 2010). A decade later Hallinger and Heck (2010) elaborated on these models in a review of empirical research on principal leadership and student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 1996 in Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

According to Hallinger and Heck (2010:97) empirical evidence suggests that successful school leadership creates conditions that support effective teaching and learning and builds capacity for professional learning and change. Over the past decade there has been increased interest in exploring the sources, means and implications of viewing school leadership more broadly than that which is exercised by the principal (Gronn 2002; Leithwood et al., 2009; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995 in Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Hallinger and Heck (2010) posits that although scholars have proposed meaningful distinctions between terms such as *distributed* (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006), *shared* (Marks & Printy, 2003; Pounder, Ogawa & Adams, 1995) and *collaborative* (Hallinger & Heck, 1996) leadership, all three terms reflect a similar concern for broadening the sources of school leadership (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

Hallinger and Heck (2010) suggest that collaborative leadership focuses on strategic school-wide actions that are directed towards school improvement

that are shared among the principal, teachers, administrators and others (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). In the context of their study (Hallinger & Heck, 2010) collaborative leadership entails the use of governance structures and organisational processes that empower staff and students, encourage broad participation in decision-making, and foster shared accountability for student learning. The Hallinger and Heck (2010) study took place in a state where the use of school leadership teams as a means of fostering school improvement was actively promoted.

According to Hallinger and Heck (2010:97), increasing the school's capacity for improvement represent a key target of leadership efforts designed to have an impact on teacher practice and student learning. In their research Hallinger and Heck (2010) define school improvement capacity as school conditions that support teaching and learning, enable the professional learning of the staff and provide a means for implementing strategic actions aimed at continuous school improvement. Hallinger and Heck (2010) sought to develop a dynamic picture of school improvement by measuring teachers' perceptions of their schools' collective leadership and related school improvement processes at several points in time. This information was used to define an improvement trajectory that portrayed change in these processes for each school over a four-year period of time (Hallinger & Heck, 2010;97).

According to Hallinger and Heck (2010:95) over the past fifty years scholars in Europe have sought to understand whether and how leadership contributes to school improvement and more specifically to student learning (Heck & Hallinger, 2005 in Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Hallinger and Heck posits that this research (whether and how leadership contributes to school improvement and more specifically to student learning) generally supports the conclusion that leadership contributes to learning through the development of a set of structural and socio-cultural processes that define the school's capacity for

academic improvement (Hallinger, Bickman & Davis, 1996; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2006; Robinson et al., 2008 as cited by Hallinger & Heck 2010).

According to Hallinger and Heck (2010) while this finding (that leadership leadership contributes to school improvement and more specifically to student learning) offers encouragement to policy-makers and practitioners, such research has relied largely upon cross-sectional surveys of principal effectiveness and case studies of school improvement (Heck & Hallinger, 2005; Reynolds et al., 2000 in Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Neither of the above research designs offers a satisfactory approach for understanding how leadership contributes to school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). They (Hallinger and Heck, 2010) assert therefore, that gaining deeper insight into this issue requires longitudinal data that describes changes in school processes and outcomes in a substantial number of schools over time (Hallinger & Heck, 2003; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Reynolds et al., 2000; Southworth, 2002 in Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

After this brief introduction I now discuss principals' preparation for their leadership role and I do this by discussing the ACE Leadership programme.

2.2 Preparing new principals in South Africa: the ACE School Leadership Programme

According to Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi (2011) there is increasing recognition that effective leadership and management are vital if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for students. There is also emerging evidence that high quality leadership makes a significant difference to school improvement and learning outcomes (Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi, 2011). Huber (2004:1-2 as cited by Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi, 2011) claims that schools classified as successful possess a

competent and sound school leadership and adds that failure often correlates with inadequate school leadership (Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi, 2011). Leithwood et al. (2006:4 in Bush et al., 2011) argue that school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning. They (Leithwood et al., 2006) conclude that there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership (Leithwood et al., 2006:5 in Bush et al., 2011). There is also a significant body of South African literature contending that effective leadership and management are essential to developing good schools (Bush et al., 2010; Christie, 2001; 2010; Department of Education, 1996; Roberts & Roach, 2006 as cited by Bush, 2011).

According to Bush et al. (2011), while there is an increasing body of evidence proving that leadership makes a significant difference in learner achievement, there is less agreement about what preparation is required to develop appropriate leadership behaviours. In many countries, including South Africa, school leaders begin their professional careers as teachers and progress to the headship via a range of leadership tasks and roles, often described as middle management (Bush et al., 2011). This leads to a widespread view that teaching is their main activity and that a teaching qualification and teaching experience are the only requirements for school leadership (Bush et al., 2011).

Bush and Oduro (2006:362 in Bush et al., 2011) note that throughout Africa there is no formal requirement for principals to be trained as school managers (Bush et al., 2011). They are often appointed on the basis of a successful record as teachers with the implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership (Bush et al., 2011). However, as Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen (1997:252 as cited by Bush et al., 2011) note, good teaching abilities are not necessarily an indication that the person appointed will be a capable educational manager. Van der Westhuizen et al. (2004 as

cited by Bush et al., 2011) reach a similar conclusion that wide-ranging changes in the education system have rendered many serving school principals ineffective in the management of their schools. Many of these serving principals lack basic management training prior to and after their entry into leadership (Van der Westhuizen et al. 2004 as cited by Bush et al., 2011).

According to Bush et al. (2011), there is a growing realisation that, in the 21st century, headship is a specialist occupation that requires specific preparation. Bush (2008 in Bush et al., 2011) notes the following reasons for this paradigm shift:

- **The expansion of the role of school principal**. In decentralised systems, the scope of leadership has increased.
- **The increasing complexity of school contexts**. Principals have to engage with their communities to lead and manage effectively.
- **Recognition that preparation is a moral obligation**. It is unfair to appoint new principals without effective induction.
- **Recognition that effective preparation and development make a difference**. Principals are better leaders following specific training.

Mathibe (2007:523 in Bush et al., 2011) says that South African principals are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership. Daresh and Male's (2000) comparative study of English and US principals demonstrates that principals experience a culture shock as they cross the threshold from teaching into principalship. Effective preparation is one way of reducing the shock and helping leaders to cope (Bush et al., 2011).

Bush et al. (2011) posits that there are two main options available for the preparation of school principals. These are to identify and prepare potential principals before they are appointed, or to provide development for practising

principals after they have been appointed. The former South African Education Department envisaged a new threshold qualification for aspiring school principals as part of its wider strategy to improve educational standards. The course described as an Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE) (Bush et al., 2011) was piloted in six provinces from 2007 to 2009. The pilot was open to serving principals as well as to deputy principals and school management team members aspiring to become principals. Participants were nominated by the provincial departments of education. Since 2009 the programme has continued but it is not yet a compulsory qualification for principals (Bush et al., 2011).

Bush et al. (2011) further contend that the ACE is delivered by universities through a common framework agreed with the national Department of Education and the National Management and Leadership Committee (NLMC). The first pilot cohort involved only five universities and the Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (Bush et al., 2011). The intention of the course is that it should be different from typical university programmes in being practice-based:

> *Its primary purpose is to ascertain how much of the course learning has been internalised, made meaning of and applied in practice in the school* (Bush and Oduro, 2006 as cited by Bush et al., 2011).

This emphasis on practice has resulted from the evidence (e.g. Department of Education, 1996 in Bush et al., 2011) that, although many school leaders hold university qualifications in management, their collective impact on school outcomes is minimal. Their focus appears to be on Education Management (Department of Education, 1996), described as not only a turning point, but also a starting point for the training and development of education leaders in South Africa (Bush et al., 2011). Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren

(2007:436 in Bush et al., 2011) are critical of the university provision of educational leadership and development:

> *Management development practices ... have tended to focus on the collection of qualifications and certificates with little attention being paid to actual ability to transfer this newly acquired knowledge to the institution in which managers work* (Van der Westhuizen & Van Vuuren, 2007:24 as cited by Bush et al., 2011).

Van der Westhuizen et al. (2004 in Bush et al., 2011) make a similar point in concluding their evaluation of management training:

> *The design and content of training programmes should be geared towards developing requisite skills and knowledge to enable trainees to transfer their skills and knowledge ... to the school situation.*

Bush et al. (2011) further notes that the very different and ambitious aim of the ACE programme was to make an appreciable difference in participants' management practice, leading to school improvement (Bush et al., 2011). The ACE was also intended to ensure that candidates were able to engage with leadership and management issues in a sustained way (Bush et al., 2011). This reflects implicit acceptance of the limitations of the workshop model of development. McLennan's (2000:305 in Bush et al., 2011) assessment of training in the Gauteng province is that such workshops are often poorly organised and irrelevant.

I now discuss the concepts *leadership, management* and *power sharing*. These concepts are important to clarify because they help us understand their differences from and their interrelatedness with the phenomenon under study.

2.3   Leadership, management and power sharing

According to Singh, Manser and Mestry (2007) a leader does not simply assume a hat associated with a specific position and then performs the functions associated with the job description in a technocratic and bureaucratic manner. This approach is usually associated with the functions of a manager (Singh et al., 2007). A leader wears many hats and consequently assumes several roles and, depending on the task situation in which the individual finds himself, can be a leader or a subordinate (Kochan & Reed, 2005; Singh, 2005; Thilo, 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 1997 as cited by Singh et al., 2007).

Hellgriel et al. (2006:6 in Singh, Manser & Mestry, 2007) define a manager as a person who plans, organises, directs, and controls the allocation of human, material, financial and information resources in pursuit of the organisation's goals. In terms of their definition, a successful manager capably performs four basic managerial tasks: planning, organising, leading and controlling (Singh et al., 2007). The task of leading involves communicating with and motivating others to perform the tasks necessary to achieve the organisation's goals within the context of supporting organisational culture (Hellgriel et al., 2006:9 in Singh et al., 2007).

Hellgriel et al. (2006:286-287 in Singh, Manser & Mestry, 2007) note that leadership involves influencing others to act towards the attainment of a goal and this is based on interpersonal relationships and not only on administrative activities and directives. They believe that individuals throughout the organisation can and should exercise leadership, and the best organisations have effective leaders at all levels (Hellgriel et al. in Singh et al., 2007).

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Hellgriel et al. (2006 in Singh, Manser & Mestry, 2007) further point out that successful leadership depends on the leader establishing trust, clarifying the direction in which people should be headed, communicating so that people would feel confident that they can make the right decisions, encouraging others to take risks, and finally, having a source of power that Hellgriel et al. (2006:287 in Singh et al., 2007) regard as the ability to influence the behaviour of others.

Kouzes and Posner (1997:185 in Singh et al., 2007) observe that credible leaders prefer to give away their power in the service of others and for a purpose larger than themselves. Such leaders accept and act on the paradox of power that we become most powerful when we give our power away. Collegial leaders take the power that flows to them and connect it to the other members of their team (Singh, Manser & Mestry, 2007). As pointed out by Kouzes and Posner (1997:187 in Singh, Manser & Mestry 2007), when leaders share power with others, they demonstrate profound trust in and respect for others' abilities. Such leaders, and not the controlling ones, are most respected and most effective.

According to Kochan and Reed (2005 in Singh, Manser and Mestry, 2007) where principals are identified as "leaders" many principals find it difficult to give up power and control. Kochan and Reed (2005:77 in Singh, Manser and Mestry, 2007) further point out that even when schools attempt to create empowering situations barriers exist that include language, positions and attitudes implying that educators and other stakeholders should be afforded the opportunity to question issues that hinder the creation of equal power relationships (Kochan & Reed, 2005 in Singh, Manser & Mestry, 2007). This is particularly true of parents, especially Black parents, who may not be comfortable in a school setting and may feel unwelcome there (Department of Education, 1996; Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004 as cited by Singh et al.,

2007). Such individuals would feel intimidated by the situation and uncomfortable or distrustful because of past experiences (Seitsinger & Zera 2002 in Singh et al.,2007). Collegiality should be lauded as a democratic value in education that contributes to the enfranchisement and emotional wellbeing of all its stakeholders (Singh et al., 2007).

According to Singh et al. (2007) the empowerment of stakeholders in any organisation depends on the devolution of power by leaders. Traditional managers cling to power as an entitlement of their positions (Singh et al., 2007). In contrast, collegial leaders share their power base in order to flatten hierarchies (Kouzes & Posner, 1997 in Singh, Manser & Mestry, 2007). Empowered stakeholders therefore demonstrate a greater commitment to complete a task based on their increased sense of self-confidence, self-determination and personal effectiveness (Singh, 2005 in Singh, Manser & Mestry, 2007).

Kochan and Reed (2005:68 in Singh, Manser and Mestry, 2007) state that democratic leadership requires individuals to adopt a collaborative approach that includes building a sense of community with both internal and external stakeholders. This involves sharing power with others, which involves multiple groups of stakeholders in decision-making in meaningful ways (Kochan and Reed in Singh et al., 2007). As Bennis (1994 in Mesrty et al., 2007) points out, a leader focuses on people and inspires trust whereas a manager focuses on systems and structures and depends largely on control measures to get the job done. A leader challenges the status quo which the manager accepts as "the classic good soldier" (Bennis, 1994 in Singh et al., 2007). The difference between the manager and the leader as described by Bennis clearly distinguishes the artist (leader) from the technocrat (manager) (Bennis, 1994 in Singh, Manser and Mestry, 2007).

I will now discuss education management development in South Africa by looking at the contributions of the ETDP SETA and the Joint Education Trust (JET).

2.4 Professional development of school principals in South Africa

Mathibe (2005 in Mathibe, 2007:529) notes that in South Africa, unlike in the UK and USA, any educator can be appointed to the office of principal, irrespective of the fact that he/she has a school management or leadership qualification. Such openness does not only defeat Taylor's view of "getting the right man" for the job but also places school administration management leadership and governance in the hands of people unqualified for the work (Van der Westhuizen, 1999 in Mathibe, 2007). It is in this way that *ad hoc* attempts have been made to provide skills and professional development programmes for principals in South African schools (ETDP SETA, 2002) (Van der Westhuizen, 1999 in Mathibe, 2007). For example, an advisory body consisting of former principals, union representatives and members of the education department was established to give direction to the Delta Foundation's programme for developing capacity in school management and leadership (Mathibe, 2007). According to Mathibe (2007:529) key features of the programme are the following:

- Ensuring that training programmes conform to EDTP SETA-SAQA standards;
- Ensuring that all training has a long-term strategic objective;
- Ensuring that all principals' training should be a mixture of face-to-face contact and group work;
- Rigorous impact evaluation and cost benefit analysis; and

- The Department of Education supporting the initiative as a full partner by providing financial assistance to the programme (Delta Foundation, 2001 in Mathibe, 2007).

According to Mathibe (2007:530), in addition to efforts by non-governmental organisations to build management and leadership capacity in schools, the ETDP SETA (2002:35 in Mathibe, 2007) notes that in South Africa some of the management development programmes are provided by universities and technikons, Universities of Technology as well as workshop-based training offered by the Department of Education on education management development (EMD). Mahanjana (1999:9-10 in Mathibe, 2007) notes the following salient points regarding strategic outcomes of EMD:

- Strengthening the capacity of district and regional officials to enable them to provide ongoing on-site professional support to principals;
- Developing principals as leaders and managers of collaborative management teams;
- Supporting the strategic role of principals and school governing bodies in addressing challenges at school level;
- Encouraging education stakeholders to adopt EMD visions, principles and practices; and
- Developing a holistic resource and distribution plan that acknowledges EMD as a function of people and organisational development.

Mathibe (2007) further states that, in a study of twelve management development programmes by the Joint Education Trust (JET) on training offered by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) it was found that all 12 programmes offered provided some form of training to principals (ETDP

SETA, 2002; Heystek, 2003:10 in by Mathibe, 2007). The content of some of the training programmes (as cited by Mathibe, 2007) includes the following:

- **Personnel management:** Developing a personal vision and mission, leadership skills, stress management, change management;

- **Organisational development:** Vision crafting for the school, drawing up a mission and development plan, inspiring and motivating staff, conducting a SWOT analysis and strategic planning;

- **Skills development:** Delegating, problem-solving, conflict management and resolution, aligning constituencies, team building, human resource management, employee appointment and induction, financial management and staff appraisal;

- **Administrative management:** Computer literacy, timetabling, activity planning, improved record keeping, effective resource management and the planning of duty rosters; and

- **Management of curriculum delivery:** Managing the classroom and quality assurance procedures (ETDP SETA, 2002 in Mathibe, 2007).

According to Mathibe (2007) from the preceding discussion of professional development programmes it is evident that professional development programmes for principals in South Africa can be characterised by the following:

- **Fragmentation:** There are too many agencies (both public and state) engaged in professional development and consequently the different agencies emphasise different points of interest;

- **Poor co-ordination and irrelevancy:** University, school management and leadership qualifications differ in depth, quality

and emphasis since there is no directive from the National Education Ministry on what service providers (universities) should offer in relation to what schools need. In other words, universities provide qualifications that are not necessarily responsive to school needs;

- Mathibe (2007) further notes that, the nature and scope of programmes for the professional development of principals suggest that there should be control over programmes that are provided to both practising and prospective principals as set out in the National Qualification Framework (NQF) (Mathibe 2007). For example, the programme for professional development should be relevant and outcomes-based

I will now discuss the Department of Education's view of educational leadership and management for planning and bringing about management development.

2.5   Educational leadership and management

According to Van der Mecht (2008:14), the Department of Education section responsible for planning and bringing about management development has a particular view of educational leadership and management. It is a view that stresses participative, democratic management, collegiality, collaboration, schools as open systems and learning organisations, and, importantly, site-based management; in short, a view Willower and Forsyth (1999:2) have described as one of only three unifying elements in a vast and complex terrain (the other two being systematic research and professional/ academic networking) (Van der Mecht, 2008). The influential and often-cited Task Team Report on Education Management Development (DoE, 1996) is driven by the philosophy that consultation and participation lead to increased ownership and hence to increased effort and productivity (Van der Mecht,

2008). Significantly, the more recent Draft Policy Framework on Education Management and leadership development refers to the Report's arguments and endorses its philosophy (Van der Mecht, 2008). It also maps out a strategy to bring about appropriate development of school leaders and managers, a nettle this arm of the state has been keen to grasp. So, for example, the new Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) in School Leadership has come into being as a manifestation of the Task Team's intent (Van der Mecht, 2008). This programme is similarly infused with the philosophy outlined above and also, significantly, driven by experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984 in Van der Mecht, 2008) as discussed earlier (Van der Mecht, 2008:15).

According to Van der Mecht (2008:15), the Department of Education section responsible for assuring quality through prescriptive policies like Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and Whole-School Evaluation (WSE) (DoE, 2001 in Van der Mecht, 2008) clearly has a different view of the business of school management. Here the emphasis has shifted to performance management and it is difficult to see how the line function of ensuring that performance rubrics are properly completed can sit comfortably with participative and collegial management approaches (Van der Mecht, 2008). There is an obvious mismatch of interests here, which is to be expected considering their very different agendas (Van der Mecht, 2008). It nevertheless raises important questions about what counts as appropriate leadership and management where the balance of power lies and what counts as knowledge in and off the field (Van der Mecht, 2008:15).

According to Van der Mecht (2008), this tension has been extensively noted and explored in other countries. Gunter (2004:29 in Vane der Mecht, 2008), for example, laments how, in the UK, educational leadership has been replaced by performance leadership where knowing is increasingly about complying with central requirements to implement reform. Glatter (1999:254

in Van der Mecht, 2008) traces the growing power and influence of the central state in a climate of policy hysteria in the UK, and cites Fullan pointing to similar tensions in the USA (Van der Mecht, 2008). Similarly Bush (1999:243 in Van der Mecht, 2008) reports on the same concerns in Australia, citing Smyth's view that the supposed decentralisation of power is illusory and the reality is an intensification of central control. According to Van der Mecht (2008) we should not draw comfort from the fact that this may be a universal tension: we should rather be wondering why South Africa has not learned anything from many international consultations.

Van der Mecht (2008:15) posits that the advantage of this clash of interests is that the good intentions of management development initiatives – in all likelihood enjoying the support of academia – are likely to be frustrated by an emphasis on performativity and compliance, where the simple act of filling in forms correctly can appear to be evidence of quality. At the same time, though, it has to be said that there is a sense of unease surrounding the expectation that higher education institutions will deliver the ACE qualification referred to above because it comes as a complete package and also because academics loathe to think of themselves as trainers (Van der Mecht, 2008). It is the classic professional/academic tension (Van der Mecht, 2008:16).

I now discuss effective collaborative leadership as a fundamental feature for successful and sustained functioning of an organisation as well as an important requirement for dealing with change.

2.6   Effective collaborative leadership

According to Edwards and Smit (2008:109), schools are essentially concerned with people and the development of knowledge and skills. Schools are also tasked with being relevant in contemporary society, for the present and for the future (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Like any other societal institution, schools

require sound leadership that is appropriate for the business of teaching and learning (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Even though school leadership structures are historically hierarchical in nature, more modern trends suggest a move away from rigid command leadership approaches to leadership styles that are more participative and collaborative in nature (Edwards & Smit, 2008).

Edwards and Smit (2008:109) posits that, woven within the fabric of organisation structure and relevance is the premise that leadership exists in a form that requires further consideration and examination (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Against this backdrop of the changing context of leadership I would like to examine whether curriculum implementation is possible by using collaborative leadership (Edwards & Smit, 2008). I would like to argue that, while there are certain desirable conditions required, it is indeed possible to use collaborative leadership to implement the curriculum successfully (Edwards and Smit, 2008).

According to Edwards and Smit (2008:109), effective collaborative leadership is frequently presented as a fundamental condition for successful and sustained functioning of an organisation as well as an important requirement for dealing with change. This holds true for commercial organisations, organs of the state and most certainly for schools (Edwards & Smit, 2008). One such an example, the National College for School Leadership in England, illustrates that British education authorities recognised the need for leadership as part of their school improvement programme (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Such leadership makes a difference and it can play a significant role in the success of a school (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Conversely poor leadership or lack of leadership skills can adversely affect the entire process of teaching and learning as well as the development of a positive school culture (Edwards and Smit, 2008). Fullan (2004 in Edwards and Smit, 2008) appropriately cautions that "only principals and school management teams who are equipped to handle a complex, rapidly

changing environment, can implement the reform that leads to sustainable improvement in student achievement".

According to Ewdards and Smit (2008:110), the conceptual framework for successful collaborative leadership suggests a shift in the understanding of best leadership practice in schools (Edwards & Smit, 2008). For the purpose of their study, Edwards and Smit (2008) focus on the following five broad themes of this changing perspective:

(i)   A school is similar to any other business or commercial endeavour

According to Edwards and Smit (2008:110), the first theme suggests that a school is similar to any other business or commercial endeavour and therefore similar models, approaches and leadership styles can be imported. Here practitioners and school leaders as well as school management teams place confidence in the premise that this practice will produce successful schools and high levels of learning and achievement (Edwards Smit, 2008). Southworth (2005 in Edwards and Smit, 2008) challenges this line of thinking and argues that school leadership is quite different from leadership in other organisations.

Edwards and Smit (2008) states that the distinguishing factor, is that school leaders have the responsibility to create and lead an environment that enhances and supports learning. Southworth (2005 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) argues that "it is precisely this focus on students' development which makes school leadership distinctive and different from other forms of leadership". Furthermore, effective school leadership is synonymous with leadership that effectively manages change (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Harris, Day, Hopkins, Hargreaves and Chapman (2005 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) note that "the current focus on leadership stems from the need to cope with discontinuous and accelerating change".

According to Edwards and Smit (2008), this is particularly relevant within the current South African educational context, which could be regarded as a society in which the virtues of democracy, transparency, openness, participation and consultation are held in high regard (Edwards and Smit, 2008). Principals who are able to manage change in their schools effectively can be characterised as being transformative rather than transactional, invitational rather than autocratic and empowering rather than controlling (Harris et al., 2005 in Edwards & Smit, 2008).

(ii)   The role of principals as curriculum leaders

According to Edwards and Smit (2008), the second theme that addresses best leadership practice in schools relates to the role of principals as curriculum leaders. Lambert (2002: 37 in Edwards and Smit, 2008) explains that the days of the principal as lone educational leader are over. She elaborates that the old model of formal one person leadership leaves substantial talents of teachers largely untapped. As such curriculum leadership should not lie solely with the principal but teachers should be directly involved and responsible for driving educational processes of curriculum implementation as well as curriculum development (Edwards & Smit, 2008). The responsibility of the principal is to provide a suitable and supportive pedagogic environment where curricula can be effectively and efficiently implemented (Edwards & Smit, 2008). A desirable characteristic that emerges from implementing such a situation, in which the principal considers himself as the curriculum leader, is when the role of curriculum leadership is distributed amongst teachers at different levels in the school (Edwards & Smit, 2008).

I support Manthey's (2004:13 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) assertion that "leadership that matters is leadership that is sustained, which requires that it is distributed to others" (Edwards and Smit, 2008). This proposes that leadership

is in fact most powerful when it is shared with others (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Day, Hall, Gammage and Coles (1993 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) refer fittingly to enabling leadership in discussing curriculum leadership. They comment that all teachers within a school community should be involved in curriculum development and implementing and not just those who have been assigned such tasks (Day, Hall, Gammage & Coles, 1993 in Edwards & Smit, 2008). Appropriately, the principle task of the curriculum leader is viewed as one of stimulating staff initiatives and encouraging creative thinking around curriculum matters (Edwards & Smit, 2008). This proposes that curriculum leaders enable teachers to participate actively in the process of curriculum implementation and development (Day et al., 1993 in Edwards & Smit, 2008).

(iii)   Sustainable leadership

According to Hargreaves (2005 in Edwards and Smit, 2008:111) the third theme relates to sustainable leadership, which implies a shift from the single charismatic leader, who although exerting immediate influence, is evanescent. Sustainable leadership lasts in that it secures success over time (Hargreaves, 2005 in Edwards & Smit, 2008). It is also patient in that it defers gratification instead of seeking instant result. A credible measure of sustainable leadership practice can only be established once the leader has left the organisation (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Appropriately Manthey (2004 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) explains that the success of leaders with regard to student learning cannot be measured by their impact on student learning at the end of their tenure, but rather by the number of quality leaders that remain at the school when they leave.

Edwards and Smit (2008) posit that, in the act of developing sustainable leadership the principal is required to execute roles in a balanced and thoughtful manner. The principal's role includes assuming the role of

instructional leader as well as empowering teachers to be and become collaborative leaders themselves (Edwards & Smit, 2008). By adopting a collaborative leadership style the principal is still regarded as the instructional leader with an added dimension (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Instructional leadership is distributed and disseminated to teachers who are empowered to be instructional leaders in their own right (Edwards and Smit, 2008). The task of the instructional leadership and curriculum implementation is therefore a shared one, and one that can develop sustainability in instructional leadership (Edwards & Smit, 2008).

(iv)   The absence of the school principal

According to Edwards and Smit (2008:112), the fourth theme relates to the absence of the school principal in a variety of scenarios. The first scenario is where there is no principal at all. In a report compiled by O'Brien, Murphy and Draper (2003:46 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) it became evident that in approximately one third of cases studied the situation of permanent absent leadership arose from retirement, resignation and a much smaller third from promotion. The second scenario presents a situation where there is an incumbent principal in the position, but his/her leadership style is so far removed from the daily processes of the school that, to all intents and purposes, he/she may be regarded as absent (Edwards & Smit, 2008). The third scenario is similar to the second; the principal is so far removed in interest and leadership in matters of teaching and learning that he/she may be regarded as absent with regard to curriculum implementation (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Absent leadership therefore suggests that there is no leadership at all (Edwards & Smit, 2008). It also suggests that in spite of a leader being present there is still no real evidence of leadership (Edwards & Smit, 2008). The absence of a leader does not necessarily imply that there is no leadership

at all in the school (Edwards & Smit, 2008). Leadership may be present at different levels of the school (Edwards & Smit, 2008).

(v)   Leadership style and collaborative leadership

According to Edwards and Smit (2008:112), the fifth and last theme addresses leadership style and collaborative leadership. Edwards and Smit (2008) distinguish between leadership style and leadership approach. While commonalities certainly exist, they suggest that a leadership approach differs from leadership style in that it seeks to create an environment in which teaching and learning can occur most effectively (Edwards & Smit, 2008). The two concepts are not mutually exclusive; leadership style gives rise to the creation of an environment that is conducive to successful curriculum implementation, whereas leadership approach creates a climate that ideally should be a collaborative culture that facilitates successful curriculum implementation and school improvement (Edwards & Smit, 2008).

Edwards and Smit (2008) further contend that, bearing in mind that curriculum implementation is essentially associated with educational change, the value of the creation of a school climate and culture that is conducive to successful implementation of curriculum and the ability to deal with change cannot be over-emphasised. Collaborative cultures are characterised by their ability to deal with change and their ability to overcome the failures and pitfalls associated with the process of change (Edwards & Smit, 2008). The approach towards change and the ability to cope with change is often attributed to the attitude and personality of the individual person (Edwards and Smit, 2008). These attitudes are often shaped by the approach to leadership and the creation of a school culture that facilitates and supports the process of change (Edwards & Smit, 2008).

To this end Edwards and Smit (2008) argue that collaborative leadership is a precondition for the creation of a collaborative culture. A central role that the collaborative leader plays is to create an environment where there is a shared vision (Edwards & Smit, 2008). This involves joint strategies and goes beyond the view of any individual or group of individuals (Edwards & Smit, 2008). A shared vision is a process that leads to the establishing of common ground (Crislip, 2002:109 in Edwards & Smit, 2008). This directs a group of people working together through the creation of a shared vision (Crislip, 2002 in Edwards & Smit, 2008). Vandal (2006:55 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) adds that school leaders must not regard teachers as troops to be deployed but rather as colleagues in the service of children. He maintains that the strongest vision for action is one that is shared. Important is that this shared vision extends further than a mere consideration for work that must be completed (Vandal 2006: 55 in Edwards & Smit, 2008). Shared vision must also include the type of working environment that is strived after (Vandal 2006:55 in Edwards and Smit, 2008). This, according to Crislip (2002 in Edwards and Smit, 2008), can be referred to as the work culture.

I will now discuss the concept *distributed leadership* by looking at its meaning as explained by several authors and also discuss the three characterisations of distributed leadership as articulated by Gunter (2005).

2.7   Leading through distribution

According to Muijs and Harris (2004 in Grant & Singh, 2009:290) traditionally research on education leadership has been premised on a singular view of leadership and upon individual impetus. The great man theory of leadership has long dominated the field of education leadership; the power to lead has been understood by the majority as positional, vested in one person, historically a male (Grant & Singh, 2009). This heroic leadership stereotype, Yukl (1999 in Grant & Singh, 2009) argues, assumes that effective

performance depends on the unidirectional influence of an individual leader with the skills to identify the correct way and convince others to take it.

However, for Yukl (1999 in Grant & Singh, 2009) the collective leadership of organisational members is much more important than the actions of any one individual leader. In South Africa, and especially during the apartheid era, this heroic leadership genre was the norm (Grant & Singh, 2009). Education leadership was equated with headship and understood in relation to formal position, status and authority (Grant, 2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009). School principals were often cast as the only leaders but, while they were accountable to the Department of Education (DoE) because of their formal position in schools, I want to argue that this did not necessarily make them good leaders and neither did it give them the monopoly in issues of leadership (Grant & Singh, 2009). The style of leadership adopted was often autocratic in nature and involved a process of delegation where tasks and directives were passed down a managerial structure by a principal to subordinates without consultation or negotiation (Grant & Singh, 2009).

Ndebele (2007:2 in Grant & Singh, 2009), however, reminds us that leadership is not only what we do when we have been put in some position of power to steer an organisation or some institution. In line with this thinking we work from the premise that leadership potential exists widely within an organisation and emerges from different individuals and groups of people at different times as they go about their work (Grant & Singh, 2009). Spillane (2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009) usefully refers to this as the "leader-plus perspective" where the work of all individuals who have a hand in the practice of leadership is acknowledged and valued. Included in this leader-plus perspective are the leadership contributions of teachers (Spillane 2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

Grant and Singh (2009:291) posit that, the concept of leadership is a contested term but, as Harris and Lambert (2003 in Grant & Singh, 2009) emphasise, the definitions seem to have one point in common, which is 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 are needed (Harris and Lambert 2003:44 in Grant & Singh, 2009). They explain further that teacher leadership has at its core a focus on improving learning and is a model of leadership premised on the principles of professional collaboration, development and growth (Harris & Lambert, 2003:43 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

Distributive leadership theory is currently in vogue (Harris, 2004:13 in Grant & Singh, 2009) in many parts of the world and has emerged as a popular alternative to orthodox ways of thinking about leadership. In the context of a now democratic South Africa distributed leadership is likely to grow in popularity and can be justified because of its representational power (Harris & Spillane, 2008 in Grant & Singh, 2009) and its leaning towards democratic ideals in schools. However, as Bennett, Harvey, Wise and Woods (2003 in Grant and Singh, 2009) concede, there is little agreement about the meaning of the term *distributed leadership*. This lack of clarity on the term presents a real danger that distributed leadership will be used as a catch all term to describe any form of devolved, shared or dispersed leadership practice (Harris & Spillane, 2008:32 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

In defining the term, Grant and Singh (2009:291) align themselves with Bennett et al. (2003 in Grant and Singh, 2009) who suggest that distributed leadership is a way of thinking about leadership that they describe as fluid, where leadership is not something done by an individual to others (Bennett et al. 2003 in Grant & Singh, 2009) in comparison to traditional notions of leadership that distinguish the leader from the follower. From this perspective

distributed leadership should be viewed as a practice, a shared activity in which all educators, i.e. SMT members and teachers, can participate in such a manner that the leadership practice is constructed in the interaction between leaders, followers and their situations (Spillane, 2006:26 in Grant & Singh, 2009). Focusing on the dynamic interactions between multiple leaders and followers (Timperley, 2005:396 in Grant & Singh, 2009) as well as on artefacts and how they are used (Timperley, 2005:414 in Grant & Singh, 2009) a distributed perspective offers a way of getting "under the skin" of leadership practice, of seeing leadership practice differently and illuminating the possibilities for organisational transformation (Harris & Spillane, 2008:33 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

Defining *distributed leadership* in this way means that it is not a blueprint for exercising school leadership more effectively (Spillane, 2006: 9 in Grant & Singh, 2009). It is in and of itself neither good nor bad. Instead, it offers a way to investigate how leadership practice is stretched over two or more leaders and to examine how followers and the situation mutually constitute this practice (Spillane, 2006:15 in Grant & Singh, 2009). However, while distributed leadership has representational power, its lack of conceptual clarity does not allow for a clear operationalisation of the concept in empirical research (Hartley, 2007:202 in Grant & Singh, 2009). Notwithstanding this view research evidence from empirical studies is beginning to emerge that suggests that distributed leadership impacts positively on organisational outcomes and pupil/student learning (Harris, 2004; Timberley, 2005; Spillane, 2006; Muijs & Harris, 2007 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

In the next segment I discuss the Task Team's (1996) work on educational leadership development and in more detail the three approaches to education management used in South Africa then.

2.8 Reconceptualising education management development

The Task Team's (1996) work on educational leadership development revealed that there were three approaches to education management at work in South Africa then.

Approach 1:

According to the Task Team (DoE, 1996), this approach characterised public administration in South Africa for 30 years prior to the task team's report. It focused on technical administrative functions such as planning, organising, guiding and controlling (DoE, 1996). Officials were seen as implementers of policy formulated by elected politicians. This approach dominated the public service during the apartheid years and influenced current thinking on education management (DoE, 1996). It was the guiding principle behind the restructuring of many provincial education departments and was characterised by a concern with order and control (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) posits that, in their attempts to deal with the chaos of transition many managers in the education system as a whole (including those at school level) focused strongly on issues such as professionalism, the development of regulatory frameworks and the clarification of roles and functions (DoE, 1996). This way of thinking focused on administrative processes and generated an approach to management development that emphasised structure (DoE, 1996). It was largely concerned with defining job descriptions, powers, functions and management relationships (DoE, 1996).

Approach 2:

According to the Task Team (DoE, 1996), the second approach attempted to reduce the emphasis on administrative processes (DoE, 1996). It emphasised the management and leadership functions of managers in the education system

as a whole, including those at school level (DoE, 1996). It was concerned with people development and with the establishment of management systems which support education delivery (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) contend that, the notion of a management team that led and facilitated change was central to this approach. It depended on management practices that emphasised the devolution of power, mission building, human resource development and school effectiveness (DoE, 1996). Management development that supported this approach highlighted quality assurance and performance (DoE, 1996). It developed leadership and technical management skills to ensure effective and efficient delivery within education institutions as well as government departments (DoE, 1996).

Approach 3:

According to the Task Team (DoE, 1996), the third approach was concerned with governance and with the relationship between policy, decision-making processes and implementation (DoE, 1996). It dissolved the divide between policies and administration that characterised the first approach above (DoE, 1996). This approach featured strongly in the new education policy framework. It implied an emphasis on relationship building, stakeholder participation, the management of diversity and development (DoE, 1996). In this approach management development focused on the skills required to build and support the relationships needed to reconstruct a ruptured education system (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) contends that, if South Africa was to break decisively with its past and implement its vision for our education system, which has the improvement of teaching and learning at its heart, it was necessary to draw on aspects of all three approaches (DoE, 1996):

- Firstly, to develop structures and systems appropriate to developing decision-making within the context of new policy legislation.
- Secondly, to develop the leadership skills needed to manage people, lead change and support the process of transformation.
- Thirdly, to develop individual and team competencies – understanding, knowledge, skills and attitudes – appropriate to the day-to-day management of education.

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) further contends that, education management development as a key to decentralisation and trans-formation required a broad and more inclusive understanding, and the Task Team (DoE, 1996) argued that it had to embrace three important spheres of activity:

- The ethos and practice of management: Articulating and putting into practice the principles of good management practice in South Africa.
- Organisational development: Developing and sustaining effective structures, systems and procedures for improved management.
- People development: Empowering managers by building their professional competencies and providing on-the-job support to them.

These spheres of activity were interrelated and that is why the Task Team (DoE, 1996) advocated an approach to education management development which was both participatory and holistic. For example, if teachers were not being paid, it would be very difficult for principals to manage their schools effectively. Similarly, low morale at district level reflected a disorganised structure and poor allocation of resources. Each element was fundamentally linked to the other (DoE, 1996).

According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996) in practical terms education management development was seen as an ongoing process in which people

learn and organisations adapt and adjust, within the context of commonly-held values and standards of performance (DoE, 1996). As an integral part of the education system it was a process that sought to harmonise the current and future goals, both of the education system and of individuals in the education community (DoE, 1996).

According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996), the vast complexities of our education transformation, the scale of our need and the great diversity of training providers required that we harness all our development capacity in practical networks and nodes of cooperation. Government needed partners – in the non-governmental and private sectors, in training institutes, colleges and universities – if management development was to reach every classroom, every teacher and every student (DoE, 1996).

In the next segment I will discuss a collegial approach to understanding leadership and I do this by looking at leadership and collegiality in a very broad sense.

2.9 A collegial approach to understanding leadership

According to Singh Manser and Mestry (2007:549), research conducted thus far is strongly supportive of collegiality as a key component in transforming traditional management practices in our schools. Dantley (2005:34 in Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007) points out that much of the thinking in the field of educational leadership has been shaped by the ideas of what is generally referred to as scientific management and Frederick W. Taylor is considered to be the father of this influential management theory. Scientific management explores the quickest methods to accomplish a task, with the lowest number of body motions necessary to do the job efficiently (Singh et al., 2007). The role of the manager, then, is to discover the most time and cost-efficient way to accomplish tasks and training is usually provided so that employees can

reproduce the process, the results of which can always be predicted and quantified (Singh et a., 2007).

The traditional emphasis on bureaucracy is challenged by a normative preference for collegiality in many parts of the world, including South Africa (Kouzes & Posner, 1997; Manz & Sims, 2001; Singh, 2005; Bush, 2003:70 in Singh et al., 2007). Traditional management implies that the ideal organisation is orderly and stable, that the organisational process can and should be engineered so that things run like clockwork (Kouzes & Posner, 1997:15 in Singh et al., 2007).

According to Sergiovanni (1991 in Singh et al., 2007) collegiality, is a collaborative process that entails the devolution of power to teachers and other stakeholders for them to become an integral part of the leadership processes of the school that are guided by that school's shared vision. Collegiality is therefore considered a process of assimilation that involves encouraging personal visions to become part of a shared vision built on synergy (Singh & Manser, 2002:57 in Sing et al., 2007). This process is possible because collegial strategies tend to be more lateral or horizontal rather than being vertical and hierarchical, reflecting the view that all stakeholders should be involved in decision-making and own the outcome of discussions (Bush, 2003:70 in Singh et al.,2007). As pointed out by Kouzes and Posner (1997:12 in Singh et al., 2007) leaders know that one does not do one's best when feeling weak, incompetent or alienated; leaders know that those who are expected to produce the results must feel a sense of ownership.

According to Kouzes and Posner (1997:30 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007) leadership is the art of mobilising others to want to struggle for shared aspirations. Kouzes and Posner (1997:31 in Singh et al., 2007) state that people in positions of authority can get other people to do something because

of the power they wield, but leaders mobilise others to want to act because of the credibility they have. Collegial leadership therefore focuses on the stakeholders' capacity to play a participatory role in the leadership of the school (Lofthouse, 1994; Senge, 1990; Singh & Manser, 2002 in Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007). Under these circumstances collegial leadership should be viewed as a process that encourages and accommodates shared decision-making and shared leadership in the spirit of enabling people to want to act (Singh et al., 2007).

Kouzes and Posner (2001: 85 in Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007) point out that leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. They (Kouzes & Posner 2001: 85 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007) state that at the heart of this relationship is trust. Without trust one simply cannot lead. Exemplary (collegial) leaders devote much of their time and effort to building sound relationships based on mutual respect and caring (Kouzes and Posner 2001: 85 in Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007). Kouzes and Posner (2001:85 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007) further point out that long before empowerment was written into popular vocabulary, leaders understood that only when their constituents feel strong, capable and efficacious, and when they feel connected with one another, could they ever hope to get extraordinary things done.

For collegiality to be effective the process of shared leadership needs to prevail (Singh, 2005 in Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007). Bush (1993:33 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007) identified three main advantages of collegiality that have their roots in the development of shared leadership:

- Teachers participate fully in the management and leadership of the school;

- The quality of decision-making is improved when the teaching staff participates in this process and takes the lead in finding solutions to problems; and

- The contribution of the teaching staff is important because they take the responsibility of implementing changes in policy (Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007).

The essence of shared leadership (Kouzes & Posner 1997:16 in Singh ,Manser and Mestry, 2007) is not the private reserve of a few charismatic men and woman. It is a process ordinary people use when they are bringing forth the best from themselves and others. Liberate the leader in everyone, and extraordinary things happen (Kouzes & Posner 1997:16 in Singh ,Manser and Mestry, 2007). Traditional management teachings suggest that the job of management is primarily one of control: the control of resources, including time, material and people. Leaders do not command and control; they serve and support (Kouzes & Posner 1997:16 in Singh ,Manser & Mestry, 2007). .

Singh et al. (2007:550) posits that, a collegial leader can be classified as an emancipator seeing that he contributes extensively to the creation of an environment for emancipation. The emancipation of teachers as decision-makers and leaders refers to the creation of a climate in a school that encourages teachers to participate in the development change process in governing their school (Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007). Emancipation in a collegial climate means that teachers, who demonstrate power through expertise, are afforded the same opportunities and leadership rights as those placed in positions of hierarchical power (Singh, 2005 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007). They need to feel comfortable in their capacity as decision-makers and be unafraid to take decisions based on professional work ethics and collegial principles (Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007). Emancipation does

not mean that teachers are given unconditional freedom, but rather it includes the assumption of responsibility and accountability and commitment to the school's shared and chosen direction.

According to Singh and Manser (2002:58 in Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007) and Singh (2005:12 in Singh et al., 2007) there are six underlying principles or foundations that determine whether or not a collegial environment exists in a school; these foundations are accountability, shared core values, shared vision, shared decision-making, shared leadership and empowerment. Accountability is shared and educators are happy to be held accountable for leadership roles that they have chosen (Singh 2005:12 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007). There is shared empowerment and shared leadership, which indicate that educators have been given the opportunity to take on leadership roles and are accountable for decisions that they make without the interference of those in more powerful hierarchical positions (Singh 2005:12 in Singh et al., 2007).

Singh et al. (2007) posit that, a non-existent collegial environment suggests two scenarios that can be described as being opposite to a functional collegial environment (Singh et al. 2007). The first one depicts a leadership structure in the school that is largely autocratic (Singh et al., 2007). Accountability is not shared, leadership is regarded as a position of pre-ordained hierarchical power and the principal by choice holds himself accountable for all that happens in the school (Singh et al., 2007). The principal determines the core values and the school's vision and educators are told to abide by them (Singh et al., 2007). An executive committee headed by the principal makes decisions and educators are informed of them when and if it is deemed necessary (Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007). The focus is on getting the job done in the most efficient way possible, regardless of personal sacrifices that will need to be made (Singh et al., 2007). It is a cold, impersonal well-oiled machine (Singh et al., 2007).

According to Singh et al. (2007), the second scenario depicts a sense of disarray and chaos in a school (Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007). There is a very poor or non-existent work ethic (Singh Manser and Mestry, 2007). Educators are unsure of where the school is going and have lost faith in the principal's ability to lead (Singh et al., 2007). There is a high rate of staff absenteeism, academic results are poor and the school is clearly rudderless (Singh et al., 2007). There are no core values in place, there is no vision for the school and empowerment amplifies feelings of desperation to get things done by the few committed educators that may be present (Singh et al., 2007). This brings me to a very important question, namely what is the challenge we face in terms of educational leadership and are we living up to this challenge? The next section discusses this question.

2.10   What is the challenge?

According to the Task Team (DoE, 1996), the key challenge to education management relates to the inappropriate nature of many of the existing management systems, processes and structures. New education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery (DoE, 1996). In addition very little systematic thinking has been done to conceptualise the education management development strategies relevant to the South African experience (DoE, 1996). A key priority is the development of a shared understanding about education management development strategies through which to address these needs and priorities (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) contends that, the picture that emerges is one of disjunction between vision and actual change, both because of the immensity of the challenge for fundamental transformation and because of the enduring influence of past management structures and relations that do not support the desired change (DoE, 1996). In short, the situation is one in which,

notwithstanding the will to change, existing structures and relationships are inappropriate to the achievement of the purpose of education transformation (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) further contend that, at the heart of the policy and legislative initiative of the South African education system is a process of decentralising decision-making about the allocation of resources to school level, and a significant process of democratisation in the ways in which schools are governed and managed (DoE, 1996). These processes are closely related to a trend towards institutional autonomy that is occurring in other parts of the world. In these countries the move to school self-management is based on the understanding that decisions should be made by those who best understand the needs of learners and the local community (DoE, 1996). Studies have shown that self-management can lead to greatly improved school effectiveness (DoE, 1996).

However, the move towards self-management in itself offers no guarantee of positive change (DoE, 1996). Real transformation depends upon the nature and quality of internal management. Self-management must be accompanied by an internal devolution of power within the school and in transformational leadership (DoE, 1996).

According to the Task Team (DoE, 1996), the approach to education management that the Task Team proposes is an integrative and collaborative one: collaborative in that it involves all staff and stakeholders, and integrative in so far as it informs all management processes and outcomes in an organisational setting. Decisions related to concerns such as student learning, resource management, staff management and development derive from premises founded on common, agreed principles (DoE, 1996). In this approach management is shifted from an expedient response towards a value-

driven approach, founded upon consent and consensus (DoE, 1996). It links goal setting, policy making, planning, budgeting and evaluation at all levels of the school (DoE, 1996).

The approach the Task Team (DoE, 1996) proposes emphasises that everything is driven by the values and missions of the school and that these are developed and owned by more than just the principal or some outside authority (DoE, 1996). A true culture of teaching and learning as well as a supportive management culture can only thrive in a school where the major stakeholders feel ownership of the school's mission and ethos (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) contends that, it is insufficient merely to adopt a formal mission statement. The mission statement is only useful to the extent that it provides a visible symbol of what the teachers, parents and students in the school really believe in (DoE, 1996). The values that underpin the mission of the school shape the notion of quality for the school, but do not in themselves achieve this quality (DoE, 1996). Only by actively involving all members of the school community in the realisation of the mission can one hope to generate the kind of commitment necessary to foster continuous school improvement (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) believes that the primary focus for any new approach to management must be the school and its community. In our country schools are the building blocks for the transformation of the education system. It is in schools that the culture of teaching and learning must be recreated and the foundational lessons of democracy learned (DoE, 1996).

The Task Team (DoE, 1996) further believes that, the South African Schools Act (1996) placed schools firmly on the road to a school-based system of education management: schools will increasingly come to manage themselves.

This implies a profound change in the culture and practice of schools. The extent to which schools are able to make the necessary changes depends largely on the nature and quality of their internal management (DoE, 1996). The Task Team (DoE, 1996) states that to achieve self-management schools will need assistance and continuing support. This has to come from a range of quarters but primarily from all the other levels of the education system (DoE, 1996). The clear implication is that staff in all parts of the education system has to become responsible for providing the assistance and support required by schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning (DoE, 1996). Departmental staff members may themselves require assistance to reinterpret their roles and functions in the light of these new developments (DoE, 1996).

In improving the quality of teaching and learning education management must be more supportive than directive of the change process (DoE, 1996) This means reconceptualising the management of schools and also the ways in which other bodies in the overall education system relate to schools. Taken together this means a whole new way of thinking (DoE, 1996).

According to the Task Team (DoE, 1996), when approaches to the management of education are essentially authoritarian, non-consultative and non-participatory, as has been and still is the case in our country, management development tends to focus predominantly on enhancing the skills and competence of key individuals in the management hierarchy, so that they may carry out their line functions efficiently (DoE, 1996). However, under conditions of decentralisation and a significant shift towards school-based management, it is inadequate simply to focus on individuals (DoE, 1996).

According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996), the implication of decentralised management in the education system suggests a broader and more inclusive

understanding of education management development. South Africa's strategy for education management development must embrace the following:

- The development of managers: the education, training and long-term support of managers;
- The development of management: articulating and operationalising the principles of good management practice in South Africa; and
- The development of organisations: developing and sustaining effective structures, systems and procedures for improved management (DoE, 1996).

According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996), these elements of education management development are interrelated and this is implied strongly in The Task Team's (DoE, 1996) advocacy of a participatory and holistic approach to the management of schools. The approach needs to become part of people's understanding of what it is to manage schools. There will thus be a need to interpret and integrate the approach into current understanding and practices (DoE, 1996).

2.11 The findings from the literature review in this chapter

Firstly, the main findings from the review of literature in this chapter reveal that there is a growing realisation (Bush 2008; 2010 in Bush et al., 2011) that in the 21st century, headship is a specialist occupation that requires specific preparation (Bush 2008; 2010 in Bush et al., 2011). Bush (2008; 2010 in Bush et al., 2011) notes the following reasons for this paradigm shift:

- **The expansion of the role of school principal**. In decentralised systems, the scope of leadership has increased.
- **The increasing complexity of school contexts**. Principals have to engage with their communities to lead and manage effectively;

- **Recognition that preparation is a moral obligation**. It is unfair to appoint new principals without effective induction; and

- **Recognition that effective preparation and development make a difference**. Principals are better leaders following specific training.

Secondly, according to Hellgriel et al. (2006: 286-287 in Singh and Mestry, 2007), leadership involves influencing others to act towards the attainment of a goal and this is based on interpersonal relationships, not on administrative activities and directives. Successful leadership depends on the leader establishing trust, clarifying the direction in which people should be headed, communicating so that people feel confident to make the right decision and encouraging others to take risks (Hellgriel et al. 2006: 286-287 in Singh & Mestry, 2007). Collegiality should be lauded as a democratic value in education that contributes to the enfranchisement and emotional wellbeing of all its stakeholders (Hellgriel et al 2006: 286-287 in Singh & Mestry, 2007).

Thirdly, according to Edwards and Smit (2008), effective collaborative leadership is frequently presented as a fundamental condition for successful and sustained functioning of an organisation as well as an important requirement for dealing with change. Fullan (2004:16 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) appropriately cautions that only principals who are equipped to handle a complex, rapidly changing environment, can implement the reform that leads to sustainable improvement in student achievement. In the context of a now democratic South Africa collaborative leadership is likely to grow in popularity and this can be justified because of its representational power and its leaning towards ideals in schools (Harris et al. 2005 in Edwards & Smit, 2008).

Fourthly, according to The Task Team (DoE, 1996), when approaches to the management of education are essentially authoritarian, non-consultative and

non-participatory, as has and still is the case in our country, management development tends to focus predominantly on enhancing the skills and competence of key individuals in the management hierarchy, so that they may carry out their line functions efficiently (DoE, 1996). However, under conditions of decentralisation and a significant shift towards school-based management, it is inadequate simply to focus on individuals (DoE, 1996).

2.12 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented a comprehensive literature review of collaborative leadership from an educational leadership and educational leadership development perspective.

Firstly, the former Minister of Education, Mrs. Pandor (DoE, 2007) made a very profound comment when she noted the extreme inequality in learning achievements and criticised the hundreds of school principals and teachers throughout the country who appeared satisfied with mediocrity (DoE, 2007). The Task Team (DoE, 1996) set up by the South African government shortly after the first democratic elections in 1994 argued that addressing such attitudes needed new management strategies:

> *Improving the quality of learning … requires strategies which focus on change at the school and classroom level… Managers can no longer simply wait for instructions or decisions from government. The pace of change, and the need to be adaptable and responsive to local circumstances, requires that managers develop new skills and ways of working* (Department of Education, 1996:13-14).

Secondly, according to Bush and Jackson (2002), Bush and Oduro (2006), Evetts (1994), and Cardno and Fitzgerald (2005 in Grant and Singh, 2009) training in many countries is not a requirement for appointment as a principal

and there is still an assumption that good teachers can become effective managers and leaders without specific preparation for their leadership and management roles. Many of the serving principals lack basic leadership and management training prior to and after their entry into principalship:

In many instances ... headteachers come to headship without having been prepared for their new role ... As a result, they often have to rely on ... experience and common sense ... However, such are the demands being made upon managers now, including headteachers, that acquiring expertise can no longer be left to common sense and character alone; management development support is needed (Tsukudu & Taylor in Bush & Oduro, 2006 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

Thirdly, and in conclusion, local and international developments in school management are demanding a great deal of technical and intuitive skills and leadership from principals (Mestry & Singh, 2007). There is therefore an urgent need to provide principals with in-service education. Everard and Morris (1996: ix in Mestry & Singh, 2007) make a critical point when they state that development of principals must lead to greater understanding and competence (Mestry & Singh, 2007). Therefore, while it may be appropriate for a programme to include the acquisition of techniques or skills, or the learning of data, it must lead to a higher level of intellectual and creative performance (Mestry & Singh, 2007). The process of development is primarily concerned with helping principals to acquire and improve the competencies necessary to manage schools effectively (Mestry & Grobler, 2004 in Mestry & Singh, 2007).

The next chapter covers the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

The main objective of this study is to explore the collaborative leadership experiences of four primary schools in the Gauteng Province. To address and make sense of this phenomenon I used a qualitative case study design to help me to provide an in-depth understanding of the articulation of the school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership and its practice in primary schools. This approach was useful as it allowed participants to share their experiences in their own setting and in their own words. This sharing of personal experiences generated valuable insights for the participants as well as for the researcher (Creswell, 2008:46).

In this chapter I elaborate on the approach and the data collection tools I used during this proposed study. It is my contention that the school management team should perform instructional tasks jointly. This means that the school management team members must collaboratively define the mission and academic goals of the school, manage the instructional programme and create a supportive and stimulating school climate for effective teaching and learning. To help me explore how school management team members understand collaborative leadership, I used a case study design because it is appropriate as it recognises the capacity of human beings to construct and interpret their social world (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This design was the most appropriate to help me address the issues raised in the literature as well as during the data collection process.

3.2   Research design

According to Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al. 2007:70) "a research design is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumption to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be

used and the data analysis to be done". According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:31), the purpose of a research design is to provide, within an appropriate mode of inquiry, the most valid accurate answers possible to research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:31).

3.2.1   *Type of design*

According to Bromley (1990:302 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:75) case study research is a "systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events that aim to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest". I made use of a case study design because it assisted me in gaining a clearer understanding of how school management teams understand collaborative leadership. A case study is defined by the fact that it is a bounded system (Merriman, 1988) and that it does not necessarily mean that one site only is studied. The use of a case study design furthermore provided me with multiple sources of information and facilitated the process of exploring and describing how school management teams understand collaborative leadership (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

According to Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al., 2007), a key strength of the case study method is the use of multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process. The researcher determines in advance what evidence to gather and what analysis techniques to use with the data to answer the research question (Mark in Fouche, 2002 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:344), the case study design employed in this study was both exploratory and interpretive, and endeavoured to examine collaborative leadership practices in terms of the day-to-day activities of the participants (SMT members) in primary schools. Accordingly, the objective of this study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), is

to make sense of the school management team's daily collaborative practices and how they perceive what they do. In order to do so it was necessary for me to listen very carefully to school management team members while conducting face-to-face interviews in relation to the tasks reflected in the literature on effective collaborative leadership practices in educational establishments (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

While I acknowledge the limitations of a case study approach, due to its subjectivity and bias, I believe that it is also a very valuable instrument for contributing to theory, practice and social issues and actions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Moreover, the case study design is appropriate for such exploratory research as the current research. Exploratory studies examine issues or concerns in which there have been little or no prior research and are designed to stimulate further enquiry. The design gave me a systematic way of looking at the practices of the school management team members, collecting and analysing the relevant data and reporting the results. The approach also enabled me to gain a greater understanding of how school management teams understand collaborative leadership. In a face-to-face interactive style of inquiry the study enabled me to foster a relationship of trust and rapport with the participants and it helped me to gain access into their life worlds (Le Compte & Preissle, 1993).

3.2.2 *Epistemology*

According to Cohen et al. (2004), knowledge can be viewed in one of two ways; it can either be seen as hard, real and objective, a positivist stance, capable of being transmitted in tangible form – a view which might lead to adopting an observer role and using the methods of natural science to consider the use of quantitative methods, e.g. standardised tests. Alternatively an interpretive, anti-positivist stance may be adopted – a softer, more subjective spiritual or even transcendental kind, which might lead to a more subjective

participatory role, often rejecting the standard methods of natural science. Cohen further asserts that an interpretive paradigm is a view of social science, a lens through which one examines the practice of research (Cohen et al., 2004). In this study the latter approach is adopted.

According to Mouton (1996:28), the epistemology of qualitative research therefore acknowledges an interactive relationship between the researcher and the participants as well as between the participants and their own experiences and how they have constructed reality based on those experiences. These personal experiences, beliefs and value-laden narratives are biased and subjective, but qualitative research accepts them as true for those who have lived through the experience (Mouton, 1996). The stories, experiences and voices of the respondents are the mediums through which we explore and understand reality (Mouton, 1996:28).

3.2.3   *Research paradigm*

This study follows an interpretivist paradigm, which allowed me to interact closely with the participants to gain insight into and a clear understanding of how school management teams understand collaborative leadership (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:58).

According to Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al. (2007:60), the ultimate aim of interpretivist research is to offer a perspective on a situation and to analyse the situation under investigation to provide insight into the way in which a particular group of people make sense of their situation or the phenomena they encounter (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). One of the greatest strengths of the qualitative approach is the richness and depth of explorations and descriptions it yields. In effect this means that I, the researcher, become the instrument through which the data is collected and analysed (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). At the same time, however, most of the critique levelled

against the approach is that the interpretivist research paradigm is directed at the subjectivity and the failure of the approach to generalise its findings beyond the situation that is being studied (Maree et al., 2007:60).

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2005:23) interpretivist researchers begin with individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them (Cohen, et al., 2005:23). According to Henning (2004:37), knowledge is not only constructed by observing phenomena, but also by descriptions of the intentions of people as well as their beliefs, values, reasons meaning-making and self-understanding (Henning, 2004:37).

3.2.4 Research approach

This study followed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding where a researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of information, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell et al., 2007:46). The research questions are general and broad, and seek to understand participant's experiences with the central phenomenon, which in this case happens to be the school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

Qualitative research is a type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants; asks broad, general questions; collects data consisting largely of words (or texts) from participants; describes and analyses these words for themes; and the inquiry is conducted in an objective, unbiased manner (Creswell, 2008:46).

Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al. 2007:50) says that people often describe qualitative research as research that attempts to collect rich descriptive data in

respect of a particular phenomenon or context with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed or studied. Furthermore, qualitative research, according to Maree et al. (2007:51), is concerned with understanding the processes and the social and cultural context that underlies various behavioural patterns and is mostly concerned with exploring the "why" questions of research. It typically studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment and focusing on their meanings and interpretations (Maree et al., 2007:51).

3.2.5 *Research methodology*

3.2.5.1 **Research methods (Case Study)**

In this study I used a case study and semi-structured interviews. This type of design assisted the researcher in gaining a clearer understanding, acquiring knowledge regarding school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership.

According to Bromley (1990:302 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007), case study research is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events that aims at describing and explaining the phenomenon of interest. From an interpretivist perspective the typical characteristic of case studies is that they strive after a comprehensive, holistic understanding of how participants relate and interact with one another in a specific situation and how they make meaning of the phenomenon under study (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

A case study is an in-depth analysis of a single entity. It is a choice of what to investigate, identified as a single case (Stake, 2008 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al. 2007). Creswell (2008:476) refers to a case study as an in-depth exploration of a system, e.g. an activity, event, process or individuals based on extensive data collection (Creswell, 2008:476). A case can be an individual,

group, activity or event or it could be a process (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

3.2.5.2 Sampling

In this study I made use of purposeful sampling. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) describe purposeful sampling as the selection of elements in a population that is informative about the topic of interest. In other words, judgement is made about the type of sample and subjects to be selected, so as to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research. Similarly Maxwell (1996:70) portrays purposeful sampling as a strategy in which a particular setting, person or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained via other sources.

This study was conducted in four primary schools in the Gauteng North district of the Gauteng Department of Education, in Pretoria. The sample comprised four principals, four deputy principals and four heads of department from four different primary schools, one from Mamelodi – a black township east of Pretoria, two from Eersterust – a coloured township east of Pretoria, and one from Silverton – a white suburb east of Pretoria.

Table 3.1: Number of participants in each of the four schools

Category	Principal	Deputy Principals	HOD's	Total
School A	1	1	1	3
School B	1	1	1	3
School C	1	1	1	3
School D	1	1	1	3
Grand total of participants 12				

Cohen et al.'s (2009:114) opinion on purposive sampling is that when a choice is made of a sample through purposeful sampling, the researcher handpicks

participants in the sample on the basis of his or her judgement of the participants' typicality. In this study the sample schools were deliberately selected because of their proximity to my place of work (Cohen et al., 2009:114).

In qualitative data collection purposeful sampling is used so that individuals are selected because they have experienced the central phenomenon. Purposeful sampling has been selected for the researcher to be able to select a few participants according to a list of specific criteria (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). According to Black (1999 in Maree et al., 2007), purposeful sampling involves the researcher handpicking the participants based on exact characteristics in order to develop a sample that is large enough yet possesses the required traits.

3.2.5.3   Data collection procedures

McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 408) write that most interactive researchers employ several data collection techniques in a study but usually select one as the central method (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 408). They furthermore stipulate that these multi-method strategies permit triangulation of the data across inquiry techniques and the different strategies may yield different insights about the topic of interest and increase the credibility of the findings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:408). In the current study I used literature review, interviews, document analysis, observations and field notes as data collection procedures (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:408).

3.2.5.3.1   Literature review

An extensive review of literature was undertaken on educational leadership development and more specifically on collaborative leadership (shared leadership, distributed leadership, collegial leadership) to inform me of what has been researched on the topic. In order to conduct a sound and useful

literature review I used various sources to help me locate material that was relevant and up-to-date. In this respect I used books, dissertations journals, research reports, policy and legislative documents (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

3.2.5.3.2   Interviews

The primary data source consisted of personal interviews with the participants. These contained semi-structured, face-to-face open-ended questions. Denzin (1998) writes that the interview is a favourite methodological tool for qualitative research, while for Greef (in De Vos, 2002) qualitative interviews are

> *attempts to understand the world or phenomena from the participant's point of view, to unfold the meaning of the people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations* (Greef in De Vos, 2002 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

This approach was chosen so that I could present accurate descriptive data in the participants' own words. I used a video recorder to record the interviews (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). This information was later transcribed verbatim. I also took notes during the interview sessions. This was done to help ensure accuracy of the data collection process (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007)

Cohen and Manion (2009) point out that interviews are used to convert into data information directly obtained from a person by providing access to what is inside a person's head, what a person likes and dislikes and what a person thinks (Cohen & Manion, 2009). This study is framed in the qualitative paradigm and employed interviews as part of the data gathering instruments and I believe that this served as a good source for primary information gathering.

- **Types of interview**

Semi-structured interviews were suitable for this study. Open-ended questions enabled me to use prompts and probing questions to obtain deeper data from the participants, and to move designed questions to unplanned prompts that emerged during the interview process. These prompts required the participants to give examples and to further explain their views and opinions. This encouraged open communication and allowed participants the freedom to elaborate on their responses (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:87).

- **Types of question**

The open-ended type of question helped to elicit appropriate responses from the participants. With this type of question the participants were encouraged to talk about whatever was essential in terms of the topic under discussion. In other words, they were invited to tell their story of how they perceived and experienced collaborative leadership in their schools. Even though the structure and sequencing of these questions were predetermined, probes were used to dig deeper beneath the surface to obtain the required information from the participants (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:88).

- **Interview schedule**

According to McMillan & Schumacher (2010:357), to maximise the use of interviews, an interview schedule was designed to guide and put the interview process in focus. An interview schedule is a checklist to assure that all relevant topics are covered for each participant. I therefore made a list of the questions or issues that I needed to discuss and or explore in the course of the interview. This was done to avoid the loss of vital data in the process through forgetfulness. The schedule was also useful to ensure that the same basic

issues were pursued with each individual participant (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

3.2.5.3.3   Document analysis

According to Mc Millan and Schumacher (2010:361), documentary analysis is one of the methodological tools for testing information contained in texts (Mc Millan & Schumacher, 2010). This approach enabled me to analyse national and school policy documents. Consequently I examined the following documents: the school time table, the notice boards, the school vision and mission statements, minutes of meetings and the principals' circulars and memoranda to staff (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). This instrument was used as a data gathering instrument because it had the potential of revealing vital information that might not necessarily have been supplied by the participants during the interview process (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). This method, apart from being a data-gathering instrument, was very useful in the study's triangulation process (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). This means that this process of analysing documents was also used as a cross-check on the study's reliability. Documentary analysis as a data-gathering approach was utilised as a complementary technique for the data-gathering process (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

3.2.5.3.4   Observation

According to Bell (1993 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007), observation is one of the most common methods of qualitative research Bell (1993 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Bell (1993 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007) contends that it is not always the case that people do what they say. Consequently I decided on observation as an approach to data collection to be able to match theory and practice in relation

to the implementation of collaborative leadership in each of the sample schools (Bell 1993 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995:95 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007), observation is the systematic narrative of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for the study. They propose a checklist during observations, which include the physical setting (environment, context, behaviour), the participants (Who is in the scene? How many and what are their roles? What brings them together?). This schema was followed during the observation. Observation during the study was based on my perceptions of what I saw and heard about the phenomenon as I moved around the school environment. The purpose of the observation was to match the information received during the interview against what was being practised (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:95 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

3.2.5.3.5   Field notes

In the current study I made use of field notes during the interview process. These field notes included recording behavioural patterns of participants while they were being interviewed. According to Hittleman and Simon (2002:148), there is a need for highlighting the importance of taking field notes by the researcher during the periods of data gathering. I made field notes while observing the participants during the interviews. The notes included information pertaining to the descriptions of the behaviour of people, interpersonal relationships, places, activities and conversations as well as the feelings or impressions of the researcher (Ary et al., 2002: 431). According to Hittleman and Simon (2002:148), these notes supplement the information that was acquired during the interviews.

3.3   My role as researcher

My role as researcher was chosen in such a way that it empowered me to enter into a collaborative partnership with the respondents in order to collect and analyse data, with the main aim of creating understanding. This required that I as the researcher had to be a sensitive observer who recorded phenomena as faithfully as possible while at the same time raising additional questions, following hunches and moving deeper into the analysis of the phenomena (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Functionally this meant that I as the researcher had to perform the following:

- Assist with compiling the questionnaire;
- Administer the questionnaire;
- Prepare and structure interviews;
- Conduct the interviews;
- Analyse the data;
- Triangulate the data; and
- Report on the themes that emerged

3.4   Data analysis and interpretation

Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al., 2007:99) contends that literature on qualitative data analysis documents a range of approaches, processes and procedures whereby researchers extract some form of explanation, understanding or interpretation from the qualitative data collected of the people and situations that they are investigating. Qualitative data analysis is usually based on an interpretive philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. It tries to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to

approximate their construction of the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:99). This is best achieved through a process of inductive analysis, where the main purpose is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in the raw data, without the restraints imposed by a more structured theoretical orientation (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:99).

As Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al., 2007) puts it, qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative (non-linear) process, implying that the data collection, processing, analysis and reporting are intertwined and not merely a number of successive steps. When analysing the data my goal was to summarise what I had seen or heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that would aid me in understanding and interpreting that which is emerging. My aim was to interpret and make sense of what was in the data (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:100).

In this study I made use of content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises message content (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). It was a process of looking at the data from different angles with a view to identifying keys in the text that would help me to understand and interpret the raw data (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Content analysis is an inductive and iterative process where I looked for similarities and differences in the text that would corroborate or disconfirm my theory (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

In order to keep a clear mind and not become overwhelmed by the sheer amount of data I approached the data analysis in a highly organised manner (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Moving from a mass of words and heaps of paper to a final report required a method for organising and keeping track of the text. I kept the different data sets separate and marked each bit of data

clearly in terms of its identifying characteristic (when where, how and why it was collected) (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). I then used folders and files to gather together material dealing with the same batch of data (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). This facilitated easy retrieval, checking back and examination of the broader context in which that data occurred (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:101).

All the data collected by electronic or digital means (such as tape or video recordings) must be transcribed and this was done by me in order to include some non-verbal cues in the transcript (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Once I had sorted and typed the data I got to know it inside out. This simply meant that I read and reread it several times. Once I had typed and sorted the data I made a copy of it and saved it (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007: 104).

According to Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al. (2007), the next step in the data analysis was the coding of the data (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Coding is the process of reading carefully through the transcribed data and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. Only meaningful segments were coded (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007), Coding is therefore defined as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or unique identifying names (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). It simply meant that whenever I found a meaningful segment of text in the transcript, I assigned a code or label to signify that particular segment (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). The code labels acted as markers or pointers to rationalise what I thought was emerging from the data (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:105).

According to Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al., 2007), after the transcribed data had been coded I moved on to the next phase in the data analysis process where I organised or combined related codes into themes or categories (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). I assigned a label to each category (my

own descriptive phrases or words from the text) to establish a category. After I had established the categories I grouped the coded data into categories (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Once I had completed the categorisation, I verified to check if I had captured all the essential insights that emerged from the data through the coding and categorisation. The next step was to bring order and structure to the categories by looking carefully at the categories and identifying how each was linked or related to other categories (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007),. I looked for commonalities in meaning between categories or assumed relationships between different categories (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:109).

According to Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al. (2007), the next step was to interpret the data. This meant that the analysed data was brought into context with existing theory to reveal how it corroborated existing knowledge or brought new understanding to the body of knowledge (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). In interpreting the analysed data I searched for emerging patterns, associations, concepts and explanations from the data with the ultimate aim of drawing conclusions (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). Each conclusion was based on substantial findings from the data that had been reported in relation to what was already known so as to reveal possible new insights or corroboration of existing knowledge. All conclusions were based on verifiable data (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:111).

3.5   Trustworthiness (validity)

According to Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al., 2007:81) reliability and validity are crucial aspects in qualitative research (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:81). In qualitative research, the researcher is the data gathering instrument (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:81). Thus when qualitative researchers speak of validity and reliability they are usually referring to

research that is credible and trustworthy (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:81).

McMillan & Schumacher (2010) note that, validity in qualitative research refers to the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomenon and the realities of the world. Validity of qualitative designs is the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meaning between the participants and the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Thus the researcher and participants agree on the description or composition of events and especially on the meanings of these events (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

According to Lincoln and Guba (in Johnson & Turner, 2003 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007) the term *trustworthiness* refers to the way in which the inquirer is able to persuade the audience that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to and that the research is of high quality (Lincoln & Guba in Johnson & Turner, 2003). In this study I engaged in multiple methods of data collection (interviews, observations, document analysis and literature review) and this enhanced the trustworthiness of the study. There are as many and varied ways of addressing reliability and validity as there are different approaches to the research process, but triangulation is one of the most important (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

3.5.1   *Triangulation*

According to Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al., 2007: 67) triangulation plays an essential role in ensuring reliability and validity as it assists in corroborating data from the different data sources and ensures that the weaknesses of one method are compensated for by the strengths of another (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). For Stake (2000:443 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007), triangulation is generally considered a process of using multiple

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perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

Triangulation is critical in facilitating interpretative validity (Terre Blanche, 2004 in Maree et al., 2007) and in establishing data trustworthiness and requires the researcher to check the extent to which conclusions based on qualitative sources are supported by a qualitative perspective and vice versa. It reduces the risk of chance associations and systematic bias and relies on information collected from diverse range of individuals, teams and settings, using a variety of methods (Maxwell, 1996:93 as quoted by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:81).

3.5.2   Member checking

I as the researcher also checked my findings with the participants in the study to determine if my findings were accurate (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). I did this by member checking. Member checking is a process in which the researcher asks one or more participants in the study to check the accuracy of the accounts related by them (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

This checking involved taking the findings back to the participants and asking them about the accuracy of the report. In this regard I asked the participants to report on the following (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010):

- Whether the descriptions were complete and realistic;
- If the themes were accurate to be included; and
- If the interpretations were fair and representative.

3.5.3   Crystallisation

Nieuwenhuis (in Maree et al., 2007), assert that in most qualitative research studies the aim is to engage in research that probes for a deeper understanding

of a phenomenon and not to search for causal relationships. Rather than examining or measuring the observable features of a phenomenon, qualitative research sets out to penetrate the human understanding and constructions about it. Richardson (2000:934 as cited by Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007) proposes the concept of crystallisation that enabled me as the researcher to shift from seeing something (the findings) as a fixed, rigid, two-dimensional object towards the idea of a crystal, which allows for an infinite variety of shapes, substance, transmutations, dimensions and angles of approach. Crystallisation refers to the practice of validating results by using multiple methods of data collection and analysis. Crystallisation therefore provided me as the researcher with a complex and deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:81).

What I described as my findings were those which crystallised from the data. This crystallised reality was credible in so far as those reading the data will be able to see the same emerging patterns, and this added to the trustworthiness of my research (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007:81).

3.6   Ethical considerations

Writing about ethical issues in research, Mouton (2005:238) notes that the ethics of science concerns what is wrong and what is right in conducting research. He argues that because scientific research is a form of human conduct, it follows that such conduct has to conform to generally accepted norms and values. Similarly Denzin and Lincoln (2000) point out that because the objects of inquiry in research are human beings, extreme care must be taken to avoid any form of harm to them. They point out that traditional ethical concerns have often revolved around topics of informed consent, the right to privacy and also protection from harm. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:118) also mention that most novice researchers give only assurances of confidentiality and anonymity but seldom think about the issue of physical or

emotional harm. Strydom (2002:63 in Maree et al., 2007:298) draws on the work of Barbie and adds: "Anyone involved in research needs to be aware of the general agreements about what is proper and improper in scientific research".

As the researcher I ensured that participants were not exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). During the research I strove to be honest, respectful and sympathetic towards all participants. According to Burns (2000 in Creswell et al., 2007), both the researcher and participants must have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study. All the participants' information and responses shared during the study will be kept private and the results are presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the identities of the participants (Burns 2000 in Creswell et al., 2007).

In order to abide by the strict ethical obligations I implemented the following safeguards to protect the rights of the participants:

3.6.1   Voluntary participation

After obtaining permission from the Gauteng Department of Education I visited the participants at their schools. The purpose of my visit was to explain to the participants what the research was about and most importantly to also explain that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time if they so wished (Creswell et al., 2007:298).

3.6.2   Informed consent

After obtaining verbal consent, letters of consent in which the research process was described were presented to the participants. They were then asked to read the letters and ask questions to gain clarity if they so wished. They were then

requested to sign the consent form to show they were willing to participate in the study (Creswell et al., 2007:298).

3.6.3 Protection from harm

Participants were ensured that they would not be exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm. Honesty, respect and sympathy towards all the participants during the study were also ensured. There was no debriefing required after the interviews (Leedy & Omrod in Creswell et al., 2007:299).

3.6.4 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

All the participants' information and responses shared during the study were kept private and the results were presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect their identities (Burns in Creswell et al., 2007:299).

3.7 Limitations

Qualitative research is a form of inquiry in which researchers interpret what they see, hear and understand. The researchers' interpretation cannot be separated from their own background, history, context, and prior understandings. And this in my view can be viewed as a limitation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:357).

As with most case study research the major limitation of this study was its small size, which made it difficult for the findings to be generalised to a larger population because only four primary schools were used in this study. This study was conducted on a relatively small scale and over a very short period of time in a very limited context. Some scholars might argue that because of this fact the study might not be regarded as a case study but I beg to differ because similar studies have been done with even fewer schools as a sample. It is also important to keep in mind that this is a dissertation of limited scope (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 357).

Secondly, the use of interviews can also be regarded as a limitation. Some researchers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:357) have registered their disapproval of the use of interviews as a tool for information-gathering in research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:357). They point out that interviews have a greater potential for influencing the findings and assert that the researcher might receive false information as his/her presence may have an influence (positive or otherwise) on the responses of the participants. While interviews may be time-consuming (particularly during transcription), they also result in unnecessary information and require more efforts to sift such information (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:357). McMillan and Schumacher (2010:357) point out the potential for subjectivity and bias. Interviews have also been criticised for their lack of anonymity in data collection (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:357).

Another limitation of this study is the fact that I could not do observations of the practice of collaborative leadership in the sample schools as planned, because of practical reasons. For me to do observations of the practice of collaborative leadership would have required that I could sit-in in school management team meetings. This was not possible because all the meetings were held during school hours. Another limitation of this study is the fact that the sample did not include post level one educators and as a result no post level 1 educators were interviewed. I regard this as a limitation because post level 1 educators are not part of the school management team and therefore their views and perceptions of the school management team would have been very enlightening.

3.8 Reporting the results

The results of this study are reported in the form of a narrative research report (Creswell, 2010:272). According to Creswell (2010:272), a research report is a completed study that reports an investigation or exploration of a problem

identifies questions to be addressed and includes data collected, analysed and interpreted by the researcher (Creswell, 2010: 272). It is composed for audiences, varies in length and format, and differs for quantitative and qualitative research (Creswell, 2010: 272).

When writing the research report I followed the following guidelines as suggested by Creswell (2010:283):

- I made sure that I wrote in a sensitive and scholarly way so as not to offend any of the respondents;
- I made sure that I used non-discriminatory language so as not to discriminate against any one of the respondents;
- I made sure that I used appropriate research terms;
- I made sure that I employed a point a view that was consistent with qualitative research approaches because this study is of a qualitative nature;
- I made sure that I interconnected parts of the study by explaining which part was to follow; and
- Last but not least, I made sure that "my voice" was heard in the report.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter describes the research design and methodology I employed to explore school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership in four primary schools in Pretoria, Gauteng Province. The analysis in this chapter shows that the qualitative case study approach adopted to investigate the topic was appropriate and it allowed the participants the freedom to share their experiences in their own words. This approach was useful, firstly because it allowed participants to share their experiences in their own setting and in their own words; this sharing of personal experiences generated valuable

insights for the participants as well as for the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Secondly, this approach was useful because, according to Creswell (2007), case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a system (i.e. a setting, a context) (Creswell, 2007). Thirdly, case study research is a qualitative approach in which I explored a case through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g. observations, interviews, document analysis, literature reviews) and I reported on the case description and case-based themes that emerged (Creswell, 2007). Lastly, the data analysis in case study research was an inductive process where I identified patterns, categories and themes from the bottom-up. This inductive process required that I, as the researcher, worked back and forth between the themes until I had established a comprehensive set of themes (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007).

Chapter 4 deals with the data analysis and interpretation of collaborative leadership.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   Introduction

This chapter explores the contextual concerns of the schools under investigation. The study set out to explore collaborative leadership practices of school management teams in four primary schools in Gauteng. The issue of context is crucial to research, so it is necessary to reflect on the contexts of these schools and the significance they have on their operation and productivity. Leadership structures within the four schools were examined to highlight how they enhance or impede the delivery of the curriculum (Creswell, 2010:218)

The way of leading, behaving and acting are all shaped by the social context of the particular school or its immediate environment. Accordingly, a brief background analysis of the four schools is presented below (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:213). This brief analysis relates to the type of school, its legacy and location and the number of pupils as well as teachers, and the management structure (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For ethical reasons these four schools are simply named school A, B C and D. Participants have been identified only by their official designation: Principal, deputy-principal and head of department for the senior phase (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:213).

4.2   Contextual background

4.2.1   Contextual background of schools A and B

Schools A and B are public primary schools situated in a "Coloured" township in Pretoria. Originally the schools catered for children living in the immediate area, but as the years passed the schools opened their doors to children from the black townships in the surrounding area. Currently the schools serve five other neighbouring communities, giving quality education to previously

disadvantaged children. This shows that most of the learners are not resident in the immediate school environment, but commute from the surrounding townships.

The learners in these public school hail from both working and middle class families. The schools offer subsidies to some by means of fee-exemption and by providing a feeding scheme to learners who are unable to afford such costs. Approximately twelve percent (12%) of the learners receive partial fee-exemption, while approximately six percent (6%) receive full exemption. The schools have an average poverty index (Quintile 3), and the parents are fully involved in and committed to the activities of the school.

These schools' literacy rates range from moderate to average, with varying contributory factors, one of which is that most of the learners live with their grandparents who are uneducated. The schools have well-defined and visible vision and mission statements, displayed in various parts of the school. The vision statements highlight open access to the schools, addressing the needs of all learners, giving equal opportunities to all learners and provide proof of being accountable to all stakeholders.

The schools' stated aims are to provide the best possible education for all learners, according to their needs and abilities, regardless of their race, religion, language or gender. Their mission statements express the need to develop the skills, attitudes and values of the learners, conducive to their personal, academic and social development. The aims are to develop in their learners' self-discipline, respect for others, critical thinking and resourcefulness. The school communities attempt to do so by establishing a supportive and stimulating environment for the staff, with the aim of fostering their personal and professional development.

There are altogether 1 150 learners in school A with 29 teachers. Of the 1 150 learners 498 are boys and 652 are girls. Of the total learner population 90% are Black, 8% Coloured and 2% Indian. The principal of this school is a Coloured male in charge of 29 other teachers. Of the 29 teachers in the school, six are male and 23 are female. The racial composition of the teachers is 27 Coloured, one Black and 1 White. All the teachers in this school are employed by the state. This school has a high teacher-learner ratio of 1:40.

There are altogether 1 108 learners in school B with 28 teachers. Of the 1 108 learners, 460 are boys and 648 are girls. Of the total learner population 90% are Black, 8% Coloured and 2% Indian. The principal in this school is a Coloured male in charge of 28 other teachers. Of the 28 teachers in the school, six are male and 22 are female. The racial composition of the teachers is 26 Coloured, one Black and two White. All the teachers in this school are employed by the state. This school has a high teacher-learner ratio of 1:40.

4.2.2 *Contextual background of school C*

School C is also a public primary school located in a white suburb in Pretoria. The school was built to cater for the growing number of children in the area, having opened in 1910 with only 36 pupils and 4 teachers. It was founded in 1910.

Its long history has helped to create a stable school environment, strengthened by the fact that most of the parents of the current learner population are themselves ex-former pupils. The strong bond of family among the teachers in this school has become a trade-mark of this school and it has become known for its sense of camaraderie.

With few exceptions the school is given active support by its parent body, according to the principal. Funds raised over the years have enabled the school

to acquire almost everything an educational institution could desire. Apart from the school buildings, the parents contributed to the building and equipping of a well-equipped computer centre and arts, music and science laboratories.

The school has a current learner population of 1 717. This number includes 842 boys and 875 girls. Of this total only 40% are exempted from paying school fees. Of the 40% learners that are exempted from paying school fees, 30% have received partial exemption, while 10% have received full exemption.

There are 63 teachers in the school of whom 59 are female and four are male. The principal is male, with 62 other teachers. Their racial composition is 52 White, eight Black, two Coloured and one Indian teacher. The school has a small class size and low teacher-pupil ratio of 1:30.

4.2.3   *Contextual background of school D*

School D is a public primary school situated in a "Black" township in Pretoria. The school caters for children living in the black townships. Currently, the school is giving quality education to previously disadvantaged children in the township. Most of the learners, if not all, are resident in the immediate school vicinity.

The learners in this public school, just like in school A and B, hail from both working and middle class families. The school offers subsidies to some by means of fee-exemption and by providing a feeding scheme to learners who are unable to afford such costs. In this school approximately forty eight percent (48%) of the learners receive partial fee-exemption, while thirty two percent (32%) receive full exemption. The school has an average poverty index (Quintile 3) but the exemptions given to parents are still resourced as

parents are fully involved in and committed to the activities of the school and are very generous in their care of these.

The school's literacy rate ranges from moderate to average, with varying contributory factors, one of which is that most of the learners live with their grandparents, who are uneducated. The school has a well-defined and visible vision and mission statement, displayed in various parts of the school. Like in schools A and B the vision statement highlights open access to the school, addressing the needs of all learners, giving equal opportunity to all learners and being accountable to all stakeholders. The school's stated aims are to provide the best possible education for all learners, according to their needs and abilities, regardless of their race, religion, language or gender.

As in schools A and B the mission statement expresses the need to develop the skills, attitudes and values of the learners, conducive to their personal, academic and social development. The aims are to develop learners' self-discipline, respect for others, critical thinking and resourcefulness. The school community attempts to do so by establishing a supportive and stimulating environment for the staff, with the aim of fostering their personal and professional development.

There are altogether 628 learners in this school, with 18 teachers. Of the 628 learners, 312 are boys and 316 are girls. The total learner population is 100% Black. The principal in this school is a Black female in charge of 18 other teachers. Of the 18 other Black teachers in the school, three are male and 15 are female. All the teachers in this school are employed by state and the school has a high teacher-learner ratio of 1:40.

Table 4.1:   School population in each of the four schools

Category	Teachers	Boys	Girls	Total
School A	29	498	652	1150
School B	28	460	648	1108
School C	63	842	875	1717
School D	18	312	316	628

Table 4.2:   Number of SMT members in each of the four schools

Category	Principal	Deputy-principals	HODs	Total
School A	1	2	4	7
School B	1	2	4	7
School C	1	2	4	7
School D	1	1	3	5

Table 4.3:   Number of vacant posts on the SMT in each of the four schools

Category	Principal	Deputy-principals	HODs	Total
School A	None	1	None	1
School B	None	None	1	1
School C	None	None	1	1
School D	None	None	None	0

The statistics in this table show that three out of the four schools have a vacancy in the school management team, which implies additional work for the currently employed SMT members.

4.3   Data analysis and interpretation

The objective of this study is to investigate collaborative leadership practices of four primary schools in the Gauteng Tshwane South District. In particular, attempts have been made to record how leaders in these schools enact tasks that constitute collaborative leadership practices to influence the learning and teaching environment.

The information provided in this study was derived from the data obtained from the participants' interviews and from document and observation analysis of the understanding/perceptions and implementation of collaborative leadership tasks carried out by these school management teams (Nieuwenhuis in Maree et al., 2007). These tasks centre on aspects of management and leadership. The issues in respect of management and supervision revolve around the school management teams' duties towards creating enabling conditions for effective teaching and learning to take place (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

These issues include the school management teams' understanding/ perceptions and implementation of collaborative leadership, the tasks and strategies performed by school management teams and the resources and challenges school management teams need to implement collaborative leadership.

4.3.1   Data coding

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:370) data coding begins by identifying small pieces of data that stand alone. These data parts, called segments, divide the dataset. A data segment is text that is comprehensible by itself and contains one idea or episode or piece of relevant information. I used the following steps as prescribed by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:371):

- **Get a sense of the whole**

  I read at least two data sets and wrote about the data as I read it.

- **Generate initial codes from the data**

  I read a segment and asked myself what it was about, what word or words described it and what were the participants doing or talking about.

- **Compare codes for duplication**

  I made a list of the codes with one column for each data set. I compared the codes for duplication and overlapping descriptions.

- **Try out provisional coding**

  In using unmarked copies of each data set with which I worked I applied my organising system. I could now tell how well the descriptive code names corresponded to the data and whether some codes in the data were initially overlooked on the first reading.

- **Continue to refine your coding system**

  As I collected more data my initial system was refined and more codes were added. These codes were later used to look for patterns.

4.3.2   *Forming categories*

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:376), categories (or themes) are entities comprising grouped codes. A single category is used to give meaning to codes that are combined. The categories represent major ideas that are used to describe the meaning of similarly coded data

4.3.3   *Discovering patterns*

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:378), the ultimate goal of qualitative research is to make general statements about relationships among categories by discovering patterns in the data. A pattern is a relationship among categories. Pattern seeking means examining the data in as many ways as possible (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:378). In my search for patterns I tried to understand the complex links among various aspects of people's

situations, mental processes, beliefs and actions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:378).

4.3.4   The themes that emerged from the data

Diagram 4.1: Sample of data and assigned codes, categories and patters

Question 1:

What is your understanding of collaborative leadership?
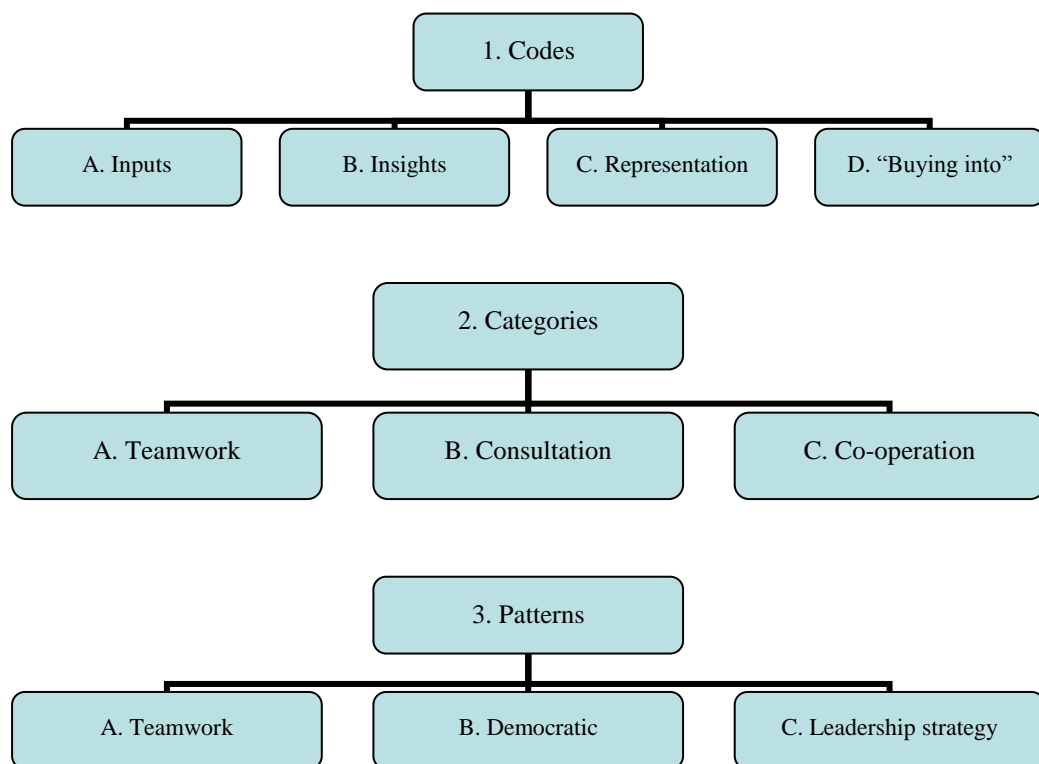
Theme 1:   Understanding collaborative leadership

Summary

The general aim of this research is to investigate school management teams' understanding of the implementation of collaborative leadership in primary schools in Gauteng Tshwane South District. The first finding from this study is that there is a ***common understanding*** of the concept of collaborative

leadership (Grant & Singh, 2009) among the participants, because most, if not all them, used the term *teamwork* as a basis for their explanation of the concept of collaborative leadership (Grant & Singh, 2009).

As one principal explained: ***Basically it is an all-encompassing, democratic, leadership strategy, based on teamwork, where all the role players, especially SMT members are represented*** (Code A).

One deputy-principal simply said: ***Its teamwork. I think it's about working together as a team, in consultation with the SMT*** (Code B.)

The HOD of one school said: ***Ok, my understanding of collaborative leadership is that there must be cooperation among not only SMT members but the whole staff*** (Code C).

From a micro-political perspective collaborative leadership in all the schools was understood by the respondents as a way to ***fulfil administrative purposes*** and the ***implementation of policies*** from the department of education (Grant & Singh, 2009). This leadership practice, from the perceptions of the SMT, may be described as ***authorised distributed leadership***, which is dependent on the ***will and skill*** of formal leaders such as the school management team (Grant & Singh, 2009).

This is confirmed by the Task Team's (DoE, 1996) view (par. 2.8 in Chapter 2, approach 1) that public administration in South Africa focuses on technical administrative functions (DoE, 1996). Officials are seen as implementers of policy formulated by elected politicians (DoE, 1996). This approach dominated the public service (including schools) during the apartheid years and influenced current thinking on education management (DoE, 1996). In their attempts to deal with the chaos of transition, many managers in the education system as a whole have focused strongly on issues such as

professionalism, the development of regulatory frameworks and the clarification of roles and functions (DoE, 1996). This way of thinking focusing on administrative processes generated an approach to management which emphasised structure (DoE, 1996).

Theme 2:   The practice of collaborative leadership

The second theme that emerged from this study is the ***practice*** of collaborative leadership in the participating schools. When asked if collaborative leadership was practised in their schools, all the respondents replied in the affirmative. However, they also conceded that it all ***depended on the situation*** and that although collaborative leadership was practised in their schools, it was sometimes very necessary to ***delegate tasks*** from management or to make important decisions without consulting the SMT.

All the respondents provided very good examples of how collaborative leadership was practised in their respective schools.

One deputy-principal remarked: ***We have SMT meetings where issues like discipline, for example, will be discussed. Everyone will then give their input and after that we will then look for a way forward*** (Code B.)

The principal of a school said: ***Teachers come together in the different learning areas and work together, share information and at times take leadership roles*** (Code A).

The HOD of one school said: ***In as much as collaborative leadership experiences is concerned, there is a high level of collaboration*** (Code C).

According to most respondents this is how their principals approached issues, by being very **consultative and motivating** SMT members to participate in these **meetings/discussions** and eventually the **decision-making process**.

This confirms the view expressed by Sergiovanni (1991:26 in Sing & Mestry, 2007) (par. 2.9 in Chapter 2) that collegiality is collaborative process that entails the devolution of authority to teachers and stakeholders in order for them to become an integral part of the leadership processes of the school that are guided by the school's shared vision (Sergiovanni, 1991:26 in Sing and Mestry, 2007). Bush (2003:70 in Singh & Mestry, 2007) (par. 2.9 in Chapter 2) adds to this by saying that collegial strategies tend to be more lateral or horizontal rather than being vertical and hierarchical, reflecting the view that all stakeholders should be involved in decision-making and own the outcomes of discussions (Bush 2003:70 in Singh & Mestry, 2007).

Theme 3: The tasks of school management teams to implement collaborative leadership

Another important theme that emerged from this study is that of the **delegation of tasks.** Members of the school management team in this study used their **formal positions** to **delegate management** and **administrative tasks** to people they saw fit for the role. Within the discourse of **delegation,** appointments to manage certain tasks rested on the criteria of **experience seniority and expertise.**
The principal of one school said*: Yes, the meetings we have are one of the tools we use to delegate important tasks to SMT members to implement collaborative leadership at our school* (Code B).

The deputy-principal of one school said: **Sometimes the principal delegates the responsibility of managing the school to one us as the deputy-principal and that is a huge responsibility** (Code A).

The HOD of one school said: ***We delegate certain tasks to people on the SMT who have the experience in performing that task, because they have done it before*** (Code C).

The views of all the school management team members reflected the professional management approach, which protects power on the basis of ***expertise and experience.*** Teachers and SMT members who had ***experience and expertise*** in areas such as ***administration, fundraising*** and ***project co-ordination*** were deemed fit to take on leadership roles in managing these tasks.

This fact is confirmed by Singh and Manser (2002:58) and Singh (2005:12 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007) (in par. 2.9 in Chapter 2) that there are six underlying principles or foundations that determine whether or not a collegial environment exists in a school and these foundations are accountability, shared values (Singh & Manser, 2002:58 and Singh 2005:12 in Singh and Mestry, 2007), shared vision, shared decision-making, shared leadership and empowerment (Singh & Manser, 2002:58 and Singh 2005:12 in Singh and Mestry, 2007). According to Lofthouse (1994), Senge (1990), and Singh and Manser, (2002 in Singh & Mesrty, 2007) collegial leadership should be viewed as a process that encourages and accommodates shared decision-making and delegation of tasks in the spirit of enabling people to act (Lofthouse (1994), Senge (1990), and Singh and Manser, (2002 in Singh & Mesrty, 2007).

Theme 4: The strategies of school management teams to implement collaborative leadership

When asked about the strategies that SMTs use to implement collaborative leadership, the respondents agreed that the most popular and practical task they use are ***open debates***, ***brainstorming sessions*** and ***meetings.*** The

respondents also stated all the stakeholders in these sessions were ***encouraged*** **and** *motivated* to freely engage with one another and their contributions were actually valued and recognised. All these processes were very ***consultative*** and decisions were based on ***democratic*** and ***collaborative*** principles.

The deputy-principal of one school remarked: ***The strategy that we use most is meetings where we will consult, debate and brainstorm issues before we make a collaborative decision*** (Code A).

The HOD of one school said: ***We have meetings where, in consultation with the staff, we debate issues and come up with possible solutions. It is a very consultative process*** (Code B.)

The principal of one school said: ***Yes, we always discuss issues in meetings before we implement them. Everyone is allowed to come up with suggestions*** (Code C).

According to the Task Team on educational leadership development (DoE, 1996) (par. 2.10 in Chapter 2) the key challenge to education management relates to the inappropriate nature of many of the existing management systems, processes and structures (DoE, 1996). New education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery (DoE, 1996). In addition very little systematic thinking has been done to conceptualise the education management strategies relevant to the South African experience (DoE, 1996). A key priority is the development of a shared understanding about education management development strategies through which to address these needs and priorities (DoE, 1996).

Theme 5: The challenges of school management teams to implement collaborative leadership

When asked about the challenges that school management teams encounter during the implementation of collaborative leadership, the respondents cited *personality clashes*, *succession battles*, *acceptance of newly appointed school management team members* and *vacant leadership positions*. The respondents explained that sometimes their school management teams do not function to their full potential, because some school management team members always have a *different opinion* about certain matters, because they differ personality-wise. Another important challenge is succession battles.

The respondents expressed the view that some school management team members felt that they were *entitled* to certain posts because of their *experience* and this was very problematic. Some respondents also felt that some school management team members refused to give their *support to newly appointed leaders* and this also caused many problems. *Vacant leadership positions* at schools was one of the reasons why school management teams also experienced problems, because this created a *vacuum* which had a *negative effect* on the *functioning* of the school management team.

The principal of one school said*: Well, there are some challenges and to me the biggest challenge is personality clashes, because people are different and they have different personalities* (Code B).

The deputy-principal of one school said: *Basically certain educators claim vacant positions for themselves and if they don't get the position than they refuse to give their cooperation to the newly appointed educator* (Code C).

The HOD of one school said: *I am the only HOD in the foundation phase at the moment and I am struggling to keep my head above water because the workload is simply too big* (Code A).

Theme 6: The resources that school management teams need to implement collaborative leadership

When asked about the resources needed to implement collaborative leadership most respondents replied that the most important resource is *human resources*. They felt that for collaborative leadership to be effective, all those who are involved in the process have to be *very motivated*. A *lack of motivation* was one of the reasons cited why some school management teams do not function very well. Other resources mentioned include things like laptops, photo copier machines and computers.

Time, especially *the management thereof* was also mentioned as one of the more important resources that SMTs have to manage in order to be successful in the implementation of collaborative leadership. *Administration and paper work* (minutes of meetings), according to respondents, are also very important because they serve the purpose of a point of reference. *Experienced SMT members* are regarded as another valuable resource because they bring a very valuable dimension to the *decision-making process* and minimise the prospect of making costly mistakes.

The principal of one school said: *I think the main resource is human resources. If you don't have people to do the job then obviously nothing will be done* (Code C).

The deputy-principal of one school said: *I think time and the management of time is one of the resources we need because we are overburdened with*

administrative work and there is simply not enough time to do everything we need to do (Code B).

The HOD of one school said: ***The lack of resources from the department as well as the loads of administrative work makes a lot of educators very demotivated*** (Code A).

4.3.5 *Data emerging from the document analysis*

In this part of the data analysis I report on what emerged from the analysis of documents. All the principals of the sampled schools (except for one) were kind enough to provide me with minutes of staff and school management team meetings, circulars from the Department and circulars from the principal to the staff. On analysis of these documents it was evident that all the sampled schools are very democratic in their practices. The minutes of both staff and school management team meetings reveal that the educators are continuously consulted on all matters regarding the management of their schools.

One principal said: ***We have SMT meetings where we will discuss issues very openly. Everyone will then give their opinions and examples to prove their point. After the issues have been discussed we will then try to look at the best option to implement.*** (Code A).

The deputy-principal of a school said: ***The principal always encourages us to air our views in the meeting and to be involved. He motivates us to actively participate in the meetings because we are part of the school and therefore we must state our views*** (Code C).

The HOD of one school said: ***Our SMT meetings are very open and transparent. We are given opportunities to express our views and our opinions are actually valued*** (Code B).

This, according to most respondents, is how their principals chair their meetings, by being very *consultative and motivating* SMT members and other staff members participate in these *meetings/discussions* and eventually in the *decision-making process*.

There was also evidence in the documents of *shared decision-making* and this, according to the respondents, increased the team work during the implementation of decisions taken. The documents also revealed that all the respondents in the sampled schools share a *common set of values* with the rest of the staff and this improves the decision-making process because the teachers feel that they belong to a team. The process of *consultation* is clearly evident and most of the important decisions are made by consulting the school management team and by *consensus.*

The principal of one school said: *I always consult the SMT and staff when important decisions have to be taken. This makes them feel part of the process of managing the school* (Code A).

The deputy-principal of one school said: *Taking decisions is a very important aspect in the management of our school, because we have to consider the consequences of making the wrong choices because we have to live with those choices* (Code B).

The HOD of one school said*: We sometimes spend a lot of time debating certain issues before we make a decision because sometimes we differ on what is the best choice and sometimes we have to vote to come up with a solution* (Code C).

4.3.6   *Data on leadership style and approach*

The following is a report on questions relating to the leadership style and approach of principals. This to me was very important because principals are not only in charge of the school but they are also in charge of the school management teams in their schools and their management style determines how their schools function.

When asked if the participants agreed on the statement that there is widespread failure to implement collaborative leadership the respondents disagreed. They felt that there was a younger breed of principals, with a ***very positive mindset*** and ***attitude***. This new breed of younger principals work very hard at ***creating a positive climate*** by ***motivating*** and ***encouraging*** their staff to be more involved in the management of their schools by involving all stakeholders in the decision-making process. They feel that especially after 1994 the management style of many principals shifted from a more ***autocratic style*** to a more ***democratic*** one.

One principal said: ***I cannot speak for other schools, but if you do not have a system where you can plan together, decide to make changes together, introduce new things together and implement together, I can certainly assure you that your level of success will not be what it is supposed to be*** (Code A).

One deputy-principal said: ***I tend to disagree because a lot of new and younger principals like our principal are very democratic. However, I have also heard of the older generation of principals who still want to hold on to power*** (Code B).

One HOD said: ***I don't think so because since 1994 a lot of changes have taken place, also in schools where principals have become more democratic***

and they involve the staff and SMT in the management of the school (Code C).

According to Edwards and Smith (2008) (par. 2.6 (v) in Chapter 2) collaborative leadership is a precondition for the creation of a collaborative culture. They futher argue that, curriculum implementation is essentially associated with educational change and the value of the creation of a school climate and culture that is conducive to the successful implementation of collaborative leadership. Collaborative cultures are characterised by their ability to deal with change and to overcome the failures and pitfalls associated with the process of change.

The response to the question, "Do you agree that a lot of principals still hold on to traditional approaches of leadership?" was really a "mixed bag" because some respondents felt that many principals (older generation) still *wield the magic wand* and everyone else should just jump. At the same time some respondents feel that many principals (younger generation) have moved from a traditionally autocratic approach to a more democratic one to managing their school.

Some respondents also feel that some principals, especially the older generation, are still very autocratic, managing their schools alone; *I do it my way,* while some principals are very democratic in their management of their institutions by following a democratic and open policy approach. Another important issue according to the respondents is the influence of *personality on the leadership style* of most principals. They feel that a principal with a *good, positive attitude and personality* has a good and open leadership style, while the opposite is also very true.

One principal said: ***Yes, at times to get a job done you have to do it yourself, because at the end of the day you as the principal will be held accountable*** (Code B).

One deputy-principal said: ***No, I don't think so. I think we have definitely moved away from principals doing things their way because our principal is young and energetic. He is very approachable and he has a good open personality*** (Code A).

One HOD said: ***Yes, definitely. Our principal is of the older generation and he believes in the philosophy that if you want something done right then you do it yourself*** (Code C).

This is confirmed by Kouzes and Posner (1997:185 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007) (par. 2.3 in Chapter 2) who observes that credible leaders prefer to give away their power in the service of others and for a purpose larger than themselves (Kouzes & Posner 1997:185 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007). Such leaders accept and act on the paradox of power that we become more powerful when we give our power away (Kouzes & Posner 1997: 185 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007). According to Kouzes and Posner (1997:185 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007) collegial leaders take the power that flows to them and connect it to the other members of their team (Kouzes and Posner 1997:185 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007). They further point out that when leaders share power with others they demonstrate profound trust in and respect for others abilities. Such leaders, not the controlling ones, are most respected and most effective (Kouzes & Posner 1997:185 in Singh Manser & Mestry, 2007).

When asked if principals should explore more than one approach to leadership, all the respondents agreed. They felt that situations are not all the

same and that *every situation determines the leadership approach*. However, they also felt that every situation should be treated with the necessary respect and dignity because some principals sometimes act without the necessary respect for their unique situations. Once again the issue of *personality* and a *positive attitude* towards colleagues is very prominent. The respondents also felt that principals should be *approachable* because of the very important position that they have. They also felt that principals at times must be *firm*, but they must also be very *flexible, reasonable and fair* in all situations that they manage.

One principal said: *Yes, I fully agree because you can't just have a style of leadership, and then you are going to pick up problems. You must look at the situation and then decide what approach you will use. You have to be flexible and at times you have to be firm* (Code B).

One deputy-principal said*: Yes, definitely and a person's personality will tell you what type of leader he is. You cannot have a one size fits all approach: you have to use different approaches for different situations* (Code C).

One head of department said: *They must remember that they are dealing with people with feelings and not robots and they have to realise that we have different situations to deal with and they must respect that* (Code A).

According to Edwards and Smith (2008) (par. 2.6 (v) in Chapter 2) there is a difference between leadership style and leadership approach. They suggest that leadership approach differs from leadership style in that it seeks to create an environment in which teaching and learning can occur most effectively (Edwards and Smith, 2008). The two concepts are not mutually exclusive; the leadership style gives rise to the creation of an environment which is conducive to successful implantation, whereas the leadership approach creates

a climate which ideally should be a collaborative culture that facilitates successful curriculum implementation and school improvement (Edwards & Smith, 2008).

When asked if school management teams receive adequate training, the respondents disagreed. They felt that the occasional ***INSET workshop*** was not enough to prepare them for the big responsibility of being in a leadership position. Some of them even pursue their studies privately, not just for financial gain or better job prospects, but more importantly to be ***better equipped*** to deal with the big responsibility that goes with being in a leadership position. The respondents felt that they were learning by ***trial and error*** and sometimes this approach had big financial and other implications for their institutions. In most cases they relied on other SMT members with ***experience*** not to make mistakes that had major financial implications for their schools.

One principal said*: **No, because we are forever changing and as long as there is change there must also be training not just to deal with the change but also to improve** (Code A).

One deputy-principal said: ***No, I don't think so. In the long run people learn from the mistakes they make. It is trial and error and that is how you obtain experience"*** (Code B).

One HOD said: ***No, I don't think so. You can't go on a one-day workshop and expect that when you come back you will be fully equipped to manage a school.*** (Code C).

This fact is confirmed by Bush and Oduro (2006: 362 in Van der Mecht et al., 2011) (par. 2.2 Chapter 2), that throughout Africa there is no formal

requirement for principals to be trained as school managers. They are often appointed on the basis of a successful record as teachers with the implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership (Bush and Oduro, 2006: 362 in Van der Mecht et al., 2011). There is a growing realisation that in the 21st century headship is a specialist occupation that requires specific preparation. Bush (2008; 2010 in Van der Mecht et al., 2011) notes the following reasons for this paradigm shift:

- **The expansion of the role of school principal**. In decentralised systems, the scope of leadership has increased;

- **The increasing complexity of school contexts**. Principals have to engage with their communities to lead and manage effectively;

- **Recognition that preparation is a moral obligation**. It is unfair to appoint new principals without effective induction; and

- **Recognition that effective preparation and development make a difference**. Principals are better leaders following specific training.

Mathibe (2007:523) says that South African principals are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership. The overall theme that emerged from this part of the interview process is the age dimension. The respondents felt that there is a huge difference in approach between the older generation of principals and the younger generation of principals. The respondents felt that the older generation of principals are still holding onto power and are not willing to delegate and share the responsibility to manage the school, while the younger generation of principals are more democratic in their approach to management.

4.4   Findings regarding school A and B

The leadership structure in school A and B appears to be democratic. The principal and the deputy principal described a decentralised and participatory leadership style in these particular schools. According to the principal of school A, all staff members are involved in decision-making concerning the school. In fact he said:

I cannot run the school alone. I have to delegate and ask other teachers, especially members of the school management team to help me; otherwise I will break down before I retire (Code B).

The deputy-principal of school B concurs, stating that staff members are encouraged to be active and involved in the running of the school by taking turns to talk to pupils during morning assembly and similar occasions. The teachers interviewed had a different perspective on the principal's leadership style. The head of departments in all four schools feel that there were instances where the principal was very autocratic and took decisions unilaterally and merely informed the other members of the staff after decisions had been made, but they also add that there was a very good working relationship with the principal and the rest of the school management team.

It was very clear from the interview process that the school management team members of these particular schools, worked very well with one another. The principals carried out their instructional leadership responsibilities very well and involved the school management team in running the school by involving them in their decisions regarding the day-to-day running of the school. Each school management team member was assigned certain duties and had to give regular reports of their duties.

4.5 Findings regarding school C and D

There appeared to be a participatory leadership style in these schools. The deputy-principal of school C indicated the following:

Different individuals are entrusted with different duties, which makes everyone feel empowered and makes everyone develop accountability for whatever they do (Code A).

The principal of school D said:

I employ an autocratic style of leadership at times because the democratic style does not always work. There are occasions when I say I hear all points of view, but on some occasions we've got to make a decision because we cannot always get consensus (Code C).

The teachers in these schools are well qualified for their jobs and some have many years of teaching experience. Except for the teachers, the school management team members all have taught for a period ranging from seven to thirty two years. Similarly, the members of the SMT have been in these schools for a long time and appear to have helped create the ethos of the school.

4.6 Conclusion

I would like to conclude this chapter by echoing the words of Edwards and Smith (2008) when they point out that "effective collaborative leadership is frequently presented as a fundamental feature for successful and sustained functioning of an organisation as well as an important requirement for dealing with change. This holds true for commercial organisations, organs of the state and most certainly for schools. Education authorities across the globe recognise the need for leadership as part of their school improvement

programme (Edwards & Smith, 2008). Such leadership makes a difference and it can play a significant role in the success of a school (Edwards and Smith 2008). Conversely, poor leadership or lack of leadership skills can adversely affect the entire process of teaching and learning as well as the development of a positive school culture (Edwards and Smith, 2008)." Fullan (2004 in Edwards & Smit, 2008) appropriately cautions "only principals and school management teams that are equipped to handle a complex, rapidly changing environment can implement the reform that leads to sustainable improvement in student achievement" (Fullan, 2004 in Edwards & Smit, 2008).

Edwards and Smith (2008) further contend that, in the act of developing sustainable leadership, the principal is required to play a carefully balanced and thoughtfully executed role. The principal's role includes assuming the role of instructional leader as well as empowering teachers to be and become collaborative leaders themselves. By adopting a collaborative leadership style the principal is still regarded as the instructional leader, with an added dimension (Edwards & Smith, 2008). The task of instructional leadership and curriculum implementation is therefore a shared one, and one that can develop sustainability in leadership (Edwards & Smith, 2008).

The data I collected certainly confirms what these authors are saying.

One principal said: *As the principal of this school, it is my responsibility to take charge and lead the SMT in a democratic and consultative way order to manage the school effectively and move forward* (Code A).

One deputy-principal said: *Any school needs a good leader with a positive attitude to manage the school effectively and this must be done by involving all the stakeholders* (Code B).

One HOD said: *A good attitude and a positive mindset is very important for any leader, because he/she must be able to maintain a good working relationship with all the stakeholders, including the SGB if he/she wants to be successful in managing the school"* (Code C).

The next chapter deals with the summary (overview), findings, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this research study is to investigate school management teams' understanding and implementation of collaborative leadership. In order to realise this general aim the specific objectives are the following:

1. To investigate how school management teams understand the concept of collaborative leadership.
2. To investigate whether school management teams implement collaborative leadership.
3. To investigate the tasks, challenges, strategies and resources to implement collaborative leadership.

This being the final chapter, it is necessary to summarise the salient points of this research project under the following headings:

1. **Overview** – which presents a global overview of the entire mini-dissertation.
2. **Findings** – which are drawn from the responses of the educators to the interviews in respect of collaborative leadership in their schools and also from the observation and document analysis
3. **Conclusions in regard to the working assumptions**.
4. **Recommendations** – which are taken from the important findings.
5. **Topics for further research**.
6. **Concluding remarks** – which attempt to highlight the contribution of this study.

5.2   Overview

Chapter 1

This chapter is concerned with defining the problem and setting out the general and specific aims of this research as well as the methodology to be implemented. In this chapter a clarification of the concepts that have been used in this study is given. The demarcation of this study is presented.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 deals with the literature study that was undertaken to understand collaborative leadership. In this chapter the broad search for literature concerning collaborative leadership is reported on, using a wide variety of sources to locate information about collaborative leadership. The main findings of the review of literature in this chapter have revealed the following:

- There is a growing realisation that in the 21st century, headship is a specialist occupation that requires specific preparation (Bush 2008:2010 in by Bush et al., 2011).

- Effective collaborative leadership is a fundamental condition for successful and sustained functioning of an organisation as well as an important requirement for dealing with change (Edwards & Smit, 2008).

- In the context of a now democratic South Africa collaborative leadership is likely to grow in popularity and this can be justified because of its representational power and its leaning towards ideals in schools (Harris & Spillane, 2008 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

- According to The Task Team (DoE, 1996) when approaches to the management of education are essentially authoritarian, non-consultative and non-participatory, as has and still is the case in our country, management development tends to focus predominantly on enhancing the skills and competence of key individuals in the management hierarchy, so that they may carry out their line functions efficiently (DoE, 1996). However, under conditions of decentralisation and with a significant shift towards school-based management, it is inadequate simply to focus on individuals (DoE, 1996).

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 deals with the design of the research instrument. In this chapter I discuss in detail the research design and methodology, the data collection procedures, my role as researcher, the data analysis and interpretation, trustworthiness and validity, ethical considerations and limitations. An interview schedule was developed to obtain the perceptions of school management team members regarding their understanding and implementation of collaborative leadership.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data. This chapter explores the contextual concerns of the schools under investigation. The proposed study set out to explore collaborative leadership practices of school management teams in four primary schools in Gauteng.

After the analysis of the data some important findings emanated which resulted in illuminating recommendations.

Chapter 5

This chapter deals with a summary of the study, as well as the findings, limitations and conclusions regarding the working assumptions, recommendations and suggested topics for further research and concluding remarks.

5.3   Findings

Discussion of the findings

The objective of this study is to investigate collaborative leadership practices of four primary schools in the Gauteng Tshwane South District. In particular attempts were made to record how school management teams in these schools enact tasks that constitute collaborative leadership practices to influence the learning and teaching environment. The information provided in this study was derived from the data obtained from the interviews with participants, document analysis and observation of the understanding and implementation of collaborative leadership tasks carried out by these school management teams. These tasks centre on aspects of management and leadership. The issues in respect of management and supervision revolve around the school management teams' duties towards creating enabling conditions for effective teaching and learning to take place.

The issues include the school management teams' understanding and implementation of collaborative leadership, the tasks and strategies performed and challenges faced by school management teams and resources needed to implement collaborative leadership.

5.3.1   Findings from the literature

The literature on collaborative leadership suggests that it is much more than just "working together" or teamwork (Grant & Singh, 2009). The literature suggests that it is more about "how" people work together (Grant & Singh, 2009). This poses the question, "How can we, especially given the South Africa's colonial and apartheid history and the resultant hierarchical and bureaucratic management structures that remain the norm in many of our schools, begin to negotiate the boundaries surrounding the various leadership practices and move towards more democratic leadership styles?" (Grant & Singh, 2009).

According to Grant and Singh (2009), the first fact that we have to acknowledge is that the journey to establishing collaborative leadership in our schools is an evolutionary process. The first step in this evolutionary process is to try to move school management teams away from autocratic forms of leadership and the understanding of leadership as control towards more distributed forms of leadership (Grant & Singh, 2009). The next step in this evolutionary process is to aim for an authorised form of distributed leadership, where tasks are distributed from the principal and school management team to the other educators in a hierarchical system (Grant & Singh, 2009). Once an authorised form of distributed leadership is in place in the school, then a move can be initiated towards a dispersed form of distributed leadership (Grant & Singh, 2009) where the workings of the hierarchy are gradually removed as a more collective and shared process of leadership is adopted (Grant & Singh, 2009).

Only once this form of leadership is solidly in place can we finally move to a democratic form of distributed leadership (Grant & Singh, 2009). It is no doubt a very complex journey that schools must undertake and it is going to take much time to achieve, but as Jansen argues "despite their obvious limits,

schools remain the life-blood of our democracy (2004:127 in Grant and Singh, 2009), requiring leaders who are socially just, and who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility towards and with others and to society as a whole" (Phendla, 2004:61 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

This study has revealed that schools and school management teams have indeed changed to become more inclusive and participatory. The findings further reveal that school management teams implement this form of leadership that reflects this shift that is termed collaborative leadership (Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2004 in Grant and Singh, 2009). Collaborative leadership (Harris & Muijs, 2005:31 in Grant & Singh, 2009) is based on the premise that leadership should be shared throughout an organisation, such as a school, where there are multiple sources of guidance and direction, following the contours of expertise in an organisation, made coherent by a common culture (Harris & Muijs, 2005:31 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

5.3.2   *Findings from the empirical research*

5.3.2.1   Addressing the aims of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate school management teams' understanding and implementation of collaborative leadership. The following objectives have guided the research:

- To investigate school management teams' understanding/perception of collaborative leadership.
- To explore school management teams' experiences of collaborative leadership.
- To investigate the tasks in which school management teams engage in order to implement collaborative leadership.

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- To discover the strategies that school management teams' use to implement collaborative leadership.
- To explore the challenges which school management teams need to address in order to implement collaborative leadership.
- To determine the resources school management teams' need to implement collaborative leadership.

I will now give the findings on school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership in order to address each of the objectives listed below in bulleted format.

- ***To investigate school management teams' understanding/perception of collaborative leadership***

There is a ***common understanding*** of the concept of collaborative leadership among the participants, because most, if not all them, used the term ***teamwork*** as a basis for their explanation of the concept of collaborative leadership.

As one principal explained: ***Basically, it is an all encompassing, democratic, leadership strategy, based on teamwork, where all the role players, especially SMT members are represented*** (Code A).

One deputy-principal simply said: ***It's teamwork. I think it's about working together as a team, in consultation with the SMT*** (Code B).

The HOD of one school said: ***OK, my understanding of collaborative leadership is that there must be cooperation among not only SMT members but the whole staff*** (Code C).

From a micro-political perspective collaborative leadership in all the schools is understood by the respondents as a way to ***fulfil administrative purposes*** and

the ***implementation of policies*** from the Department of Education. This leadership practice, from the perceptions of the SMT, may be described as ***authorised distributed leadership***, which is dependent on the ***will and skill*** of formal leaders such as the school management team.

This is confirmed by the Task Team's (DoE, 1996) view (par. 2.8 in Chapter 2, approach 1) that public administration in South Africa focuses on technical administrative functions. Officials are regarded as implementers of policy formulated by elected politicians (DoE, 1996). This approach dominated the public service (including schools) during the apartheid years and influenced current thinking on education management (DoE, 1996). In their attempts to deal with the chaos of transition, many managers in the education system as a whole focus strongly on issues such as professionalism, the development of regulatory frameworks and the clarification of roles and functions (DoE, 1996). This way of thinking focuses on administrative processes generating an approach to management which emphasises structure (DoE, 1996).

- ***To explore school management teams' experiences of collaborative leadership.***

When asked if collaborative leadership was practised in their schools, all the respondents answered in the affirmative. However, they also conceded that it all ***depended on the situation*** and that although collaborative leadership is practised in their schools, it is sometimes very necessary to ***delegate tasks*** from the management or to make important decisions without consulting the SMT.

All the respondents provided very good examples of how collaborative leadership is practised in their respective schools.

One deputy-principal remarked: *We have SMT meetings where issues like discipline, for example, are discussed. Everyone will then give their input and after that we will then look for ways forward* (Code B).

The principal of a school said: *Teachers come together in the different learning areas and work together, share information and at times take leadership roles* (Code A).

The HOD of one school said: *In as much as collaborative leadership experiences are concerned, there is a high level of collaboration* (Code C).

This, according to most respondents, is how their principals approach issues, by being very *consultative and motivating* SMT members to participate in these *meetings/discussions* and eventually in the *decision-making process*.

This confirms the view expressed by Sergiovanni (1991:26 in Singh & Mestry, 2007) (par. 2.9 in Chapter 2) that collegiality is a collaborative process that entails the devolution of authority to teachers and stakeholders in order for them to become an integral part of the leadership processes of the school that are guided by the school's shared vision (Sergiovanni, 1991:26 in Singh & Mestry, 2007). Bush (2003:70 in Singh & Mesrty, 2007) (par. 2.9 in Chapter 2) adds to this by saying that collegial strategies tend to be more lateral or horizontal rather than being vertical and hierarchical, reflecting the view that all stakeholders should be involved in decision-making and own the outcomes of discussions (Bush, 2003:70 in Singh & Mesrty, 2007).

- *To investigate the tasks in which school management teams engage in order to implement collaborative leadership.*

Members of the school management team in this study used their *formal positions* to *delegate management* and *administrative tasks* to people they

saw fit for the role. Within the discourse of ***delegation,*** appointments to manage certain tasks rest on the criteria of ***experience seniority and expertise.***

The principal of one school said*: **Yes, the meetings we have are one of the tools we use to delegate important tasks to SMT members to implement collaborative leadership at our school*** (Code B).

The deputy-principal of one school said: ***Sometimes the principal delegates the responsibility of managing the school to one us as the deputy principal and that is a huge responsibility*** (Code B).

The HOD of one school said: ***We delegate certain tasks to people on the SMT who have the experience in performing that task because they have done it before*** (Code B).

The views of all the school management team members reflect the professional management approach, which protects power on the basis of ***expertise and experience***. Teachers and SMT members who have ***experience and expertise*** in areas such as ***administration, fundraising*** and ***project co-ordination*** are deemed fit to take on leadership roles in managing these tasks.

This fact is confirmed by Singh and Manser (2002:58) and Singh (2005:12 in Singh and Mestry, 2007) (in par. 2.9 in Chapter 2), that there are six underlying principles or foundations that determine whether or not a collegial environment exists in a school; these foundations are accountability, shared values, shared vision, shared decision-making, shared leadership and empowerment. According to Lofthouse (1994), Senge (1990) and Singh and Manser (2002 as cited by Singh & Mestry, 2007) collegial leadership should be viewed as a process that encourages and accommodates shared decision-making and delegation of tasks in the spirit of enabling people to act.

- *To discover the strategies that school management teams use to implement collaborative leadership.*

When asked about the strategies that SMTs use to implement collaborative leadership, the respondents agreed that the most popular and practical task they use are ***open debates**, **brainstorming sessions*** and ***meetings.*** The respondents also stated all the stakeholders in these sessions are ***encouraged** and *motivated** to freely engage with one another and their contributions are actually valued and recognised. All these processes are very ***consultative*** and decisions are based on ***democratic*** and ***collaborative*** principles.

The deputy-principal of one school remarked: ***The strategy that we use most is meetings, where we will consult, debate and brainstorm issues before we make a collaborative decision*** (Code A).

The HOD of one school said: ***We have meetings where, in consultation with the staff, we debate issues and come up with possible solutions. It is a very consultative process*** (Code B).

The principal of one school said: ***Yes, we always discuss issues in meetings before we implement them. Everyone is allowed to come up with suggestions*** (Code C).

According to the Task Team on educational leadership development (DoE, 1996) (par. 2.10 in Chapter 2) the key challenge to education management relates to the inappropriate nature of many of the existing management systems, processes and structures (DoE, 1996). New education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery (DoE, 1996). In addition very little systematic thinking has been done to conceptualise the

education management strategies relevant to the South African experience (DoE, 1996). A key priority is the development of a shared understanding about education management development strategies through which to address these needs and priorities (DoE, 1996).

- *To explore the challenges which school management teams need to address in order to implement collaborative leadership.*

When asked about the challenges that school management teams encounter during the implementation of collaborative leadership, the respondents cited *personality clashes*, *succession battles*, *acceptance of newly appointed school management team members* and *vacant leadership positions*. The respondents explained that sometimes their school management teams do not function to their full potential, because some school management team members always have a *different opinion* about certain matters, because they differ personality-wise. Another important challenge is succession battles.

The respondents expressed the view that some school management team members feel that they are *entitled* to certain posts, because of their *experience,* and this is very problematic. Some respondents also feel that some school management team members refuse to give their *support to newly appointed leaders* and this also causes many problems. *Vacant leadership positions* at schools are one of the reasons why school management teams experience problems, because this creates a *vacuum* which has a *negative effect* on the *functioning* of the school management team.

The principal of one school said*: Well, there are some challenges and to me the biggest challenge is personality clashes, because people are different and they have different personalities* (Code B).

The deputy-principal of one school said: ***Basically certain educators claim vacant positions for themselves and if they don't get the position than they refuse to give their cooperation to the newly appointed educator*** (Code C).

The HOD of one school said: ***I am the only HOD in the foundation phase at the moment and I am struggling to keep my head above water because the workload is simply too heavy*** (Code A).

- ***To determine the resources school management teams need to implement collaborative leadership.***

When asked about the resources to implement collaborative leadership, most respondents replied that the most important resource is ***human resources***. They felt that for collaborative leadership to be effective, all those who are involved in the process have to be ***very motivated***. A ***lack of motivation*** is one of the reasons cited why some school management teams do not function very well. Other resources mentioned include things like laptops, photo copier machines and computers.

Time**,** especially ***the management thereof***, was also mentioned as one of the more important resources that SMTs have to manage in order for them to be successful in the implementation of collaborative leadership. ***Administration and paper work*** (minutes of meetings) according to respondents are also very important because they serve the purpose of a point of reference. ***Experienced SMT members*** are regarded as another valuable resource because this brings a very valuable dimension to the ***decision-making process*** and minimises the prospect of making costly mistakes.

The principal of one school said: *I think the main resource is human resources. If you don't have people to do the job than obviously nothing will be done* (Code C).

The deputy-principal of one school said: *I think time and the management of time is one of the resources we need because we are overburdened with administrative work and there is simply not enough time to do everything we need to do* (Code B).

The HOD of one school said: *The lack of resources from the department as well as the loads of administrative work makes a lot of educators very demotivated* (Code A).

5.3.2.2 Findings regarding school A and B

The leadership structure in school A and B appears to be democratic. The principal and the deputy principal described a decentralised and participatory leadership style in these particular schools. According to the principal of school A all staff members are involved in the decision-making concerning the school. In fact he said:

I cannot run the school alone. I have to delegate and ask other teachers, especially members of the school management team; to help me otherwise I will break down before I retire.(Code A)

The deputy-principal of school B concurs,, stating that staff members are encouraged to be active and involved in the running of the school by taking turns to talk to pupils during assembly and similar occasions. The teachers interviewed had a different perspective on the principal's leadership style. The heads of department in all four schools feel that there are instances where the principal is very autocratic and takes decisions unilaterally and merely informs the other members of the staff after decisions have been made, but they also

add that there is a very good working relationship with the principal and the rest of the school management team.

It was very clear from the interview process that the school management team members of these particular schools work very well with one another. The principals enact their instructional leadership responsibilities very well and involve the school management team in running the school by involving them in their decisions regarding the day-to-day running of the school. Each school management team member is assigned certain duties and has to give regular reports of completed duties.

5.3.2.3   Findings regarding school C and D

There appears to be a participatory leadership style in these schools. The deputy principal of school C said the following:

Different individuals are entrusted with different duties, which makes everyone feel empowered and makes everyone develop accountability for whatever they do (Code B).

The principal of school D said:

I employ an autocratic style of leadership at times because the democratic style does not always work. There are occasions when I say I hear all points of view, but on some occasions we've got to make a decision because we cannot always get consensus (Code A).

The teachers in these schools are well qualified for their jobs and some have many years of teaching experience. Except for the teachers, the school management team members all have taught for a period ranging from seven to thirty two years. Similarly, the members of the SMT have been in these schools for a long time and appear to have helped create the ethos of the school.

5.4 Conclusions regarding the working assumptions

I will now give the findings on school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership regarding the working assumptions.

- *To investigate school management teams' understanding/perception of collaborative leadership.*

The findings appear to confirm the working assumption that school management teams understand the concept of collaborative leadership.

As one principal explained: *Basically, it is an all encompassing, democratic, leadership strategy, based on teamwork, where all the role players, especially SMT members, are represented* (Code A).

- *To explore school management teams' experiences of collaborative leadership.*

The findings seem to confirm the working assumption that school management teams indeed practise collaborative leadership in their schools.

One deputy-principal remarked: *We have SMT meetings where issues like discipline, for example, will be discussed. Everyone will then give their input and after that we will then look for a way forward* (Code B).

- *To investigate the tasks in which school management teams engage in order to implement collaborative leadership.*

The findings seem to confirm the working assumption that school management teams delegate certain tasks to implement collaborative leadership in their schools.

The HOD of one school said: *We delegate certain tasks to people on the SMT who have the experience in performing that task, because they have done it before* (Code B).

- *To discover the strategies that school management teams use to implement collaborative leadership.*

The findings seem to confirm the working assumption that school management teams indeed use different strategies to implement collaborative leadership in their schools.

The deputy-principal of one school remarked: *The strategy that we use most, is meetings, where we will consult, debate and brainstorm issues before we make a collaborative decision* (Code A).

- *To explore the challenges that school management teams need to address in order to implement collaborative leadership.*

The findings confirm the working assumption that school management teams experience certain challenges in the implementation of collaborative leadership in their schools.

The HOD of one school said: *I am the only HOD in the foundation phase at the moment and I am struggling to keep my head above water because the workload is simply too much* (Code A).

- *To determine the resources school management teams need to implement collaborative leadership.*

The findings confirm the working assumption that school management teams need different resources such as finances to implement collaborative leadership in their schools.

The HOD of one school said: ***The lack of resources from the department as well as the loads of administrative work makes a lot of educators very demotivated*** (Code A).

5.5 Recommendations for improvement of practice

I recommend that:

- the Department of Education provide appropriate training for school management teams for collaborative leadership to be implemented effectively in schools;
- the concept of collaborative leadership is clarified to SMTs in order for them to fully understand the concept;
- the Department of Education and SGBs provide financial resources to meet the needs of SMTs to function to their full potential;
- principals be encouraged to delegate meaningful tasks to other SMT members to ease the burden of the management of their schools;
- the Department of Education empower SMTs with practical tools in the form of workshops to deal with the challenges to implement collaborative leadership in their school;
- the Department of Education consider a minimum and maximum age as a requirement for candidates who apply to be a principal.

5.6   Suggested topics for further research

Various issues that need further investigation have materialised from this study. Among them are the following:

- The challenges experienced by schools management teams to implement collaborative leadership in their schools.

- The role and place of the school governing body in a holistic, interactive interrelated, collaborative leadership and education management process.

- The importance of the relationship between theory of the education leadership and management models with the practice of the different types of leadership in schools.

5.7   Concluding remarks

This study is valuable because it has revealed that:

- participants have a limited understanding of the concept of collaborative leadership; the literature suggests that collaborative leadership is a complex process;

- school management teams need training to implement collaborative leadership effectively in their schools;

- school management teams experience many challenges as far as implementing collaborative leadership in their schools is concerned.

Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen (1997:196 in Grant & Singh, 2009) describe the task of converting the proliferation of legislation introduced so soon after South Africa became a democracy as daunting, a view echoed by Jansen who

argues that while impressive architectures exist for democratic education, South Africa has a long way to go to make the ideals concrete and achievable within education institutions **(**Jansen, 2004:126 in Grant & Singh, 2009). Moloi (2002 in Grant & Singh, 2009) suggests that although our education policies call for new ways of managing schools, many policies remain unresponsive and retain their rigid structures, with educators unable to shift from patriarchal and hierarchical ways of thinking.

Against this backdrop it is important to determine whether schools have shifted to becoming more participatory and inclusive (Grant and Singh, 2009). This study has revealed that schools and school management teams have indeed changed to become more inclusive and participatory (Grant and Singh, 2009). The findings further reveal that school management teams implement this form of leadership that is termed collaborative leadership (Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2004 in Grant & Singh, 2009). According to Harris & Muijs, (2005:31 in Grant & Singh, 2009) collaborative leadership is based on the premise that leadership should be shared throughout an organisation, such as a school, where there are multiple sources of guidance and direction, following the contours of expertise in an organisation, made coherent by a common culture.

The findings of this study are very significant because collaborative leadership allows for the emergence of teacher leadership as one of the multiple sources of guidance and direction (Grant & Singh, 2009). Collaborative leadership offers a radical departure from the traditional understanding of school leadership because it deconstructs the notion of leadership in relation to position in the organisation (Grant & Singh, 2009). Instead it constructs leadership as a process that is shared and that 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, 2008:85-86 in Grant & Singh, 2009).

This study has revealed that even though school management teams have made significant efforts to implement collaborative leadership in their schools they are still faced with many of challenges (Grant & Singh, 2009). For collaborative leadership really to take root in our schools, school management teams will have to make great efforts. Jansen argues that:

> *despite their obvious limits, schools remain the life-blood of our democracy (2004:127), requiring leaders (school management teams) who are socially just, and who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility towards and with others and to society as a whole* (Phendla, 2004:61in Grant & Singh, 2009).

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Annexure A

Letter of application to the Department of Education to do research in Gauteng schools

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Head of Department
Gauteng Department of Education
Private Bag X
Pretoria
0001

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Application to conduct research in schools

I, Phinias September, I. D. 6708085031088, currently a student at the University of Pretoria (Student no. 96314868) hereby wish to apply for permission to conduct research in four different schools in the Tshwane South District 4 region.

The interviews will be personal interviews with four principals, four deputy principals and four heads of department from four different primary schools in this region. The research will partial fulfil the requirements for the degree Magister Educationis in Educational Leadership.

The research topic is school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership and it deals mainly with leadership and management in primary schools. The aim of this study is to obtain ideas and opinions of school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership as a practice in primary schools.

The information obtained will be used for research purposes and no names of participants, schools or any identifying data regarding the schools will be made known in any of the reports.

I also need to stress that this will not have an impact on the teaching time of the educators or learners.

I hope my application will be granted.

Yours sincerely

………………………………   ………………………………….

P. September (Researcher)   Prof J.L. Beckmann (Supervisor)

Cell: 083 294 8220   Cell: 082 570 1825

Email: phinseptember@gmail.com   Email: johan.beckmann@up.ac.za

Annexure B

Letter of application to principals to do research in their schools

Dear Principal

Application to conduct research at your school

I hereby wish to apply for permission to conduct research at your school. The research topic is: ***School management teams' perception and understanding of collaborative leadership.***

A letter of application has also been sent to the Gauteng Department of Education and I am awaiting their response. The research will be conducted in the form of personal interviews with school management team members, who must include one of each of the following: a principal, a deputy principal and one head of department.

The interviews will last approximately 30-45 minutes and the identity of the school as well as of those participating in the study will be kept strictly confidential. The information obtained will be used for research purposes only.

Your assistance in this matter will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

…………………………………   ……………………………………

P. September (Researcher)   Prof J.L. Beckmann (Supervisor)

Cell: 083 294 8220   Cell: 082 570 1825

Email: phinseptember@gmail.com   Email: johan.beckmann@up.ac.za

Annexure C

Letter of invitation to participants to participate in the research and letter of consent

Dear Colleague

I, Phinias September, as a student at the University of Pretoria, hereby wish to invite you to participate in a study to determine school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership. For me to be able to do this I would appreciate your participation in this study. I would need to conduct a 45 minute personal interview in which you will be required to answer a few questions about leadership and management at your school. You may also be observed as part of this research project.

Your answers will be strictly confidential. I will not tell anyone the answers you provide; however ,findings from the study may be published but your name will never be used in any presentations or papers.

You do not have to participate in this study because participation is entirely voluntarily. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time. You may also choose not to answer particular questions that will be asked in the interview.

Yours sincerely

……………………………… ………………………………….
P. September (Researcher) Prof J.L. Beckmann (Supervisor)
Cell: 083 294 8220 Cell: 082 570 1825
Email: phinseptember@gmail.com Email: johan.beckmann@up.ac.za

Consent Letter:

I have been given the opportunity to read this consent form. I understand the information about this study. Questions that I wanted to ask about the study have been answered.

My signature signifies that I am willing to participate in this study.

………………………………..…   …………………………………..

  Participant's name   Participant's signature

……………………………………..
              Date

Annexure D

Gauteng Department of Education research approval letter

education
Department: Education
GAUTENG PROVINCE

For administrative use:
Reference no. D2012/209

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	10 February 2012
Validity of research Approval:	10 February 2012 to 30 September 2012
Name of Researcher:	September P.
Address of Researcher:	369 Begoria Avenue
	Eersterus
	Pretoria
	0022
Telephone Number:	012 806 9815 / 083 294 8220
Fax Number:	012 806 7152
Email address:	phinseptember@gmail.com
Research Topic:	School Management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership in Primary schools
Number and type of schools:	FOUR Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.

1

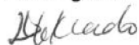**Making education a societal priority**

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

3.   A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

4.   A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.

5.   The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.

6.   Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.

7.   Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.

8.   Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.

9.   It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.

10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.

11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.

12. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.

13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.

14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

Dr David Makhado   2012/02/13

Director: Knowledge Management and Research

2

Annexure E

Ethical Clearance Certificate

Annexure F

Interview questions

Dear Sir/Madam

In my letter requesting this interview I indicated to you that I am busy with a research project on school management teams' understanding of collaborative leadership. I would like to stress that the aim of this research is to obtain your ideas and opinions regarding your understanding of collaborative leadership as a practice in your school.

The information obtained will be used for research purposes and no names of participants, schools or any identifying data regarding the school will be made known in any reports.

Introduction

Although the Task Team on Leadership and Development (DoE, 1996) introduced the notion of shared leadership as embodied among others in school management teams, considerable doubt remains about its practical implementation.

It seems that there may be widespread failure to implement the idea of shared leadership and participative (collaborative) leadership and the problem this research will explore is whether in the opinion of school management team members the traditional approach to leadership has changed.

Interview Questions

1. *What is your understanding of collaborative leadership?*

2. *According to your understanding of collaborative leadership, do you experience collaborative leadership in your school?*

3. *What tasks do you as a member of school management teams use to implement collaborative leadership in your school?*

4. *What strategies do you as a member of a school management team use to implement collaborative leadership in your school?*

5. *What are the challenges that you as a member of a school management team need to address to implement collaborative leadership successfully in your school?*

6. *What are the resources that you think school management teams need to implement collaborative leadership successfully in your school?*

7. *Do you agree with the statement that there is widespread failure to implement collaborative leadership in our schools? Why?*

8. *Do you agree that many principals still hold on to traditional approaches of leadership? Why?*

9. *Do you agree that principals should explore more than one approach to leadership in their schools? Why?*

10. *Do you think that school management teams, given their huge responsibility of running schools successfully, are adequately trained to deal with the management challenges of the 21st century school? Why?*

Annexure G

Letter indicating that this mini-dissertation was edited

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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University of Pretoria
Groenkloof Campus
PRETORIA 0002
South Africa
2012-8-25

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that I, the undersigned, have edited the dissertation titled *School Management Teams' Understanding of Collaborative Leadership in Primary Schools in Gauteng* by Phinias September for language and grammar errors.

The suggested changes have been indicated and communicated to the candidate. It is the candidate's responsibility to effect the changes electronically before printing the document to be handed in for assessment.

Prof. Tinus Kühn
Department of Curriculum Studies
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