Distributed leadership as manifested in the role of the primary school deputy-principal

by

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Declaration

I declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Educationis in Education Leadership at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

Signature: ………………………………….

Date: …..…………………………………

Dedication

I dedicate this research to a number of people to whom I am truly indebted and without whom this dissertation might not have been written.

In respectful memory of the late Dr Jurina Human – in her capacity as both my lecturer of education law at the University of Pretoria and IDSO for the Gauteng Department of Education – and especially for her influential encouragement. Although she was unable to see the final dissertation, her sincere interest in my study will always be an inspiration to me.

In loving honour of my late parents Jan and Isabella Swart, for teaching me the values of hard work and perseverance.

I am deeply grateful to my dear husband, Hennie, who lovingly believed in me and encouraged me to pursue my dream. The myriad ways of demonstrating his fullest understanding, support and sacrifice made it possible to accomplish this study. Thank you so much. I am truly blessed!

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Abstract

In this study, the role of the deputy-principal is examined. An attempt is made to gain a better understanding on how distributed leadership manifests in the role of the primary school deputy-principal by focusing on the deputy-principal's activities and interactions with, among others, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the principal, educators, the School Governing Body (SGB) and the community. A deputy-principal is in the unique position of being not only the assistant to the principal and deputising for the principal during his or her absence, but also a teaching staff member. Education leadership literature shows that little attention has been given to the specific duties and responsibilities of South African deputy-principals in comparison to other leadership and management positions in schools. Due to the vaguely defined position of deputy-principals, their role and responsibilities remain largely undetermined. By posing the central research question to the study: "How is distributed leadership manifested in the role of the primary school deputy-principals?" the aim was to determine what primary school deputy-principals do on a daily basis at school, what the different perspectives are on the role and responsibilities of the deputy-principal with regard to school management and leadership, and also who determines what the primary school deputy-principal does and what criteria are used to determine these duties. Purposive sampling was used, selecting five large primary schools in the Tshwane South District of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE).

Keywords

Distributed leadership; shared leadership; deputy-principal; empowerment; professional development; primary school; multiple deputy-principals; teamwork; workload; assistant to the principal; duties and responsibilities; preparation for principalship.

Language editor

Language Editing & Educational Support Services

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

13 November 2019

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I have completed the language editing of the dissertation **Distributed leadership as manifested in the role of the primary school deputy-principal** by Christa Marelize Jansen submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree **Magister Educationis** in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria.

Yours faithfully

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List of abbreviations

ACESLM	Advanced Certificate in Education, School Leadership and Management
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
DAS	Development Appraisal System
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DLI	Distributed Leadership Inventory
DP	Deputy-principal
DSG	Development Support Group
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
HODs	Heads of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Material
MGSLG	Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance
NPFTED	National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa
NZ	New Zealand
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
P	Principal
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PS	Performance Standard
SASA	South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996
SAT	School Assessment Team
SBST	School Based Support Team
SDT	Staff Development Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SMT	School Management Team
WF	Wallace Foundation

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Studies on twenty-first century school leadership have received a high degree of prominence and attention in recent years (Storey, 2004:249). In addition, legislative and policy demands on education transformation have contributed to a shift away from a centralised bureaucratic structure towards a more flexible, decentralised system (Wilhelm, 2013:62; Lemmer, 2004:14). Pressures from global changes in government policies have also contributed to school leadership receiving more responsibility for improving education and a growing number of scholars have suggested that school leadership is considered to be critical for school improvement (Du Plessis & Heystek, 2019:2; Wilhelm, 2013:62; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:3) and that effective schools are led by effective leaders (Gurr, 2015:145; Kruger, 2004:41). Although research indicates that a correlation exists between a shift from a traditional teacher leadership approach to applying a shared or distributed leadership approach (Lashway, 2003:4), Storey (2004:249) advocates that little empirical work has been carried out "on the meanings and implications of distributed leadership".

Distributed leadership involves two aspects, namely "a leader-plus aspect" and a "practice aspect" (Spillane, 2005:144). Numerous studies have confirmed that the notion of the principal as the solo "heroic leader" is outdated (Hartley, 2007:208-209; Oduro, 2004:23) and that the task of transforming schools is too complex for one person to accomplish alone (Kruger, 2004:43-44). Principals, in particular, are confronted with immense and wide-ranging demands and are required to think anew in managing the school effectively (OECD, 2009:191). According to Lashway (2003:4) even "the best-qualified principal is unlikely to have mastery of all those areas" principals are expected to manage. Hence, studies have suggested that effective school leadership ought to involve multiple people in various degrees and it should not only be located in those in top positions (Harris, 2005:11). Principals should thus be trained and learn how to share leadership in order to manage their schools effectively (Wilhelm, 2013:62; Naicker & Mestry, 2011:105).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the light of changing education contexts, deputy-principals across the globe have experienced their position as continuously evolving (Garrett & McGeachie, 1999:67)

and are increasingly experiencing an intensification in leadership responsibilities (Natsiopoulou & Giouroukakis, 2010:1) as their principals are bombarded with more responsibilities and a heavier workload (Triegaardt, 2013:2).

Various studies have revealed that deputy-principals carry out one of the least understood roles in modern education (Lochmiller & Karnopp, 2016:205; Petrides, Jimes & Karaglani, 2014:173). As mirrored by a number of scholars, deputy-principals generally experience a shift from a more "traditional" role towards a role that comprises more leadership functions (Blose, 2019:2; Petrides, Jimes & Karaglani, 2014:174). Although the deputy-principalship is also regarded as preparation for principalship (Johnson, 2015:8) it appears as if very few empirical studies have focused on the role and responsibilities of South African deputy-principals (Blose, 2019:1; Khumalo et al., 2018:190; Khumalo et al., 2017:193; Naicker & Mestry, 2011:100; Sepheka, 2006:14).

Seeing that the core duties and responsibilities of deputy-principals vary according to the needs of the specific school (RSA, 2016a: A-30), it appears challenging to determine exactly what deputy-principals do (Hodges, 2018:32; Sharp & Walter, 2012:153). In South Africa the formal hierarchical management structure in public schools essentially consists of the principal, deputy-principal, head of department (HOD) and teachers (RSA, 2016a: A30-31). Deputy-principals are thus in a unique position where they are the assistant to the principal, deputise for the principal during their absence, yet remain a teaching staff member (RSA, 2016a: A-30). Significantly, literature on school management and leadership has proven to focus more on the role(s) of the principal and/or HOD (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009:1; Christie, 2010:698-699). Due to a lack of clarity, some scholars have described the role of the deputy-principal as "ambiguous" (Best, 2016:3) and labelled it a "nebulous position" (Jubilee, 2013:8).

As second-in-command of public schools in South Africa, it would be justified to assume that deputy-principals would have received more prominence in the education literature. Notwithstanding empirical research conducted by Johnson (2015), Hilliard and Newsome (2013), Sharp and Walter (2012), Scott (2011) and Retelle (2010), uncertainty still exists regarding the role and responsibility of deputy-principals within the broader context of a school's management team. Despite extensive theory about distributed leadership, limited empirical knowledge exists about how and to what

extent principals actually distribute leadership in their schools (Lashway, 2003:3). Hence, Du Plessis and Heystek (2019:3) argue that:

> "Since school principals are accountable for the quality of education in their schools, it can be assumed that in a shared or distributed leadership model, leaders at levels lower than the principal should be equally accountable for the quality of education in the school."

Studies also provided evidence that principals often follow their own discretion in determining the role of the deputy-principal (Kwan, 2009:193; Harvey & Sheridan, 1995:69). This includes, for example, assigning duties to their deputy-principals they are reluctant to handle themselves (Sharp & Walter, 2012:153). Despite suggestions that a deputy-principal's position should be defined and recognised as a leadership role "in its own right" (Cooke, 2015:37), no universal definition or job description could be found (Johnson, 2015:30). On the other hand, Nieuwenhuizen (2011:13-14) argues that deputy-principals are mostly engaged with clerical duties rather than performing duties associated with a functioning administrative team. In their study on South African school leadership development, Sullivan and Associates (2013:3) confirmed that the leadership roles and responsibilities of deputy-principals are not defined.

Considering the above and in alignment with Jubilee (2013:8), who contended that if the role of the deputy-principal is not distinctly defined, it could cause a negative impact on a school's leadership and success, the question arises: What does a primary school deputy-principal actually do at the school all day?

1.3   RATIONALE

The rationale for this study emerged from a personal experience and was later confirmed in the literature. I experienced first-hand how a principal single-handedly can change the job description of a deputy-principal within a few minutes. I was selected to act as deputy-principal for a few months. My first encounter of this new experience was when the principal called me to his office to inform me that prior to my taking up my new position, he had changed the deputy-principal's job description to exclude the maintenance of services and buildings for the duration of my acting. As I knew I had the necessary skills, knowledge and competence to also attend to that part of the job, my first reaction was that the principal's decision was not justified, that I had

fallen prey to a sexist viewpoint, being a female and the other deputy-principal was a male. At that time, I even wondered whether the principal had the authority to make such a change in the job description on his own.

Bearing in mind that the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) covers the terms and conditions of employment of educators in the public service, including the role of the deputy-principal (RSA, 2016a), I recently experienced how the principal at my current school changed the job description of a newly appointed deputy-principal prior to her taking up her responsibilities. This occurrence made me ponder the reason(s) why a principal would find it necessary to change the deputy-principal's job description and especially, what criteria would be used to justify such a decision. Curiosity as well as a keen interest in the topic of the role of the deputy- principalship, I held informal conversations with colleagues, aiming to determine their viewpoints on the role and responsibilities of the deputy principal. Surprisingly, I discovered that a number of educators (some highly experienced) were unsure of the exact role and responsibilities bestowed upon deputy-principals.

A 69-page report on a study for the Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance conducted by Pat Sullivan and Associates entitled *School Leadership Development Framework for the Gauteng Department of Education* had only one page dedicated to the role of deputy-principals (Sullivan & Associates, 2013:41-42). In another 103-page report to the Minister of Education on *Schools that Work* (Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007:54), specific reference to the deputy-principal occurred only once. Significantly, both these documents make more reference to the HOD than to the deputy-principal, despite the fact that the deputy-principal holds a more senior position than the HOD.

This study is therefore a result of a personal experience as well as a gap in available literature on the roles and responsibilities of the primary school deputy-principal in which I have attempted to gain a better understanding of how policy plays out in practice.

1.4   AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to explore how distributed leadership is manifested in the role of a primary school deputy-principal.

The objectives of the study are to determine:

a) How distributed leadership is manifested in the role of a primary school deputy-principal.

b) The role and duties of primary school deputy-principals.

c) How principals view the role of primary school deputy-principals.

d) Who determines what the primary school deputy-principal does and what criteria are used to determine their duties.

e) How primary school deputy-principals experience their role, both as a leader and as a member of staff.

1.5   THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Taking the unique character of the individual schools into consideration, this study explored the prevalence of distributed leadership practice in the role of the primary school deputy-principals. Focusing on the deputy-principal's activities or interactions with, for example, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the principal, school management teams (SMTs), educators, school governing bodies (SGB) and the community, this study intended to gain a better understanding of the actual role and duties performed by the primary school deputy-principal, as well as to determine how distributed leadership manifests in the deputy-principal's daily school activities. Considering the uniqueness of a primary school, the roles of the deputy-principals were examined.

1.6   RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS

This study answers to the following main research question:

"How is distributed leadership manifested in the role of primary school deputy-principals?"

The following sub-questions were derived from the main question in order to support the primary research question:

a) What is the role and the duties of primary school deputy-principals?

b) How do primary school principals view the role of their deputy-principals?

c) Who determines what deputy-principals do and what criteria are used to determine it?

d) How does a primary school deputy-principal experience his or her role?

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Literature indicates that a distributed leadership framework has proved to be a very useful theoretical framework for understanding the realities associated with schools by providing an "achievable and sustainable" alternative to a solo "heroic" leadership (Timperley, 2005:395). The theoretical framework that assisted this study is based on a distributed leadership framework developed by Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004). This framework centres on the "how" and "why" of leadership practice and includes, among other things, examining the interrelatedness of leaders, their followers and their unique circumstances (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:27). Williams (2011:1) explains that the "[t]heory on leadership has recently undergone a major paradigm shift: from the traditional view of leadership as centred in [the] individual role or responsibility to alternative leadership theories which place the focus on multiple sources of leadership."

The major responsibility for the improvement of teaching and learning typically lies in the hands of the principal and the deputy-principal. Principals, however, find themselves overwhelmed with all their responsibilities and the teachers lack support to step forward as instructors (Bierly, Doyle & Smith, 2016:6). In the light of the above, and referring to the study of Timperley (2005:395), who reported that there is an increasing demand in practice and in theory to think of educational leadership in terms of activities and interactions that are distributed amongst numerous stakeholders and situations, a distributed leadership framework guided this study in finding answers to the research questions.

Although a distributed approach to leadership is not new, a re-conceptualisation thereof has gained prominence since the 1980s and early 1990s (Timperley, 2005:396). After an examination of various definitions of distributed leadership, Williams (2011:190-192) concluded that:

> "… a number of features suggest that distributed leadership is a form of leadership that should be seriously considered as a means of addressing the leadership crisis in many South African schools."

Distributed leadership thus places an emphasis on interactions between multiple leaders and followers rather than on actions (Harris & DeFlaminis, 2016:141; Timperley, 2005:396), which can assist schools in having a less rigid, more flexible leadership structure (De Villiers, 2010:37). This means a shift from a single individual to multiple individuals who are regarded as partners or group members, and who share the responsibility for leadership (Hughes & Pickeral, 2013:1; Triegaardt, 2013:38; Du Plessis, 2014:47). Hence, as a theoretical framework, distributed leadership can be helpful to obtain a better understanding of the leadership practices at schools and can also be of assistance to gain a better understanding of how the school's leadership style influences (or does not influence) the role of the primary school deputy-principal. Distributed leadership has thus become progressively more imperative in practice, recognising that the school principal, as sole leader, does not produce the maximum benefits for the school (RSA, 2008:19).

1.8   RESEARCH SCOPE

In this study, the research focused primarily on how leadership is distributed among multiple deputy-principals in five public primary schools in the Tshwane South district of Gauteng. This study relied on the views and experiences of five principals and ten deputy-principals (two from each of the participating schools) at the purposefully sampled schools. All the participating schools are urban schools with between 815 and 1937 enrolled learners and located within close proximity of a ten kilometre radius from one another.

1.9   RESEARCH APPROACH

Reality is constructed through human interaction and therefore there can be multiple realities (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:35). Advancing from an interpretivist paradigm, this research made use of case study research, seeking to obtain in-depth, in-context understandings about how the participants perceive their natural surroundings (Mills & Gay, 2016:32).

1.9.1   Research design

In this qualitative inquiry a multiple case study design was employed. Bertram and Christiansen (2017:42) describe a case study as an in-depth, systematic style of research which aims to describe "what it is like" to be in a specific situation or circumstances. Yin (1984), in Nieuwenhuis (2013:75) defines the case study research method as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used".

The study allowed for multiple participants, not just a single voice or two. Hence, this study made use of multiple case studies as a design to collect comprehensive data from the participants, endeavouring to gain an understanding of the dynamics of their perspectives or experiences on how distributed leadership is manifested in the role of the primary school deputy-principal.

1.10   METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

This study made use of purposive sampling. Creswell (2014:228) describes purposive sampling as a method of sampling where researchers intentionally select individuals and their sites with an exact rationale in mind. Experienced in a primary school setting, I purposefully selected five primary schools from the Tshwane South District in Gauteng where I teach. The selected five primary schools (schools which employ multiple deputy-principals) were purposely selected from the eastern suburbs of Pretoria as this area is conveniently located not too far from my home and school where I teach, limiting travel expenses and time wasted. Schools in this area vary in language of learning and teaching (LOLT), comprising mainly of English schools, with a few Afrikaans schools.

Participants could be re-visited as often as it was practically possible. The participants from the five selected schools comprised three participants per school, namely the principal and two deputy-principals. Where schools had more than two deputy-principals, those two deputy-principals with the most experience in school management were selected to participate in the study.

Consisting of a set of predetermined questions, two sets of semi-structured interview schedules were used. One set was used for the participating principals, and the other

for interviewing the deputy-principals (See Addendum C and D). Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted in the participants' natural environment (school) where they could feel at ease. The interviews focused on the specific aspects that would give a better understanding of each participant's viewpoint on the questions asked during the interviews (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:439). The semi-structured interviews enabled probing and clarification during the interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:88). During each of the interviews, notes and summaries were made in a reflective journal, which later on proved to be a helpful reference tool when the data was analysed (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:465).

1.11 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In line with qualitative research features, the data analysis process started at the same time the data was collected (Male, 2016:178). The interviews were conducted over a three week period. Each of the interviews was recorded and transcribed. This was followed by an inductive process of reducing and coding the data. The data was organised, and a few themes emerged from the data reducing process. This guided the further process of data analysis and assisted with the drawing of conclusions.

1.12 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The structure of the dissertation is briefly outlined as follows.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This first chapter consists of the background of the study, problem statement, rationale, aims and objectives, purpose of the study, research questions and sub-questions, theoretical framework, research scope/approach/design and method of data collection.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter Two discusses literature relating to the role of the principal, the principal and deputy-principal relationship, conceptualising deputy-principalship, the role of the primary school deputy-principal, distributed leadership, and schools with multiple deputy-principals.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter Three elaborates on the research methodology and research design that will be followed in the study.

Chapter 4: Presentation of data

In Chapter Four the participants are described, and the data is presented.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

Chapter Five focuses on the empirical aspect of the study. This includes a discussion of the findings regarding the leadership functions of deputy-principals, the professional support and assistance to deputy-principals, professional interaction between the deputy-principals and the understanding of the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Chapter Six contains the overall conclusion on the dissertation, including recommendations and suggestions for practice and further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Public institutions are dynamic, ever-changing organisations that are highly influenced by external factors such as policies, globalisation, localisation, the changing workplace, post-modernism and technology (Bester & Brand, 2013; Underberg, 2009; Vockley, 2007:2; Weber, 2007; Roux, 2002:418-421). Inevitably, schools are continuously faced with changes and too many decisions to be made by one or two people (Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2013:32-41; Newhouse, 2010). Chapter 2 attempts to examine how distributed leadership is engaged in the role of the deputy-principal within the complexity of a primary school. Detailed consideration is given to the individual roles and duties of the deputy-principal. Furthermore, the relationship between the principal and deputy-principal is explored and particularly how a distributed leadership approach impacts the overall management and leadership of a school. In the review of the literature, an attempt will be made to indicate how distributed leadership is incorporated into the formal structures of the public education system.

2.2 OFFICIAL POLICIES AND FORMAL STRUCTURES

The philosophy of schools revolves around the optimal development of learners' potential (Van Zyl, 2013:147). The South African education system is complex. After the first democratic election in 1994, the government has attempted to implement educational reform and to transform the education system from an authoritarian, bureaucratic leadership to a leadership that distributes the leadership among all stakeholders (Sibanda, 2017:567). Since effective school management and leadership is crucial for improving the quality of education (Joubert & Bray, 2007:23-26), this study essentially takes into consideration the mission statement of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), namely "To ensure that quality learning and teaching take place in the classroom every day" (RSA, 2014:17). Proportionally, the size of a school has an impact on the school management (Southworth, 2004:7; RSA, 2016a:A-11). Bigger schools require more in terms of the administrative demands on educators, hence principles such as "power sharing" and "stakeholder participation" are indisputably critical in education (Joubert & Bray, 2007:12-13).

2.3 PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES (PAM)

The PAM published in terms of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 is relevant to all South African public schools, large and small. The aim of the deputy-principal's job, as contained in the PAM (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31) is:

- To assist the principal in managing the school and promoting the education of learners in a proper manner.

- To maintain a total awareness of the administrative procedures across the total range of school activities and functions.

The PAM describes the duties and responsibilities of a deputy-principal's job as being "individual and varied, depending on the approaches and needs of the particular school" and include, but are not limited to the following: "general/administrative, teaching, extra and co-curricular, personnel, interaction with stake-holders and communication" (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31). Deputy-principals must therefore manage the school and accept the full responsibility of running the school while deputising in the absence of the principal (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31:A-30).

2.3.1 School management team (SMT)

Joubert and Bray (2007:2) describe a school as an organisation where "there are just too many decisions to be made for one person to deal with them all" and that "the workload is too great for one or two staff members to cope with." This is confirmed by a comprehensive study conducted in 900 schools by Chrisholm et al. (2005:19) on educator workload. Their findings have revealed that the innumerable roles educators are expected to fill, increase their workload. The SMT ought to assist the principal in the execution of the professional management affairs and the duties delegated to the principal by the SGB (Colditz, 2007:4). Neither the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (SASA), (RSA, 1996b), nor provincial legislation singles out the existence of the SMT, hence no official prescriptions regarding the composition thereof exist. Most public schools, however, have an effective SMT which consists of at least the principal, deputy-principal and HODs (Colditz, 2007:1-3). Deputy-principals therefore automatically form part of the SMT due to the position entrusted to them. Depending on a school's unique circumstances, some schools may include subject heads or heads of grades in the SMT (Joubert & Bray, 2007:20; Kruger, 2004:44).

An organogram can be a useful instrument to graphically illustrate the SMT's job titles and positions and the inter-relatedness thereof. Also, organograms visibly indicate the lines of the decision-making and leadership structure as well as the organisational structure and the interaction between the relevant stakeholders, units and departments (Van Zyl, 2013:147).
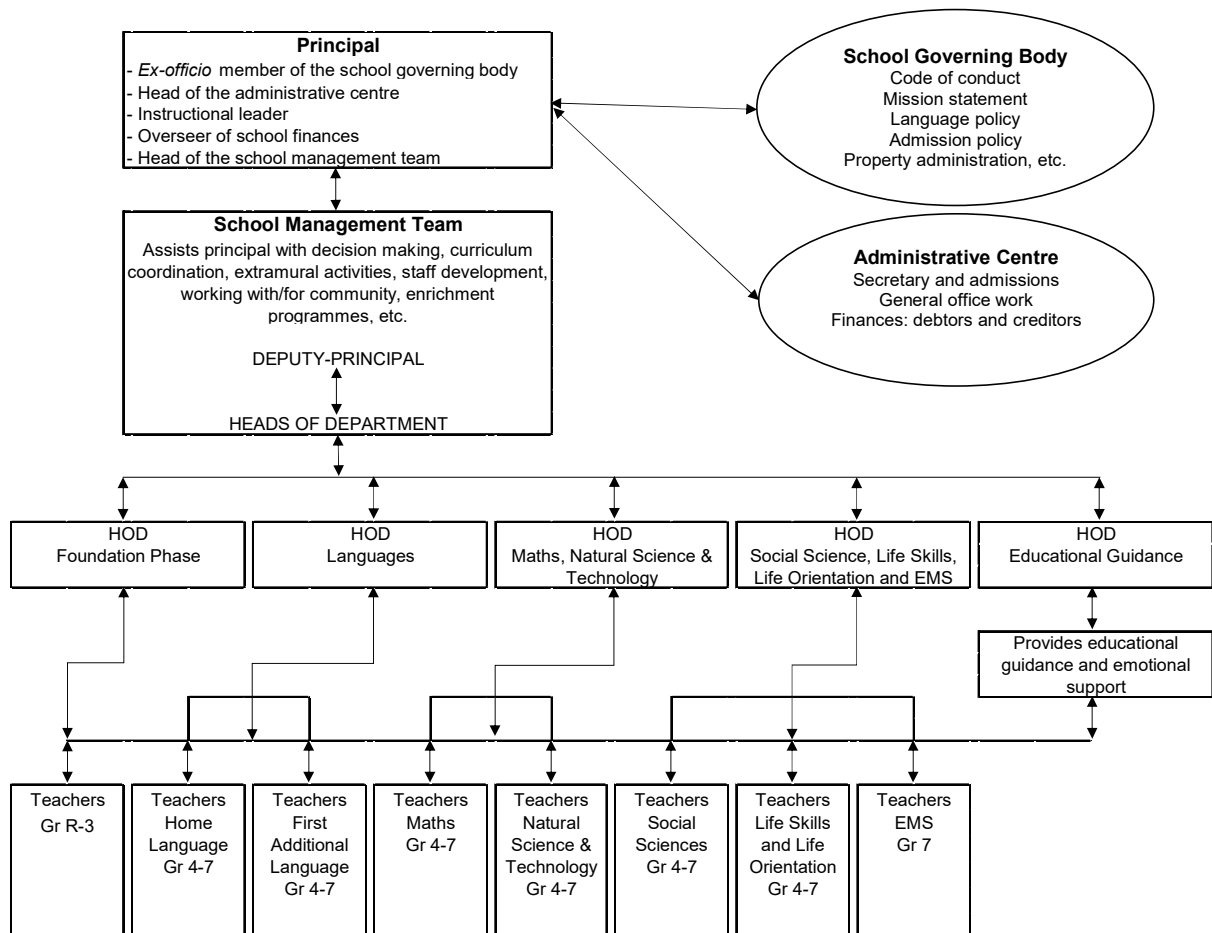
Figure 2.1: A simplified organogram of a primary school as an organisation (adapted from Van Zyl, 2013:148)

The example of an organogram in Figure 2.1 represents a fairly large primary school in which provision is made for leadership through various functions. This organogram displays an intuitive top-down-reflection that the school is led by a principal, who is supported by the SMT, the deputy-principal and the heads of department (HODs). In addition, the correlation among other stakeholders such as the SGB and the administrative personnel is briefly reflected. The lateral level of HODs can be increased or decreased according to the school's size and needs. Depending on the

school's internal structuring, heads of grades (Gr R to 7) can also be added and will thus fill the gap between the teachers (per grade) and the relevant HOD. This possibility, however, is not indicated on this organogram.

It is one of the core functions of the school principal to develop the SMT into a successful leadership team (RSA, 2008:20) which should reflect group cohesion (Hulpia, Devos & Rosseel, 2009:1015). The induction programme of the DBE describes the role of the SMT as, *inter alia,* to build relationships between the SMT and teachers (DBE, 2016:4). An essential role of the SMT is thus to facilitate and organise educational staff in a way which is conducive to learning and teaching (Sullivan & Associates, 2013:40; Kruger, 2004:44). In other words, the SMT is responsible for all relevant aspects pertaining to the provision of quality education: human resources management and support of staff, teaching and managing the curriculum as well as the management of the extra-curricular programmes (Joubert & Bray, 2007:20).

In this respect, literature increasingly emphasises concepts like "shared management", "distributed leadership", "team leadership" and "leadership teams" (Gronn, 2003:2-17; Hall, 2001:327-328). Accordingly, a growing emphasis is placed on cooperative management and leadership (Hoerr, 2017:86-87) and the claim that functioning in a team is better than working alone (Chang, 2011:493). An organised and well-functioning team provides a breeding-ground to create, establish and maintain realistic goals among the team members and, through support the team generates positive cooperation and collaboration. The SMT thus ought to focus more on the outcome of the team than on the benefit of an individual role player (Bipath, 2013:86).

A distributed approach to leadership focuses more on the interactions of leaders than on their actions (Harris, 2010:56), hence it influences new patterns of interaction among the educational staff members and is not merely dependent on individuals' leadership functions.

2.3.2   The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is the result of negotiations between the DBE and teacher unions in their quest to introduce a transparent form of

monitoring and evaluation of teachers (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2013:49). Performance Standard 9 of the IQMS addresses the management and development of personnel (Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), 2003:27-28). As key accountable person of the school, the principal has the overall responsibility to implement the IQMS in all its facets. The educators (including the deputy-principal), should accordingly be guided and offered the opportunity for continuous growth and development. Even though ongoing professional development is the primary responsibility of the educator him/herself, the principal remains an important partner and participant in implementing staff development programmes. For this reason, it must be highlighted that there is a distinction between the professional and the personal development of staff. Professional development is associated with the attainment of relevant credentials to improve and empower educators to perform their duties more effectively. In contrast, personal development is more complex and concerned with the enhancement of an individual's potential, talents, values, emotions, beliefs and behaviour with the goal of assisting the person to function better (Mosoge, 2013:169-170).

The workload of school principals is gradually increasing (Muijs & Harris, 2003:7) and the "boundaries of what principals can accomplish in the practical world of schools" are recognised (Heck & Hallinger, 2009:684). School principals therefore progressively rely on the SMT to facilitate the process of professional staff development (Du Plessis, 2014:3). Considering everything already mentioned, it has been found that leadership of a group cannot be vested in a single person, but should rather be focused on teamwork (Marishane, 2013a:98). In fact, it is evident that teamwork forms an integral part of the IQMS. Given these points, Van Rooyen, (2013:155,187) maintains that professional development prospers where teachers work together in teams.

In the quest for school improvement through quality teaching and learning, a distributed leadership approach sets the scene for better leadership strategies by means of integrating more staff members in the decision-making process (Harris, 2010:58). An educator's initial training is thus not always adequate for being an effective manager or leader.

2.4   THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

As in many other countries, South African school leaders begin their professional careers as teachers and progress to principalship by being promoted from one level of leadership position to the following (Bush, 2010:112; Middlewood, 2010:142). A few scholars have found that classroom performance and teaching experience are likely to be used as parameters when appointing a principal (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015:1-8; Bush, 2010:113). Hence, the appointment of principals with limited management/leadership skills can thus potentially result in various problems, making such schools difficult to lead (Bush, 2010:93).

South African principals face various challenges (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:99) and it can be accepted that the increased complexity of the South African school context indirectly affects leadership decisions that must be made (Botha, 2016:6804). Van Rooyen (2013:152-153) confirms the increased accountability of principals as indicated in the Education Laws Amendment Act No. 53 of 2000 (RSA, 2000:4) and in addition, Middlewood (2010:141-142) found that the role of principals has become progressively autonomous.

Resulting from its in-depth international study on creating effective teaching and learning environments, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009) indicates that there is a rising concern that the role of the principal, which was originally designed for the industrial age, has not since been adapted to address the intensified complexities of 21st century education leadership and challenges (Fitzsimons, James & Denyer, 2011:313; OECD, 2009:192; Reddy, 1999:54). It is therefore argued that the role of the principal should be adapted accordingly (OECD, 2009:192; Harris, 2003:318-319). What is required, are highly effective principals who manage to "maintain a balancing act of 'stepping up' (being more directive as needed), and 'stepping back' (acting more in a guiding role as appropriate)" (Wilhelm, 2010: Online). This delicate balance, according to Wilhelm (2013:62-63) will result in highly functioning leadership teams.

The principal has the overall responsibility of managing a public school efficiently and the authority to take appropriate action to ensure a suitable environment where quality teaching and learning can take place. On the one hand it is the duty of the principal to

ensure that all the school's management systems are understood and administered (RSA, 2016a: 8,11,21). On the other hand, school principals ought to develop leadership potential in their staff (Humphreys, 2010:33). Literature confirms that the personal characteristics of the principal and the approach to how responsibilities and duties are executed have undergone extensive metamorphosis. Hence, the role of the principal is now seen as far too complex and demanding for a single individual to handle (Bush, 2010:112-118; OECD, 2009:13,17). This, however, does not mean that the principal's role is considered less important (Williams, 2011:192). In fact, school principalship is a specialist profession that requires professional training and leadership development (Bush, 2010:113; Coleman, 2003:182). The principal is correspondingly seen as the "leader of leaders" (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:100-101) and that other stakeholders must be involved to assist (Botha, 2016:6805). In her book on the traits of effective principals, McEwan (2003) lists the following ten qualities of highly effective principals: communicator, educator, envisioner, facilitator, change master, culture builder, activator, producer, character builder and contributor. Although Naidoo and Petersen (2015:3) report that in many respects principals perceive their role as mostly administrative – with a slight accent on learner welfare and discipline –it is important to realise that school principals not only bring into the school environment a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills, but as a team leader they should apply and share this optimally for the benefit of the school in all its facets (Marishane, 2013b:135).

With the cooperation and support of the SMT, principals are responsible for the professional management of the school (Joubert & Bray, 2007:20). The Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship (RSA, 2016b:13) presents the fundamental areas of principalship whereas the PAM includes policy prescriptions regarding their core duties and responsibilities. As instructional leader the principal is found to be in an ideal position to directly influence the organisational culture of the school through providing support for staff development programmes and involving teachers in decision-making (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015:1-3; RSA, 2016a:23-25; Kruger, 2013:6; Hallinger, 2012:48). Principals can, however, delegate some duties to their subordinates, yet they remain the appointee of authority who is in the position of responsibility. The providing of professional development opportunities should thus "fundamentally be about educator learning and should result in changes in skills,

beliefs and attitudes due to the acquisition of new skills, concepts, appropriate knowledge and processes related to the act of teaching" (Du Plessis, 2014:62).

Principals who want to accomplish established targets for their schools need to be familiar with curricular developments and focus incisively on the quality of teaching and learning (Humphreys, 2010:34) and in particular, ensure all-out performance from all the relevant staff members (Naidu et al. 2013:93). It is thus primarily a principal's task to create an encouraging atmosphere where teachers (including the deputy-principal) can effectively participate in team work and efficiently apply the principles of educational management (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2013:111), motivation and the offering of emotional support (Niemann & Kotzé, 2006:612). In effect, principals function centrally in various interlinked teams, working together towards better school performance (RSA, 2008:19) and integrating the various departments into a harmonious unity. To illustrate this point, the education management process is demonstrated with the help of a model which consists of separate compartments, indicating the various tasks and duties which ought to be managed by the school (see Figure 2.2).
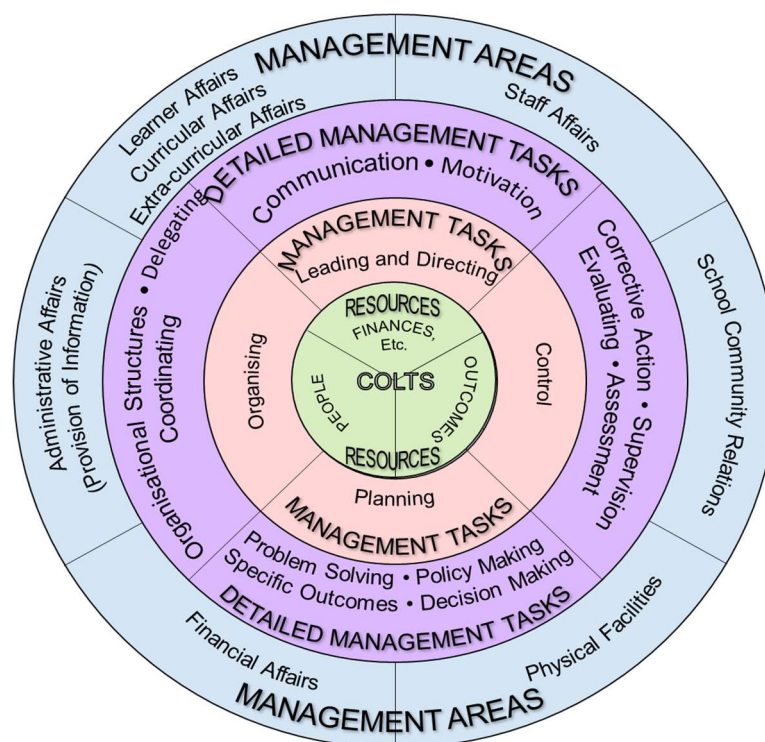
Figure 2.2: Model of the education management process (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2013:73)

By implication, principals must be visionary and innovative, take risks when necessary, foster collaboration by endorsing co-operative goals and build trust. They must share a vision and empower their staff members to become capable in what they do and strengthen them by sharing information and power. Also, principals must provide the required support and the school must become a learning organisation in which the staff is encouraged to persevere and eventually succeed.

To sum up, principals are fundamental to the success of schools in providing quality teaching and learning, but most importantly, they have the overall responsibility to empower staff and build a professional learning community in the school through providing opportunities for shared leadership, teamwork and participation in decision-making (RSA, 2016a:23; Niemann & Kotzé, 2006:612,622-623). Resulting from their changed role, principals are expected to spend a substantial amount of time and effort on the professional development of their staff, including the development of leadership capacity (Van Rooyen, 2013:143; McEwan, 2003:23). In a broader context, the district offices of the DBE should not only develop school principals, but their deputies too (Syed, 2015:25, 27).

2.5 THE PRINCIPAL AND DEPUTY-PRINCIPAL RELATIONSHIP

School leadership is rapidly expanding and as a result of their escalated workload, it is essentially part of leadership to delegate more responsibilities to other staff members (Van Deventer, 2013:118-119; Muijs & Harris, 2003:7). In this context, delegation means that the principal requests an appropriate staff member to perform a task or duty which is considered necessary for the effective functioning of the school (Van Zyl, 2013:152; Bush, 2003:68). To clarify, Van Deventer (2013:118) explains that:

> "The work of a principal – a school manager – is to get the work of teaching and learning at his school done through the efforts of others. No principal can exercise leadership without delegating most of his responsibilities. Unless work responsibilities, authority and power are shared among the staff members, the school will lack creativity and adaptability."

To manage their unique position successfully, Kerry (2000:38) suggests that deputy-principals should exercise diplomacy and that a large degree of trust should exist between the deputy-principal and the principal. Weller and Weller (2002:68-69) regard

trust as the lubricant or emotional glue that binds the participants together, whereas Kerry (2000:16-17) regards trust as the secret to a successful working relationship between the principal and the deputy-principal. In addition, good communication is also seen as a factor in establishing a successful partnership. This implies working together in a cohesive professional relationship (Marshall & Hooley, 2006:6).

Principals thus play a crucial role in leadership development (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015:1-3; Huber, 2004:676), including the development of the deputy-principal. This resonates with the Ministry of Basic Education's call on school leaders to accept more responsibility in the management of their respective schools (SA News, 2012:Online). Accordingly, the principal simultaneously serves as manager and a leader of the school and is considered the appropriate person to facilitate and implement change (Marishane, 2013b:125; Van Deventer, 2013:68). A report by the Wallace Foundation (WF) 2008 on the relationship between principals and their deputy-principals emphasises that principals should cultivate leadership in their deputies as this will be of great advantage when the deputy is promoted to principal (Syed, 2015:25,27). As appointee to assist the principal (RSA, 2016a:A30-A31), the deputy-principal is in the ideal position to share responsibilities with the principal. More specifically, the principal should assist and develop the deputy-principal to be completely capable of deputising for the principal in his or her absence (Hilliard & Newsome, 2013:153). Although it is time-consuming and demanding to mentor a mentee, a principal who dutifully mentor his or her deputy-principal will benefit directly and indirectly from a professionally developed deputy-principal as assistant (Mosoge, 2013:185-186).

It therefore becomes essential for principals to distribute the leadership duties to other school leaders who, in turn, will grow in knowledge, experience and confidence (Botha, 2016:6804). Correspondingly, principals should know their deputy-principals well, acknowledge their good qualities and protect them where necessary (Davis, 2008:6). Findings by the WF on how principals use various methods at school to cultivate talented deputy-principals indicate that sharing work with the deputy-principal not only provides more time in the principal's schedule, but also builds the skills and confidence of the deputy-principals (Syed, 2015:24). Most importantly, the leadership of principals and their deputy-principals is crucial for the coordination of groups who function in vertical and horizontal patterns (Starrat, 2011:132).

2.6 CONCEPTUALISING DEPUTY-PRINCIPALSHIP

"'What do deputy-principals do?' These questions are seldom asked and rarely answered" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006:1-2). Researchers such as Cranston, Tromans and Reugebrink (2004:241) and Muijs and Harris (2003:6) question the insufficiency of literature reviews on deputy-principalship in contrast to other school leadership positions. Evidently, literature on school principals and HODs is far more freely available than studies on the deputy-principalship (Lee, Kwan & Walker, 2009:188).

Despite many educational changes in South Africa since 1994, no substantive policy amendments have been made in seventeen years with regards to the role of the deputy-principal, as published in both the 2016 and 1996 PAM (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31; RSA, 1999:C64-C65). Resolution 8 of 2003 of the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC, 2003), however mandates the principal and the SMT to manage the performance of teachers. This assumes that the deputy-principal is mandated to support and assist the principal towards the development of educators (KZNDoE, n.d.:37).

Studies as early as 1923 reveal the major responsibilities of the deputy-principal as being limited to classroom teaching, administration and supervision (Madden, 2008:17). Older literature by Harvey and Sheridan (1995:82) claim that there has been little understanding of the deputy-principal's contribution towards school effectiveness. Weller and Weller (2002:xiii) agree that the role of the deputy-principal is one of the least deliberated themes in educational literature. In support, Jubilee (2013:8) stresses that if the role of the deputy-principal remains vague, it can impact the school negatively. Several aspects of the deputy-principalship remain poorly defined and contradictory (Sullivan & Associates, 2013:3; Scott, 2011:47). Due to the vaguely defined position of the deputy-principal, the responsibilities connected to the post remain largely undetermined (Scott, 2011:47; Muijs & Harris, 2003:6). This, according to the deputies themselves, is inadequate and frustrating (Kerry, 2000:40-41). The induction programme for new principals (DBE, 2016:4) however, provides the following ambiguous description for a (new) principal: "New principals are teachers who have just been promoted to a principal or deputy principal's position and are about to assume duty in their new post." This suggests that the education authorities regard the deputy-principal and the principal's posts as similar and closely related. Weller and

Weller (2002:xiii), however, regard this ambiguity in the role of the deputy-principal as a reason why the position is ineffectively used in education.

Several studies outline the traditional role of the deputy-principal (Madden, 2008:17; Harris, 2003:1; Harvey & Sheridan, 1995:70-71) in some of which deputy-principals are described as the disciplinarian, controller of learner attendance (Gregg, 2007:3,5), "timetabler" (Kerry, 2000:33) and "administrative assistant of the principal" (Beycioglu, Ozer & Ugurlu, 2012:637). According to Johnson (2015:29) the core duties of deputy-principals relate to learner discipline, learner attendance and school safety. Related descriptions of the deputy-principalship vary from being labelled as "caretaker" to being called "daily operations managers" (Lee, Kwan & Walker, 2009:188; Kaplan & Owings, 1999:81). Moreover, Jubilee (2013:8) connotes the role of the deputy-principal as being a "nebulous position". In addition, Weller and Weller (2002:13) and Nieuwenhuizen (2011:10) regard the deputy-principal as a "jack of all trades".

In view of what has been mentioned thus far, it is believed that, although the nature of administrative duties differs, deputy-principals remain primarily responsible for supporting and assisting the principal (Johnson, 2015:27-30; Hilliard & Newsome, 2013:153; Scott 2011:58). Correspondingly, the deputy-principal is named "the principal's closest co-worker" and a person who should have the necessary qualities to deal with difficult tasks when deputising for the principal (Doş & Savaş, 2015:9). The expertise and strong points of the deputy-principal are thus found to complement the principal's capabilities and attributes (Sharp & Walter, 2012:153). In several of the studies reviewed, the authors agree that deputy-principals hold an essential and critical position in the smooth operation of schools (Sharp & Walter, 2012:153; Lee, Kwan & Walker, 2009:187; Madden, 2008:2; Marshall & Hooley, 2006:1). Although the studies of Johnson (2015:30) and Sharp and Walter (2012:153) explain that deputy-principals perform a large variety of tasks within the school and their role is universally perceived as very important, Johnson (2015:27) provides evidence that deputy-principals often find themselves secluded and pressured into performing the typical traditional duties of deputy-principals. Scott (2011:58-60), on the other hand, suggests that if the position of the deputy-principal remains largely undefined, it leads to questioning the deputy-principal's level of competence to deputise for the principal in

his or her absence. Considering the above, the role of the deputy-principal is considered as complex (Marshall & Hooley, 2006:3).

Resulting from her study on the deputy-principal's experience in preparation for the principalship, Kwan (2009:202) deduces that there are seven job responsibility dimensions applicable to a deputy-principal's role: external communication and connection; quality assurance and accountability; teaching, learning and curriculum; staff management; resource management; leader and teacher growth and development; strategic direction and policy environment. Altogether, the duties of a deputy-principal thus include planning, design and monitoring of school administration, finances, physical and human relations as well as building and facilities management. The effective management of these activities therefore determines the level of success (Machelm, 2015:46).

As second in charge of the school, deputy-principals are expected to assist the principal in his or her duties (RSA, 2016a:39) thereby fulfilling a fundamental purpose when deputising for the principal in his or her absence (Machelm, 2015:46). Conversely, the study by Beycioglu, Ozer and Ugurlu (2012:637) has documented that role tensions are often evident due to an overlap in responsibilities between deputy-principals and their principals. Prior literature brings to light that many deputy-principals perceive their role as uncertain, as they are involved in almost everything that transpires in and around the school (Döş & Savaş, 2015:7; Scott, 2011:47; Muijs & Harris, 2003:6). Although the deputy-principalship is widely acknowledged as an effective preparation ground for the principalship (Kwan, 2009:191, Weller & Weller, 2002:xiv), Kelly (1990) cited in Gregg (2007:4) claims that it is "one of the enduring myths of education" to regard the deputy-principalship as a "proper and useful training ground for the principalship."

To summarise, Kerry (2000:2) outlines the deputy-principalship as one of the most challenging positions and specifically describes the position as "difficult", "one with little training", a "balancing art", and that deputy-principals often feel "torn" between the principal and the staff. To put it differently, Johnson (2000:85) describes the deputy-principal as "a bouncer-counsellor-substitute-toady-boss-co-worker" and Gregg (2007:5) ultimately suggests that to survive the deputy-principalship, it is important to remember to laugh!

2.7 THE ROLE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL DEPUTY-PRINCIPAL

Literature specifically aimed at the primary school deputy-principal is limited, and related research questions are still unexplored by academics and policymakers (Marshall & Hooley, 2006:3). The few studies that have been conducted on the topic reveal little difference between high school and primary school deputies or urban, sub-urban and rural schools (Khumalo et al., 2018:196-198; Khumalo et al., 2017:200-207; Mafora, 2013:690-693).

Resulting from his extensive study on the deputy-principalship, Kerry (2000:40) raises his concern regarding the vague job description of the primary school deputy-principal. He revealed that many primary school deputy-principals experience their job descriptions as less than adequate and that some researchers have described deputy-principals as "weighed down by petty tasks." Moreover, the author highlights the uncertainty of deputy-principals who experience their job descriptions as vague, containing nebulous phrases like "supporting the principal or overseeing non-teaching staff." Accordingly, there is a lack of understanding regarding the complexities and difficulties within the role of the deputy-principal (Marshall & Hooley, 2006:3).

2.7.1 Different perspectives

"You can't achieve great things without quality people: Many schools create strategy, then try to rally staff around it; good-to-great schools start with great people and build great results from their effort" (Bipath, 2013:59). Older literature not only reveals a lack of research on the deputy-principalship, but it also agrees that deputy-principals should receive more recognition (Harvey & Sheridan, 1995:83). Incidentally, Sharp and Walter (2012:153) indicate that it is the deputy's job to support the principal "and make the principal look good". Although no universal definition exists for the deputy-principalship, Sharp and Walter (2012:155) identify the major duties and responsibilities of the deputy-principal as:

- assisting with supervising and evaluating classroom teachers, instructional aides, noon duty supervisors and clerical personnel;

- assisting in the monitoring and the administration of the school budget;

- assisting in communicating with peers, parents and the public regarding the goals and objectives of the school;

- assisting the principal and staff in improving the instructional program[me];

- the provision of staff development support; implementation of school and district policies pertaining to student discipline and [learner] activities;

- the assumption of other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the principal.

In historic retrospect, it must be accepted that current literature recognises the role of the deputy-principal as growing and multi-faceted (Nieuwenhuizen, 2011:10). In practice, a general concern amongst deputy principals is the balancing of teaching time with the demands of their duties (Kerry, 2000:26). Ultimately, the deputy-principal's position can be stressful and filled with numerous negative aspects (Sharp & Walter, 2012:157). Nevertheless, Muijs and Harris (2009:6) contend that deputy-principals promote stability and order in a school. Deputy-principals carry out a large variety of tasks within the school and need to be competent in all aspects of school management (Johnson, 2015:30; Sharp & Walter, 2012:153). The principal, therefore, must take the responsibility of developing and empowering the deputy-principal in various leadership responsibilities (Torrance, 2013:354). In this regard, Cooke (2015:37) suggests that the deputy-principal's position should be recognised as a leadership role in its own right.

2.7.2 The deputy-principal as "link"

Kerry (2000:37,109) claims that many deputy-principals regard their position as a "go between" the principal and the staff. Representing the principal to the staff and the staff to the principal is not only a difficult task, but also raises tension. Having said that, Kerry (2000:21-22) describes the following two models of deputy-principalship. In Model 1 (Figure 2.3) the deputy-principal is torn between loyalty to the staff and loyalty to the principal. This model might also be labelled as "Piggy in the middle."

Principal

↑

Deputy-principal

↓

Staff
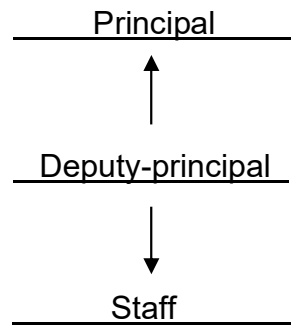
Figure 2.3: Model 1 "Piggy in the middle" (Kerry, 2000:21)

Model 2 (Figure 2.4) describes the deputy-principal as simply the mouthpiece of the principal. This model might be labelled as the "Chain of command" model where the principal may almost become irrelevant in the school, because all the power is vested in the deputy-principal.

Principal

↓

Deputy-principal

↓

Staff
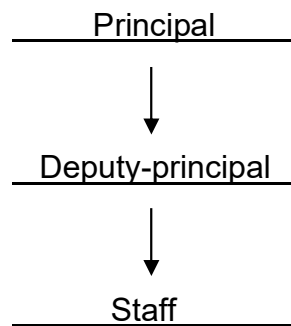
Figure 2.4: Model 2 "Chain of command" (Kerry, 2000:21)

2.8   MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Management and leadership can be regarded as the opposite sides of the same coin whereas leadership without management and management without leadership is unthinkable (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2013:71). Leadership and management are inter-related, yet distinguishable (Kerry, 2000:61), highly complex and multifaceted. Although managers and leaders serve different functions (Kerry, 2000:13), in a school environment management and leadership functions are closely related and often overlap (RSA, 2008:42). Moreover, management and leadership complement each other and both processes are important for an organisation to function effectively

(Grant & Singh, 2009:289). Adding to this, Clarke (2012:1) distinguishes between management and leadership in the following way:

> "[l]eadership is about direction and purpose, while management is about efficiency and effectiveness. Leaders look outward and to the future. To them, success is derived from future-focussed change. Managers look inward and to the present. To them, success is derived from improved systems of control, predictability and order. Strong leadership and good management are both essential for the success of a school, and a good principal is skilled at both."

In effect, a person can be a leader without being a manager or a manager without being a leader.

According to Weller and Weller (2002:29), the school principal usually adopts a leadership role while a deputy-principal is mostly regarded as a manager. Deputy-principals, however, must make a personal commitment to develop essential leadership competencies, especially if he/she is aspiring to become a principal.

2.8.1 School management

The "present and future state of any organisation depends on its management" (Botha, 2013:2). School management exists at all levels of the school and is not restricted to only the principal (Botha, 2013:8). The results of an in-depth study on school leadership development for the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (MGSLG) reflect that previous South African policy and practice focused more on management development than on leadership (Sullivan and Associates, 2013:67). Policy changes in South African education, such as the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (SASA) (RSA, 1996b), the Norms and Standards for Educators (RSA, 2000) and the Task Team Report on Education Management Development (RSA,1996a), have thus challenged schools to review their management practices (Grant & Singh, 2009:289).

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:54) describe educational management as the practice of working with and through individuals, groups and other resources – albeit learners, teachers, administrative staff, parents or others – to achieve educational aims or results. Hence, schools are managed in at least two ways, namely internally and externally, and in accordance with each school's unique culture (Kruger, 2013:3-6;

Badenhorst, Calitz & Van Schalkwyk, 1995:74, 122). The organisational culture of the school thus influences all other aspects of the school, including school management (Kruger, 2013:5; OECD, 2009:192). Continuous managerial functions need to be carried out which require purposeful, efficient management (Badenhorst et al., 1995:6-7; Godden et al., 1996:14). Although various role players are involved in the complex process of school management (Botha, 2013:2), the principal has the overall responsibility to develop and incorporate effective management systems in the school (RSA, 2016a:20). Taking the four fundamental managerial functions (planning, organising, leading and controlling) into account, it is evident that the manager decides what must be done, how it should be done, gives instructions that it must be done and determines whether or not it has been done (Pretorius: 1998:55). In many schools the deputy-principal is typically responsible for managerial aspects in the school. As manager, the deputy-principal is expected to be familiar with the implications of new policy and legislation for management (Godden et al. 1996:41). The Management Skills Pyramid (Lindenau, 2010:Online) illustrates what skills a successful manager must cherish and develop (see Figure 2.5). Each level demonstrates how the various skills build on each other towards reaching the successful level at the top.
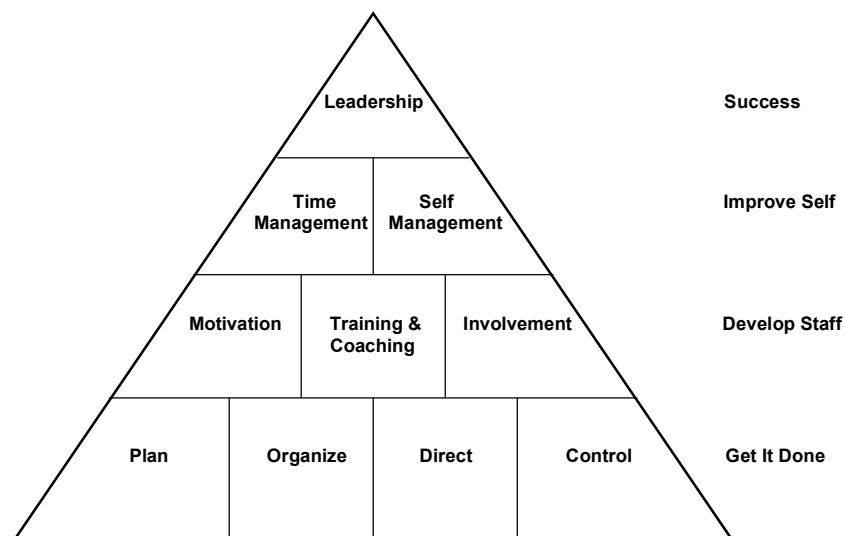
Figure 2.5: The Management Skills Pyramid (Lindenau, 2010:Online)

The Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) module on management and learning (RSA, 2008:23-24) highlights that the road to successful leadership and management includes "challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modelling the way and encouraging the heart." Also, managers must be adaptable,

cultivate new skills and styles of working and be able to provide leadership for individuals and teams both inside and outside the school (Godden et al., 1996:14).

Even though Kerry (2000:61) emphasises that educational management training has gained popularity, it has not yet produced substantial school improvement (Van der Voort & Wood, 2014:1). The Ministry of Basic Education's Policy on the South African Standard for Principals (RSA, 2016b:8) claims that a high standard of education must be maintained in all public schools. Effective management therefore requires keeping things in good order, such as providing resources and carrying out the institution's processes (Kerry, 2000:60). Principals and their deputies therefore need to work together to maintain the expected standard.

2.8.2 School leadership

"Pick the right school leader and great teachers will come and stay. Pick the wrong one and, over time, good teachers leave, mediocre ones stay, and the school gradually (or not so gradually) declines." (WF, 2008:3). There is a global increase and change in the interest and understanding of school leaders and leadership (Marishane, 2013a:95-99; Niemann, 2013:23-28) and especially regarding the inclusion of leadership in education policies (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015:1; Naidu et al., 2013:2-5). Despite the findings of Pont, Nusche and Moorman (OECD, 2008:76), who report that the primary school principal is most often the only person in a formal leadership role, research indicates that studies on school leadership no longer primarily focus on the traditional views of a single "great man" leader (Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2010:10; Grubb & Flessa, 2006:519.). In fact, school leadership typically incorporates a compound range of expertise that cannot be studied in isolation (Muijs, 2011:45).

Sullivan and Associates (2013:2) group school leadership practices together as:

- the building of vision and the setting of direction;

- the understanding, working with and developing of people;

- the designing, managing and building of the organisation;

- and ensuring that teaching and learning take place.

In simple terms, leadership illustrates "the ability to lead others, in groups or as individuals, by means of influencing, motivation, communication and authority, so that they are able to strive towards certain goals voluntarily" (Pretorius, 1998:57).

In view of the above, school leadership differs across schools and in accordance with the divergent needs of educational and administrative leadership (Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007:88). Troen and Boles (2012:30), however, remind us that whereas all teachers have the potential to be leaders, their leadership roles differ from formally structured leadership roles (such as principals) and other leadership roles. School leaders are therefore directly and indirectly confronted with multifaceted challenges and they increasingly play a pivotal role in education reform. School leaders are expected to be active contributors in meeting the intricate 21st century expectations. As such, principals must typically be involved in far more than being good managers leading the school in a dominant top-down approach (Tomal, Schilling & Trybus, 2013:15, Williams, 2011:194).

The principles of leadership are easy to understand, unlike the practice thereof (Heifetz, cited in Simkins, 2005:23). Although the emphasis of leadership is commonly intended to initiate change, it seems equally likely to be about maintaining the current status of the school (Spillane & Orlina, 2005:159). In practice, school leadership should purposefully focus on the quality of teaching and learning and intentionally concentrate on the unique human qualities of the educational leaders (Heystek, 2013:5; Humphreys, 2010:33). In addition, Niemann and Kotzé (2006:609) quote Education Minister, Naledi Pandor, as published in Business Day, 30 December 2004:

> "We have a (school) leadership that cannot analyse, cannot problem-solve, cannot devise strategic interventions and plans, cannot formulate perspectives that are directed at achieving success."

To a large extent organisational changes generally put schools under enormous strain. As a result, school leaders face multiple challenges in leading teachers and learners (Niemann, 2013:31-37). The South African post-1994 democratic education environment has been changed to address the transformational goals. In addition, Naidu et al. (2013:2) explain that schools are expected 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". It is furthermore evident that governments worldwide task school leadership with more accountability and expect them to implement and manage significantly more demanding educational programmes (OECD, 2009:13,191). Figure 2.6 portrays the influence and interrelatedness of a changing world on education. The model is divided into three segments, namely global trends, the impact of global trends on countries regarding education, and thirdly, how governments react in an attempt to address the challenges of such global trends. Each segment is indicated separately, yet they are all interlinked. School leadership can thus use this model to form a clear understanding of whether, or how, external factors such as political or technological changes, globalisation and migration influence the school environment, or not.
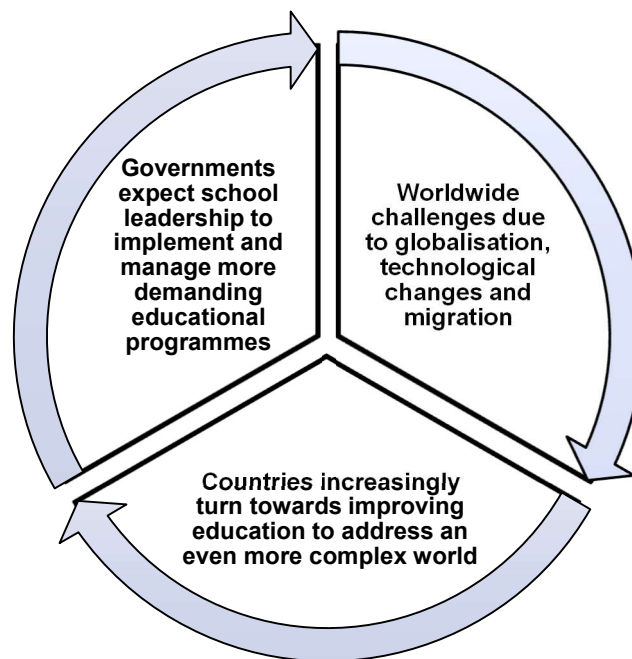
Figure 2.6: The broader challenges of school leadership

Leadership is not only personally demanding (Weller & Weller, 2002:4-5), it also requires fairness, honesty, trustworthiness and limited usage of authority and power. Successful leaders acknowledge that there is always more to learn, therefore they are continuously involved in collecting information regarding their post and they demonstrate the urge to improve themselves (NZ Ministry of Education, 2012:30). Ultimately, good leadership contributes to school improvement (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:99; Sergiovanni, 2007:47). In other words, high-performing schools are led by

strong leaders (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015:2). In this respect, the role of the deputy-principal provides ample opportunities for displaying management and leadership skills in the school and the SMT (Kerry, 2000:14). Hence, the way in which leaders interrelate with their staff is of more importance than the official leadership role itself (Harris, 2010:56). Similarly, Niemann (2006:107-111) suggests that school leaders need to adjust their philosophy of treating everyone alike; they must rather endorse a shift towards recognising individuals' differences and respond in a way that will lead to greater productivity whilst avoiding any discrimination.

Humphreys (2010:3) raises concern that the responsibilities of school leaders are expanding beyond what is realistic for one individual to accomplish alone. Hence, the focus must rather be on leadership in practice and in this case, how leaders perform their leadership and why they act in the chosen way (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001:23). The school leadership matters model (Figure 2.7) displays four policy levers which, if used in combination, can assist school leadership to lead the school optimally (OECD, 2009:7).

Figure 2.7: The school leadership matters model (OECD, 2009:7)

To summarise, Sullivan and Associates (2013:2) define school leadership as:

> "[T]he combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions which enable effective learning to take place in schools. Leadership may be distributed across principals, deputies and heads of department (HoDs), who have formal authority, as well as those teams (district, governing bodies, teachers, parents) which support the learning process."

Naidoo and Petersen (2015:3) accordingly maintain that numerous South African principals function without the required leadership abilities necessary to perform their duties as school managers and leaders. This results in many principals feeling overwhelmed by their task (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015:3).

2.8.3   The relationship between good leadership and school effectiveness

"To have an effective and successful school we need an effective and successful leadership of the administrators in the schools. The school's success and failure is directly related to [the] leader's efficiency and capability" (Tashi, 2013:165). The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NPFTED) was published in April 2007 (RSA, 2007:1). The policy framework is designed to:

> "equip a teaching profession to meet the needs of a democratic South Africa in the 21st century … The policy framework aims to provide … professional development of teachers. More specifically, it aims to ensure that … teachers are able to continually enhance their professional competence and performance."

In their study on leadership programmes for primary school principals, Naidoo and Petersen (2015:1) emphasise that successful principals must take control of managing the school's instructional programme. Moreover, they point out that workable methods for the training and support of school principals are generally insufficient throughout Africa. Little is known about the "how" of school leadership, thus explaining the way in which school leaders advance and sustain the conditions that are commonly thought to be required for innovation (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:4). The prime activities in education include the prolific implementation of the curriculum, as well as teachers' proficient and effective practice. Although other factors may also contribute to a positive turnaround at troubled schools, the intervention of a powerful leader is acknowledged as the catalyst (Harris, 2013:551; Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons & Hopkins, 2007:338). In addition, emotionally intelligent leaders deliver better results and use positive emotions to visualise important progression in organisational functioning, whereas effective leaders accomplish good organisational performance (Bipath, 2013:75).

Recent South African studies have revealed that a correlation exists between learner performance and the type of school they attend (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015:1). This implies that school leaders (including the deputy-principal) should encourage a performance culture and purposefully create opportunities for professional development (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009:478-9,488). The influence of good versus poor leadership on a school and its community was thoroughly examined by Fink and Brayman (2006:70,85) over a 30-year period. Some of their findings revealed the (positive) influence of a dedicated principal and particularly the importance of developing the entire staff to ensure a shared, distributed responsibility. While limited definitions of professional leadership and management are included in both the PAM and the IQMS, the DBE has developed the Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship which acknowledges the importance of shared leadership (RSA, 2016b:8).

To conclude, alternative models of leadership have gained much attention over recent years (Fitzsimons, James & Denyer, 2011:313; Dunklee, 2000:90-9) and most particularly, since the turn of the millennium (Bolden, 2011:252). Although an immense number of studies are available on leadership activities, analysing and understanding the influence of distributed leadership patterns in leaders' actions gets closer to the actual leadership practice (Harris, 2010:57).

2.9   DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

The history of distributed leadership can be traced back over an assortment of organisational and leadership ideas, such as empowerment, transformational leadership, shared leadership, participative or democratic leadership (Benson & Blackman, 2011:1141). Bolden (2011:252) suggests that the characteristics of distributed leadership date back as far as 1250 BC, making it one of the oldest forms of leadership where organisational goals are fulfilled through people. Distributed leadership is often acknowledged as being synonymous with "shared, collaborative, facilitative and participative" leadership. Some concepts overlap, making it difficult to identify the exact meaning thereof (Woods, Bennett, Harvey & Wise, 2004:439, 441). It appears, however, that there is not much benefit in continuous debate on whether different perceptions of distributed leadership are correct or incorrect (Harris, 2010:60). Related concepts such as "shared", "co" and "collaborative" however, vary

between countries and sectors and over time (Bolden, 2011:251). In addition, distributed leadership has "chameleon-like" features, resulting in conceptual ambiguity that leads the way to accommodate an extensive variety of interpretations (Woods et al., 2004:441) and that consequently make distributed leadership appealing to policy makers (Harris, 2007:315).

Many definitions exist for distributed leadership (Bush & Glover, 2014a:216; Sullivan & Associates, 2013:3,13; Anderson, 2012:43-44; RSA, 2008:19-21). Although Harris et al. (2007: 338) agree that distributed leadership can be seen as the "practice distributed over leaders, followers and their situation and incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals", Harris (2010:59) holds the notion that distributed leadership is considered as an indefinable concept to which many different interpretations and conceptualisations prevail. Primarily, a distributive leadership perspective realises and acknowledges that leadership activities are shared in and among organisations (Harris, 2010:60; Harris & Spillane, 2008:31). In other words, as a concept, distributed leadership appeals to groups of individuals who collaborate and engage their expertise and skills to improve the school they serve (Grant et al. 2010:403; Grant, 2008:87). Against this background, Harris (2010:59) asserts that distributed leadership is often misinterpreted as the opposite of a "top-down" hierarchical leadership model. In contrast, it involves both vertical and horizontal dimensions of leadership and incorporates both formal and informal leadership practice through its supporting of co-leadership (Bush, 2011:258-259).

Traditional educational leadership models no longer proved to be effective and supportive to school improvement (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:99), as a result, academics, reformers and experts had sought for an alternative leadership model as a substitute. What is more, organisational and management research studies concurrently show an increased focus on alternative leadership models where leadership is not limited to a formally appointed leader (Anderson, 2012:43; Humphreys, 2010:33; Fitzsimons, James & Denyer, 2011:313). According to Harris (2012:7) distributed leadership is considered to be the most emerging and dominant leadership concept in education. Distributed leadership has garnered popularity as a more achievable and sustainable leadership approach (Hartley, 2007:202-211) that can be used by schools as a tool to evaluate their leadership practice and the effect it

has (or does not have) on the school (Harris & Spillane, 2008:33). Although the idea of shared, collaborative or participative leadership is not new, as a theoretical framework distributed leadership has ignited a renewed interest in thinking about a familiar theme (Harris, 2012:7; Harris, 2010:56; Hartley, 2007:202-211). Distributed leadership thus attempts to make sense of how leadership tasks are performed in a school's social and situational contexts (Hartley, 2009:139,148; Harris, 2007:315).

A rich empirical enquiry conducted by Spillane and his colleagues affirms that it is not easy to explore distributed leadership due to the multiple causes of influence (Harris, 2010:60). Essentially, the focus of distributed leadership is upon the interrelated interaction and practice where multiple individuals are involved in varying degrees to contribute to a group or organisation, and not something "done by an individual to others" (Harris, 2014:Online; Harris, 2007:315). In this regard Bromley (2013:160) suggests that senior leaders

> "… must distribute leadership and empower others to make decisions, they must not micro-manage every goal and target on the school improvement plan. They need oversight, they need to be able to see the 'bigger picture' and draw various elements together. They do not need to know all the details, just be reassured that someone else does."

Internationally, school leadership has moved away from a bureaucratic model towards a restructured, shared decision-making model where teachers are empowered to participate in the managerial process (Blasé & Blasé, 2000:130). In South Africa the implementation of the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (SASA) (RSA, 1996b) has brought a new dimension to school management. The Schools Act makes provision for the inclusion of various role players to take part in the governance of a public school. In a democratic South Africa, therefore, the multiple voices of the various education stakeholders are regarded as significant (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:99). To an extent, school decision-making is no longer entrusted to a single leader (where the principal virtually makes all the decisions) but has moved to a shared approach where individuals are organised and developed in all levels of the school management (Harris, 2014:Online; Marishane, 2013b:137; Harris, 2010:6). School leadership has thus increasingly moved to distributed leadership as an alternative

model to gain an understanding of leadership in context (Marishane, 2013b:135; Eggen, 2010:25-37; Horsford, 2010:225-226).

Figure 2.8 is an illustration of the distributed leadership model which exemplifies how leadership takes place among various stakeholders and teams within a complex organisation such as a school.

The distributed leadership model

- Like a self-repairing system, those with the greatest knowledge of problems are empowered to investigate, recommend and find solutions.

- The clarity of the framework is critical if all of these efforts are to be coordinated and efficient, without repetition of effort.

Individuals reporting the problem are empowered to follow through solutions

Those closest to the problem are motivated most to solve it

Numerous teams focused on solving problems and progressing up the framework. Shared monitoring benchmarks

Review framework: standard set of questions, benchmarks and solutions

Senior team can maintain the strategic overview and act as specialist advisors

Figure 2.8: The distributed leadership model (Buckley, 2012:Online)

Various research studies indicate that distributed leadership is recognised as "post-heroic leadership thinking" (Gronn, 2010:70, Spillane, 2005:143). In other words, a principal might be an outstanding leader, yet it is unrealistic to expect him/her to perform all the duties alone (Tashi, 2013:166). Leadership thus no longer revolves around one "heroic individual who single-handedly develops a vision which is then aspired to by others" (Benson & Blackman, 2011:1142). Many contemporary scholars accordingly advocate that effective schools cannot be led by a single "superhero"

individual only. Instead, they should adopt a distributed leadership perspective (Williams, 2011:191; Harris, 2010:60).

Most significantly, distributed leadership is not inherently good or bad. Understanding the *how* of leadership and *how* it is distributed in a school remains likely to have an effect (positive or negative) on an organisation (Harris, 2010:58; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:11, 12). There is a growing body of evidence that indicates that different arrangements of distributed leadership prevail in schools. Some schools plan the practice of distributed leadership carefully, whilst others apply it haphazardly (Harris, 2010:62). It is therefore important to investigate the "people and practice" aspect of leadership – how distributed leadership is applied among the leaders, followers and other relevant stakeholders of the school – not focusing on the leader, but on the leadership activity. Distributed leadership compels us to concentrate on the expertise of individuals at all levels of the school to create more opportunities for change and to enable effective school improvement, irrespective of the leadership role or experience. Hence, distributed leadership focuses on the practice of leadership instead of on the individual leaders and their roles (Spillane, 2005:146-149).

It is noteworthy that various studies attribute the success of high performing schools to the decisive reorganising, reformulation and restructuring of leadership to be more distributed (Harris, 2014:Online; Benson & Blackman, 2011:1148; Harris, 2010:57-58; Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007:61). Instead, Hartley (2007:202) finds that, although there is "very little evidence of a *direct* causal relationship between distributed leadership and school achievement", there is some evidence of an "*indirect* causal effect".

Implementing a distributed leadership approach leads to shifting between those in formal and those in informal leadership practices (Harris, 2010:60). Moreover, the exercising of distributed leadership incorporates the interrelatedness of the staff, acknowledging that people might have different goals and results in mind (Harris, 2010:60) and encourages a continued development of teachers into leaders (RSA, 2008:21). Although Harris (2010:55) argues that distributed leadership enjoys much attention as one of the most dominant educational leadership concepts among researchers, policy makers, teachers and educational reformers worldwide, Hartley (2007:211) contends that the emergence of distributed leadership corresponds with

the milieu of "contemporary reform of the public services." In addition, Torrance (2013:356) argues that the emergence of distributed leadership was an "inevitable consequence of the global shift to devolve school governance, coupled with workforce reform in a drive to increase the performance of education systems and economic prosperity." However, Gronn (2008:155) suggests that the future of distributed leadership is yet uncertain. Humphreys (2010:37) takes into consideration that distributed leadership acknowledges and incorporates a wide spectrum of meanings and it is associated with a range of practices. As a result, she summarises the main features of distributed leadership as:

- Recognition that leadership is not solely bestowed on the principal and deputy-principal;

- Acknowledgement that all actions in the school revolve around enhancing learner performance;

- Leadership that transpires through interaction, collaboration and organisational practices and procedures;

- Interdependence between leaders, followers and their specific circumstances;

- Valuing and supporting teachers in their professional practice;

- Being an ongoing learner, irrespective of whether the person is a teacher or a learner;

- Functioning within a participative community;

- Acknowledgement of the contribution of stakeholders towards the success of the school – that the school is as good as the people who are involved in the school;

- Appreciation of appropriate expertise;

- Proper structures are formed and re-formed to cater for joint and cooperative decision-making;

- Trust towards the different stakeholders;

- Engaging leadership through formal and informal roles and activities.

To sum up, it can be argued that without the implementation of distributed leadership in schools, leaders will find it more difficult to accomplish the goals of the school (Marishane, 2013b:126; Tashi, 2013:171). It must, however, be acknowledged that for distributed leadership to be optimally successful and to reach its full potential, the concept must be linked practically and appropriately with the collective responsibility and flexibility of leadership practitioners (Bolden, 2011:251). As a final point, Hulpia, Devos and Rosseel (2009:1013-1030) developed a practical Distributed Leadership Inventory (DLI) which can be used to investigate the functionality of distributed leadership and leadership team characteristics. The DLI contains six characteristics of distributed leadership, namely: support, supervision, a cohesive leadership team, participative decision making, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. This inventory is a useful tool which can be applied to evaluate a school's level of involvement in distributed leadership practice.

2.9.1 Critique of distributed leadership

The concept of distributed leadership is not exempt from criticism (Harris & DeFlaminis, 2016:143-144; Bolden, 2011:262). Not all forms of distributed leadership are necessarily good – some are more operational and beneficial than others (Harris, 2010:62, 66). Many scholars have questioned the promoting of distributed leadership and have argued that distributed leadership is nothing less than "old managerialism" camouflaged in a modern appearance (Harris, 2010:55). Resulting from her numerous studies, Harris (2007:315) points out that distributed leadership is somewhat ambiguous, representing a wide-ranging expression for any form of shared, decentralised or dispersed leadership. In addition, Williams (2011:198) and Hartley (2007:210) asserts that there is not adequate indication that the implementation of a distributed leadership approach leads to improved teaching and learning.

Alternatively, where distributed leadership is established, procedures must be implemented to evaluate the relationship between effective leadership and improved learning results. In fact, Williams (2011:198) believes that distributed leadership is dependent on numerous variables, and due to each school's contextual circumstances, it is possible that an alternative leadership approach, or even a combination thereof, might be more beneficial. This resonates with the views of Bolden (2011:262), who argues that distributed leadership does not specifically address the

expectations and needs of the learners of a school. All in all, a prerequisite for the successful application of distributed leadership is that all the staff must have a positive attitude and purposely share the same focus (Botha, 2016:6811; Starrat, 2011:132). In practise, this is not always the case. Also, not all teachers are ready and available to assume leadership roles (Williams, 2011:198).

It is important to realise that supporters of distributed leadership are often unaware of the true situation which starts and defines leadership practice. Distributed leadership is often implemented as a type of disguised delegation system, and often imposed without considering that the viability thereof is dependent on numerous variables (Williams, 2011:197, 198). As Tashi (2013:171) points out, distributed leadership is not equally accepted among different ethnic or cultural groups. Some population groups traditionally regard the principal as the solo leader, especially if he/she is well accepted and established in a community and/or has exceptional personal and professional qualities (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010:204). According to Woods et al. (2004:439, 449) distributed leadership is ambiguous for it can be interpreted in a variety of ways with practices which are largely unexplored. Moreover, they advocate that distributed leadership encourages a high level of informal perpendicular collaboration in contrast to the more structured formal hierarchy.

Above all, Bolden (2011:262) appeals for the advancement of a critical viewpoint to contest the prevailing literature on distributed leadership which recognises the following four alarming areas of concern:

- A lack of critique against policy;

- An under-emphasis of historical precedents;

- Ignorance of parallel developments;

- A lack of attention to power relations.

2.9.2 Distributed leadership in practice

In practice, distributed leadership focuses on the role that principals play in developing teacher leaders and building distributed leadership teams in order to improve their schools (Harris & DeFlaminis, 2016:142-143).

The following questions can be helpful when viewing distributed leadership in practice (Harris & Spillane, 2008:33):

- How is leadership distributed in my school?

- Is this pattern of distribution optimum?

- How is distributed leadership practice developed and enhanced?

- How do we extend leadership distribution to parents, [learners] and the wider community?

- What difference is distributed leadership making?

In the past, leadership development programmes based on the principles of distributed leadership were scant. This has changed over the years due to the increasing number of empirical studies focusing on the influence and effect of distributed leadership (Harris, 2005:10). Consequently, this has resulted in a clearer understanding and an increase in the application of the principles thereof (Harris, 2010:67). Despite slight warnings from the research community, distributed leadership has already been promoted and recommended in many countries around the world. Most significantly, South Africa has followed in the footsteps of a few countries, including parts of Europe, the UK, the USA, Australia, and New Zealand, which have already adopted distributed leadership as part of educational reforms (Harris, 2010:57-58; RSA, 2008:19-21). Yet, Williams (2011:195) and Christie et al. (2010b:36-37) hold the opinion that most South African schools do not function in a framework that is conducive to distributed leadership.

As has been noted, distributed leadership has the potential to positively influence school change and learner performance (Harris, 2010:62). This leads to a framework in which various stakeholders, including the deputy-principal, must function as leaders and decision-makers (Marshall & Hooley, 2006:3). Literature accentuates the fact that school principals cannot lead a school in isolation. Hence, they must create formal structures such as groups, teams and committees to address the specific needs of the school (Humphreys, 2010:34, 35).

In contrast to pre-1994, where the South African education system was characterised by an authoritarian system that restricted wider participation, the implementation of a

distributed leadership approach necessitates setting the scene for creating beneficial circumstances where people can work together, learn together and prepare and refine the situation that leads to a shared purpose (Muijs & Harris, 2009:7). Despite teachers' inclination to participate in leadership activities, they are not always granted the opportunity, or conversely, teachers might be willing to assume a leadership position, yet it turns out at a later stage that they are not satisfied with the additional responsibilities (Tashi, 2013:165).

According to Harris (2001), increased professional relationships and empowerment will build school capacity (Harris, 2001:261). Also, the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2012:30) middle managers typically seek supplementary education opportunities and show an interest in making use of external specialists as mentors. Hence, conditions must be conducive for colleagues to collaborate in teams or in partnerships. In addition, proponents of distributed leadership argue that it creates an environment which encourages schools to function in synergy and that distributed leadership contributes to school effectiveness (Botha, 2016:6811). Overall, principals must provide the structure and opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership abilities and similarly enhance opportunities to accommodate teamwork and/or partnerships (Humphreys, 2010:37).

As indicated in the introductory paragraph, team work is at the core of a distributed leadership approach and the deputy-principal forms part of the teams such as the SMT (RSA, 2008:19) where he/she is supposed to be actively involved in the day-to-day decision-making of the school (DBE: 2016:5-6). Although the principal plays a pivotal role in *determining* the organisational style of the school, the deputy-principal plays a major role in *establishing* the organisational style of the school. Against this background, it can be argued that a good partnership between the principal and deputy-principal can have a substantial influence on the relationships among the staff (Kerry, 2000:69). Studies advocate that the principal plays a significant role in connecting activities at different levels and distributing the skills of the staff across the entire school. Accordingly, principals must set the formal structure and environment to support the staff (Humphreys, 2010:34). Besides, those in formal management roles certainly play a determining role in preparing and facilitating the implementation of distributed leadership in practice (Harris, 2014:Online). A recent South African study

provided evidence that under certain circumstances, female leaders experience a bigger need of support than their male counterparts (Botha, 2016:6811).

Though the PAM, (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31) explains the core duties and responsibilities of the deputy-principal, it is largely the principal who assigns the specific duties to their deputy-principals (Madden, 2008:19). Accordingly, where a school follows a distributed leadership approach, the role of the deputy-principal changes from a predominantly management role to a leadership role (Muijs & Harris, 2003:8). In support, Madden (2008:18-19) highlights that deputy-principals often lack participation in school leadership activities which might have a negative impact on the deputy-principal's training for the principalship. It is therefore important to realise that principals as well as their deputy-principals benefit when the latter receives support of his or her professional development. In fact, an investment into the deputy-principal's development is regarded as an investment in the school (Syed, 2015:27). Due to their changing professional responsibilities, deputy-principals ought to receive leadership coaching and training (Lochmiller & Karnopp, 2016:206). Despite many transformational policy amendments made by the DBE since 1994 (Heystek, 2013:3,14; Niemann, 2013:23, 26-31, 39; Van Deventer & Kruger, 2013), the PAM (RSA, 2016a:A-18) reflects only one addition to the core duties and responsibilities of a Post Level 1 (entry level) educator, namely: "To take on a leadership role in respect of the subject, learning area or phase, if required." Seeing that this had been omitted in the previous publication (RSA, 1999:C-67,C68), one can deduce that, although 17 years later, the DBE places increased emphasis on teacher leadership (Heystek, 2013:11). In practice, this implies that imposing distributed leadership will encourage the contribution and participation in decision-making among all possible stakeholders in a school (Williams, 2011:195-196). Yet, Williams (2011:191) indicates that "distributed leadership in South Africa has not been actualized as envisaged in official policy". Thus, in conclusion: "What principals believe in or care about most is what they systematically pay attention to" (Bipath, 2013:69).

2.10 SCHOOLS WITH MULTIPLE DEPUTY-PRINCIPALS

Jones (2015:47) advocates that "the dynamics of the job" changes "dramatically" when the workload of the deputy-principal can be divided. It is however general practice that the DBE determines the permitted number of deputy-principals in accordance to the

number of learners enrolled at a school (Badenhorst et al.,1995:37). Consequently, the size of the school influences how full a school's timetable will be (RSA, 2008:43). In fact, Kantor (2015: Online) suggests that the size of a school will influence the duties of the deputy-principal. He furthermore explains that in a smaller school, a solitary deputy-principal might be the only other SMT member who has an overview of the school's management procedures. In terms of Section 38A of the Schools Act the SGB can make supplementary payments to staff members who perform additional duties (RSA, 1996b:B-17). To illustrate, a school can remunerate teachers from a lower post level to fulfil the duties of a more senior position, such as an HOD (Post Level 2) performing the duties of a deputy-principal (Post Level 3). While, the Department of Education (DBE) might only allocate one deputy-principal to a specific school, the SGB can appoint additional staff, including additional deputy-principals. In conclusion, the findings of Syed (2015:25) explain the extent to which multiple deputy-principals can be of assistance to their principal: sharing the workload among deputy-principals is beneficial for the principal as well as for the deputy-principals. Effectively, the principal benefits by getting work done, and the deputy-principals benefit by building skills and confidence. Most importantly, the principal releases more authority to the deputy-principals and the deputy-principals grow in their professional development.

2.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher examined issues relating to the role of the primary school deputy-principal found in the literature. There is agreement that the deputy-principalship is one of the least understood positions in modern-day education (Lochmiller & Karnopp, 2016:205; Petrides, Jimes & Karaglani, 2014:173; Sharp & Walter, 2012:153; Retelle, 2010:1; Kaplan & Owings, 1999:81-82; Harvey & Sheridan, 1995:90; Harvey, 1994:15; Hartzell, 1993:710-718). Due to the vaguely defined position of deputy-principals, their responsibilities remain largely undetermined (Scott, 2011:47; Muijs & Harris, 2003:6). Incidentally, Kerry (2000:26) points out that various job descriptions exist for the deputy-principal, but as a result, some deputy-principals have comprehensive job descriptions with somewhat detailed specifications about the targets they should meet, whilst others have job descriptions with minimal details, expressed in general of terms. Conversely, the deputy-principal primarily remains an educator, yet he/she is also a teacher leader (Kerry, 2000:39). Due to the deputy-

principal's seniority in the school's hierarchy, he/she has positional power without (automatically) enjoying the support of actual authority (Sharp & Walter, 2012:153). In contrast to earlier studies detailing the deputy-principal's restricted access to instructional leadership opportunities, Madden (2008:17-18) and Kantor (2015:1) argue that the deputy-principal's role has developed into a role which includes instructional leadership as well as staff and curriculum development. Although literature disagrees on the key duties and responsibilities of the deputy-principal (Hilliard & Newsome, 2013:155; Scott, 2011:45; Kwan, 2009:192), there is consensus that deputy-principals play an important role in influencing the educational and social needs of a school (Kantor, 2015:1; Hilliard & Newsome, 2013:157).

Guided by her study on deputy-principalship, Harris (2003:7) suggests that when favourable conditions prevail for deputy-principals and their principals to work together and learn together, leadership is a much stronger inner motivator for school improvement and change. Accordingly, there should be a deliberate, conscious move toward using the knowledge and skills of the deputy-principal to the benefit of the school (Hilliard & Newsome, 2013:153). This view is supported by Sharp and Walter (2012:153) who consider the role of the deputy-principal as exceptionally important, although often overlooked by educationalists and academics. In agreement, Beycioglu, Ozer and Ugurlu (2012:637) describe the deputy-principal's role as "vital to a successful school" but conclude that it remains unclear what roles and responsibilities deputies have. The practice of distributed leadership will provide the framework to determine what the role of the primary school deputy-principal is. In the next chapter the research methodology of this study is presented.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework for this study. In addition, the research design, as well as the methods used to collect, record and analyse the data, are described. The relevant ethical guidelines that were applied throughout the study are recorded and the trustworthiness and credibility of the study is discussed.

3.2   RESEARCH PARADIGM

Paradigms comprise a clear set of concepts and approaches which are filled with typical sets of values and beliefs that guide action (Burton & Bartlett, 2009:17). A research approach is influenced by the researcher's philosophical and fundamental conventions about social reality (ontology), the nature of knowledge (epistemology) and assumptions regarding human nature and agency (Opie, 2004:18-19). The research paradigm describes models of research that replicate and represent a specific viewpoint, determining what can be observed and investigated, the type of questions that can be asked and how to collect and interpret the data (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:22-27; Burton & Bartlett, 2009:18).

Following an interpretive paradigm, it was not the intention to predict the outcome of the study, but rather to embrace the feelings and experiences of a small number of individual participants who described their understanding of the role of the primary school deputy-principal. The intent was further to seek the meaning behind the actions of the participants, such as the distribution of leadership duties among multiple deputy-principals at a primary school. All participants' interpretations were regarded as equally valid. The objectivity of the study lies within the authenticity of the detailed explanations provided through interviewing the participants. Attention was paid to being rigorous throughout the study, rather than to fall into the trap of attempting to generalise the findings (Burton & Bartlett, 2009:21). The trustworthiness of the interpretivist paradigm was reinforced by the detailed description of the data (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:22-26; Burton & Bartlett, 2009:18-21; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:22-23).

3.3 METHODOLOGY

The choice of methodology is usually influenced by what is practical and feasible, personal choice and interests as well as various situational factors (Needham, 2016:19; Opie, 2004:16-17). This study made use of a phenomenological qualitative study trying to capture the subjective perspectives of the participants in the "real world setting" or social environment they represent in everyday practice where the researcher "does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Golafshani, 2003:600). The choice of a research method is dependent on the problem under investigation and its circumstances (Flyvbjerg, 2006:226), and this guided the researcher to make use of case study research.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Application of a qualitative research methodology paved the way for selecting a case study design as context for seeking answers to the research questions (Creswell, 2014:31). Using a case study design provided the liberty to determine beforehand what evidence needed to be collected (Mills & Gay, 2016:419). Case study research is a concrete, systematic and exhaustive study of real people in their real (tangible) situations (Mills & Gay, 2016:418; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:181). According to Verma and Mallick (1999:81), a case study is "essentially a research in depth rather than in breadth." Yet, case studies are much more than the description of individuals, proceedings or circumstances as they "resonate with the readers' experiences" (Mills & Gay, 2016:418).

This study examined and described the participants' individual and communal professional social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. It was the researcher's goal to use distributed leadership as a lens to explore the role of the primary school deputy-principal, to analyse the complexity of human relationships within each school's leadership dynamics and comprehending it in all its aspects and structures (Burton & Bartlett, 2009:64; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:181). In fact, the study delved into the underlying conventions, motives, reasons, aims and beliefs transpiring in the professional relationship between the principal and the two deputy-principals as well as the distribution of leadership roles and duties (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:431), to name a few. Case studies focus on identifying commonalities and non-commonalities as well as features that are unique to specific cases (Struwig & Stead,

2001:8). Flyvbjerg (2006:223) describes a case study as particularly well-matched to produce context-dependent knowledge. In particular, this study utilised multiple cases as part of the complete study. A multiple-case study design has the advantage that it assists in gaining a more inclusive understanding of a phenomenon (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:42) and it is often regarded more convincing and more likely to provide valid generalisation (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:439).

The reliability of a case study is more important that its generalisability (Opie, 2004:5). Therefore, it was not the focus of this research study to generalise findings across a population (Creswell, 2014:228; Nieuwenhuis, 2013:115; Struwig & Stead, 2001:8; Verma & Mallick, 1999:114-115). The value of a case study lies in the interpretation of detailed information, rather than studying a large sample (Verma & Mallick, 1999:81). An advantage of a case study is that it is regarded by qualitative researchers as an important research method in own right (Borg & Gall, 1989:402) and is an essential and adequate method for certain research studies in the social studies (Flyvbjerg, 2006:241).

3.5   DATA COLLECTION

Researchers intentionally collect data to answer the research question(s). Selecting a data collection method cannot be done in isolation as it is directly influenced by the research question(s), the research design and the paradigm. Qualitative data collection can be described as comprehensive and holistic, set to detect meaning to participants' real-life experiences, inquiring about the proceedings behind or reasons for specific behaviour. A feature of qualitative data is that it concentrates on natural events and everyday incidents to explain why specific behaviours and views occur (Lin, 2016:157; Tuckman & Harper, 2012:392; Opie, 2004:111; Verma & Mallick, 1999:122). Reality is constructed through human interaction – hence there can be multiple realities depending on the specific experience of an individual participant. This study assumed that the participants represent multiple realities (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:15), therefore it employed an interactive investigation where face-to-face techniques were used in the participants' natural surroundings, opting to understand the case from the participants' viewpoint (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:35;395-396).

3.5.1 Sampling of participants

Reflecting on the above and considering the features of qualitative research, interviews were identified as an appropriate data collecting method to collect data from five primary schools in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria. Each school employs at least two deputy-principals. Apart from selecting good key participants who would be in the position to provide the interviewee with substantial, information rich information (Mills & Gay, 2016:167), consideration was also given to the practicalities of conducting interviews, such as the time allocation and financial implications for the interviewee (Opdenakker, 2006:11). This includes considering that principals and deputy-principals have busy schedules so it was important that not too much time should be taken up with the interviews and member checking (Opie, 2004:28).

Corresponding to the characteristics of qualitative research, this study consisted of a small sample (Mills & Gay, 2016:167). The participants were purposely sampled for their knowledge of the education system and experience in school management. Purposeful sampling was conducted, selecting information-rich cases based on the pre-determined purpose of intentionally selecting sites and individuals who were expected to be representative of a specific population (Lin, 2016:158; Mills & Gay, 2016:167), believing it would provide information-rich data, offering clarification on the case studied and therefore increasing the effectiveness of the study. Specific sample choices were made about which sites and individuals to include, considering that the specific cases did not represent the wider population, but rather the properties, time and purpose of the study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:60-61; Lin, 2016:158; McMillian & Schumacher, 2001:400). Seen through the lens of distributed leadership, this study sampled schools with multiple deputy-principals. The criteria directed the researcher to the eastern suburbs of Pretoria, where a cluster of large primary schools is located.

Anticipating an exhaustive study, five primary schools were purposively selected, in view of the following criteria:

- At least two deputy-principals are appointed by the school;

- The participants must have at least five years' experience in school management;

- The schools are conveniently located in one geographical area of Pretoria east;

- The schools are located not too far from the researcher's home or workplace.

Considering the above criteria, five well established primary schools in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria in the Tshwane South district of the Gauteng province were identified. No distinction was made between deputy-principals employed by the GDE or the SGB. The sampled schools were all relatively easily accessible, making re-visits convenient. The schools and participants were not known to me prior to their participation in the study.

3.5.2 Gaining access to participants

As the first step in the data collection process, written permission had to be obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education. Upon receipt of the official approval letter, telephonic permission was requested from the principals of five primary schools, stressing the availability of the principal and two deputy-principals to be interviewed. The purpose of the study, ethical considerations and completion of consent forms were discussed. One of the school principals indicated that her school had a vacancy for a second deputy-principal at that stage, consequently disqualifying that school as a suitable case according to the pre-determined criteria. With reference to the original criteria, School W was identified as an appropriate replacement school for the latter.

Ultimately, permission was obtained from five principals indicating their willingness to participate in the study. Each principal received a file containing a copy of each of the following documents:

- the GDE Research Approval Letter;

- introduction letter from the supervisor;

- letter from the researcher, requesting the principal to participate in the study;

- consent form.

Each deputy-principal received a file containing of a copy of each of the following documents:

- letter from the researcher, requesting the deputy-principal to participate in the study;

- consent form.

Appointments were made to interview the respective participants from the participating schools. The selected participating schools were all willing to accommodate me.

3.5.3 Semi-structured interviews

An interview is a purposeful method to collect in-depth information from others (Mills & Gay, 2016:568). In this study face-to-face interviews were conducted to gain insight into the interviewee's knowledge or information and determining the values, preferences as well as that person's attitudes and beliefs (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:82; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:268). Commenting on the interviewing of individuals, Forsey (2012:365) expresses the opinion that although interviews are debatably the most used instrument in qualitative research, it is not necessarily the only or best method for conducting qualitative research. In fact, Creswell (2014:239) considers interviewing and observation as "equally popular". Most importantly, Forsey (2012:364) admits that interviews provide opportunities "for creating and capturing insights of a depth and level of focus rarely achieved through surveys, observational studies or the majority of casual conversations held with fellow human beings."

Essentially, interviews permit participants to converse their interpretations and understandings of the world in which they work and live (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:267). Interviews offer purposeful interaction, providing the opportunity for individuals to obtain important information from others which cannot be acquired from observation alone (Mills & Gay, 2016:567-8). Moreover, interviews create the possibility to collect knowledge about a specific topic by making use of a process of interchanging viewpoints among people of interest (Lin, 2016:160) and to find out what is known and cannot be known otherwise (Forsey, 2012:364). In addition, Delamont (2012:364) emphasises that interviews provide beneficial ways to collect richer data than a pen and paper survey. Interviews thus deliver focused, exhaustive information not likely to be obtained through other data collection methods, thereby attaining information which cannot be collected in another way (Mills & Gay, 2016:568). As indicated before, the purpose of an interview is to discover what the thoughts and feelings of the interviewee(s) are.

Taking into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of different data collection instruments and in line with the features of qualitative research methodology, it was decided to make use of semi-structured interviews to answer the research questions

(Lin, 2016:159; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:267). Semi-structured interviews (a combination of structured and non-structured interviews) are a more flexible version of the structured interview (Opie, 2004:118) and are very common in educational research (Connoly, 2016:141; Mills & Gay, 2016:568). The interviewer asks predetermined questions and the interviewees provide the answers in their own words. In addition to case study design and attempting to enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the study, observation of the participants' non-verbal behaviour was exerted during the interviews (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:407). Anecdotal notes were taken, based on the observations made during the interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:85). The interviews were conducted at a venue chosen by each individual participant.

3.5.4 Interview protocol

An interview protocol serves as a practical structuring tool designed by the researcher to provide guidance before, during and after an interview. The initial part of the interview protocol highlighted and shared information on the following aspects (Creswell, 2014:243-250):

- the purpose of the study;

- sources of data to be collected;

- ethical considerations, including the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

- the duration of the interview;

- the kind and context of the interviews;

- the participants and the data being collected;

- the structure of the interview;

- signing of the consent form.

In the second part of the interview protocol, the principals were requested to provide biographical and demographical information on the school, including information on the staff provisioning, learner enrolment numbers, the GDE quintile allocation, and language of instruction. All participants were requested to supply personal information

on their academic and professional qualifications, years' of experience, age and gender.

Focusing on the different positions and perspectives of the participating principals and deputy-principals, the third part of the interview protocol consisted of two sets of predetermined questions, one being applicable to principals and one to deputy-principals. During the interviews the participants were requested to answer the questions in an organised and consistent manner, yet they were given the opportunity to discuss issues beyond the scope of the specific questions (Mills & Gay, 2016:568-569). Probing strategies and clarification of answers were used throughout the interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:88-89; Struwig & Stead, 2001:98). Interview questions included discussions on the following:

- How the leadership function(s) of the deputy principal(s) are determined at the schools;

- The determination of the deputy-principals' leadership functions;

- The role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal;

- The assistance and professional support deputy-principals receive regarding the performance of their duties;

- The handling of overlapping (grey areas) in work distribution amongst the deputy-principals;

- Average time the principal and deputy-principal spend interacting professionally;

- Defining the role of the primary school deputy-principal;

- The unique position of the deputy-principal.

A copy of the semi-structured interview schedule is included as Addendum B and C respectively.

3.5.5 Advantages of semi-structured interviews

The use of semi-structured interviews provided the following advantages:

- The semi-structured interview questions could be developed in advance (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:87). An interview schedule assisted the interviewer to limit

getting side-tracked and to remain focused during the interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:87; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:455), and preventing a pointless discourse (Opie, 2004:118). Rather, it offered a more interpersonal meeting, not merely a data collection exercise (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:279).

- The flexibility offered by the semi-structured interviews appealed to the interviewer (Connolly, 2016:141) and it provided the opportunity to deviate from it where an interviewee led to an area that had not been considered before (Connolly, 2016:141). Semi-structured interviews thus offer both a formality in circumstances as well as an informal atmosphere, following the interviewee's flow of ideas (Opie, 2004:117-118).

- Using a semi-structured approach assisted the interviewer by making the data collection process somewhat orderly (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000:271), yet it provided the opportunity for deviating from the pre-set text and changing the wording of the questions and the order in which they were asked (Opie, 2004:118).

- Semi-structured interviews are designed to try and understand others and the world in which they function, therefore the interviewer had the liberty to probe and ask questions that were elaborated on and to clarify uncertainties (Creswell, 2014:240; Nieuwenhuis, 2013:87). Aspects such the school's leadership hierarchy and the roles and duties of the deputy-principals could be explained and clarified.

- Semi-structured interviews are partially systematic. Hence, the interviews in this study could be conducted in a less structured, more relaxed and conversational atmosphere (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:271).

- The purpose of an interview is to collect valuable data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:435). An atmosphere of trust could be established, encouraging the interviewees to be open and elaborate on their experiences (Creswell, 2014:240), hence the interviewer was able to collect detailed, information-rich data.

- The experience of conducting the physical interviews provided the researcher the necessary opportunity to gain first-hand understanding regarding the experiences and knowledge of the interviewees (Mills & Gay, 2016:568). It also provided the

opportunity for the interviewer to learn from the interviewee's non-verbal language (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:446).

- Semi-structured interviews seldom span a long period (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:87). All 15 interviews in this study could be conducted over a period of three weeks.

- Follow-up interviews or correspondence could be arranged, where and when necessary (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:455).

- Due to their professional position at the apex of the school's hierarchy, the principals and deputy-principals are well informed about the topic and had the experience and knowledge to provide good descriptive data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:279). The interviewees therefore shared valuable information which could be compared and contrasted (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:455).

3.5.6 Disadvantages of semi-structured interviews:

The interviewer experienced the following disadvantages of semi-structured interviews during this study:

- Principals and deputy-principals are busy people and finding a suitable time to conduct the interviews required good planning as only a limited number of interviews could be conducted per day (Lin, 2016:161).

- Semi-structured interviews allow for diverging from the predetermined interview schedule (Opie, 2004:118). Although the interviewer attempted to adhere to the pre-determined order throughout all the interviews, it happened that the sequencing wording of the questions sometimes differed (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:271). According to Lin (2016:161) this could have an influence on the comparability of the responses.

- The possibility exists that interviewees could refrain from giving their own views, but rather present the data that they felt the interviewer expected to hear (Creswell, 2014:240).

- Some interviewees got side-tracked during the interviews and had to be guided back to the topic (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:87).

- An interviewer is very dependent on reliable audio recording equipment during an interview (Creswell, 2014:240) and should always have a backup plan for a faulty recording device. Although I had pre-tested the audio recorder before each interview (Lin, 2016:160), during the interview with Deputy-Principal 5 (DP 5) the audio recorder was set on a faster speed setting than it should have been. As a result, DP 5 had to be re-interviewed.

- It is possible that the interviewee is not fully comfortable with or distrusts the interviewer (Creswell, 2014:240; Nieuwenhuis, 2013;87) which could lead to the interviewee withholding detailed, information-rich data from the interviewer.

- Due to the human dynamics involved in an interview, a participant's interpersonal or emotional wellbeing at the time of the interview could influence the response (Edwards & Holland, 2013:77). One of the interviewees attended a friend's funeral just preceding the interview. Hence, I had to be thoughtful and sympathetic (Connolly, 2016:139; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000:279) to establish an appropriate atmosphere of comfort, support and security, yet to elicit the desired information (Mills & Gay, 2016:568-569).

- An interviewee's response might not be well articulated or clear (Creswell, 2014:240). One of the interviewees spoke very fast and she also has a relatively soft voice. The open windows in her office faces the playgrounds and the noise of the learners playing on the playgrounds affected the audibility of the recording.

- The phrasing of the questions is very important to elicit the desired information (Mills & Gay, 2016:568). Although this study and the interview questions were written in English, several interviewees preferred to answer the questions in Afrikaans. This necessitated the interviewer translating all the English interview questions into Afrikaans beforehand. For clarification during some of the Afrikaans interviews, the English quotes had to be re-phrased or paraphrased in Afrikaans.

- At the first school where I conducted the interviews, both the principal and one of the deputy-principals exceeded the scheduled timeframe. The third interview (DP 2) was interviewed directly thereafter. This interview was completed in less time than was scheduled. Although this deputy-principal answered all the questions, I

found that this shorter interview reflected less detailed data than that of his colleagues.

- The possibility of researcher bias exists. I therefore had to be careful not draw my own conclusions (Opie, 2004:118).

- Although the interviewer is well experienced in interviewing teachers and parents at school, conducting an interview that needs to be transcribed is more challenging and time-consuming (Mills & Gay, 2016:569).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Qualitative data analysis and interpretation gives meaning to the raw data by primarily focusing on the holistic understanding of the data (Struwig & Stead, 2001:172). In this case study a general inductive approach was followed when the interview transcripts were explored (Thomas, 2006:238), and an overall sense of the data was understood. Forming a fundamental part of qualitative analysis (Male, 2016:179-181; Creswell, 2014:267), this was followed by a process of data reduction whereby the raw data (audio recordings of the interviews) was transcribed to text (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:71,83). In an attempt to answer the research questions, the transcribed data was coded, analysed and interpreted without bias. Patterns, regularities and themes could be recognised (Creswell, 2014:267). Some of the data was useful for this study, whilst other data was found to be meaningless, or even useless (Thomas, 2006:238).

Whilst reading the transcripts in their entirety a few times, they were analysed by hand by writing down notes and ideas. The large quantities of data were made manageable by categorising it into fewer content groups (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:483-485). This was followed by reducing the data, and displaying it in an organised, written format. Finally, the data was used to note patterns, themes and regularities and to draw conclusions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:116-118), Thomas, 2006:238). An inductive process of generating themes and sub-themes was developed as a way of describing the participants' knowledge, experience and approaches (Mills & Gay, 2016:426). Once the entire text was coded, seven themes were identified. After re-examination of the text, similar themes were grouped together and it was reduced to four themes (Creswell, 2014:269). The following four predetermined themes were formed, namely:

a) Leadership functions of deputy-principals

b) Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals

c) Professional interaction among deputy-principals

d) Understanding of the role and responsibilities of a primary-school deputy-principal

These themes were further divided into sub-themes.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical principles must practically unfold and continuously receive prime consideration at all levels of the research process and should not merely be perceived as a type of "afterthought" (Creswell, 2014:37). Official approval in respect of the request to conduct research was granted by the GDE and the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria approved the application for ethical clearance. None of the participants were forced or manipulated to participate in this study.

Before starting the fieldwork, permission was gained from the principals to conduct research at their schools. They were informed about their right to withdraw from the study should they wish to do so.

Upon approval, the principals were requested to identify two deputy-principals who would be best equipped and experienced to participate in the study. In the case of schools with only two deputy-principals, they were both included in the study.

My role as researcher in the study was explained to the participants (Struwig & Stead, 2001:227) and they were accordingly informed of the purpose of the study. The participants were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of the study after which each of the participants filled out consent forms. Pseudonyms were used to identify the various schools and participants and the participants were informed about their right to withdraw or not to participate in the study (Palaiologou, 2016:50-51).

It is beneficial for both parties in an interview (interviewer and interviewee) if a relationship of trust is established. This would also be a step towards "developing an ethical commitment from both parties" (Palaiologou, 2016:52). Throughout the study, and more particularly during the interviews, attention was paid to establishing trust between the interviewer and interviewees. Likewise, the participants were treated with

respect and dignity. I also indicated my sincere appreciation for the time the participants spent on me interviewing them. Even when member checking was done, I confirmed my appreciation for the time and the involvement of the participants in this study (Palaiologou, 2016:50-53; McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:420-422). None of the participants indicated that they wanted to withdraw from the study.

3.8   TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2017:194) research is never incontestably valid or trustworthy. Consequently, the authors suggest that researchers ought to attend to the advancement of the validity and trustworthiness of their studies. In congruence with their recommendations, this study used triangulation as a tool to validate the data from different participants in the study (one principal and two deputy-principals per school) (Lin, 2016:173). The same questions were posed to all participants of similar rank (principal or deputy-principal). As can be seen in the interview protocol (Addendum B and C), 12 questions were put to the principals and 15 questions were posed to the deputy-principals.

Member checking was applied by e-mailing participants' transcripts to them for authentication. Furthermore, five of the 15 participants (33%) were called afterwards to verify some of the data which they had shared during the interviews. Triangulation of data sources was used (Lin, 2016, 173; Creswell, 2014:286) through cross-validating each school's data and comparing the consistency of the collected data to that of all three participants of a school. This includes cross-checking the two deputy-principals' data as well as comparing the principals' data with that of each of the two deputy-principals. To find consistencies in the data, I sought recurring patterns, regularities and irregularities in the data (Lin, 2016:173; Mills & Gay, 2016:574; McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:478).

Researchers are never completely objective, and they bring prior knowledge or experience to the situation (Ma, 2016:33; Male, 2016:179). Hence, particular caution was taken that the transcripts reflected the precise words of the participants and that authors received due recognition for their contributions. In addition, as a participant observer, meaningful interpretations could be made during the interviews and valuable notes were recorded (Mills & Gay, 2016:397). The findings in this study can thus be

supported by the data such as the audio recording of the interview, transcript, member checking and hand-written codes.

3.9   ADVANTAGES OF THE RESEARCH APPROACH USED

The intention of this study was to gain a comprehensive understanding on how distributed leadership manifests in the role of the primary school deputy-principal. This study led to describing five different schools' reality, understanding and thoughts (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:42). In congruence with the features of a case-study method, this study provided the inclusion of "multi-perspective analysis" whereby the viewpoints of a variety of relevant participants or groups are also considered, not merely a single voice or two (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:75). In this study the viewpoints from the principals' perception was considered and compared, as well as that of the deputy-principals.

Case studies typically strive towards an all-inclusive understanding of the interaction among participants in certain circumstances and how they make sense of the meaning of the occurrences under consideration (Mills & Gay, 2016:417). The interview transcripts naturally developed into a process of identifying themes, which further resulted in a process of "open coding", where the data could be explored in an analytical and systematic way. This process assisted in ensuring that the findings only reflect the actual data collected (Male, 2016:179-180). Finally, the data analysis in this study assists researchers to gain an exhaustive understanding of the case.

3.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter focused on and discussed the rationale for the research design and methods of data collection in order to answer the research questions. The ethical considerations were described, and the trustworthiness and credibility of the study were outlined. Chapter 4 presents the data, followed by a discussion of the findings in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the raw data emerging from the semi-structured interviews is presented. A brief description of the demographic traits of the participating school is given followed by a biographical account of the participants. The interviews with the participating principals and deputy-principals were guided by 12 and 15 questions respectively. Four themes (illustrated in Figure 4.1) were identified and the data is presented accordingly.
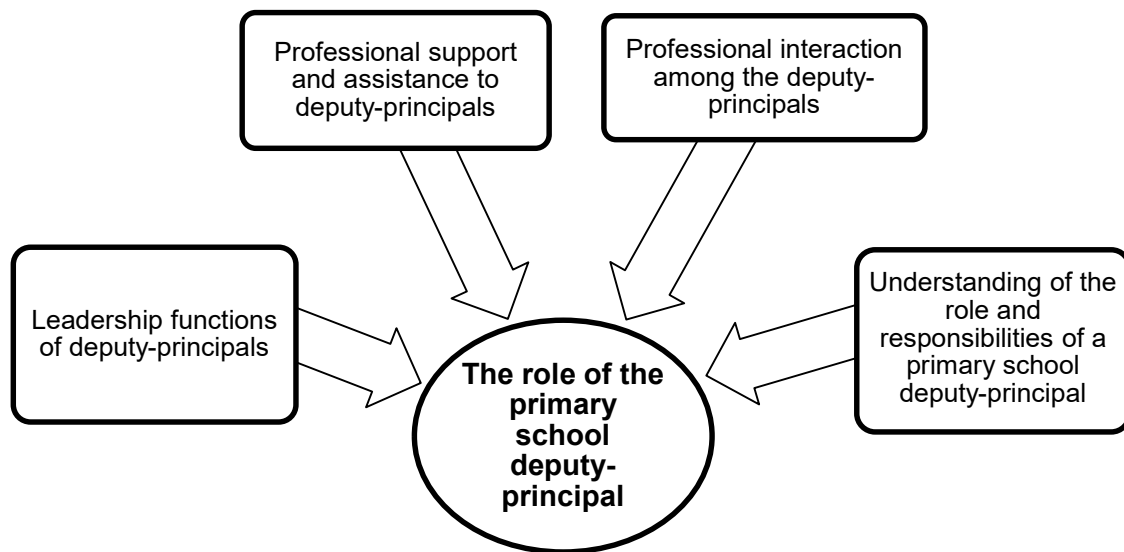
Figure 4.1: Four emergent themes from the participants' responses

4.2   DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

School W is not only the smallest participating school, but also the school that serves the most diverse community. School W accommodates up to 18 different cultures and a variety of different languages and religions. Serving such a diverse community often leads to controversy, but they have managed to find the golden mean. The University of South Africa (UNISA) assisted the school in implementing international values which are applicable to all cultures. Significantly, many of the learners' parents work at the embassies in the surrounding area. As a result, Principal W uses the knowledge and expertise of the parents originating from foreign countries as a source of information. Hence, Principal W remains updated with the latest foreign education systems and trends. Very few learners attending School W receive education in their mother

tongue. A brief description of the staff provisioning, learner enrolment and LOLT of each of the participating schools is provided in Table 4.1 below. This is followed by a biographical description of the participants (Table 4.2) and a summary of the participants' teaching and management experience in education (Table 4.3).

Table 4.1: A brief description of the staff provisioning, number of learner enrollment and language of learning and teaching (LOLT)

Participating school	Language of learning and teaching (LOLT)	Number of learners enrolled at school	Staff provisioning	Employed by the GDE	Employed by the SGB	Total
School V	Afrikaans	1705	Principal	1		1
			Deputy-principal	2		2
			Heads of Department (HOD)	5		5
			Post Level 1 educators	31	39	70
			Total	**39**	**39**	**78**
School W	English	815	Principal	1		1
			Deputy-principal	1	1	2
			Heads of Department (HOD)	3		3
			Post Level 1 educators	18	7	25
			Total	**23**	**8**	**31**
School X	Afrikaans	1937	Principal	1		1
			Deputy-principal	2		2
			Heads of Department (HOD)	5		5
			Post Level 1 educators	35	34	69
			Total	**43**	**34**	**77**
School Y	English	1462	Principal	1		1
			Deputy-principal	2	1	3
			Heads of Department (HOD)	5	2	7
			Post Level 1 educators	28	25	53
			Total	**36**	**28**	**64**
School Z	Afrikaans	952	Principal	1		1
			Deputy-principal	1	3	4
			Heads of Department (HOD)	3	25	28
			Post Level 1 educators	19	28	47
			Total	**24**	**56**	**80**

As can be seen from Table 4.1 above, three of the five participating schools (Schools W, Y and Z) employ additional deputy-principals. Significantly, each of the two smallest schools in the study (Schools W and Z) employs two deputy-principals. Despite having more than double the number of enrolled learners (1937 learners) than School W (815 learners), both the schools employ two deputy-principals. School Z, on the other hand, has 137 enrolled learners more than School W, yet School Z (80 educators) employs more than double the number of educators than School W (31 educators).

4.3 BRIEF BIOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 4.2: Biographical description of participants

School	Participant Male/Female Age	Biographical description of participants
School V	**Principal V** Male Age: 56-60 years	Principal V has 30 years' experience in education. His initial training was a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE). He furthered his studies whilst teaching by obtaining a BA degree. Principal V has been in his current position for 11 years. He does not teach any classes. The principal, the two deputy-principals and the heads of departments (HODs) form the SMT.
	Deputy-principal 1 (DP 1) Female Age: 41-45 years	At first, DP 1 obtained a BA degree, followed by an HDE and finally she earned a BA Hons (Afrikaans). She currently teaches Grade 7 Life Orientation. DP 1 joined School V 1 year ago. Prior to this position she was a deputy-principal at a high school for 4½ years.
	Deputy-principal 2 (DP 2) Male Age: 51-55 years	DP 2 initially obtained a BA degree followed by a BA (Hons), a BEd (Hons), an MEd degree and finally a PhD. DP 2 has a total of 31 years' experience, 6 years of which were as a high school principal. He has 19 years' experience as a deputy-principal. Prior to the 6½ years in his current position, DP 2 held the position of a high school deputy-principal for 12½ years. In addition, he has 3 years' experience as principal of a private school (see Table 4.4). He currently teaches Grade 7 Mathematics.
School W	**Principal W** Male Age: 61-65 years	Principal W is very experienced. He obtained an HDE before he commenced his education career. In total he has 31 years' experience in education and is close to retirement. The principal and the two deputy-principals form the executive committee of School W.
	Deputy-principal 3 (DP 3) Male Age: 51-55 years	DP 3 obtained an HDE and he has 7 years' experience as deputy-principal at School W. DP 3 teaches Grade 7 Afrikaans and he received a national award for the exceptional manner in which he teaches Afrikaans to their (mostly) foreign learners. He even appeared on national television for this achievement.
	Deputy-principal 4 (DP 4) Female Age: 51-55 years	DP 4 is an HOD who receives an additional remuneration from the SGB to perform duties of a deputy-principal with specific focus on academics. Her internal title at the school is 'Deputy Academics'. DP 4 first obtained a BA degree which was followed by an HDE. She teaches English and has 27 years' experience in education.
School X	**Principal X** Male Age: 51 – 55 years	Principal X has 28 years' experience, 12 years in his current position and 7 years as deputy-principal. He started his education career after the successful completion of an HDE. Whilst teaching, Principal X obtained a BA degree as well as a BEd (Hons) through distance learning. Until the end

		of the previous year Principal X was still teaching. He has since stopped teaching, but he continues to coach rugby.
	Deputy-principal 5 (DP 5) Male Age: 56 – 60 years	DP 5 is very experienced in education and plans to retire within the next year or two. He initially qualified by obtaining a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE) and thereafter completed a BA degree through part-time study. He later enrolled for and completed a BEd (Hons) degree in Education Management. DP 5 is responsible for teaching Gr 7 Natural Sciences (NS). DP 5 has 19 years' experience as deputy-principal, and he mentors the novice deputy-principal (DP 6). There are 1937 learners enrolled at School X and throughout the interview he refers to School X as a macro school ("*makro-skool*").
	Deputy-principal 6 (DP 6) Female Age: 46-50 years	DP 6 qualified as an educator by obtaining an HDE. As indicated in Table 4.4 DP 6 is a novice deputy-principal. She had six years' experience as HOD: Foundation Phase at School X prior to her promotion to deputy-principal 2 months before this interview. In total she has 25 years' experience of which 19 years have been at a smaller school of approximately 700 learners. She had gained a lot of experience at the smaller school and this has developed and prepared her for deputy-principalship. She acknowledges that whilst teaching at the smaller school, she did not realise the benefits of taking on duties which are usually associated with a more senior position. DP 6 currently teaches Grade 6 Life Skills and Gr 7 Life Orientation.
School Y	**Principal Y** Male Age: 51-55 years	Principal Y first obtained a BA degree which was followed by an HDE, a diploma in Youth Preparedness and finally a BEd (Hons) degree. He has 27½ years' experience in education, of which 12½ years have been in his current post. It manifested during the interview that Principal Y regards the deputy-principalship as an important position. Principal Y stands at the head of 64 educators, of which 3 are deputy-principals.
	Deputy-principal 7 (DP 7) Female Age: 46-60 years	DP 7 has 22 years' experience in education of which 4 years have been as deputy-principal. She initially obtained a BA degree which was followed by an HDE. Whilst teaching, she furthered her studies and obtained a BEd Hons in Educational Psychology as well as a Further Diploma in Education. DP 7 teaches Grade 7 Life Orientation.
	Deputy-principal 8 (DP 8) Female Age: 41-45 years	DP 8 has 24 years' experience in education. She initially received a BA degree which was followed by an HDE She currently teaches Grade 5 Social Sciences. She has five years' experience as deputy-principal at School Y.
School Z	**Principal Z** Male Age: 41-45 years	Principal Z was promoted to principal at a young age. In fact, he is currently one of the youngest principals in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria. As can be viewed in Table 4.4 his prior experience entails 7 years as a Post Level 1 educator, 1 years' experience as HOD and 1 years' experience as deputy-principal. Principal Z claims to be continuously refining and/or expanding the school's management model.
	Deputy-principal 9 (DP 9) Female Age: 46-50 years	DP 9 regards herself as a lifelong learner. She obtained a B Prim Ed degree at the University of Pretoria (UP). Whilst teaching, DP 9 obtained a BEd (Hons) in Education Psychology. She also successfully completed the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE): School Management and Leadership which was offered by the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance. She currently attends a comprehensive one-year management course.
	Deputy-principal 10 (DP 10) Male Age: 41-45	DP 10 qualified as an educator by obtaining an HDE. Thereafter, he successfully completed a BEd (Hons). DP 10 manages all aspects around the Sport and Culture at School Z. He teaches Mathematics.

As indicated in Table 4.3, six of the participating deputy-principals (60%) have a Higher Diploma in Education, and five of the ten deputy-principals (50%) have a BA degree. Six of the participating deputy-principals (60%) hold an Honours degree, whilst DP 2 is the only participating deputy-principal who holds an MEd and PhD. Only one deputy-principal completed the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE). There are only two deputy-principals who have high school and primary school experience, and both participants are employed at School V.

4.4 SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Table 4.3: Summary of the participants' years of experience in education.

Participating school	Participant	Number of years' experience				
		Post Level 1	Post Level 2	Post Level 3	Post Level 4	Total
School V	Principal V	8	5	6	11	**30**
	Deputy-principal 1 (DP 1)	18	4	5½		**27½**
	Deputy-principal 2 (DP 2)	6	3	19	3	**31**
School W	Principal W	3	2	1	22	**28**
	Deputy-principal 3 (DP 3)	10	8	11		**29**
	Deputy-principal 4 (DP 4)	10	12	5		**27**
School X	Principal X	4	5	7	12	**28**
	Deputy-principal 5 (DP 5)	7	12	18		**37**
	Deputy-principal 6 (DP 6)	13	12	2 months		**25**
School Y	Principal Y	6	3	6	12½	**27½**
	Deputy-principal 7 (DP 7)	18		4		**22**
	Deputy-principal 8 (DP 8)	12	7	5		**24**
School Z	Principal Z	7	1	1	14	**23**
	Deputy-principal 9 (DP 9)	2	15	11		**28**
	Deputy-principal 10 (DP 10)	7	3	9		**19**
TOTAL		**131**	**92**	**108½**	**74½**	**406**

As illustrated in Table 4.3, both Principals W and Z were appointed as principals at a young age. DP 6 is a novice deputy-principal, whilst DP 2 has the most experience as deputy-principal and he is the only deputy-principal who has experience as a principal (three years). It can be noted that DP 7 is the only deputy-principal who was directly promoted from Post Level 1 to deputy-principal (Post Level 3). The participating schools call their executive committee, which usually comprises of the principal and the multiple deputy-principals, different names, i.e. "senior management" or "top management" or just simply "the management team". This should, however, not be

confused with the SMT. In order to limit possible confusion, this study will only distinguish between a school's SMT and the executive committee.

The raw data from each of the participants was categorised per theme and is accordingly presented below.

4.5   SCHOOL V

4.5.1   Principal V

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

The principal and the two deputy-principals form a collaborative and supportive team. Both deputy-principals receive ample time to deputise. DP 1 is responsible for the academic programme of the school, whilst DP 2 leads aspects revolving around sport, culture, discipline and operational management. Principal V explains how he involves both the deputy-principals in leadership decision-making as follows:

> "But let us think about it, how are we going to extend it? How are we going to make it grow? How are we going to cultivate the love? How are we going to expand it further at our school?"

Principal V emphasises the importance of managing the school according to the school's organogram. He explains that, in line with the hierarchy practised at School V, the school operates from the bottom to the top, not the top to the bottom. School V's management meetings take place every morning of every school day and thereafter, the deputy-principals give feedback to the staff at the staff meetings which take place before school.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

According to Principal V he invests a lot in his deputy-principals. He encourages both deputy-principals to attend training courses of their choice. He motivates both DP 1 and DP 2 by occasionally buying them inspirational leadership-directed books, and personally guides them through the books in a systematic manner. Principal V believes that by doing this, he prepares the deputy-principals to be pro-active and thoroughly equipped to minimise possible crisis situations ("brandpunte") that may arise. In addition, Principal V encourages the deputy-principals to regularly attend motivational speeches, some of which the principal attends with them. Upon return, the deputy-

principals are expected to share the newly acquired information with the rest of the staff. Principal V believes that managing the school is a team effort. Towards the end of each year, the SMT attends an annual breakaway weekend where the following year's school programme is planned and discussed in detail. This includes collaborative discussion of the school's organogram and the distribution of duties. Hence, everyone present is expected to give their input. According to Principal V he prefers to lead by example, and he expects both deputy-principals to show the same commitment to develop and mentor staff. Principal V furthermore regards his professional support and assistance to the deputy-principals as continuous and practical. He also believes that Post Level 1 educators must help with the management of the school and specifically to assist the deputy-principals with the general school management. In fact, Principal V promises to empower any Post Level 1 educator who is willing to assist. He/she will be empowered and will be sent for training, if necessary. Consequently, Principal V expects the deputy-principals not to be sensitive about receiving instructions from a lower ranked educator. As an illustration, Principal V explains that the school uses a Post Level 1 teacher to manage the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). Should this educator request the submission of files, the deputy-principals must submit themselves to his or her instructions.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

The overall management of School V is defined in a rather detailed organogram. Principal V claims there are very few grey areas in the work distribution between the deputy-principals due to the specific way in which the school organogram is structured. Hence, the deputy-principals' duties are specified in detail. When overlapping does occur, the two deputy-principals will sit together and discuss and/or debate it in order to find a solution.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

The roles and responsibilities of the deputy-principals of School V are envisioned in accordance with the PAM. In the words of Principal V:

> "At our school it is absolutely in accordance with the PAM."

Principal V believes the role of the primary school deputy-principal has not changed much over the years, yet he thinks that a more refined definition has been added to it. Also, several finer nuances have been added to the job and this has resulted in and increased the number of people working under the deputy-principal. Principal V considers it important that his deputy-principals manage their portfolios independently and in accordance with his expectations, irrespective of whether or not he is present. The deputy-principals must know the principal well enough to perform duties on his behalf according to his preferred ways. This includes the ability to be handed the principal's cryptic notes and without any prior notification, take control and lead a meeting or assembly. Principal V believes it is a pre-requisite that a deputy-principal must be a good public speaker. Accordingly, when interviewing for a deputy-principal post, the panel of interviewers must submit the candidates to a type of practical test to determine whether the candidate is a good orator or public speaker.

Principal V holds the opinion that the management of the academic programme forms a fundamental part of deputy-principalship. The deputy-principal must thoroughly understand the logistics of being in charge of the academic programme of the school. This includes understanding the broader school management situation of the school and being able to ensure fairness in the equal distribution of the teachers' curricular and co-curricular workload. At School V the academic component appears to be so extensive that it is managed separately under the leadership of DP 1. Similarly, a deputy-principal must understand the school's overall academic challenges and must be academically orientated in addition to whatever qualifications he/she might have. This also means that he/she must be able to compile a school and an exam timetable because it is not "a cup of tea."

Principal V furthermore believes a deputy-principal must know how to prepare a school budget. Of equal importance, the deputy-principals must assist the principal with staff development and Principal V expects his deputy-principals to surround themselves with the same invitational style of energy that he radiates. For example, he does not believe in giving orders - instead, he expresses his wishes. In this respect, the deputy-principals are encouraged to follow Principal V's leadership style. The extent to which this invitational approach has permeated through the school is demonstrated by the

fact that the school won an international award for invitational leadership practice in 2010.

On the other hand, the principal seems to encourage his deputy-principals to disagree with him. The data confirmed that DP 2 often debates with the principal. Principal V explains:

> "DP 2 and I debate many things, but afterwards he says thank you that we may differ and be engaged in a debate for what will be the best for the school."

Principal V strongly believes that deputy-principals must have progressed through all the prescribed promotional ranks for educators. He furthermore insists that the deputy-principals assist him with creative thinking and strengthen his hands. He also feels that his deputy-principals must not be overwhelmed by administrative tasks, thus he ensures that the administrative staff and heads of departments (HODs) assist the deputy-principals with administrative duties.

Principal V believes it is not a problem that there is no universal definition for a deputy-principal. In his view each school has its unique character and the size of the school, as well as its socio-economic background will define the role of the deputy-principal. Yet, Principal V believes that management of the academic programme will always form part of a deputy-principal's portfolio. To illustrate, Principal V explains that a school situated in an area with limited sport facilities will not need a deputy-principal to manage sport. Instead, it can be managed by an administrator. If, for instance, a school has a hostel, the deputy-principal can manage the hostel whereas the HOD can manage the sport and culture. In brief, Principal V feels that a deputy-principal must be able to substitute and represent the principal.

4.5.2 Deputy-principal 1 (DP 1)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

DP 1 believes a school must not revolve around one person only. She explains this as follows:

> "… a school of excellence can absolutely not, may not revolve around one person, there is no way that it can/should happen."

According to DP 1, the principal and the SGB decide on the broader leadership functions of the school. The distribution of the specific leadership tasks and duties of the deputy-principals, however, are made at the SMT breakaway weekend towards the end of each year. DP 1 expresses her views on sharing the leadership functions with the principal as follows:

> "But the schools in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria are gigantic schools. In other words, the principal cannot be involved in everything. He simply won't survive."

DP 1 feels that it is very important that the deputy-principals and principal work together in unison. She compares it to having one body with many hands ("*een liggaam met baie hande*"). DP 1 furthermore believes the duties of the two deputy-principals are divided in order to strengthen the school. Her leadership role includes putting measures in place for mentorship, training, and staff development, and she often gets the opportunity to do staff training and present staff development talks.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

The executive committee meets each morning for about twenty minutes. On some days this seems to be the only contact DP 1 has with the principal, but on average she spends about an hour a day with the principal. In a broader context, DP 1 explained that she and the principal visited a top-rated school in Cape Town to learn how it functions. Generally speaking, DP 1 believes that some principals want to do too much on their own, whereas others do not want to do anything by themselves. As such, DP 1 believes that a principal who wants to do too much on his own deprives the deputy-principal of opportunities to grow. DP 1 reports that she receives professional support from various sources, including her union which provides her with continuous information and support. DP 1 attended her union's induction training course for newly appointed deputy-principals. DP 1 also regularly attends training courses, some of which are presented by private companies. In addition, DP 1 receives a lot of professional support from the principal and she mentioned that she appreciates the trust he displays in her abilities. Principal V shared practical lessons he has learnt during his career with DP 1. To illustrate, Principal V taught her the value of training and developing the HODs, and even more important, trusting them. DP 1 explains the principal's perspective as follows:

> "I have learnt to trust my heads of departments. I have trained them and trusted them, made them strong. That is how I managed to survive."

Overall, DP 1 believes that the executive committee must continuously be "in training". She points out that a school must not come to a standstill if something happens to the principal. Rather, the staff must be empowered, trained and their strengths must be developed so that there are always back-up systems in place.

- **Professional interactions between the deputy-principals**

DP 1 describes School V as huge ("reusagtig"). She spells out that the two deputy-principals have specific duties assigned to them and they must be skilled enough to handle a variety of situations. Although the duties are divided between the two deputy-principals, she often experiences overlapping or grey areas that must be navigated. However, she feels that if there are too many fingers in the pie, it can cause problems. DP 1 maintains that most of the cases which are handled by the two deputy-principals already have some background history. Accordingly, she feels it is better that the one who handles the case from the start, must complete it. This does not always appear to be possible, therefore DP 1 will update her colleague, DP 2, after handling a case on his behalf, and *vice versa*. To sum up, DP 1 once again emphasises the importance of working together as a team.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

DP 1 holds the position of Deputy-Principal: Academics. In brief, DP 1 is primarily responsible for all aspects regarding School V's academic performance. DP 1 explains it as follows:

> *"…* everything that concerns academics, in its most basic form … I handle, I manage, I administer."

She is fairly new in the position and believes that her role is still developing. She also conducts the parent information meetings at the beginning of each academic year. Due to her having gained marketing experience at her previous school, she handles an increasing number of marketing related duties at School V. DP 1 experiences that, because she is the only female on the executive committee, she lately finds herself

handling more staff-related situations than before. DP 1, however, emphasises that the academic programme remains her primary focus. She thus conducts class visits and convenes curriculum-related meetings with the HODs. In essence, DP 1 believes she cannot conduct class visits and hold teachers accountable if her work is not up to date. As such, she feels that it places a responsibility on her as deputy-principal to set the example.

DP 1 also manages the term planning, coordinates all dates on the year plan, sets the exam timetable and ensures that the demarcation for the exams is in place. Besides this, DP 1 organises relief staff, and is involved in the management of the IT. Finally, DP 1 manages the school's marketing, newsletters and she organises school functions. On the whole, DP 1 highlights that most of the tasks she currently handles had randomly landed on her table and that she has made a deliberate decision to take on these additional responsibilities and to be the steward of her decisions and actions.

DP 1 is an elected member of the SGB, and she works in collaboration with those members whose portfolios are in congruence with her academic and marketing portfolios. Furthermore, DP 1 states that she is the secretary of the IT Committee of the SGB. The school's IT did not form part of her portfolio when she joined School W. As time went by, she realised that a lack of good IT was affecting each teacher's academic duties. She thus firstly established a committee, which was followed by a management plan. Soon thereafter, DP 1 realised that she was involved in many additional duties. She motivates her statement as follows:

> *"… in a small management team [executive committee – own insertion] there are actually a few hands for all the tasks."*

DP 1 claims that she recently organised the Grade R open day and coordinated a local radio station's broadcasting at the school. Although a deputy-principal performs many administrative duties, DP 1 asserts that it entails a variety of other duties as well: DP 1 drafts the term programmes and assists the educators with Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM). She also receives IT training at school, which includes receiving training on how to do the backend of the school's web page. DP 1 is one of the educators who conduct assemblies in the school hall. Because the school is so big, the learners are divided into several groups and it takes up almost half a day to

complete all the assemblies once a week. Accordingly, DP 1 experiences that there are so many duties which must be performed, that she does her administrative tasks at night.

DP 1 considers deputy-principals as powerful people who manage the innumerable aspects of the school in a dynamic way. She feels that if there is no written definition for the deputy-principalship, it can make people feel leaderless or directionless ("*leierloos en sonder rigting*"). Accordingly, she believes that the deputy-principalship must be clearly defined. DP 1 views the role of the principal and deputy-principals equal in various aspects. However, DP 1 acknowledges that the principal remains the chief ("*die hoofman*") who determines the deputy-principals' portfolios with the aim of assisting the principal. Once again DP 1 suggests that a principal at such a large school cannot be involved in all aspects of school management. In addition, DP 1 points out that she teaches six periods per week and she performs the same duties as the rest of the staff, such as marking books, submitting marks on time, preparing files, planning lessons and the preparation of Power Point presentations. Hence, DP 1 stresses the importance of a deputy-principal being involved in all aspects of teaching. DP 1 gives a broad overview of some practical aspects regarding her role as follows:

> "So, if you work in collaboration with the staff, then, I think, you can add value, because you experience whatever your people [teachers – own insertion] experience: heat, cold, loose data projector cable connections, and children in different facets of the year – very tired, lots of energy, lots of everything. Also, in the primary school now, that extra-long [second – own insertion] term that goes on and on. Until the bell rings at the end of the term, we continue to teach. That complete tiredness that pulls the staff down."

To sum up, DP 1 describes the deputy-principalship as a leadership role in its own right, and she regards a deputy-principal as a "mini-principal" ("*'n leierskapsrol in eie reg, want jy is eintlik die mini-hoof*"). Interestingly, DP 1 explains that she never wants to become a school principal.

4.5.3 Deputy-principal 2 (DP 2)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

DP 2 considers it obvious that the deputy-principal's role should be seen as a leadership role in its own right. ("*Dis voor die hand liggend*"). He embraces the fact that the executive committee of School V thinks creatively, strategically and with vision. In appreciation, DP 2 explains that he has always worked in favourable circumstances where his principals have empowered him. School V uses an organogram in which all leadership roles are defined. The executive committee (comprising the principal and both deputy-principals) decide how the leadership duties are divided. This, according to DP 2, is done by considering the competencies, qualifications and experience of the two deputy-principals. DP 2 believes that he demonstrates leadership in the SMT. He claims that, due to his prior experience as principal and deputy-principal, he finds it easy to be assertive in the management team. DP 2 furthermore points out that he serves on the SGB where he is specifically tasked to fulfil a collaborative role with the parents concerning sport and culture. From this perspective, he points out the particulars as follows:

> "I am responsible for the sport and culture. So there, in other words, I will empower my organisers so that they can take ownership of their specific sport or culture opportunities without applying micro management. So, they will experience unprecedented freedom and space inside that domain by saying: a freedom that leads to absolute responsibility, but they must be empowered."

DP 2 is also the leader of the administrative staff. Typically, he and the head of administration will hold regular meetings to discuss issues related to the importance of the school administrative staff as first point of contact in the reception area. In addition to this, DP 2 seems to be involved in evaluating the administrative staff's progression towards maintaining high levels of client service.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

School V holds management meetings every morning for 15 minutes and each Friday they meet for an additional 30 minutes. Apart from this, the principal's door is open for assistance at any time. DP 2 suggests that he is relatively well empowered, and he

values the relationship with the principal, especially if he needs the principal as a sounding board (*"klankbord"*).

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

According to DP 2 there will always be communal points in the work distribution of deputy-principals. He furthermore confirms the existence of grey areas in the professional interaction between the two deputy-principals as follows:

> "One deputy-principal [DP 1 – own insertion] is responsible for the academics. I am responsible for educational matters, which also relates to discipline. For example, a child who neglects doing homework experiences academic drawbacks. However, this could be due to specific behavioural problems or challenges. This, in turn, falls within my portfolio. In such a case, the two deputy-principals will meet and discuss the situation to the eventual benefit of the child."

Of importance, though, is that the deputy-principals are comfortable with the existence of grey areas and the fact that overlapping situations will occur.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

DP 2 explains that his role includes the mentoring of staff. He comments that he is responsible for all aspects relating to the placement of student teachers and the teacher assistant programme. This includes involvement in their mentorship and the monitoring of their performance. He substantiates it as follows:

> "… finding out how they are, sharing the challenges, highlights, joys and fears they experience to prepare them to eventually handle their profession."

He provides a practical example where he uses a difficult educational situation, such as learner misconduct, to guide and develop the staff professionally. Upon asking DP 2 whether he thinks that deputy-principals are mostly engaged with clerical duties, he disagrees. He asserts that deputy-principalship encompasses far more than their many administrative duties.

DP 2 expresses his opinion in terms of the deputy-principal being a link between the educators and school management as follows:

"… it gives you the ideal opportunity to demonstrate the full package of being a teacher. In other words, being a role model, to be a subject specialist as well as demonstrating your added value, to set the example. When the bell rings, and teachers remain seated, I say: 'Ladies and gentlemen, the bell has rung.' Because I want to be the first to arrive at my class, set an example of how the ideal teacher must behave."

In summary, DP 2 clarifies that his role as deputy-principal corresponds with the requirements of the PAM. Moreover, he asserts that the school's organogram does not only display his individual role, but also how it relates to the wider context within the school and to the benefit of the school as a whole. DP 2 feels that he is in an ideal position to set an example for the teachers by not arriving late for classes, not handing in marks late, by setting exam papers in an exemplary manner, and that he is knowledgeable in the subject he teaches. DP 2 elaborates by stating that the way in which he coaches sport and his conduct on the sports field are ways to demonstrate his leadership as a role model.

4.6 SCHOOL W

4.6.1 Principal W

According to Principal W, principals often complain about the current education system which enables educators to be promoted too easily. As a result, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) increasingly demand that candidates have suitable management qualifications. Explaining that an educator can be promoted as principal after only seven years of service (without any management experience), he is convinced that some educators are promoted because they are good teachers, not because they are good managers or leaders.

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

School W's leadership structure became somewhat dysfunctional a few years ago. Principal W explains that they made use of an external expert to assist them in designing a new leadership model. They firstly took the needs of the school into account and thereafter the line functions were determined. Also, the competency of the educators who had to fill the positions was considered. Thus, the school's challenges and needs were addressed, and they have managed to design a

leadership model which provides for specialist educators in various line functions. This process took about three to five years to establish. Initially they experienced resistance from the educators, but once the (new) leadership structure proved itself, everybody seemed happy. Principal W explains as follows:

> "We used the school leaders … the SMT, the heads of grades, the heads of the learning areas, the subject heads. We all sat together to ask, "What will be the best [for the school – own insertion]?"

The leadership functions at School W are specified in a flow diagram which also indicates the various job descriptions. Principal W considers it important that the two deputy-principals function independently. He furthermore believes that both deputy-principals function independently, that they are specialists in their fields, and they have specialist educators who work with them.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

The first two hours of the school day are set aside for professional school management. This includes meetings with the principal. In addition, the executive committee holds weekly meetings on Tuesday mornings. School W arranges numerous staff-development and empowerment opportunities.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

Principal W believes there are no grey areas in the work distribution between the two deputy-principals and that they assist one another when necessary.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

Principal W affirms that the executive committee firstly used the PAM as the point of departure when they determined the roles and responsibilities of the two deputy-principals. They literally used the PAM to determine whether or not they had covered all aspects of a deputy-principal's work. Principal W emphasises that it is a terrible workload ("verskriklike werkslading") for one deputy-principal to manage alone. That is why the executive committee requested the SGB to employ an additional deputy-principal. Principal W explains the situation as follows:

"That is why we said to the [School – own insertion] Governing Body, 'Can't we split the deputy-principal's work, because you want excellent education, but you also want a school that is neat and clean and well maintained. One person [deputy-principal – own insertion] cannot do it all."

According to Principal W the PAM gives too broad a description of the deputy-principal's role and responsibilities. Principal W comments as follows:

"The PAM is broadly defined, and the words are not very descriptive. That is part of the problem …"

Apart from being an award-winning educator whose success as a language teacher was screened on national television, DP 3 is responsible for the operational functioning of the school. This includes, *inter alia*, the neatness of the school site, managing sport arrangements and the preparation of sports fields. DP 3 is a co-opted member of the SGB. In addition, he is responsible for the discipline which also includes writing the code of conduct. In this regard, DP 3 trained the educators and explained to them that their new discipline system works on positive reinforcement. DP 3 furthermore assists the educators by providing them with quality LTSM and resources to make their work easier. DP 3 also mentors a number of educators and assists them with the IQMS. He is passionate about staff motivation and development. Hence, he conducts staff development sessions once a week during the staff meetings before school. To illustrate, DP 3 initiated that all the educators receive a motivational book each term. DP 3, who personally works through these books with the staff also regularly shows them motivational videos. This is regarded as an investment in the staff's development. In addition, the executive committee also attends workshops and training provided by the unions or private institutions.

DP 4, on the other hand, is mainly responsible for the academic programme of the school. She demonstrates strong leadership and affirms the importance of staff empowerment. She asserts that the academic workload is heavy, hence she uses Post Level 1 educators to assists her. Once again Principal W confirms that the deputy-principal's assigned workload – according to the PAM – is unrealistic for one person to handle alone. Principal W elaborates on the education structure represented in the PAM in the following way:

"The [education – own insertion] system is actually an old system which needs adjustment. The schools are no longer … you don't get a school with only 350 learners. Look at … [schools in direct vicinity – own insertion]. School A [for example – own insertion] has 2 200 to 2 300 enrolled learners. They talk about the super-schools, because the super-schools are forced down on us from the Department of Education, because there is only one school in that area, and it must accommodate all those children. So, the school grows, but your [physical – own insertion] facilities remain the same."

With reference to his personal experience, Principal W confirms that the role of the deputy-principal has changed over the years. He, however, believes that a school's location, the size thereof and the type of learners will influence the role of the deputy-principal. For example, if sport achievements are high on a school's priority list, it will most likely influence the role of the deputy-principal. Principal W refers to the deputy-principal as a "principal-in-training." He explains the disadvantage of a deputy-principal performing duties which are supposed to be carried out by the principal. When this happens, the principal will be uninformed. As stated before, it took a long time to develop the school's leadership model which reflects a distinctive distribution of duties. Although Principal W uses the PAM to define the deputy-principalship, he holds the opinion that the deputy-principalship is vaguely defined because the principal's job description is vaguely defined. However, Principal W explains that a deputy-principal is both an educator and a manager. It is thus important to balance the deputy-principal's workload. Regarding the importance of using the PAM as the point of departure to determine a deputy-principal's job description, Principal W articulates his thoughts in the following manner:

"You must look at the workload of that person [deputy-principal – own insertion] and go back to the PAM documents, you know. He [deputy-principal – own insertion] has a percentage [allocated – own insertion] time [that – own insertion] he must spend on school management and he is in actual fact the principal's right hand. He must … he is the principal's shadow. If I go out here tonight and a car knocks me over, he [deputy-principal – own insertion] must be able to continue my work. There mustn't be any dark areas or grey areas between me and him … And I think then you must also look at the work

distribution, [so – own insertion] that he is not totally overloaded with IQMS or LTSM and that type of thing and he cannot get to the management of the school."

Principal W acknowledges deputy-principals as leaders in their own right who must show initiative and accept responsibility for their duties. In addition, Principal W states that DP 3 is his "right hand." This places DP 3 in the ideal position to be "the contact between the management and the school" (*"die kontak tussen ons en die skool").* Accordingly, DP 3 will have a better understanding of the educators' frustrations and complaints.

4.6.2 Deputy-principal 3 (DP 3)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

A primary school manages a compelling variety of activities. The deputy-principals' individual talents and abilities influence the way in which their roles are distributed. According to DP 3, the executive committee designed an organogram which reflects all aspects of school management. Accordingly, the executive committee continuously revises the job descriptions, according to the school's needs. There has been a change in DP 3's primary duties so that he focuses more on the organisational management of the school. Informally he is called "Deputy: Operations" and is responsible for all the "operations of the school". Part of his role is to prioritise and decide what is most important, what must be done immediately, and what can be done at a later stage. In contrast, DP 4 oversees the entire academic programme. Therefore, some of DP 4's previous responsibilities are now carried out by DP 3. In addition, Post Level 1 educators are trained and empowered to assist the deputy-principals. DP 3 affirms this as follows:

> "Yes, and we do it constantly. The level 1-teachers to whom we give additional work such as pre-moderation and post moderation, that type of thing [duties – own insertion] because they have the abilities and because they are good leaders. And they can do the work."

DP 3 furthermore manages the LTSM, learner discipline and also completes the annual statistics for the DBE. DP 3 realises that the principal does not have time to do everything. As a typical example of the role he plays, DP 3 will, after attending a

workshop on the code of conduct, demonstrate his leadership-in-practice by using his initiative to adjust the current code of conduct and present it to the principal for approval. Accordingly, DP 3 suggests that the administrative workload of a deputy-principal has increased a lot, but not necessarily the responsibilities. He does, however, not think that the work deputy-principals do is more important than before. In fact, he thinks the DBE has added a lot of "stupid" administrative duties to their workload. He refers to some of these duties as "senseless" and "a waste of time".

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

DP 3 considers Principal W his mentor who constantly supports him professionally with duties and decisions that have to be taken. They meet each morning and afternoon to interact professionally. DP 3 often seeks the principal's advice and uses him as a sounding board.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

DP 3's experience is that grey and overlapping areas do exist in the work distribution between him and DP 4.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

DP 3 drafts the school's extra mural timetable. Due to the many meetings after school, he is no longer a sports coach, but he remains the school's athletics organiser. Moreover, he is the chairman and organiser of inter-school athletics meetings with twenty-four participating schools. As mentioned previously, the school uses a sophisticated e-learning system in the classrooms. This is managed by DP 3. In addition, DP 3 is involved in the school's finances. This includes managing the day-to-day payments. According to DP 3 he regards teaching his primary duty, and his main function is "to assist the principal." To put it differently, DP 3 states that one half of a deputy-principal is a leader in his or her own right, and he calls the other half the "supporter" of the principal. Indeed, he finds that because the principal cannot do everything on his own, it is better to work in collaboration with the principal.

4.6.3 Deputy-principal 4 (DP 4)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

After attending workshops, the deputy-principals at School W return to school and present information feedback sessions or workshops with the educators. DP 4 is informally called "Deputy: Academics". Soon after she had become a deputy-principal, DP 4 realised that she could not manage the academic programme of the school on her own. She trained, guided and empowered six Post Level 1 educators who have since become heads of subjects. This new structure is a great help. Also, the executive committee has appointed heads of grades.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

Principal W puts in a lot of effort to empower both deputy-principals. DP 4 explains as follows: "The principal is empowering us to be able to apply for promotional posts." DP 4 attends many workshops, courses, staff training and conferences. Latterly she has focused more on attending leadership courses.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

DP 4 highlights the fact that the two deputy-principals work in harmony. To clarify, DP 4 holds the opinion that when one deputy-principal is absent, the other one can easily move to the other's job at any time, although it might not always be perfectly done. In general, DP 4 feels satisfied that the grey areas that exist are managed smoothly. She describes their professional relationship as supportive and a relationship "where it just goes smoothly". In fact, she experiences that they complement each other. DP 4 furthermore explains that the two deputy-principals are very involved in the school's management despite their full teaching loads. Although her colleague (DP 3) is responsible for the co-curricular timetable, DP 4 gives him her input.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

At times DP deputises for the principal. DP 4 describes a typical scenario as follows:

> "Yesterday I was acting principal and all hell broke loose, so I was busy phoning parents and setting up meetings for the Grade 1 teachers and I was busy gathering children for detention and telling them what the code of conduct is in

the school. Reminding them about it, and what the punishment will be if their [bad – own insertion] behaviour continues."

Although it is not DP 4's primary responsibility, she regards the handling of discipline as "overriding everything". She expands on this point by saying:

> "One of the responsibilities of the deputy is to handle discipline in the school. Handling the discipline is overriding everything else in the school, it's taking over. That's how much problems we have, that's how much time it's consuming."

DP 4 feels that although the role of the deputy-principal has changed over time, the core purpose, however, is still to assist the principal. She knows the principal depends a lot on her assistance. She, however, finds being the link between the principal and the staff difficult. According to DP 4 a deputy-principal's role and responsibilities are varied. She mentors a few educators. Furthermore, she sets invigilation timetables for exams. DP 4 monitors the academic results and attempts to allocate the most suitable educators to the various subjects. She uses an administrative period to walk around the school each morning and she tries to visit all the Grade 1-classes each morning.

4.7   SCHOOL X

School X is the largest of the participating schools with 1937 enrolled learners. They took the school's unique circumstances into consideration when they recently promoted the HOD of the foundation phase to second deputy-principal (DP 6) of School X. One practical aspect they had to seriously consider was that DP 5 had planned to retire the following year.

4.7.1   Principal X

According to Principal X they had to consider the overall needs of the school when the recent vacancy for a deputy-principal (DP 6) arose. Similarly, he explains that he took the school's needs into consideration when he redistributed the two deputy-principals' duties prior to DP 6's appointment. The point of departure was primarily practical considerations, rather than the Personnel Administrative Measure (PAM) *per se*.

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

According to Principal X all schools have a principal and HOD, all schools do not necessarily have a deputy-principal, let alone two deputy-principals. Principal X believes all schools have different needs which can be used as the rationale to define the deputy-principalship. Principal X agrees that deputy-principals are leaders in their own right, yet it is difficult to define the deputy-principalship. Principal X argued that if there is no universal definition for a deputy-principal, one of two things can happen. Either the principal does all the work and the deputy-principal does nothing, or the deputy-principal does all the work and the principal does nothing. He feels it is very difficult to cast the deputy-principalship into a mould. The capabilities of the educators must be considered when duties are delegated to the deputy-principals. According to Principal X some schools might need a deputy-principal to manage the sport, whereas other schools' needs are different, and they may have other capable staff who can take on the job. He alluded to a school without a deputy-principal where the HOD must take on those duties usually associated with a deputy-principal.

Principal X believes that his comprehensive knowledge of the school's management structure transcends that of the rest of the management team. Thus, he believes that he is in a better position to decide how the leadership roles should be divided between the two deputy-principals. He clarifies this point as follows:

> "I obviously share my thoughts with the management team, one has to do that. But during this week I realised that teachers don't see the bigger picture. Not the picture of: 'this is what the [bigger – own insertion] school looks like.' So, to be honest, I determine it [leadership roles – own insertion] and then I share it and I listen to their input and say, 'You know what, I'm the one who sees the bigger picture … [has – own insertion] the vision'."

In addition, Principal X mentions that the deputy-principals at School X incorporate leadership in respect of mentorship and staff development in an integrated way. In other words, it is continuously incorporated in all aspects where they demonstrate leadership. Both deputy-principals take a lead in the SMT with regard to their specific roles. Also, both deputy-principals are co-opted members of the SGB where they fulfil an important role. Once a month DP 6 takes full control of a number of meetings, such

as the subject head meetings and the School Based Support (SBST) meetings. Principal X does not always attend these meetings because he wants his staff to know that he trusts them and does not want to give the impression that he is looking over their shoulders. On the contrary, the deputy-principals do not take the lead in respect of co-curricular activities. The school has a sports manager and a culture manager who handle all such related aspects.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

Principal X emphasises that he believes in empowering the deputy-principals. In this regard he clarifies that he wants DP 6 to manage her own portfolio. Principal X feels that a principal must not try to do everything himself/herself, but rather empower the deputy-principals by focusing on their strong points. Yet he does not expect them to do all the work on their own either. He explains it as follows:

> "But you know what, I absolutely believe in empowerment. How can the principal otherwise carry out class visits, walk on the terrain, and meet parents, that type of thing? And when DP 6 became the deputy-principal, I told her, 'You are the boss of your farm' … and I think this demonstrates trust in them. The principal must not try to keep everything to himself. I believe that they [the deputy-principals – own insertion] must be empowered. They are [the – own insertion] management."

It is an important aspect of a deputy-principal's responsibility to help keep the school running. Principal X reveals that some principals do not develop their deputy-principals. He shares his experience as follows:

> "It differs from school to school. You get a principal who does absolutely nothing for his deputy-principals. I believe in empowerment, you know, I … you must empower."

DP 5 is a very experienced deputy-principal who plans to retire within the next year or two, whereas DP 6 is a novice deputy-principal. Hence, their needs differ. DP 6 was internally promoted and is familiar with the school's culture and its functioning. Thus, the principal did not officially initiate her as he would have done with a newcomer. Nevertheless, Principal X encourages DP 6 to seek assistance when the need arises. He prefers her to establish her own identity in the position. Principal X, the two deputy-

principals and a senior Post Level 1 teacher take it in turns to conduct the morning staff meetings. Generally speaking, Principal X tries to give the deputy-principals as much exposure to meetings and functions outside the school as possible. Besides, he believes the surrounding schools must get to know his deputy-principals.

Principal X spends about 30% of a normal school day interacting professionally with the deputy-principals, yet it varies in accordance with the duties the deputy-principals perform at a given time. To clarify, DP 5 plays a leading role in the current building projects at the school, whereas the principal is only involved in a supportive capacity. Professional interaction between the deputy-principals

Although from a different angle, both deputy-principals work on the school year plan in collaboration with the principal. In general, Principal X believes that principals and the deputy-principals must also cooperate 100%.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

Principal X considers the handling of the co-curricular activities and the finances very important duties. He furthermore believes that the core duty of a deputy-principal is to support the principal. The duties of a deputy-principal can be changed, however, in accordance with the needs of the school. For instance, the school's needs will be considered when DP 5's successor must be appointed after his retirement in the near future. Clarifying this point, Principal X explains that he has recently identified curricular aspects which concern him, and which he wants DP 6 to attend to. He will thus free her from other duties, such as the IQMS which will in future be managed by one of the HODs. As a result of their different duties, DP 6 has more administrative duties than DP 5. Nonetheless, DP 5 also performs a number of administrative duties, for instance the school year plan. DP 5 manages the school's infrastructure, co-curricular activities and finances, whilst DP 6 manages the curriculum in all its facets. Principal X calls DP 6 the "driver behind the curriculum" (*"… sy is die dryfveer"*).

Principal X explains that their school's finances are run in a unique way. Each department has a budget manager. The budget managers are Post Level 1 educators and they report to DP 5. Furthermore, the school has a well-functioning finance office which is managed by DP 5. In addition, DP 5 manages infrastructure-related duties,

including the administration thereof. This is done in collaboration with the school's estate manager.

4.7.2 Deputy-principal 5 (DP 5)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

There is a distinct separation of functions between the two deputy-principals at School X. Prior to the recent appointment of DP 6, the job descriptions of the two deputy-principals were reviewed and adjusted, taking the expertise and strengths of the two deputy-principals into consideration. DP 5 describes his fellow deputy-principal (DP 6) as a very meticulous, orientated person and a good administrator. Hence, he finds her perfectly suitable for managing the academic programme. DP 5 argues that leadership and management of a large school such as School X is totally different to that of a small school. He contends that the annual planning meeting for a forthcoming year is a very important event where a whole range of aspects must be coordinated and taken into consideration. For example, each deputy-principal must ensure that their department is ready for the following academic year. DP 5 is involved in the development of the heads of grades and heads of subjects. Moreover, DP 5 claims that a large school such as School X cannot be managed without the leadership input of Post Level 1 educators. It is furthermore noted that one of the administrative office ladies assists the deputy-principals with various administrative duties such as the recording of statistics.

DP 5 describes himself as a lifelong learner who likes to share his knowledge and skills with the rest of the staff. He holds regular professional developmental talks with the staff according to the needs that arise at a given time. For example, DP 5 recently talked to the staff about creativity and uniformity. Most importantly, DP 5 believes that a deputy-principal must have a professional academic background and qualifications which must include subjects like education finances and education law and management. He explains that he had completed his Honours degree in education management because he knew it would assist him in performing his duties. He also foresees that in the future the DBE will require at least an Honours or a Masters' degree in educational management as a pre-requisite. He affirms that his Honours degree in education management has equipped him to have a better perspective of

school management and to "see the bigger picture." Importantly, DP 5 maintains that he automatically takes the lead wherever he moves around on the school premises.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

Principal X and the two deputy-principals have daily meetings before school each morning. Some days DP 5 and the principal only see each other for a few minutes early in the morning, whereas other days they spend much more time together. DP 5 defines his relationship with the principal as a very positive professional partnership. He reveals that the principal is his sounding board, and *vice versa*. He also describes their professional relationship as a happy and good partnership. DP 5 furthermore receives professional support from the GDE by attending the training courses they offer. DP 5 often finds that he cannot attend their longer courses due to the tight time schedule at school. He also attends training courses offered by his union and other private companies.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

As an experienced deputy-principal, DP 5 describes his overall involvement as deputy-principal as follows:

> "You know, I am not cast into a mould. You know, you must handle whatever crosses your path. I can also answer a parent on academic issues because I have handled it for a long time. Then I handle the situation, if you know the other one [deputy-principal – own insertion] only comes back the next day, or so. That is how we work."

DP 5 reports that he had had a meeting with the novice DP 6 the previous week to assist with and clarify the overlapping aspects in their portfolios.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

Some of the duties performed by DP 5 include staff development and mentoring. DP 5 believes that a deputy-principal must be professional at all times. Both deputy-principals of School X are co-opted onto the SGB and are thus included on the interview panel when prospective staff is interviewed. As mentioned before, the SMT holds an annual planning meeting for the forthcoming year where the job descriptions

of all educators in general are reviewed. All SMT members (including the two deputy-principals) participate and give their input. The educators' work is divided according to their expertise and interests. The school management of the school has been refined throughout the years and is managed in a specific way. In brief, DP 5 coordinates the IQMS of the school. He is also responsible for the professional development of the HODs in terms of the requirements of the IQMS. In addition, he is the subject head for Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) and Technology. This includes controlling the teachers' files, and moderating tests and examinations. DP 5 furthermore manages the LTSM. He has an assistant who helps him with the recording and distribution of the material. DP 5 furthermore manages the support services, insurance, the school's infrastructure and finances. The latter includes authorisation of electronic funds transfers (EFTs) and the approval of petrol claims. DP 5 compiles the school's preliminary budget of R24 million. Once completed, DP 5 works in close relationship with the principal and SGB who check the budget before it is presented to the parents. Once approved, DP 5 manages the budget of the entire academic programme throughout the year.

In addition to the above, the site supervisor reports directly to DP 5. All work done by the factotum and his team of general assistants is supervised by DP 5. DP 5 is furthermore involved in various school activities such as the organising of an annual week-long educational tour for a group of 200 Grade 7-learners to the Lowveld of the Mpumalanga province. His responsibilities include the permission application from the GDE, coordinating the finances, arranging the accommodation, transport, safety and first aid, to name a few. DP 5 explains that, although he does not organise general school excursions, he will oversee the arrangements to ensure that all relevant aspects are taken care of, especially the safety of the learners. For instance, he accompanied the teachers and a large group of learners who performed in the State Theatre on the day of the interview.

Besides all his other duties, DP 5 deals with enquiries from the staff and must furthermore ensure that all stakeholders are informed regarding school activities and that the necessary announcements are made. DP 5 has experienced an overall increase in his administrative duties. As a result, he delegates more duties to the administrative staff and teachers than before. DP 5 motivates this as follows:

"These days we handle a lot of paperwork. Mrs X handles the staff's admin, so we have the time to focus on the professional matters, the academics."

DP 5 defines a deputy-principal as someone who can think on his feet and is a good communicator. His positive sentiments are supported by the following:

"You are the principal's shadow. As the principal's shadow, you must know what goes for what [at the school – own insertion]. You [deputy-principal – own insertion] must be informed … that's why I am so glad that we have this open [relationship – own insertion] … you know, we communicate with each other. I must be able to take over his duties any time. I don't want to say you are a principal on your own, but you are … an extension of him [the principal – own insertion]. If you work against each other, you throw yourself to the wolves."

Finally, DP 5 contends that each school's needs are different. He explains that when he started as deputy-principal at his previous school, he only managed that school's finances, but at School X he delegates some duties to the administrative staff and to some of the other educators. Even though he delegates the duties, he remains "hands-on" involved.

4.7.3 Deputy-principal 6 (DP 6)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

As the deputy-principal who heads up the entire school's academic programme, it is the experience of DP 6 that her primary leadership role revolves around the school's academics. It is thus one of her responsibilities to give feedback to the SGB regarding the school's academic performance. DP 6 observes that deputy-principals take the lead ("*loop voor*"), particularly for the less experienced teachers. In this context, DP 6 holds weekly phase meetings and meetings with the heads of grades. She considers these meetings very important because they provide her with the opportunity to lead and support the staff. In addition to all that has been stated before, DP 6 describes her leadership in practice as follows:

"And you ensure that your marks are in first, because you must be there to assist [others – own insertion] where they need help."

DP 6 realises that each school's needs are different, and that this will influence the leadership role the deputy-principal will fulfil.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

It is mostly the principal who assists DP 6 in her new position as deputy-principal. She indicates that on average Principal X spends about 30% of his time assisting and supporting her professionally. DP 6 also receives support and assistance from her colleagues, and the neighbouring schools.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

DP 6 reveals that there are definitely grey areas in the work distribution between the two deputy-principals. She considers a good relationship between the deputy-principals of great importance because it is to the benefit of the school, the learners and good communication in general. When she performs duties, which fall under DP 5's portfolio, she prefers to inform him of the outcome thereof in writing.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

As both an educator and a deputy-principal, DP 6 performs the same duties as is expected of any other educator, such as marking books and test papers. When asked what she regards as the most important aspect of a deputy-principal, DP 6 explained:

> "To support the principal. We must work together and then the school will be able to fly. You must always be there [to support the principal – own insertion] and he must be satisfied with you as deputy-principal. He must be satisfied. It's impossible for him to do everything [by himself – own insertion]."

More specifically, DP 6 works closely with those therapists who offer therapy to the learners at school. She recently trained the educators on how the school's support process works. With this in mind, DP 6 handles the extensive administrative duties regarding the placement of learners in special schools. In addition, DP 6 administers the school's budget for cultural activities. She explains that she does not only compile the budget, she also ensures that it is managed correctly and that there is no overspending.

4.8   SCHOOL Y

The responsibilities of the three deputy-principals employed at School Y are divided according to their specialities, expertise and experience. Two of the three deputy-principals are paid by the GDE, and one is remunerated by the SGB. One deputy-principal takes overall charge of the school's academic programme, another one leads the Intermediate and Senior Phase (Grade 4 to 7) and the third one manages the Foundation Phase (Gr 1 – 3). The latter is not a participant in this study.

4.8.1   Principal Y

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

The leadership functions of the deputy-principals at School Y are determined according to their specialities, background and experience. The deputy-principals' skills are taken into consideration when the responsibility for the LTSM, IQMS, attendance, management of grade leaders and management of grade assistants and induction are divided among the three deputy-principals. It is divided in such a way that the workload is distributed more or less equally. In practice, this means that if a new deputy-principal is appointed, the principal and deputy-principals will collectively decide how the responsibilities will be redistributed. For example, Principal Y explains that a former deputy-principal managed the school's discipline and after he had left the school, they started a new department for discipline which is no longer handled by any of the deputy-principals. When asked if the principal uses the PAM as the point of departure when the deputy-principals' core duties are determined, Principal Y responds:

> "No, you don't do that. No, I don't think I did that from the beginning. I don't think my principals did that, because when you [deputy-principal – own insertion] come into [start at – own insertion] a school, your work is delegated to you or said, 'You know, this is that you must handle this division or do that.' And we discuss it together and choose and say what will be best [for the school – own insertion]. And I don't think the PAM is followed in that respect. All that one basically says is that the deputy-principal must do the same job as the principal. So, that is where I take it from. So, you [deputy-principal – own insertion] must know what I know [as principal – own insertion] and be able to do and take responsibility thereof if the principal is not there. So, you must be informed

about everything, you must basically have all that knowledge and background…"

According to Principal Y, there is a major difference between the outline of duties which are stipulated by the SGB and the regulations set out in the PAM. The latter is applicable to educators appointed by the GDE only. Principal Y prefers the employment contract between the SGB (as employer) and the educator (as employee) as it stipulates the precise duties the educator must perform. He expresses his thoughts as follows:

> "Information in a School Governing Body educator's contract is far more specified."

This is in contrast to an educator employed by the GDE where the information is not precisely stipulated as in the SGB-contract. Principal Y admits that although the PAM is not used as a point of departure when duties are allocated to educators at School Y, it seems like a good idea to refer back to it and to remind the educators of what is expected of them.

Principal Y expects his deputy-principals to show strong leadership because they are next in line to run the school. He highlights the fact that he and all the deputy-principals exercise an open-door policy. What is more, he acknowledges that deputy-principals have a lot of work to do. With regards to their leadership roles, Principal Y emphasises that this includes taking full responsibility for the duties assigned to them. They must design, incorporate and manage all leadership aspects thereof. For instance, one deputy-principal takes full responsibility for the management of the foundation phase, a second deputy-principal manages the finances as well as the LTSM and the IQMS, and the third deputy-principal manages departmental forms and the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS). Both the deputy-principals interviewed in this study perform the duties of an HOD of the specific subject they teach. This implies being a subject specialist and having to submit departmental statistics.

All the deputy-principals are involved in staff development and mentoring. One deputy-principal is specifically responsible for the induction of new educators. According to Principal Y he insists that all three deputy-principals are co-opted members of the SGB "for the good running of the school." The deputy-principals also facilitate remedial

classes. Moreover, the deputy-principals must support each other as well as the HODs. Principal Y does not expect his deputy-principals to be involved in co-curricular activities, except for showing up at gatherings to indicate their support.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

Principal Y believes that he supports the deputy-principals by working in close collaboration with them. In general, Principal Y spends about 70% to 75% of his school day communicating with the deputy-principals. The principal and deputy-principals hold formal deputy-principal meetings once a week where good support, communication and understanding are evident. What is more, they operate as a team where everything is discussed and shared. This, according to Principal Y, makes it easier to assist each other. Principal Y illustrates this by saying that while DP 7 was seconded to another school during the previous term, her duties had to be redistributed among the remaining two deputy-principals. During that time Principal Y supported them and they all worked together to get the work done. With this in mind, Principal Y emphasises:

> "All [the deputy-principals – own insertion] have a contribution to make. So, the support I provide … I allow them to do things and we work together."

Principal Y explains that when a deputy-principal is absent, the remaining two deputy-principals perform the duties on behalf of the absent deputy-principal. Alternatively, the duties can be redistributed to other staff members, including the HODs and Post Level 1 teachers. Principal Y sees this as an opportunity to develop the educators. The school furthermore provides funds for the deputy-principals to attend courses and conferences. Above all, the principal and his deputy-principals visited a renowned primary school in the Western Cape. Upon their return, they implemented some of the alternative teaching strategies they thought could benefit School Y.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

All deputy-principals have specific responsibilities, thus there are limited grey areas evident. Besides, all issues are discussed and considered as soon as they surface. To illustrate, Principal Y explains that it is impossible for him to attend all sport and cultural activities. Hence, the SMT has recently decided that the principal and his three

deputy-principals will each "adopt" a sport or cultural activity which they will attend and support.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

Principal Y explains that *ad hoc* adjustments are made to the deputy-principals' duties according to the needs of the school or during the annual planning meeting towards the end of each year. From his personal experience whilst being a deputy-principal, Principal Y remembers that it was a busy period in his career. This experience taught him how to delegate. This relieves the principal of some tasks so that he has time for other things. Principal Y reports that in the past he did not touch ground and affirms that it is a relief to have three deputy-principals, especially with the division of all the meetings they have to attend. Although Principal Y attends as many meetings as possible, it is of great support to know that he can rely on the deputy-principals for assistance.

In the meantime, the executive committee continuously identifies educators who exhibit leadership potential. Principal Y acknowledges that the school has a number of educators he calls the "willing and able and skilled" and that it is easy to fall into the habit of only focusing on these educators when they develop their educators. Nonetheless, Principal Y intentionally also gives those educators who usually do not show much leadership potential the opportunity to be developed.

Upon asking the principal whether it can be problematic if there is not a specific definition for a deputy-principal, he explains that if there is no proper definition for a deputy-principal, it is possible that the principal will refrain from developing the deputy-principal optimally. He continues to explain that in reality, a deputy-principal basically has the same job description as a principal. If a principal expects the deputy-principal to perform limited duties, that deputy-principal will experience limited involvement. Principal Y refers to this type of scenario as one-sided ("*'n eenrigting-ding*").

Principal Y does not think the role of the deputy-principal has changed over the years. He has always experienced the role of a deputy-principal as being subordinate to that of the principal. In fact, he considers the deputy-principal to have exactly the same duties as a principal. In particular, Principal Y accepts the deputy-principals as top

management ("*topbestuur*"), yet they also function on grass-roots level with all the other educators, including Post Level 1 educators. In short, Principal Y does not experience much of a gap between the principalship and the deputy-principalship.

4.8.2 Deputy-principal 7 (DP 7)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

DP 7 indicates that the leadership functions at School Y are determined by the principal and the three deputy-principals. They focus on the strengths and the interests of the deputy-principals. In practice it means that the leadership functions are redistributed, taking into consideration the strengths and passion of each deputy-principal. DP 7 suggests that a deputy-principals' leadership style must align with the leadership style of the principal. Equally important is the fair distribution of the deputy principals' workload. With this in mind, DP 7 states that at School Y they utilise the strengths of the deputy-principals and duties are distributed fairly. Accordingly, the leadership functions of the deputy-principals are reviewed annually.

DP 7 explains that Principal Y is very progressive and will accommodate a deputy-principal who wishes to get exposure in other leadership fields. Thus, should DP 7 feel that she is stagnating, she will request the principal to expose her to other leadership duties. DP 7 is a co-opted member of the SGB. She sees her role as a link and explains that she gives feedback to the SGB regarding the school's academic performance. DP 7 is also a member of the SMT.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

DP 7 emphasises that Principal Y leads by example. She explains that when she was seconded to act as principal at another school, she often phoned him for assistance and advice. DP 7 expounds that Principal Y is well informed and organised, he is good at identifying problems and that he has all the latest laws and policies. She therefore does not doubt his advice. This, according to DP 7, is the example he sets, and she chooses to follow.

The deputy-principals select which training courses they want to attend. They also attend courses offered by their unions. The principal spends about 10% to 20% of his day communicating professionally with DP 7. She explains that she prefers to keep

the principal updated as each day progresses. This, according to DP 7, is not to seek his approval, but to ensure that the principal is aware of what she is busy with and especially that he is not caught unaware of what is happening in her department.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

DP 7 acknowledges the existence of grey areas in the work distribution among the multiple deputy-principals, yet the deputy-principals at School Y generally work well together and they assist each other ("*En ons werk goed saam*"). The commonalities are well managed, and the deputy-principals must respect each other's territory ("…*dat jy nie op tone trap nie*"). In fact, good communication remains of great importance and those grey areas which occur must rather be handled immediately.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

According to DP 7 the school uses the PAM as the point of departure when they determine the roles and responsibilities of the three deputy-principals. DP 7 asserts that the principal has too many functions to perform on his own. She believes the deputy-principal is the crutches to support the principal. To be more precise, DP 7 perceives herself as a "hands-on" deputy-principal who moves around on the school terrain, walks into classrooms and makes herself available to support the educators. Likewise, she feels that it is important to be available to the parents.

DP 7 considers being a mediator as the most important duty of a deputy-principal. She explains this role as follows:

> "… between the governing body and the SMT and between the SMT and the teachers. Between the teachers and the children, between the parents and the teachers. So, for me it is to be the mediator and to help solve problems – that is for me, that is how I see my role."

In addition, DP 7 sees herself as a link rather than an administrator. She gives details of her role as the link between the school and the GDE. As the deputy-principal who is responsible for the entire school's academic programme, DP 7 frequently works with all the marks. As a result, she is constantly communicating with the educators as well as with the district office. She regularly writes reports and answers electronic mail, to

mention a few of her administrative duties. DP 7 admits that she relies a lot on the HODs to assist her with the management of the curriculum. She maintains that she leads by example and that she is continuously involved in developing staff members. In fact, she is continuously doing research to determine which developmental courses are available and she encourages the educators to attend them.

In a broader context, DP 7 feels that without a universal definition of the deputy-principalship, each school can employ a definition according to their specific needs. She believes all schools must strive towards a common goal, such as developing children who can fulfil their roles in a community, who can make a living for themselves and contribute towards the economy. On the contrary, DP 7 reveals that it can be problematic if each school applies the deputy-principalship as they wish. DP 7 is convinced there must be a universal definition for deputy-principals to indicate what is expected of a deputy-principal and what they should strive towards. DP 7 believes the role of the deputy-principal has changed over the years. In her opinion, the deputy-principals of the past generally maintained discipline.

By way of contrast, DP 7 explains that a deputy-principal performs the duties of the principal, yet also performs the duties of a teacher. According to DP 7, it is an advantage for a deputy-principal to experience the same frustrations and problems in the classroom as the rest of the educators do. As part of the executive committee, deputy-principals can thus make recommendations on how to address such problems.

4.8.3 Deputy-principal 8 (DP 8)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

At School Y each deputy-principal is responsible for managing her own portfolio. Despite being appointed as deputy-principal by the GDE, DP 8 simultaneously fills the role and duties of HOD and must handle all relevant responsibilities as well. This includes meeting with grade leaders and completing schedules for the DBE. DP 8 teaches Social Sciences and is also responsible for the IQMS and all its related facets, including the training thereof. DP 8 confirms that all the multiple deputy-principals are co-opted members of the SGB and also members of the SMT. DP 8 serves on the finance committee and manages all the teaching students. According to DP 8, her leadership functions encompass far more than she has listed. In essence, DP 8

believes the division of leadership functions depends on the specific school. She explains that at School Y the principal and the deputy-principals sit together and divide the leadership functions among themselves. Notably, School Y also uses Post Level 1 educators to take on leadership roles. Each sport has an HOD of sport or secretary of sport, but each sport will also have a teacher in charge. For instance, DP 8 attends and supports a sport and a cultural activity, but she does not coach any co-curricular activities.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

DP 8 attends courses which are related to her duties and more specifically where she experiences a gap in her knowledge. She regards Principal Y as supportive and hands-on and mentions that the principal knows exactly what is going on in the school and its various departments, including the curriculum. DP 8 describes the principal's professional interaction as follows: "It's like as and when and each day is a different day." Generally speaking, though, the principal interacts with the deputy-principals on a constant basis.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

As a result of their different portfolios, DP 8 claims that they do not experience overlapping or grey areas among the deputy-principals because their portfolios are so different. She believes it is "duty specific." Nevertheless, the deputy-principals rely on each other for assistance and they work in collaboration with each other.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

Firstly, and most importantly, DP 8 carries out the duties of a deputy-principal which includes the management of the IQMS and LTSM. In addition, DP 8 also performs the duties and responsibilities of the HOD of Social Sciences. This includes all the related administrative duties. In this regard, DP 8 reports to her fellow deputy-principal, DP 7, who remains responsible for the academic programme.

In particular, DP 8 is responsible for the mentoring and training of student teachers, and newly appointed educators. Although DP 8 calls her training "pedantic", she feels that the training of new personnel is necessary because each school is managed

differently ("*when we get new people sometimes, things fall through the cracks.*") Similarly, she trains the educators who act as mentors. DP 8 explains that all new educators must attend an induction programme before the school officially opens at the beginning of an academic year. DP 8 considers this necessary because the school is "a big and busy school."

The educators at School Y follow the school's prescribed hierarchy and do not go directly to the principal. They acknowledge the deputy-principals as leaders and will seek their assistance, irrespective of the particular portfolio they manage. DP 8 refers to a deputy-principal as "the principal-in-waiting" and highlights that the deputy-principal must know everything that happens at the school. Notably, DP 8 thinks that the size of a school will influence the role of the deputy-principal and that, although the principal remains the accountable person, he/she cannot manage everything that a school has to get done. The same applies to the deputy-principals, because they also deal with tough issues. Even though they try as hard as possible, it is not possible to cover all the work on their own. DP 8 furthermore reports that she manages being a link between the principal and the educators by means of good planning and organisation. In particular, DP 8 explains that she is so used to being a deputy-principal that she no longer experiences the division of roles as educator on the one hand and the deputy-principal on the other hand, as something unusual. At the same time DP 8 assumes that the situation will be completely different at a school with only one deputy-principal. In summary, DP 8 considers the deputy-principalship as a "big responsibility."

Although the respective deputy-principals take responsibility for their own portfolios, they interact and collaborate with each other and their principal on a daily basis. The principal assists, trains and empowers his deputy-principals, who in turn create conditions for the HODs and educators to be developed and empowered. From time to time the deputy-principals are expected to assist their fellow deputy-principals. This, according to the data, is done in a manner to improve the efficiency of the school in general. The data confirm that the educators at School Y are progressively more involved in informal and formal leadership roles.

4.9 SCHOOL Z

For the purpose of this study, it must be noted that Principal Z also manages the Pre-primary department (Grade RRR to Gr R) which is located on the same premises. One of their four deputy-principals works in the Pre-Primary department. Although reference is made to this department, this study does not include the Pre-Primary department which comprises five management members. This includes one deputy-principal, two HODs and two deputy-heads of departments. With the pre-primary department included, the total learner enrolment is 1200 with a total staff complement of 126. Principal Z cannot manage all the staff members on his own. He sheds light on the situation as follows:

> "So, to manage them [staff members – own insertion] all, one person cannot do it and five cannot do it either. So, when you have 30 [persons – own insertion] who can manage it, then it becomes so much easier and I am a perfectionist. And I am one of those people who always want to do everything myself. And early in my life I had to learn to say, 'Give [the work – own insertion] to the following person.' And I [have – own insertion] changed my attitude and I said, 'Hand it to the next person.' Because where I always said, 'I am not going to give it to him, because he might not do it as well as I do,' I have changed my attitude and gave it to the next person, he might do it better than me. So, I have changed my attitude and things changed in the school. Yes, so I will also not be fussy. In fact, [I will – own insertion] not tell the person what he must do at all. If they ask advice, of course [I will assist – own insertion]. But I empower people [by saying – own insertion], 'You are responsible for it. Do it, go for it!' And the moment you empower somebody, he performs so much better."

At the time of the interview the school had 952 enrolled learners and employs 85 educators, including the pre-primary educators.

4.9.1 Principal Z

At the time of Principal Z's appointment 14 years ago, the learner enrolment was 400 and the total staff complement was 38 (including the administrative staff). After 14 years as principal at School Z, he is still excited about the success of the school's unique management model. As a countermeasure for stagnation, Principal Z has already started to work on a next level of management. Principal Z prefers to keep the

management structure lively and renewed. In fact, he claims that the continuous revision of the management model paves the way for "young energy" to join the SMT. He believes this keeps him "on his toes."

As part of Principal Z's dedication to staff empowerment, he regularly redistributes management duties to allow his staff to get exposure to various aspects of management. As can be viewed in Table 4.4, Principal Z did not have much experience as an HOD or deputy-principal before he was promoted to principal. Hence, he insists that his executive committee must be professionally equipped and empowered. Principal Z explains the rationale as follows:

> "Because I became principal at a very young age, I had to go and learn what each position I was appointed in [entailed – own insertion]. Even when I became the HOD, I did not know what the duties of a HOD were. And when I became the deputy-principal I did not know what a deputy-principal does. And it's easy: read the PAM and look there. A principal has 23 criteria and a Post Level 1 educator has 13 [criteria – own insertion]. It's easy to go and read that, but what do you really do in practice? And each school is different. So, I soon realised there's not much preparation for the next post level and there is no training. It's a big shortcoming."

After taking up the position of principal, Principal Z soon realised that he needed a strong leadership structure if he wanted to lead a successful school. As the school expanded, he identified new management positions and requested the SGB to support him in extending the executive committee. Major changes took place, such as the internal promotion of the (then) current deputy-principal to a newly created position as "Senior Deputy-principal" (which is internally ranked as Post Level 3½). Part of the new management structure was to appoint three additional deputy-principals. The executive committee of School Z currently consists of the principal and four deputy-principals. According to Principal Z, he and the four deputy-principals are light-heartedly referred to as the "Big Five." School Z's executive committee is graphically displayed in Figure 4.2 below.
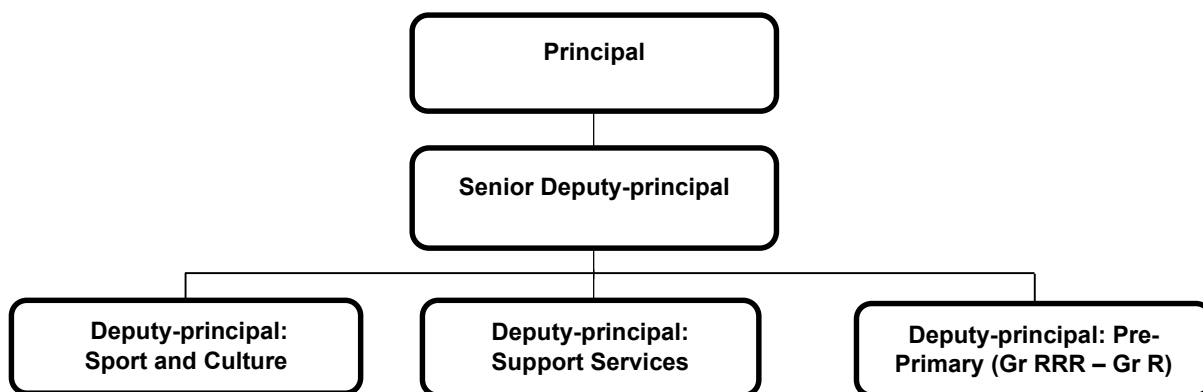
Figure 4.2: Executive Committee of School Z

In addition to the above management positions, Principal Z also initiated the appointment of more HODs (Post Level 2). Moreover, the SGB appointed educators in supplementary internally-created positions called "deputy-heads of department" (deputy-HOD) (Post Level 1½). In fact, Principal Z asserts that after a recent internal promotion, he could sense the new energy in the school. The educators realise that there are constantly new portfolios created at School Z and that keeps them motivated to work for the next available position. Apart from the SMT, the school also utilises a head of grades for Grade 1 to Grade 7. The abbreviation "D-HOD" is used for the deputy-HODs who are represented in the organogram of the SMT of School Z (illustrated in Figure 4.3 below).
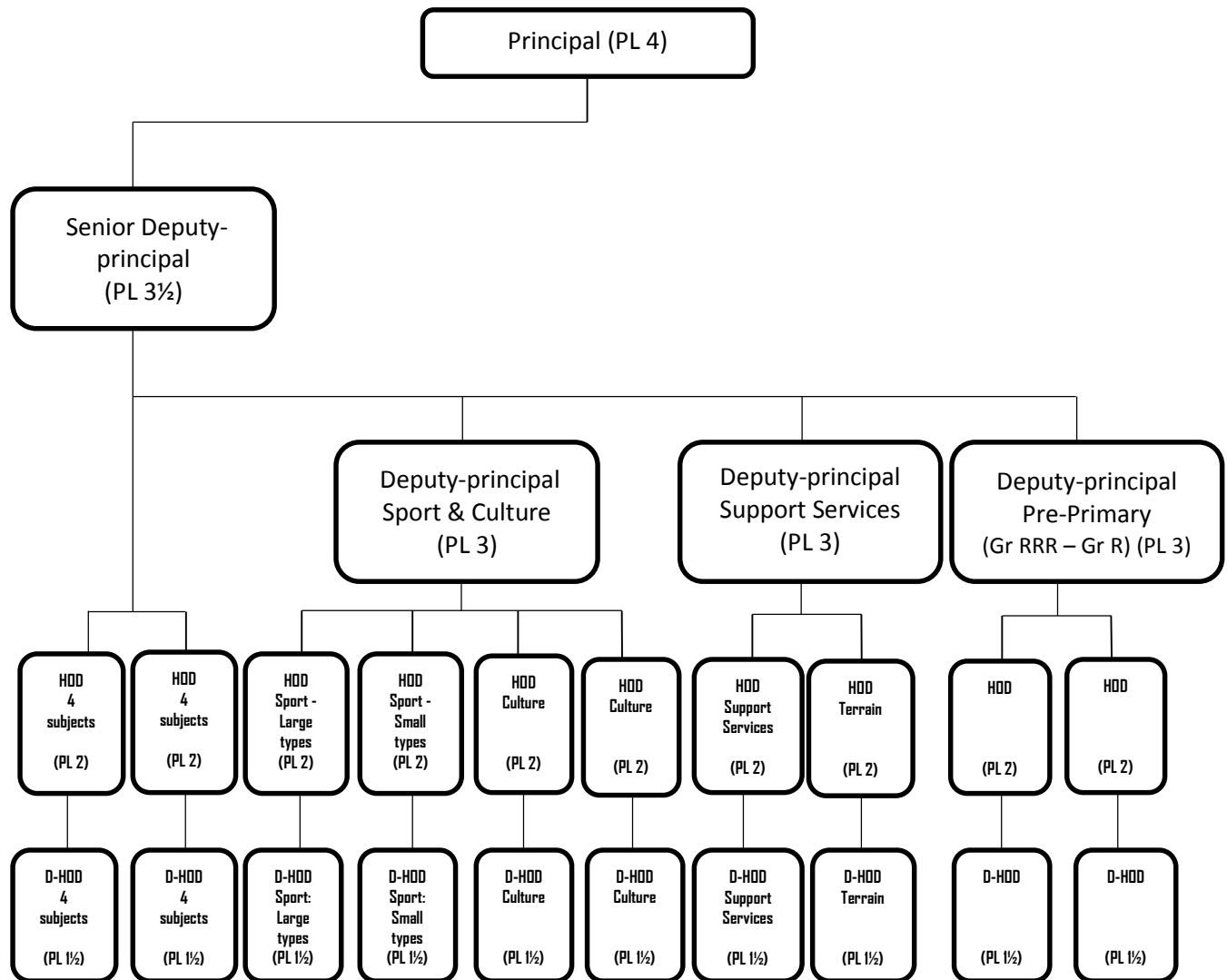
Figure 4.3: Organogram of the SMT of School Z

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

As already mentioned, Principal Z became principal at a relatively young age. Despite his limited experience in a management position, he soon realised that a strong management system is a pre-requisite for success. It is customary at School Z that Principal Z and his deputy-principals sit around a table when their job descriptions are determined. They use 23 criteria and then the duties are distributed according to their specific portfolios. Like most primary schools, School Z's main management areas initially focused on the academics programme, sport and culture. However, Principal Z expanded the management structure and he appointed an additional deputy-

principal to manage the support services at the school. The latter manages the school site, but he is not included in this study.

Principal Z describes himself as someone who likes to think strategically and differently. He is convinced that strategic thinking is of great importance in education and that those educators who think strategically are the ones who have business mind-sets and can really manage a budget successfully. Yet, his experience is that only a few educators think strategically. He thus insisted that all the deputy-principals at School Z completed a course on strategic planning. Principal Z encourages the delegation of tasks. He insists that the deputy-principals delegate certain duties to the HODs because he considers it as an important part of empowerment. This, according to Principal Z, is to the benefit of the entire school.

Principal Z explains that when DP 9 holds academic meetings with the educators, he deliberately does not attend. DP 9 takes full responsibility and Principal Z gives her the freedom to chair these meetings on her own. He prefers not to peep over her shoulder all the time. Principal Z furthermore explains that DP 10 serves as chairman of the entire sports management team meetings. It is customary at School Z that once a sport season has ended, DP 10 hosts strategic workshops with all the involved personnel to determine what improvements ought to be made before the next sport season starts.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

Principal Z emphasises the benefits of their extended SMT as follows:

> "You have a large team that works with you. I always say, 'One person alone cannot do ten things well, but ten people can each do one thing well.' And that's the principle behind the entire thing [extended management team – own insertion]. You empower people, you give them opportunities and allow them to grow and develop. We as principals are stuck-up, and we want to do our own thing. We will tell the teachers, 'You can put any flowers there, as long as they are yellow, and you place them exactly there.' I mean, what freedom do you really give? Just, give the people freedom to develop. And to grow – that is simply my principle."

Principal Z estimates that he spends approximately 25% to 30% of a school day interacting professionally with the deputy-principals. He encourages good communication with the executive committee, and he supports an open-door-policy. Importantly, the deputy-principals receive a separate budget for further training. Hence, Principal Z encourages the deputy-principals to attend courses and to further their professional studies. Two of the four deputy-principals have recently completed their Honours degree in school management. In fact, all the deputy-principals are currently busy with a comprehensive one-year management training course.

As educators go through the ranks of promotion, they need practical training as well. Principal Z emphasises the following aspects:

"Nobody goes and studies to become a principal. You study to become a teacher and then you rise above it and you are promoted to HOD and then to deputy-principal and then to a principal. But you have never studied somewhere to become a principal. Okay, you can study an Honours [degree – own insertion] in school management or education law or something, that is true. But nobody teaches you the actual work and also, schools differ drastically. Schools in the west of Pretoria and schools in the east of Pretoria are like two … they are worlds apart! It's different levels and it's not because you think you are smart or different, but it is completely different. You simply cannot compare it. And if you think you can place someone in a school in the east of Pretoria in the role of principal or in finances who does not know much about doing sums, it's not going to work, because schools there have large budgets – on average between R30 million and R50 million. And somebody must understand how it works, but none of us get that specific training. So, it's, there are so many possibilities and that is exactly what [I try to do – own insertion]. So, now I will … and it's certainly less professional than attending specific courses and degrees and doing things like that … I find it more useful to work personally with my people. I will typically sit with DP 9 in my office and have two laptops open and I will show her how to work on Excel and how to do the budget. And I will sit and spend time with her for an hour or two or with DP 10 or with [the other deputy-principal – own insertion]. So, I will sit with my deputy-principals, I will do training with them and work through things with them and say, 'This is

how I do this.' I will say to them, 'Well, I create scenario X, Y, Z,' - something that happened with a child or at school. 'How would you handle it?' And then they must tell me how they would handle it. I put them through interview sessions. I sometimes have interviews with them – to talk to them for a while – especially, to prepare them for principalship. So, I do a lot of personal training and talks with my deputy-principals."

Apart from the above, Principal Z and the deputy-principals hold weekly management meetings. These meetings last for two hours and include training sessions. Principal Z elaborates as follows:

"Two hours management meeting each week, then we sit and talk about the school and then it is also an opportunity for training and discussions about how to take the school forward. They [deputy-principals – own insertion] bring problems to the table, we sort them out here and move forward. And for me that is far more valuable than any courses one can do. Courses are good, but I think we sit with many experts in our own schools who we can walk the road with. We are privileged to have a professor of Tuks [University of Pretoria – own insertion] who is the financial chairperson [of our finance committee – own insertion]. She trained us last Wednesday evening in the conference room on budgeting and the management thereof. So, we use our own experts to do training, our own people. To me, that is worth more."

In particular, Principal Z feels very strongly about empowering the deputy-principals. This he articulates as follows:

"I think it's a problem with most of our schools. We … I've mentioned it previously as well. The principals want … they are control freaks. We always want to do everything ourselves and we are not prepared to create an opportunity for the next person and … even in this [management – own insertion] model of mine where I encapture all these beautiful things I have just mentioned, I also fight hard that my deputy-principals must begin to act as principals, because they are ready for it. But I deliver a product. If any of my current four or three deputy-principals are promoted to a principalship during the next year, he will be on a totally different level than any other person [from

another school – own insertion] who will become principal, because he's really empowered. Here he was really part of strategy, of staff development, staff appointments."

To summarise, Principal Z puts in a lot of effort to conduct practical training with the deputy-principals. He sees them each morning when they enjoy coffee with him in his office. Sometimes it's only for ten minutes, other days it might be for 30 minutes. Once again Principal Z stresses that he has an open-door policy and they may enter any time of the day. Principal Z personally manages the school's budget. Thus, the deputy-principals continuously communicate with the principal when they need his approval signature.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

Principal Z highlights that in 14 years he has never experienced any grey areas in the work distribution of the deputy-principals. The four deputy-principals have their specific focal areas and their duties are divided accordingly. All deputy-principals have their detailed job descriptions, hence there are no grey areas. DP 9 is the deputy-principal responsible for the entire school's curriculum. As a Mathematics teacher, DP 10 reports to DP 9 in this regard. As such there might be some overlapping, but each deputy-principal knows exactly what is expected of him/her.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

Principal Z explains that he and the deputy-principals regularly conduct one-on-one interviews with each of the 126 staff members. They aim at having at least a 15 to 20-minute meeting with each staff member per term.

Although Principal Z is 100% informed about the school's academic programme, he refers all queries to DP 9. He sees this as a token of trust in her capabilities to manage the academic programme excellently and therefore he prefers not to interfere. All the deputy-principals have a number of administrative duties and they manage their own budgets. They also decide which courses they want to attend. Principal Z asserts that the deputy-principals are absolutely empowered to manage their own staff and departments strategically. They conduct weekly meetings with their departments and once per term they do their strategic planning. In fact, DP 10 interviews and appoints

new sports coaches on his own. Thus, the deputy-principals at School Z take full responsibility. Principal Z expounds:

> "And as I have said, they take full responsibility. At SGB meetings and at financial committee meetings my deputy-principals are given a turn to speak. It's on the agenda. They each get a turn to explain, justify and defend their budgets. This happens at each financial committee meeting. He [or she – own insertion] must explain what has happened, where they have overspent, why they have overspent or where they plan to overspend, and why. So, they must take full responsibility. And I don't stand in the gap for them, it's theirs, because that is how they are trained, that's how they learn."

As the senior deputy-principal who is responsible for the academic programme, DP 9 has a lot of administrative duties. She takes full responsibility for controlling all the academic files from Grade RRR to Grade 7. She manages the portfolio with the assistance of her HODs and deputy-HODs. In addition, DP 9 liaises with the DBE. As the deputy-principal responsible for all the different sport and cultural activities, DP 10 delegates duties to his HODs and sport/culture organisers. As such, the deputy-principals constantly mentor the educators. According to Principal Z it is a never-ending process. ("*Dit hou eintlik nooit op nie*"). At School Z all the deputy-principals are expected to submit written reports to the SGB a week prior to each SGB meeting. DP 10 will typically report on 26 different strands. He must compile a report on each one. Although his department assists him with this, he remains responsible for presenting it to the SGB.

Principal Z considers it in a negative light for the broader South Africa that there is no fixed definition for a deputy-principal. He foresees that it can be a huge problem in certain schools. He interprets it as follows:

> "In the broader South Africa, it is negative if a person does not know exactly what the definition is or what he must do. If a principal does not even know what the definition of his deputy-principal is, so what is he [deputy-principal – own insertion] then actually going to do? And then they can bump heads, especially if the two have strong personalities. One who is the principal, and the other one

the deputy-principal. To say, 'But the PAM says this is mý responsibility.' And the other one says, 'No [own insertion] it's yóúr responsibility.'"

Principal Z strongly believes that deputy-principals must remain teaching. In fact, Principal Z had taught until the end of the previous year. He claims that a deputy-principal loses track of the contents of the curriculum and the realities of teaching if he/she stops teaching, yet he comprehends the demands deputy-principals are facing. Principal Z believes that in order to be a good manager, a deputy-principal cannot spend more than 50% of a school day on teaching. This is particularly true for the Deputy-Principal: Academics, who will otherwise not have time to do class visits, file or book control, and all the other relevant duties.

Ultimately, Principal Z believes that the role of a primary school deputy-principal has changed drastically over the years. He explains that previously the primary function of a deputy-principal was to give support and assistance to the principal. In the past it was the principal who decided what work the deputy-principal had to do, and it traditionally included some form of academic management and discipline.

4.9.2 Deputy-principal 9 (DP 9)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

According to DP 9 the deputy-principals at School Z do exactly what is expected of them. ("*Elkeen doen presies wat van ons verwag word*"). DP 9 is responsible for managing the school's year calendar. This includes communicating with the other deputy-principals and incorporating their required time slots in the year programme. DP 9 and the other deputy-principals are also responsible for drafting the educators' job descriptions. At the same time DP 9 finds it interesting that the induction programme offered by the DBE does not differentiate between the training of deputy-principals and principals. In fact, the title of the training manual states, "Induction programme for newly appointed deputy-principals and principals." To clarify, each deputy-principal is responsible for his or her portfolio. DP 9 is internally called "Senior Deputy-principal" and she is responsible for the school's academic programme. Should a new deputy-principal be appointed at School Z, it is possible that a restructuring of the roles and responsibilities could take place. DP 9 explains that they

continuously try to appoint the right person in the right position because they do not want educators in positions which they are not passionate about.

In short, DP 9 indicates that she is thankful for School Z's extensive management structure. She acknowledges that each school's needs are different and that their management structure will differ accordingly. Primarily, it is of importance that everyone on the management team is well informed and equipped to substitute for a colleague if required to do so. DP 9 takes the lead in presenting an induction programme for newly appointed educators. In addition, she explains that a colleague from another school trained her on the management of the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD), after which she started to assist and mentor the educators at School Z in this regard. DP 9 and her two academic HODs meet once a day for half an hour. DP 9 explains that she has learnt to delegate and consequently, the various educators are given ownership. Amongst other things, DP 9 demonstrates her leadership as secretary of the SGB, member of the SMT, School Assessment Team (SAT) and the SBST. Moreover, School Z wants to establish mentorship committees in the following year.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

DP 9 considers herself "lucky" to have had supportive mentors throughout her education career. She regards these mentors as important contributors to her success. Experts are regularly invited to conduct staff training at School Z. DP 9 furthermore attends as many training courses as possible. In fact, she and the other deputy-principals are currently busy with an eight-month comprehensive management course. DP 9 explains that since her promotion to deputy-principal, she has not only attended the induction course offered by the DBE, but she also constantly equips herself by reading tutorial books on management and leadership. DP 9 accordingly describes herself as a "lifelong learner". Overall, DP 9 believes that her practical experience in education has equipped her to handle challenging situations.

DP 9 often considers herself as a link ("buffer") between the principal and staff. *("'n Adjunkhoof is baie keer die buffer na die hoof toe").* She accepts that this can be challenging for some deputy-principals, but in her case this has developed naturally. In essence, DP 9 emphasises that she is not there for the job title; she is there to serve

the people. DP 9 finds herself in continuous professional communication with the principal. He often visits her in her office, and *vice versa*. DP 9's experience is that the principal openly demonstrates his trust in her as deputy-principal. She describes their trust relationship as follows:

> "I think he trusts what I do, I just continue with what I do and then I give him feedback. We have an exceptional trust-relationship. We must not break that trust-relationship, but he gives me total space and freedom and that motivates one [even more - own insertion]. So, I write it in my diary, and I say to him: 'Principal Z [own insertion], it is time, we must talk, I am going to give you feedback.' So, he only wants feedback."

To summarise, DP 9 describes Principal Z as an excellent mentor who is always willing to assist and give advice when requested. ("*So, dis vir my lekker om te kan sê ek het iemand waarheen ek kan gaan om te sê: 'Gee vir my raad hieroor'").* Professional interaction between the deputy-principals. DP 9 admits that there are grey areas in the work division of the multiple deputy-principals. DP 9, however, describes their collaboration as follows: *"*Yes, we keep each other informed and we rather look at it together."

DP 9 elaborates that a learner can possibly experience academic problems due to something that happened on the sports field, or a lack of emotional support. When one of the deputy-principals handles a situation that falls under another deputy-principal's domain, the relevant deputy-principal will be informed thereof immediately, either by e-mail or by telephone. Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal

Considering that Principal Z designed School Z's different portfolios (as indicated in Figure 4.2 above), DP 9 elaborates as follows:

> "So, he [Principal Z – own insertion] saw the needs in the school where there are three lanes - actually four if you split sport and culture. So, we sat together and [determined the different roles – own insertion]."

According to DP 9 it appears most challenging for the average deputy-principal to keep up with the heavy workload. Accordingly, the executive committee reviews the different roles and responsibilities of the entire SMT once a year. DP 9 emphasises that their

roles and responsibilities are not 'set in stone', yet, it remains a challenge to manage change. DP 9 elaborates that before she was promoted to Senior Deputy-Principal, she held the title of "Deputy: Academics". Hence, she knows the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) off by heart and feels comfortable to lead the HODs who are responsible for the management of the academics programme. DP 9 emphasises that a school revolves around the curriculum ("*… kurrikulum is eintlik waaroor skool gaan"*), and she remains the external moderator of all exam papers. She also mentions that although there is a lot of paperwork involved in her job, she feels comfortable with it because administration is one of her strong points. For example, DP 9 has worked hard throughout the years to draft and refine numerous documents which now form the foundation of their smooth-running administrative system. Moreover, the HODs administer and manage their departments in such a manner that she finds time for "people management."

Once a week DP 9 chairs the academics management meetings where all relevant practicalities are discussed, and she provides support wherever it is needed. DP 9 confirms that teamwork forms the foundation of these meetings and that all relevant stakeholders seek solutions when they participate in the meetings. DP 9 furthermore emphasises the importance of good collaboration between her and the HODs, and more specifically when she delegates tasks to the HODs. It is customary at School Z that feedback is given in the staff room concerning these meetings. According to DP 9 a deputy-principal's job is challenging, hence it requires a positive attitude and one must always be pro-active. In addition, the deputy-principal must remain positive and radiate energy, especially because they manage educators.

Concerning the roles and responsibilities of deputy-principals, DP 9 comments that she studied the PAM and found that it only included the general duties and responsibilities of deputy-principals. In essence, she finds it wide-ranging, and not school-specific ("*dit word veralgemeen"*) and accordingly makes the following statement:

> "There are responsibilities [documented – own insertion], but yes, there are not guidelines. You go and look at your [specific – own insertion] school's situation. You look at your [school's – own insertion] needs and then you look at your staff structure, but yes, there aren't good guidelines in the PAM."

Due to their broad management model, School Z offers many opportunities for internal promotion. DP 9 shares her viewpoint in a light-hearted way:

> "In our situation there are more opportunities … you almost become a jack of all trades, master of none."

All things considered, DP 9 regards the most important aspect of her job to be happy with what she does and that the parents are happy and treated fairly. She ends the interview by emphasising that she regards her post as "amazing" [wonderful – own insertion] and that she considers it a privilege to be a deputy-principal at School Z. In this context, DP 9 mentions that School Z experiences a very low staff turnover.

4.9.3 Deputy-principal 10 (DP 10)

- **The leadership functions of deputy-principals**

DP 10 realises that a school must have a good functioning management structure. Likewise, the educators must take responsibility for the duties entrusted to them. All deputy-principals are involved when the broader management model is revised annually, yet when an individual deputy-principal's job description is finalised, it is done by the principal and the particular deputy-principal only. At School Z the principal thus determines the overall leadership direction. DP 10 confirms that in the end it is the principal who indicates the direction of where the multiple deputy-principals are heading. As illustrated in Figure 4.2, DP 10 is responsible for all sport and cultural activities. He carries the responsibility and must face the consequences.

DP 10 asserts that it is part of their training as deputy-principals to trust the educators who report to them. The team falling under DP 10 is a relatively young team. Initially, DP 10 had to mentor and support them a lot to reach the stage where trust was established and where the educators are empowered to take full responsibility. As an illustration, DP 10 takes turns to guide the two sports HODs with administrative duties, such as the finalisation of a meeting's agenda and its minutes. He thereafter holds a follow-up meeting with the relevant HOD to finalise matters. This, according to DP 10, is his way of guiding and empowering the HODs and ensuring that the sports organisers have everything ready before a new sport season starts. Due to a full school programme, DP 10 has to organise some sport team meetings in the evenings.

Due to a lack of enough planning time during a school term, DP 10 has to do the strategic planning for his portfolio during the school holidays.

In cooperation with DP 9, DP 10 plays an important role in designing a progressive measuring model which is used during assessment for the foundation phase Physical Education. In particular, DP 10 plays a leading role in the coordination of the sport programme with the overall academic programme. DP 10 explains that the planning of the sports programme revolves around the school's academic activities. For instance, no sport activities are allowed two weeks prior to an examination. Altogether, DP 10's involvement in the SGB varies from sharing a new year's sport and culture vision to giving feedback to the sports coaches regarding decisions made by the SGB.

- **Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals**

Due to his involvement in the co-curricular portfolio as the Deputy-principal: Sport and Culture, DP 10 makes a deliberate effort to remain updated on curricular aspects. He feels that he gets too little exposure to curricular management and regards this as a disadvantage. In line with his view that it remains the principal's responsibility to create opportunities where the deputy-principals can get exposure to the work of other departments (*"dis dan die hoof se plig"*), DP 10 has made the principal aware of his need to be more involved in curriculum management. Consequently, Principal Z assists him by creating additional training opportunities with the intention of getting more exposure to handling curricular-related problems.

Overall, DP 10 receives a great deal of professional support. All the deputy-principals at School Z are currently receiving training on whole school development. This is presented by the chairman of the SGB, who is an expert on project management. DP 10 explains that he aspires to become a principal and consequently attends as many relevant courses as possible. As already mentioned, all the deputy-principals completed a strategic planning training course the previous year. The deputy-principals furthermore spend time with their principal during an hour-long management meeting once a week. In total, it adds up to about two to three hours contact time per week. DP 10 reports that he spends at least 15 minutes additional time with the principal each day regarding sport related matters. He apparently had an hour long one on one meeting with the principal the previous Saturday. In addition, he and

Principal Z also meet professionally some evenings. In conclusion, DP 10 asserts that the support they receive from the DBE has decreased, whereas the overall demand to perform has increased. Deputy-principals thus seek external support and training.

- **Professional interaction between the deputy-principals**

Each deputy-principal is an expert in his or her field. It is, however, possible for the deputy-principals to swop portfolios internally after three years' service and upon mutual agreement. This opportunity is created to assist the deputy-principals to gain experience in different fields of management. From a different perspective, DP 10 admits that in some instances the deputy-principals' portfolios overlap. For example, a learner who struggles on the sports field might also face financial constraints or emotional challenges. Hence, upon handling such problems, the deputy-principals integrate their support and skills in order to act in the best interests of the learner.

- **Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal**

A deputy-principal's primary role is to support the principal. He/she must strengthen the principal's hands and assist the principal into keeping all the balls in the air. DP 10 comments that by doing so, the deputy-principals support the principal so that he can focus on the core aspects of the school's vision. Again, DP 10 emphasises the benefits of the broad and balanced management model they follow. He considers their management model functional as it assists the executive committee to address all the school's needs. DP 10 suggests that without a proper management model, there cannot be progression and it will impact the learners' development negatively. DP 10 believes that their management model can be expanded even more to integrate more people into the SMT. He motivates his statement by explaining that a traditional management model for their school would consist of only four levels, namely that of teacher or master teacher (Post Level 1), HOD (Post Level 2), deputy-principal (Post Level 3) and principal (Post Level 4). With School Z's expanded management model, they have created two additional levels, namely assistant HOD (Post Level 1½) and senior deputy-principal (Post Level 3½). Consequently, this expanded model creates more opportunities and limits stagnation.

To review, School Z has a very broad leadership structure which offers additional leadership posts, such as the creation of three additional deputy-principal posts. Principal Z demonstrates remarkable enthusiasm and dedication to develop and empower the deputy-principals to be equipped and ready for promotion. Instead of a top-down leadership, School Z is characterised as a school where democratic, collective leadership prevails and a climate for collaboration and trust is built. There are various examples of leadership support and positive interactions between the multiple deputy-principals at School Z.

4.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The data in its entirety was analysed and interpreted. It was then categorised using codes and patterns which emerged from the data analysis. This chapter presents the reduced data emerging from the transcripts of the 15 participants. The data was organised and classified into four themes and each theme was further divided into sub-themes (see Table 5.1). Chapter 5 will discuss the main findings of the qualitative study.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Following the data presentation in the previous chapter, this chapter provides a discussion of the main findings after the textual data was analysed through a distributed leadership lens. Where applicable, it is linked to the literature. An inductive process of coding was used to identify patterns, categories and themes (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017:115-122; Creswell, 2014:267) which was further divided into sub-themes, as indicated in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Summary of themes and sub-themes derived from the data

Themes	Sub-themes
Theme 1: Leadership functions of deputy-principals	Role of the principal in determining the leadership role of deputy-principals; Specific leadership functions of deputy-principals.
Theme 2: Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals	Relationship with the principal; Trust; Training, development and empowerment.
Theme 3: Professional interaction among deputy-principals	Division of duties and responsibilities ; Role of the principal in separating the core duties between the deputy-principals; Grey areas in the work distribution between deputy-principals.
Theme 4: Understanding of the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal	The expectations principals have of the deputy-principals; Qualities of deputy-principals; Duties of deputy-principals; The deputy-principal as link; The changed role of deputy-principals; A definition for the deputy-principal.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

As indicated in the introductory paragraph, an analysis of the data discloses that the leadership and management of larger primary schools (such as Schools V to Z in this study) is different from managing smaller primary schools. Although all the participating schools are all located within close proximity of a 10 km radius from one another in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria (Google Maps, 2019:Online), these schools have different contexts and circumstances in which they operate. It seems as if these differences in context influence the leadership role of every deputy-principal. In congruence with the features of distributed leadership (Southworth, 2008:417), this study confirms that large schools cannot be managed without the leadership input of deputy-principals and other educators. As a result of purposeful restructuring of management structures and the corresponding redesign of leadership functions, the SGBs of three of the five participating schools (Schools W, Y and Z) have accordingly

employed one or more additional deputy-principals to distribute the leadership. Given the importance of academic performance in schools, all five participating schools in this study have one deputy-principal who primarily manages the school's academic programme. In accordance to the official grading of South African public schools (see Table 4.3 in Chapter 4) all the participating principals hold Post Level 4 posts, where Post Level 5 is regarded as the highest grading (representing the largest schools according to the number of enrolled learners and with more than forty-five (45) educators employed by the GDE).

5.2.1 Leadership functions of deputy-principals

5.2.1.1 The role of the principal in determining the leadership role of deputy-principals

As evident from the data, the participating principals greatly value their own overall, comprehensive knowledge of school leadership and management. For example, Principal X implies that his knowledge transcends that of the rest of the SMT. He claims that a principal is in the best position to have access to the "broader picture" of the entire school (…"*ek's die een wat die breër prentjie het*"). Even though this study focuses on the role of the deputy-principal, it also underlines the key role of a principal in deciding what is distributed and how distribution is accomplished. Corresponding to literature (Van Deventer, 2013:68-69; Bush & Glover, 2012:34; Grant & Singh, 2009:291; Muijs & Harris, 2007:111), this study provides substantial evidence that these participating principals take the initiative in determining the broader leadership direction of the respective schools. The data furthermore show that distributed leadership suggests a changed leadership role. This includes, amongst others, the development of deputy-principals who, according to Southworth (2008:414) were given scant attention in the past.

At School V the principal plays a fundamental role in building leadership capacity throughout the school, expanding the leadership roles beyond those in formal leadership or administrative posts. There is evidence of work redesign among the deputy-principals as well as increased and varied participation in leadership interaction. Moreover, the deputy-principals work in an environment that is supportive and encourages leadership initiative and accountability.

It appears that principals who adopt a distributed leadership approach are considered successful leaders. Also, the principals seem to understand how to connect to people and networks and lead their educators to follow a shared goal. On the contrary, those schools who are dominated by the principal or whose principals attempt to lead the school alone, will most likely discover that they become excessively dependent on the principal's leadership (Lambert, 2002:37). In contrast to Lambert's caution (2002), none of the principals in this study attempted to lead their school on his own. None of the participating principals expected their deputy-principals to do all the work on their own either. To a large extent, this study illuminated the combined professional effort of all the stakeholders in the participating schools. It is noteworthy that, according to Kerry (2000:37) such a cooperative partnership between the deputy-principal and the principal will most likely influence and determine the relationships and work methods among the staff. The data suggests that larger schools do not only have an effect on the roles performed by SMTs, but also result in the involvement of other educators in the sharing of management responsibilities. For instance, two principals (Principals W and Z) in particular, insist that deputy-principals should delegate duties to the HODs, because it is considered as "training". This corresponds with the views of Botha, (2016:6811); Hughes and Pickeral (2013:2-3) and Fitzsimons, James and Denyer (2011:318). In addition, this study affirms that participants who delegate duties remain fully responsible thereof. Undoubtedly, distributed leadership should not be implemented as a type of "misguided delegation" (Williams, 2011:197).

The majority participating principals make use of an organogram that show a distinctive hierarchical distribution of duties. In light of the before mentioned, the data provide insight into the rationale behind the adapted management models of School W, Y and Z. It appears that their organograms had led to an extension in the schools' overall managerial functioning by providing opportunities for more educators (including deputy-principals) to share in leadership and management responsibilities. All five of the participating principals indicated that they are responsible for drafting a detailed job description for each of the multiple deputy-principals, and they also determine how the leadership roles are divided between/among the deputy-principals. Moreover, that the participating principals encourage inputs by deputy-principals and involve them in decision-making. This 'leader-plus' aspect (Bolden, 2011:252) focuses on the inclusion of all individuals who attribute to the overall management and leadership of

schools. This corresponds with the view of Harris (2008:176) who asserts that organisational change and development are boosted when leadership is broad based and where educators are afforded the opportunities to collaborate and actively participate in change innovation. The data seem to confirm the findings of Sibanda (2017:569), who noted that "the interdependence between people and their context" is important where leadership is distributed.

The majority participants regard the annual planning meeting as an important and ideal opportunity to assess and refine the school's overall management and leadership affairs. This includes reviewing of educators' duties at all levels. It appears that the individual portfolios of the deputy-principals will influence the specific leadership role they fill on the SMT. In line with a distributed leadership perspective (Harris, 2004:15), all the participating deputy-principals appear to be supported by their principals and that they receive ample opportunity and time to deputise. DP 2 even expressed his gratitude towards all the previous principals who had empowered him throughout his career. Evidently, the principals and deputy-principals of the participating schools form a collaborative and supportive team and the leadership is viewed as a collective endeavour rather than an action performed by the principals on their own. This corresponds to the findings and views of a number of authors (Fitzsimons, James & Denyer, 2011:313; Naicker & Mestry, 2011:101,105; Southworth, 2008:417, Muijs & Harris, 2007:111.132; Harris, 2004:15; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:5).

Significantly, the majority of the participating deputy-principals expressed their concern that principals do not have time for all the work they are expected to do, and that the workload is too much for one person to handle alone.

The findings attest that, as argued by Thurlow (2003:196-198), school leaders ought to think strategically and progressively if they want to succeed. For example, Principal Z explained that teachers do not study to become strategic thinkers, but to become classroom teachers. He therefore insisted that all the deputy-principals at School Z attended a year-long strategic thinking training course the year before. The evidence indicates, although the participants feel that it is important to manage a school according to its organogram, this must involve, as expressed by Harris (2010:65) "both the vertical and lateral dimensions of leadership practice". The evidence furthermore suggests that the broad, unconventional SMT of School Z – which includes unofficial

(internal) positions such as a "senior deputy-principal" and "deputy-heads of departments" (deputy-HODs) – merits special mentioning. (The organogram of the SMT of School Z is illustrated in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 in Chapter 4). It would be misleading not to include the merits of this as a key issue emerging from the study, as it relates to an element of reconfiguration and organisational redesign in schools and a move away from bureaucratic to more distributive leadership practices. Similarly, it appears as if the multiple deputy-principals at School Z are continuously busy training and mentoring the HODs and various management teams at School Z. This seems to form part of Principal Z's strategy in providing continuous in-house practical training to all educators, irrespective of their post levels.

Related to the above, it is noted that variances occur regarding the application of the PAM, especially with regards to determining the roles and responsibilities of deputy-principals. It appears that at three of the participating schools (Schools V, W and Z) the PAM is consistently used as a guideline. This was substantiated by School X, who, due to practical factors – such as the recent appointment of a novice deputy-principal and the forthcoming retirement of the second deputy-principal – they primarily consider the needs of the school when determining the duties and responsibilities of the deputy-principals. This corresponds to what Marishane (2016) calls being "contextually intelligent" in school leadership. In contrast, at the fifth school, Principal Y remarked that neither he, nor the principals who he had worked under throughout his career, has ever used the PAM as guideline to determine the core duties and responsibilities of the deputy-principals.

However, contradicting her principal, DP 7 (School Y) contended that they use the PAM as guideline to determine the core duties and responsibilities of the multiple deputy-principals at School Y. She explained as follows:

> "... we take the PAM and then we say how we can adapt it [the job descriptions of the deputy-principals – own inserion] and that. We always try to follow its regulations and things."

Only in School Y there seems to be inconsistency in the data concerning the application of the PAM. This can possibly be attributed to the fact that the management of School Y is believed to be successful and that it simply did not appear to Principal

Y as if the PAM is being used. Or alternatively, it can be assumed that they are so used to managing the school in their customary way, that Principal Y did not find it necessary to consult the PAM in this regard. Another possibility might be that School Y turns out to focus so much on the practical aspects of school management, that they disregarded turning to the regulations stipulated in the PAM. After probing during the interview, Principal Y rationalised his viewpoint regarding the use of the PAM as follows:

> "Must you use it [or – own insertion] mustn't you use it? Yes, because everyone just does things. Maybe we are just used to it [the way we usually manage the school – own insertion]. But we take it for granted, you do anything and everything to make the school better. But yes, I understand what you say, and it is definitely like that, that one will, actually ought to use it."

In direct contrast to Principal Y's view, Principal V stated that they diligently work according to the PAM's guidelines.

A connection was found between the overall changed landscapes in education and the changed role of the school principal. Consistent with a distributed leadership approach (Christie, 2010:695), the data indicated that the principalship has evolved to a role which has intensified and developed to such an extent that principals cannot function without the input of expert stakeholders. The data furthermore support the findings of Harris (2004:13), who pointed out that distributed leadership focuses on engaging the expertise that primarily exist within the school rather than focusing only on the formal position or role of the individual (principal). In congruence with a distributed leadership practice (Bush & Glover, 2014b:560; Grant et al., 2010:403; Harris, 2010:65; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:19-23), the participants shared numerous experiences in confirmation that there appears to be a general movement away from the single, heroic leader to an emphasis on shared leadership participation (Bush & Glover, 2014b:566; Harris, 2012:8; Hartley, 2007:206,211). All the principals in this study seem to adopt a supportive leadership style that encourages inputs by their deputy-principals and involve them in decision-making. Likewise, all the principals in this study are seemingly engaged in developing each of their multiple deputy-principals. It was found though, that the approaches followed by the participating

principals with regards to the functions of and tasks performed by deputy-principals, vary from school to school.

A notable characteristic of School Z appears to be their broad management model which provides valuable opportunities for three internally promoted deputy-principals to take on leadership roles. This agrees with the perspective of Harris (2013:546) who argues that distributed leadership focuses on the distribution of leadership among formal and informal leaders and more specifically, taking full advantage of the leadership abilities within the school. Furthermore, Bush and Glover (2014b:560) supports the claim that distributed leadership integrates the expertise of a group, which would not be the case with a single leader.

The viewpoints, enthusiasm and determination of Principal Z to personally empower his deputy-principals had not escaped my attention. Amongst others, the personal interaction at their official weekly management meetings incorporates training and discussions on how to take the school forward ("… *ons praat oor die skool en dan is dit sommer ook geleentheid vir opleiding, gesprekke – om die skool vorentoe te vat"*). Apart from reporting that these meetings lead to equipping the multiple deputy-principals, Principal Z attests that his deputy-principals receive outstanding training – something he personally never received. In this study, the deputy-principals' functional participation was not only observed in their verbal communication, but an overall recognition of their contributing leadership role appeared evident during the interviews. Aspects such as the deputy-principal's knowledge, talents, experience, interests, proficiencies and qualities seem to influence the division of duties and responsibilities between the multiple deputy-principals.

Principal Z expounds his personal involvement in developing and equipping the deputy-principals for promotional purposes as follows:

> "Because they [deputy-princiapals – own insertion] are ready [for promotion to principalship – own insertion]. But I deliver a product. If any of my four or three deputy-principals that I currently have, become a principal within the following year, he will be on a total different level than another person [from another school – own insertion] who will become the principal, because he is really

empowered. [At School Z - own insertion] he was really part of strategy, of staff development, staff appointments."

Principal Z accordingly mentioned that he finds it very useful to work personally with his deputy-principals. This aligns with the establishment of an environment wherein distributed leadership, as articulated by Harris (2010:58), "depends upon the school itself, the purpose of the distribution and most importantly, *how* leadership is distributed". Yet, as argued by Williams (2011:192), a distributed leadership perspective is not meant to "displace the crucial role of the school principal". In a nutshell, principals play the most important role in establishing distributed leadership practice at schools (Day & Sammons, 2016:54; Harris, 2012:8; Naicker & Mestry, 2011:101). The general consensus in the data reminds us that principals ought to share their responsibilities with the deputy-principals in a planned, structured way (Aaron & Du Plessis, 2014:1446; Lambert, 2002:40). A few participants view principalship and deputy-principalship as being alike in many aspects, whilst others indicate a clear distinction between the two positions.Supporting this view, DP 10 confirms that, in the end, it is the principal who indicates the direction of where the deputy-principals are heading towards "and then we get wings" ("*en dan kry ons vlerke")*.

5.2.1.2 Specific leadership functions of deputy-principals

It is noteworthy that a number of participants suggested that a deputy-principal's leadership style ought to align with that of the principal. What is clear from the data, though, is that deputy-principals (also referred to as a *"principal-in-training")* are expected to demonstrate leadership abilities and take full accountability and responsibility for a wide variety of duties assigned to them. Corresponding to a distributed leadership approach, the research of Bush and Glover (2014b:561) recognises "that distributed leadership has the potential to expand the scope of leadership, leading to enhanced student outcomes while developing the formal leaders of the future." As an illustration thereof, DP 10 clarifies his leadership role as follows:

> "… I carry the responsibility, I sit in the hot seat with regards to decision-making, not only in lieu of what sport and which activity we do, but also [with regards to - own insertion] the conflict which may take place. That mentorship part where you teach the team how to handle parents, how to conduct information

sessions, what communication [must take place – own insertion] … I try to explain the role of what a parent ought to know [what information must be shared with the parents – own insertion]. That's how they buy into it."

In elaboration, DP 10 takes the lead in coordinating the sport programme together with the overall academic programme. Also, DP 10's involvement in the SGB varies from sharing the vision of the sport and cultural activities of every new school year with all relevant stakeholders, to giving feedback to the sport coaches regarding decisions made by the SGB. Aligned with literature (Coleman, 2003:174), the data indicate that the leadership roles of deputy-principals "are not cast in stone" and may change if and when required. The findings remind us that deputy-principals perform diverse roles which differ from school to school (Kerry, 2000:26, 40). It furthermore turns out that all participating deputy-principals are expected to perform leadership functions by, *inter alia*, conducting various meetings, such as HOD meetings. Apart from principals who serve on the SGB as *ex officio* members, all participating deputy-principals also serve the respective SGBs of their schools, either as elected or co-opted members. It appears as if the majority of the deputy-principals who participated in this study experience their leadership role on the SGB as a collaborative role. This varies from serving on the finance committee (DP 5; DP 8) or giving feedback on sport (DP 2, DP 3, DP 10), culture (DP 2, DP 6, DP 10) or academic programmes of the school (DP 1; DP 4; DP 6; DP 7; DP 9). DP 9 (School Z) serves as a secretary of the SGB.

Although all ten deputy-principals interviewed in this study each have a unique job description and their leadership functions vary according to their respective schools' unique circumstances, it is noted that some of the deputy-principals seem to fill similar leadership roles. For instance, five of the deputy-principals (one at each participating school) are primarily responsible for the academic programme of their schools. Two of the participating deputy-principals (Schools W and Z) are responsible for managing co-curricular activities, whereas the majority of the participating deputy-principals are not expected to be involved in any co-curricular activities. For instance, DP 3 is School W's athletics organiser whilst DP 10 is responsible for the overall management of School Z's sport and cultural activities. It merits mentioning that, a few weeks prior to participating in this study, Principal Y and his three deputy-principals decided to start attending sport and cultural activities "to show their support".

Additional functions performed by participating deputy-principals is the coordination of the IQMS (DP 5), the management of learning and teaching support materials (LTSM) (DP 3; DP 5) the screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS) programme of learners who are in need of additional assistance (DP 6), learner discipline (DP 2; DP 3), being head of subject (DP 5) and the submission of the annual departmental statistics (DP 1; DP 3). At School X, though, an administrative worker appears to perform the latter duty. This corresponds with a distributed leadership approach, which incorporates both formal and informal leadership roles in schools (Bahadur, 2012:15). Remarkably, the deputy-principals from School Y (DP 7; DP 8) are the only deputy-principals in this study who perform HOD duties in combination with the deputy-principalship. The participants in general seem to agree that the participating deputy-principals' workload is more or less distributed equally, despite the fact that the duties vary so much.

As indicated before, it was suggested that factors such as a participant's knowledge, talents, expertise, interests, proficiencies, experience and the school's unique circumstances will influence the division of duties and responsibilities among the multiple deputy-principals. The majority of the participating deputy-principals agreed that deputy-principals are generally experiencing an overall increase in their workload. It furthermore appears as if the District Office of the DBE is now also requiring more administrative duties to be performed by deputy-principals, yet there is no indication of an increase in their responsibilities.

In alignment with the requirements of Performance Standard 9 of the IQMS, numerous examples in the data demonstrate how deputy-principals are involved in staff development and training. Deputy-principals mostly tend to train and develop the HODs, and especially new educators. It is widely accepted that deputy-principals often practice mentorship, especially in terms of novice educators. Two participating deputy-principals indicated that they manage the placement of student teachers. This includes being responsible for their induction programme, mentorship and monitoring of their performance. There furthermore appears to be substantial evidence in the data that deputy-principals regularly hold or arrange professional development talks, according to the needs of the school and identified educators. In agreement with the features of distributed leadership (Harris, 2013:546), it is believed that the participating deputy-

principals do not only focus on their own portfolios, they also assist others (including fellow deputy-principals) as the need arise. DP 6 furthermore noted that deputy-principals usually take the lead and handle a variety of "typical situations" associated with a primary school. Importantly, it was found that principals expect the deputy-principals to function independently. This corresponds with the findings of Day and Sammons (2016:52), who agree that distributed leadership plays an important role in allocating leadership responsibility to other leaders beyond the principal. This, it is suggested, supports the general leadership development in schools.

As alluded to before, the majority of participants experience that the size of a school influences the school's management structure. In clarification, the well-experienced DP 5 lends support to this view by giving his account as follows:

> "*What works for a small school, does not work for our macro-schools.*"

By way of illustration, DP 1 labelled School V (1705 learners) a gigantic school ("reusagtig"), whilst DP 5, referred to School X (1937 learners) as a "super school" due to its number of enrolled learners. It therefore appears that in larger schools, because of the workload and the variety of duties that must be filled, the size of the school does not only influence the roles performed by the SMT, but also result in the involvement of other educators in the professional management of the school. While the inclusion of more educators in the SMT can possibly give the impression that deputy-principals progressively delegate their duties to their subordinates, there are several examples recorded in the data that support the belief that the individual deputy-principals remain responsible for their portfolios ("… *jy delegeer, maar jy is tóg nog 'hands on' betrokke … verantwoordelik*").

It is interesting to note that DP 9 regards "people management" her most important role. Coupled herewith, it appears as if School Z is the only participating school to make use of such a broad management model which includes, amongst others, the unique position DP 9 holds as "Senior deputy-principal" (Post Level 3½). Regarding her extraordinary position at School Z, DP 9 elaborated as follows:

> "Yes, my most wonderful challenges are to keep my staff happy, to trust them. We all need encouragement and we all need recognition."

The overall data indicates that in order for schools to function optimally, the participating schools generally regard deputy-principalship as being essential by providing supportive assistance to the principal. Likewise, deputy-principals must be seen as adaptable individuals who simultaneously lead and follow. To sum up, the data indicated that the deputy-principalship ought to be regarded as a leadership role in its own right.

5.2.2 Professional support and assistance to deputy-principals

5.2.2.1 Relationship with the principal

Only one principal (Principal X) reported that it seems to be relatively important that principals ought to know their deputy-principals well enough in order to understand and meet their particular needs (James, 2008:6-7 & Kerry, 2000:16-18). As such, Principal X indicated that principals and their deputy-principals ought to cooperate "100%". The majority of deputy-principals in this study confirmed that they seem to experience a positive professional relationship with their principal. This was also witnessed by my personal observations during the interviews when some of the deputy-principals described their relationship with their principal as "using the principal as a sounding board" (DP 2; DP 5), that the deputy-principal and the principal are "partners who think alike" (DP 5) and that the partnership is good ("die *vennootskap is gelukkig*") (DP 5). This gave insight into the healthy interpersonal relationships that exist.

The participating principals generally indicated that their schools rely on team efforts to manage the school. To illustrate, Principal V seems to consider each person's role important and regards each stakeholder an ambassador of the school. He furthermore seems to invest a lot in his relationship with his deputy-principals, and practices an invitational leadership style, where every person at the school, including the deputy-principals, ought to experience that *esprit de corps* feeling. In fact, Principal V particularly mentioned that he nurtures his relationship with his two deputy-principals and expect them to "steer the ship" with him. In light of the above and through personal observation, it is noticeable that Principal V expects the participating deputy-principals to represent the school by demonstrating exemplary conduct in all situations and places.

There appears to be sufficient evidence that regular professional interaction takes place between the participating principals, deputy-principals and their situation. This confirms the contentions of Spillane (2009) and Harris (2008:175) that distributed cognition transpires through interactions and across various teams (Gronn, 2002:428) and that distributed leadership implies that the practice of leadership is shared and realised within extended groupings and networks of which some would be formal and others informal. In agreement with a distributed leadership approach, many participants confirmed the important role principals play in offering professional support and assistance. Accordingly, words like "training" and "empowerment" (of deputy-principals) regularly occur in the data. From his personal experience, Principal Z emphasised that, at first, he did not know what the role and duties of a deputy-principal entailed when he was appointed in that position. He thus gained first-hand experience what it felt like to be unprepared for the deputy-principalship. This experience might be a determining motive why Principal Z appears to be exceptionally devoted to developing and equipping his deputy-principals. It generally occurs that the particular type of support and assistance deputy-principals receive from their principals vary from working together "shoulder-to-shoulder" on a daily basis (School Y) or the deputy-principals being trained to handle possible challenging situations (School Z), to being personally guided through a book which offers many applicable practical life-coaching scenarios (Principal V).

Evident in the data, all deputy-principals, except the two well-experienced deputy-principals (DP 2; DP 5) – who each have 31 years' experience in education – described their principals as good mentors. As such, all but one of the deputy-principals mentioned their appreciation towards their respective principals and essentially, for the mentorship and guidance they provide. There seems to be substantial agreement among the participants that regular professional interaction takes place between the principal and the individual deputy-principals, and more so, that principals play a prominent role in orchestrating and implementing a type of shared leadership.

It stood out that, due to his specific portfolio of Sport and Culture, DP 10 has requested Principal Z to assist him in being developed more in the field of academic affairs, specifically as he intended to apply for promotional posts in the near future. It was thus found that Principal Z assists and supports DP 10 by giving him more exposure to

handling practical academic-related situations. It thus appears that the average time principals spend with their deputy-principals vary from school to school and day to day. For instance, the executive committees of Schools V and X tend to spend only a few minutes together on certain days, whereas some of the training and support meetings at other schools are longer and can last up to three hours per week (School Z). Generally, the data show that participants in general agree that it requires a team effort to manage a school successfully. With this in mind, it seems apparent that open communication channels exist in all the participating schools. Significantly, all the principals in this study practice an open-door policy, which they also expect of the deputy-principals. Two of the participating deputy-principals specifically pointed out that principals play the leading role in determining the direction a school is heading towards. In a distributed leadership context, the data revealed that school leadership cannot be focused on a single person (Sibanda, 2017:568; Bush & Glover, 2014b:566). In support of this view, DP 1 (School V) explained that a school of excellence can and may not revolve around one person only. Williams (2011:192), however, confirms that "distributed leadership is not meant to displace the crucial role of the school principal". The participating principals unmistakably appeared appreciative of the deputy-principals' overall involvement in the school. In explanation, Principal Y confirmed that he works together with his deputy-principals and that the multiple deputy-principals enjoy an effective relationship where duties and responsibilities are shared. He explained their open relationship as follows:

> "But in general, we discuss everything, and we enjoy a sound relationship of sharing and understanding and division [of duties – own insertion]. So, the support that I offer, is that I allow them to do things [on their own – own insertion] and we work together).

Most importantly, Principal V's dedication to support his educators appears remarkable. He accordingly described a typical practical example where he offered his help and assistance to an educator as follows:

> "What must I assist you with, because you have my support if there are problems, but how can I strengthen you hand? Either with a this or a that, a speech here? I can organise a motivational speaker ... what do you struggle with? I wil pay, come and talk to me."

Similarly, Principal X impressed with his dedication to support the novice DP 6 as follows:

> "And the other thing I told her was, 'Do you know what, I support you in whatever you do. If you make a mistake, I will also support you.'"

It is noteworthy that DP 1 (School V) and DP 10 (School Z) both explained that their respective principals give them "wings". On the contrary, DP 10 expressed his dissatisfaction with the GDE, whose professional support, he believes, has decreased over the years. In contrast, DP 5 (School X) and DP 9 (School Z) respectively pointed out that they benefitted from the training courses offered by the GDE. These two deputy-principals referred to themselves as "lifelong learners".

5.2.2.2 Trust

By and large, it appears that all the participating deputy-principals and their principals enjoy a healthy trust relationship. Consistent with the findings of Day and Sammons (2016:54), trust plays a fundamental role in the effective distribution of leadership. Indeed, most of the deputy-principals in this study indicated their appreciation towards their principals who openly display their trust. As a practical token of their trust in their deputy-principals, two principals indicated that they do not "peep over the shoulders" of the deputy-principals, and they have deliberately taken a decision not to attend all the meetings conducted by the deputy-principals. In particular, DP 1 pointed out that Principal V has not only managed to expand her role as deputy-principal, but he also demonstrated his trust in her and consequently, she had reached new heights. In turn, most principals in the study highlighted that they similarly expect the deputy-principals to demonstrate trust in the HODs and other educators. Upon supporting his deputy-principals, Principal V shared a practical experience from his earlier career as deputy-principal as follows:

> "I have learnt to trust my heads of departments. I have trained them and trusted them, made them strong. That is how I have managed to survive."

In addition, and from a different angle, the data also revealed that mutual trust between the multiple deputy-principals was evident at all the participating schools.

5.2.2.3 Training, development and empowerment

An interesting aspect that came to the fore, is that the members of the executive committees of both Schools V and Y apparently visited a world-renowned school in Cape Town to learn first-hand how that school is managed. It appears that the empowerment of deputy-principals play a prominent role in all the participating schools. Some of the participating principals, however, seem more likely to personally train and develop their deputy-principals than others. In congruence with the findings of Naidoo and Petersen (2015:1-3) and Huber (2004:676) who argue that principals play a crucial role in leadership development, the data suggests that Principals V, W, X and Z explicitly indicated their dedication to offer individualised support and training of their deputy-principals. Yet, even though the word "empowerment" was not directly used by Principal Y, DP 7 and DP 8 made it clear that Principal Y appears dedicated to empower each of them. Indeed, the data indicates that Principal Y spends about 70% to 75% of a school day communicating, assisting and supporting his deputy-principals. In addition, the findings generally outline that the participating principals do not only value and encourage their deputy-principals to attend training courses, workshops and conferences, they also inspire them to further their professional studies. All but one of the deputy-principals reported that they regularly attend courses, workshops and conferences offered by their unions and/or private companies. For example, DP 9 and DP 10 indicated that they were busy with an eight months course in whole school development at the time they were interviewed. This corresponds with the notion that for distributed leadership to succeed, school principals must support and create opportunities for their deputy-principals to develop their leadership capabilities (Petrides, Jimes & Karaglani, 2014:174). This notion is supported by Grant (2006:513) who agrees that schools should move away from a "dependency culture" to a "empowerment culture", and that principals ought to know "what kinds of professional development would benefit individual teachers" (Leithwood et al., 2007:50).

It was apparent during the interview that Principal Z was proud to announce that two of the multiple deputy-principals at School Z had recently completed the Honours degree in school management. This is in congruence with a distributed leadership viewpoint, which supports the idea of professional development (Naicker & Mestry,

2011:104; Grant, 2006:514). It was furthermore noted during the interviews that the participating principals generally appeared proud and appreciative to reveal their school's involvement with outside experts in empowering the management teams and/or educators. It was furthermore found that the majority of the participating schools appear to make use of the expertise of external experts such as members of their SGBs or even former SGB-members to train the executive committees. Given the relevance of the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) system (SACE:Online), it appears odd that only two deputy-principals mentioned the CPTD management system, as it is an ongoing process, and for deputy-principals in particular, it already started off in January 2014 (Mosoge, 2013:172-173; SACE:Online). Principal Y, on the other hand explained that in the long run, principals play an important role in preparing deputy-principals for their wide-ranging position. In other words, the data suggest that deputy-principals who don't get the necessary experience and exposure are deprived of opportunities to grow and be developed, and without it, they are likely to find it difficult to fill the footsteps of the principal. Principal Y expressed his views regarding principals who do not assist and develop their deputy-principals as follows:

> "So, that is basically what you [the principal – own insertion] do. You limit that person [deputy-principal – own insertion] to grow and to develop. Because that deputy-principal must be able to – no matter where – walk into any school and be able to do the work."

It needs to be emphasised that Principal Z, in particular, demonstrated a remarkable passion and determination to empower and prepare his deputy-principals for their current roles as well as for prospective promotional purposes. Amongst other things, Principal Z explained that he believes in taking the deputy-principals through a more complex "second level" of training. Consistent herewith, the data provide evidence of Principal Z's involvement in practical weekly training sessions for the deputy-principals. Moreover, the evidence suggests that Principal Z thoroughly trains his deputy-principals in preparation of challenging situations and/or for promotional purposes. In essence, Principal Z substantiated the idea as follows:

> "I empower the person [deputy-principal – own insertion] 100%."

This view is supported by Hilliard and Newsome (2013:153) who believe that it is the duty and responsibility of the principal to develop the deputy-principal to be capable of deputising for the principal.

To sum up, it is evident in the data that by creating the required training and development opportunities for their deputy-principals, the participating principals do not become redundant (Harris, 2012:8). Rather, by creating the context for a more collaborative and participative approach to leadership, a high degree of trust and cooperation between the principals and their deputy-principals is apparent (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:99; Williams, 2011:192). The data suggest that distributed leadership is practiced in all the participating schools, and that the participating principals lead their deputy-principals to "lead themselves" (Fitzsimons, James & Denyer, 2011:316).

5.2.3 Professional interaction among the deputy-principals

It is essential to understand how school leaders work together in a school as well as separately, as this is "an important aspect of the social distribution of leadership practice" (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004:16). Unlike the findings of Murphy et al. (2009:182-183) who argue that schools are generally not conducive to a distributed type of leadership, the data suggested a distribution of leadership among all the deputy-principals within all the participating schools. Despite each school's unique circumstances, the data revealed an overall positive and cooperative relationship among the deputy-principals of the participating schools (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:100). More specifically, the study shows that the participating deputy-principals appear to consider teamwork as one of the most important components of their professional relationships. It is furthermore important to note that leadership is distributed across the various post levels and that deputy-principals function in various interlinked teams such as the SMT, SGB and sport teams (Heystek, 2013:14 and Naido, 2013:6-12, Grant, 2006:513).

5.2.3.1 Division of duties and responsibilities

All the participating schools exercise a "leader-plus" type of leadership practice, where the leadership roles stretch beyond those in formal leadership roles (Harris, 2012:7; Bolden, 2011:252). It is evident that the division of duties among/between the multiple deputy-principals often involve a combination of leaders "who work separately yet interdependently" (Spillane, 2005:146). Unlike the findings of Beycioglu, Ozer and

Ugurlu (2012:637), no signs of role tensions were evident due to an overlapping in the responsibilities between the deputy-principal and principal. Deputy-principals are not only responsible to manage their own portfolios, they are, from time to time, expected to substitute for a fellow deputy-principal. Generally, the first available deputy-principal will perform the duties of a fellow deputy-principal, whether it forms part of the portfolio, or not. Principal W distinctly raised his concern that deputy-principals seemingly find it difficult to perform a "terrible workload" on their own. It appears that this perspective might also provide a possible reason why some of the participating deputy-principals indicated that they have to do some of their administrative duties at night. It is believed to be an ongoing process at the participating schools to identify capable Post Level 1 educators to whom additional administrative and/or leadership responsibilities can be allocated throughout the year.

Aspects such as the capabilities of the deputy-principals are considered before duties are assigned to them. Deputy-principals are not only required to assist the principal with a variety of duties (Sharp & Walter, 2012:153), they also play a key role in performing a wide selection of duties and responsibilities, which are specified in the PAM (RSA, 2016b:A-30-A31). The data furthermore reveal that deputy-principals also assume duties and responsibilities beyond those stipulated in the PAM. Despite the fact that, from time to time, principals find it necessary to change a deputy-principal's duties and responsibilities, there is no evidence in the data that any of the participating deputy-principals perceived their role as "uncertain" (Döş & Savaş, 2015:7; Scott, 2011:47; Muijs & Harris, 2003:6). In fact, the majority participants in this study are believed to be satisfied how the duties and responsibilities of the participating deputy-principals are distributed.

It can thus be assumed that deputy-principals ought to be skilled enough to handle a variety of duties and responsibilities (Johnson, 2015:30; Sharp & Walter, 2012:153). With this in mind, DP 9 indicated that, apart from her usual duties, she increasingly finds herself handling staff-related matters. This, DP 9 explained, possibly happens because the majority of educators are females and she is the only lady represented on the executive committee. This aspect of the deputy-principalship agrees with the findings of Nieuwenhuizen (2011:10) who perceives the role of the deputy-principal as growing and multi-faceted.

In summary, one of the participants attributed the success of their school to the fact that the SMT and educators are willing to work together, to learn from each other, to build one another and to practice mentorship. In fact, the evidence shows that deputy-principals generally seem willing to collaborate with and learn from their colleagues.

5.2.3.2 Role of the principal in separating the core duties between the deputy-principals

The organograms used by most of the participating schools indicate the different posts and the different levels of management. It appears that all the participating deputy-principals seem to experience an extensive workload, difficult for one person to manage alone. In fact, the data suggests that the needs of the participating schools generally play a crucial role when the core duties of the multiple deputy-principals are separated. The data also outlined that the participating schools' core duties are divided between the multiple deputy-principals according to their expertise, knowledge, talents and interests.

The participating schools all practice flexibility and make provision for "changing circumstances" (Williams, 2011:192), predominantly aimed to strengthen the school's efficiency. Under guidance of the principal, all the participating schools revise the job descriptions of all the educators (including the deputy-principals) at least once a year. It became evident that the participating principals play a prominent role in determining the roles and duties of their deputy-principals. In this respect, all the participating principals emphasised that the multiple deputy-principals ought to take full responsibility for their own portfolios. Despite the clear division of portfolios, it is noted that overlapping of duties or communal elements in the work distribution occurs (DP 2). Against this background, it is noted that Principal W appears to be the only principal who emphasised the separation of duties as follows:

> "That's why we said, 'Divide the two deputy-principals' posts … and you don't involve yourselves in each other's jobs.'"

Given the above, there appears to be general agreement among the participants that the job descriptions of deputy-principals ought to be revised annually. In fact, it appears normal practice for a principal to restructure a deputy-principal's portfolio and/or job description any time during the year when the circumstances at school change. It merits pointing out the way in which Principal W experienced the difference

at School W after the SGB's appointment of an additional (second) deputy-principal. Principal W elaborated as follows:

> "… I almost want to say it was chaotic with [only – own insertion] one deputy-principal. It is a hundred times better with two deputy-principals."

As illustrated in Table 4.2 (Chapter 4), DP 1 was relatively new in her position when this study took place. It is thus understandable that, when she was interviewed, she experienced her role as "still developing". She then pointed out that her duties are still expanding as she settles into her position. Hence, it is found that the role of an individual deputy-principal is non-static and continuously evolving (Nieuwenhuizen, 2011:10). In this regard, Principal Z empowers his deputy-principals to gain more experience in other portfolios than the specific portfolio entrusted to them. Again, the principal primarily determines how their duties and responsibilities are divided, taking the experience, skills, interests and abilities of the individual deputy-principals into consideration.

Indeed, the data substantiated that the HODs, Post Level 1 educators, and even some of the administrative personnel (School X) assists with the executing of duties. To illustrate, DP 4 (School W) elaborated on her practical experience of her fellow deputy-principal's workload, and more specifically, regarding the handling of discipline. DP 4 accordingly reported the details as follows:

> "So, if you have an admin [period – own insertion] of 30 minutes, it's not enough to see to one child's situation and he [DP 3 – own insertion] is dealing with like about 15 – 20 cases a day. I help him because he's so busy, they just come to me, then it takes up my time as well. And that's reality. So he can't get going [on – own insertion] with the other things that he has [to do – own insertion] Only the discipline [keeps him occupied most of the day – own insertion] and then he's also supposed to be in charge of staff, and that's also … he doesn't even have a lunch break, because that's when you [the staff – own insertion] get to talk with [him – own insertion]. When somebody comes in with an issue, you come in here [into the deputy-principal's office – own insertion], you close the door and the poor man can't eat, because he has to listen [to the staff's problems – own insertion]."

It seems as if the number of multiple deputy-principals, and each school's unique circumstances and size probably plays a pivotal role in distributing the duties and responsibilities of deputy-principals, which, in most cases, are most likely to change if the principal considers it necessary. In order to gain a better understanding and overview of the organisational climate in which the participating deputy-principals are working, Figure 5.2 (below) illustrates the ratio of the number of deputy-principals to the number of enrolled learners per school.

Table 5.2: The ratio of the number of deputy-principals to the number of enrolled learners

Participating school	Number of enrolled learners	Number of deputy-principals paid by the GDE	Ratio of the GDE deputy-principals to the number of learners	Total number of deputy-principals (GDE and SGB)	Ratio of deputy-principals (DBE and SGB) to learners	Number of learners per deputy-principal more than School Z expressed as a %
School Z	952*	1	1:952	3	1:317	0%
School W	815	1	1:815	2	1:408	28,7%
School Y	1 462	2	1:731	3	1:487	37,9%
School V	1 705	2	1:853	2	1:853	62,8%
School X	1 937	2	1:969	2	1:969	67,3%

* The total number of enrolled learners at School Z excludes the pre-primary department.

Table 5.2 above displays that School Z has the lowest ratio of deputy-principals to learners (1:317), while School X has the highest ratio (1:969). What appeared surprising, is that the number of learners per deputy-principal of Schools W and Y are both much lower (below 38%) than that of Schools V and X (62,7% and 67,3% respectively) which are the two largest participating schools. Table 5.2 furthermore illustrates that the deputy-principals at School Z share the responsibilities among more deputy-principals than in any of the other participating schools.

As reported in Table 4.1 (Chapter 4), School V (1 705 learners) and School X (1 937 learners) are the two largest schools in this study, yet they each employ only two deputy-principals. On the contrary, the SGB of School Y (1 462 learners) employs an additional (third) deputy-principal, whereas School Z (952 learners) employs three additional deputy-principals who can share the core duties.

5.2.3.3 Grey areas in the work distribution between deputy-principals

Considering the variances in the findings regarding whether grey areas exist in the work distribution of deputy-principals, or not, the replies of the participating principals and deputy-principals varied. Principals V and Y believe there are limited grey areas due to the specific way in which the school's organogram is structured. However, when grey areas occur, the issues are discussed, and solutions are found as soon as it occurs.

Principal W appears to believe that no grey areas exist between the portfolios of his two deputy-principals. He ascribes this to the detailed organogram which specifies the formal leadership roles of the two deputy-principals. Principal Z, on the other hand, at first reported that no grey areas exist in the work distribution of his deputy-principals. He contended as follows:

> "We do not have grey areas, because it [their duties and responsibilities - own insertion] is completely split and each one has a comprehensive job description. There are really no grey areas. I struggle to answer you regarding the grey areas, because it has never been a problem in the 14 years, because there are very definite guidelines, definite job descriptions."

Nonetheless, Principal Z later conceded that there might be some overlapping of the deputy-principals' roles at School Z.

Seen from the deputy-principals' perspective, all the deputy-principals, except DP 8 were of the opinion that grey or overlapping areas exist in the work distribution of the multiple deputy-principals. DP 1 and DP 2 (School V) confirm the existence of grey areas that must be navigated. They often find communal points in their work distribution. Of importance, though is that the two deputy-principals are comfortable with the existence of grey areas and the fact that overlapping will occur. DP 2 describes the grey areas between him and DP 1 "like a dotted line, not a solid line".

It was perceived that DP 3 and DP 4 enjoy a good professional relationship and that this might be a possible reason why Principal W believes no overlapping of roles take place at School W. DP 4 gave insight into how she perceives the existence of grey areas at School W when she described their professional interaction as follows:

"We work very well together. We actually complement each other. With the things that he has to do, that's my weaknesses, and the things that I have to do are actually his weaknesses. So, I think in that we complement and supplement each other. It runs smoothly. If I'm in hospital – if it would happen – the school doesn't come to a standstill, it carries on. We usually consult with each other when we come back. I mean it's not a matter where we step into each other's shoes and do the wrong things. We cover for each other and it just goes smoothly. We've never had that somebody messed up somewhere. It never happened."

DP 6 (School X) also confirms the existence of grey areas. She considers good communication and the good relationship between the deputy-principals of great importance. Accordingly, there appears to be a good professional relationship between the two deputy-principals at School X.

Interestingly, Principal Y and DP 7 (School Y) acknowledge the existence of limited grey areas. Yet, their colleague (DP 8) does not experience any overlapping or grey areas. She ascribes this to the "duty specific" portfolios at School Y.

Both DP 9 and DP 10 confirmed that they do experience overlapping of roles among the multiple deputy-principals of School Z. By means of a practical example, DP 9 explained that it might happen that learners experience academic problems due to an occurrence in their extra-mural activities or due to emotional problems. As such, and with reference to the organogram of School Z illustrated in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.1), it is possible that one child's problem might be practically integrated among up to three of the four deputy-principals' portfolios.

Bearing this in mind, it can be assumed that the participating deputy-principals generally enjoy positive and cooperative professional relationships (Marshall & Hooley, 2006:6). The study thus suggests that the existence of a poor relationship between the multiple deputy-principals has the potential to result in a completely different situation in which one deputy-principal might insist in only handling that part of the work that is applicable to his or her portfolio.

The contradictive perspectives of Principals W and Z, on the one hand, and the practical experience of the participating deputy-principals on the other hand, could

possibly be an indication of a form of policy-practice gap. This disparity could be ascribed to the correct manner in which the deputy-principals seem to handle any overlapping areas and how they apply their professional discretion to navigate overlapping grey areas in their job descriptions. The findings, however, gave several examples that most participating deputy-principals experience grey areas in the work distribution among the different portfolios. The data indicate beyond doubt that there could be mixed opinions regarding the management of grey areas, and particularly how it plays out in practice. Yet, it is noted that the participating principals do not consider it a recurring or serious problem. On the contrary, the majority of the participating deputy-principals seem to experience this as a frequent practical reality. Indeed, many examples of how deputy-principals practically handle overlapping or grey areas are revealed in the data. The data provided by the ten deputy-principals can be summed up as, *inter alia*: that grey areas do exist among/between the multiple participating deputy-principals and that there tend to be similarities how the five different primary schools seem to handle the individual situations. The evidence suggests that deputy-principals tend to rely on the good relationships they have with their fellow deputy-principals. Secondly, good communication between the multiple deputy-principals generally seems to be very important. Thirdly, feedback ought to be given to the other deputy-principal(s) where and when necessary. Finally, the feedback must be given as soon as possible after the situation has been handled. This feedback can be done either in writing or verbally, depending on the school's management procedure.

Overall, there seems to be evidence that the specification and/or separation of leadership roles (portfolios) do not necessary provide a guarantee that overlapping will not occur in practice. The existence of grey areas therefore has the potential to be more prominent where the multiple deputy-principals do not work together in harmony, which seems unlikely in all the participating schools in this study. Of importance, though, is that the participants are comfortable with the existence of grey areas and the fact that overlapping situations occur. Most importantly, the deputy-principals ought to respect each other's management areas.

From the above, it can be noted that some of the principals view the role of the deputy-principal different to how the deputy-principals themselves perceive their roles.

5.2.4 Understanding the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal

5.2.4.1 The expectations principals have of the deputy-principals

It appears that all the participating principals seem to have specific expectations of their deputy-principals. Understandably, principals in general count on a good and stable partnership with their deputy-principals. Principal X, for example, pointed out that he prefers his deputy-principals to establish their own identity in the position. The majority participating principals indicated that they expect their deputy-principals to demonstrate strong leadership skills and take full responsibility for the duties assigned to them. This includes designing, incorporating and managing all the leadership aspects thereof. In particular, Principal V appears to have a few definite expectations of his deputy-principals. This include, among others, that deputy-principals ought to be good public speakers, and they should refrain from being sensitive about receiving advice or instructions from a lower ranked teacher. Also, as previously mentioned, Principal V expects DP 1 and DP 2 to radiate the same type of energy as he does, and they ought to manage the school with the same invitational leadership style he practices. To illustrate, Principal V apparently does not give orders, instead, he expresses his wishes and expect the educators to perform accordingly. Above all, Principal V insists that the deputy-principals must have progressed through all the official prescribed promotional ranks for educators.

In South Africa, classroom teaching forms an integral component of an educator's duties (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31). It was noted, however, that Principals X and Z have stopped teaching six months prior to his participation in this research. Although none of the principals in this study teach any classes, the participants all agree that deputy-principals should engage in classroom teaching (RSA, 2016a:A-30–A31). One needs to understand that, apart from executing regulatory and policy prescriptions, the fact that deputy-principals engage in classroom teaching ensure that they experience the same physical conditions as the rest of the educators. It can possibly be interpreted that when principals stop teaching, they rely more on the deputy-principal to act as a type of monitor to keep them abreast of daily classroom circumstances. Deviating from prescribed teaching time allocation per post-level as contained in the PAM document (RSA, 2016a:A-9), Principal Z indicated that, due to their workload, deputy-principals cannot be expected to spend more than 50% of a school day teaching. This is an

example of how the local context of a school has an influence on how an official policy document is applied.

In agreement with Cooke (2015:37), the deputy-principals in this study work under the supervision of the principal and they are assigned duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's needs. They have varied roles and responsibilities, yet they "play a pivotal role in shaping the educational and social beliefs in a school".

5.2.4.2 Qualities of deputy-principals

A careful examination of the data indicates that deputy-principals are expected to demonstrate various qualities. Table 5.3 presents a summary of the identified general qualities deputy-principals should display. Where applicable, an example from the data is provided in support thereof.

Table 5.3: Summary of qualities of deputy-principals

Qualities of deputy-principals	Example(s) from the findings
Be accountable	Take responsibility for their own portfolios (DP 1 – DP 10)
Able to coordinate	Liaison with universities and student teachers regarding the placement of students (DP 8)
Must collaborate	Collaborating with principal, SGB, educators (DP 1 – DP 10)
Must be committed	Committed to the teaching profession in general, committed to school (DP 1 – DP 10)
Must be compassionate	Managing the support services of the school (DP 2, DP 5, DP 6) Assist and support educators who might experience personal problems (DP 1, DP 4, DP 7)
Must be confident	Must be a public speaker (School V) and conduct meetings (DP 1 – DP 10)
Must be creative thinkers	Deputy-principals explore creative ways of school management (DP 1) and Schools W, Y, Z
Must be flexible	Must be able to accept an adjusted job description (DP 6)
Good communicator	Ability to communicate with various stakeholders in/and outside a school (DP 1 – DP 10)
Honesty	Manage school finances / budgets (DP 3, DP 5, DP 6, DP 8, DP 9, DP 10)
Leadership skills	Must be able to deputise, offer solution(s) to problem(s) (DP 1 – DP 10)
Loyalty	Maintain a good relationship with the principal and school in general (DP 1 – DP 10)
Show perseverance	Taking work home - especially due to heavy workload (DP 1, DP 9)
Self-disciplined	Hand in marks on time just like other educators (DP 1, DP 2, DP 5)
Role model	Set an example for other educators (e.g. by arriving at classes in time) (DP 2)
Must be supportive	Support the principal and other educators (DP 1 – DP 10).
Trainer of educators	Train HODs and educators (DP 1 – DP 10) and student teachers (DP 2; DP 8)
Be able to work in a team	Member of Staff Development Team (SDT) in terms of the IQMS (DP 1 – DP 10)

5.2.4.3 Duties of deputy-principals

The data indicate that primary school deputy-principals are generally expected to fulfil a wide array of duties. Essentially, the data confirm that principals formulate their deputy-principals' job descriptions according to the school's specific needs and unique circumstances, and that each school's distribution of duties appears to be different.

The data furthermore underline that the size of a school plays a fundamental part in the determination of the duties of deputy-principals. This resonates with the official policy prescription of the PAM (RSA, 2016a:A-30). As indicated earlier, it appears to be common practice in the participating schools that the management of the academic programme forms an integral component of a deputy-principal's duties. Considering that one deputy-principal from each of the five participating schools are primarily responsible for the school's academic programme, the findings suggests that the remaining duties are distributed to the other deputy-principal(s), or, in some cases, to the HODs and/or Post Level 1 educators. This agrees with the comprehensive analysis of distributed leadership practice conducted by Spillane, Halverson & Diamond (2001, 2004) who conclude that "the co-performance of leading and managing activities is not unusual in schools" (Harris, 2007:318). In addition, Bahadur (2012:15) recognises that distributed leadership in schools is primarily associated with leadership at all levels and does not only focus on top-to-bottom leadership practice. This is confirmed by School V, where the data indicates that they have a strong bottom up approach.

Some of the participating principals appeared sympathetic towards the deputy-principals because of an increase in their administrative workload. With consideration to the above, and with the intention to illustrate the broad assortment of duties performed by two deputy-principals from the same participating school, a summary was drafted (included as Table 5.3). It needs mentioning though, that Table 5.4 below does not intent to represent a complete job description for deputy-principals. It merely serves as an indication how the duties of two deputy-principals at one participating school are divided.

Table 5.4: Summary of duties performed by DP1 and DP 2 (School V)

DP 1	DP 2
Administrative duties	Administrative duties
Assist and support the educators	Assist, guide, support and monitor student teachers
Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher
Conduct parent information meetings	Coordinate and monitor teacher assistant programme
Conduct staff training	Organise overall mentorship programme
Deputise	Deputise
Facilitate assembly meetings	Facilitate assembly meetings
Manage academic programme (whole school)	Manage and assist administrative staff
Marketing and related duties, including responsible for weekly newsletters	Placement of student teachers
Meetings with HODs	Discipline
Member of IT Committee	Manage all sport and culture
Organise functions	Coordinate support services for learners
SMT duties	SMT duties
Organiser of Gr R open days	
Perform class visits	
Secretary of SGB	
Coordinate term programmes	

Table 5.4 above displays a clear distinction of duties, as well as the communal duties that DP 1 and DP 2 are expected to perform. The latter includes administrative duties, classroom teacher, deputising and performing duties related to the SMT. The data suggests that deputy-principals should not perform duties that ought to be executed by the principal, and *vice versa.* Accordingly, it is suggested that schools ought to have a definite demarcation of duties for principals and deputy-principals. Principal W clarified this aspect as follows:

> "If I [principal – own insertion] do all the work, the principal-in-training will not have a clue what goes on in the school."

The data suggest that the stipulations in the PAM (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31) regarding the core duties and responsibilities of a deputy-principal appears too vague. As some of the participants pointed out, it appears impossible for one individual to perform all the duties alone. In light thereof, it seemed helpful to summarise what each participant regard as the core duties of deputy-principals. Table 5.5 illustrates a summary of these findings provided by the participants.

Table 5.5: Views of the participants on the core duties of deputy-principals

Participants	Views on the core duties of deputy-principals
Principal V	Think creatively and strategically together with the principal.
Principal W	Be the principal's right hand.
Principal X	Managing co-curricular activities and finances. To assist the principal.
Principal Y	Deputy-principals must show strong leadership because they are next in line to run the school.
Principal Z	To share the leadership role with the principal, manage own portfolio independently.
DP 1	To be the "mini-principal".
DP 2	To be of benefit to the school - within the bigger structure of the school, including groups, parents, staff and educators.
DP 3	Primary duty is teaching, and the main function is to assist the principal.
DP 4	To assist the principal.
DP 5	To be the shadow of the principal, to be an extension of the principal.
DP 6	To support the principal. Must always be available to assist the principal. ("We must work together so that he can be calm").
DP 7	Be crutches for the principal. To support the principal.
DP 8	To be the "principal-in-waiting".
DP 9	Currently it is predominantly people management.
DP 10	To support the principal.

At first glance of Table 5.5 above, it is clear that two of the five participating principals (Principals W and X) (40%) consider "assisting and/or supporting the principal" as being the core duty of a deputy-principal. In contrast, the remaining three principals (Principals V, Y and Z) (60%) indicate management and/or leadership-related duties as the core function of deputy-principals (see Figure 5.1). The views of the participating deputy-principals regarding the core duties of deputy-principals are illustrated in Figure 5.2 below.

From the data in Table 5.5, it is evident that six of the ten deputy-principals (DP 3, DP 4, DP 5, DP 6, DP 7 and DP 10) (60%) responded that they think "assisting and/or supporting the principal" is their core function. Four of the ten deputy-principals (DP 1, DP 2, DP 8 and DP 9) (40%) consider their core function being that of "leadership and management related duties". This is illustrated in Figure 5.2.
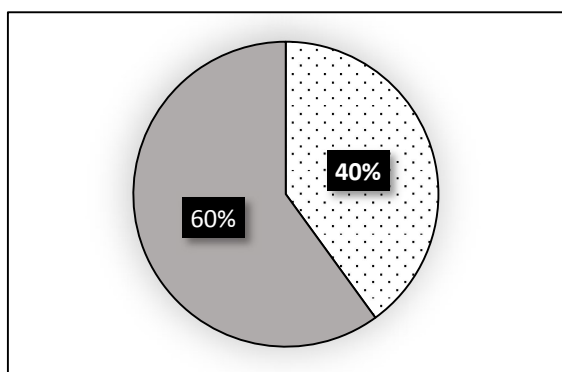
| | Leadership and management related duties | | | Assisting and supporting the principal related duties |

Figure 5.1: The core duties of deputy-principals according to the participating principals (in %)

Figure 5.2: The core duties of deputy-principals according to the participating deputy-principals (in %)

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 illustrate that there appears to be variances in the perceptions of the participants regarding what they consider the core duties of a primary school deputy-principal seem to be. One possibility might be that the participants do not distinguish between what the PAM (2016:A30–A31) consider as "the aims of the job" and the "core duties and responsibilities of the job." Significantly, the findings of this study suggest that the participating principals seem to consider their deputy-principals more involved in leadership roles than what the deputy-principals themselves perceive. Interestingly, it is noted that only DP 10's understanding of the core duties of deputy-principals appears to disagree with what his principal (Principal Z) revealed.

5.2.4.4 The deputy-principal as link

An analysis of the findings provided insight into the unique position of the deputy-principal in the hierarchy of a school. The data reveal that a deputy-principal is both teacher and leader, team player and team leader and moreover, deputy-principals are accountable to the principal but also deputise for the principal in his or her absence (RSA, 2016a:A30–A31). Principal Y acknowledged this unique position by stating that a deputy-principal is part of the top management ("*topbestuur*") on the one hand, but at the same time he/she also works on grass-root level with all the other educators, including the Post Level 1 educators. In this regard, DP 3 clarified as follows:

> "You aren't a [ordinary – own insertion] teacher, but you aren't the principal."

Significantly, only DP 7 seems to consider being a mediator as one of the most important duties of a deputy-principal. This includes being a mediator between the SGB and the SMT, between the SMT and the educators, between the teachers and the learners and finally, between the parents and the educators.

Due to the composition of the executive committees of the participating schools, the deputy-principals are found to represent the principal when dealing with the educators. Similarly, the deputy-principals represent the educators on the executive committee. This unique position is likely to place deputy-principals in the ideal position to share the same experiences as the rest of the educators (frustration, positivity, negativity, disciplinary problems, learners who have abundant energy or tiredness, marking books, lesson preparation and setting examination papers). At the same time, deputy-principals seem to experience a fair amount of the power a principal usually enjoys when they deputise for the principal. With this in mind, two participating deputy-principals admitted that they find the position as link somewhat difficult. One deputy-principal seemingly manages being a link by means of good planning. Another deputy-principal reported that she finds her role as link progressively more demanding. In spite of these challenges, being a link between the principal and the staff does not seem to cause serious problems for either the principals or the deputy-principals. To sum up, deputy-principals tend to experience being al link as a normal aspect of the deputy-principalship. In confirmation, DP 8 elaborated as follows:

"I think I'm so used to be the deputy-principal, it's just something you do."

5.2.4.5 The changed role of deputy-principals

The data suggests that the appointment of SGB teacher posts contributed to a change in the roles and duties of deputy-principals (Principal X). It is important to take cognisance of the fact that due to the larger staff complement, the executive committee (including deputy-principals) is consequently expected to manage more staff. In general, the data imply that executive committees lately rely more on the assistance and support of other educators. By way of illustration, DP 8 appears to be in a good position to explain how the role of the deputy-principal has changed over time at School Y. Previously DP 8 was the only deputy-principal appointed at School Y. School Y has since appointed two additional deputy-principals. DP 8 accordingly elaborated as follows:

"When it was just myself, I had more responsibilities and it's really more, much more difficult to deal with them solely and so, having the other two deputies come in really helped because then we had a distribution of the work. So, you're able to do what you need to do once the other deputies joined. Yes, so I think in terms of that [things changed – own insertion]. I don't think in terms of the core duties anything has changed. Oh, well, I wouldn't say nothing has changed, because the administration for the teachers has become much more and the frustration level have become more than it was four years ago."

Put simply, it appears that the role of deputy-principals has indeed changed over time. As an example, the HODs and administrative staff of School V assist the deputy-principals with administrative duties (Principal V). Regarding changes in the role of the deputy-principal, DP 4 commented as follows:

"What I find is not in the PAM, but it's in the meetings that we go to. Like they've [GDE – own insertion] given deputies more responsibilities, but it's not yet [recorded – own insertion] in the PAM. Like for instance, the deputy is supposed to be the SAT co-ordinator. When we had a visit from the Department, and they insisted the feedback, they said it is changing. They [GDE – own insertion] feel that the deputies – that's what they feel – that they are not doing enough. That's what the Department feels. They are [thus – own insertion] loading them …"

Interestingly, only Principal V indicated that a few finer nuances have been added to the role of the deputy-principal and that this has led to an increased number of educators who work under the deputy-principal. Also, unlike the traditional hierarchical practice of the past, the data suggest that Principal V encourages the deputy-principals to differ from him.

5.2.4.6 A definition for the deputy-principal

The responses regarding a definition for the deputy-principal varied, of which a few will be discussed. From what I understood, none of the participants seemed to have a definition for a deputy-principal, although a few of the participants indicated that there ought to be one. One principal, in particular, mentioned that he finds it difficult to define deputy-principalship. The data show that without a clear definition, there might be discrepancies between the role of a principal and a deputy-principal, which may

possibly result in conflict. As continuously pointed out, a school's unique circumstances are likely to have a determining influence on several aspects of school management, including a definition of a deputy-principal. In an attempt to define deputy-principalship, some of the participants indicated that they do not experience much difference between principalship and deputy-principalship. In an interesting statement made by DP 1, she pointed out that she regards deputy-principals as powerful people ("magtige mense") who dynamically manage various facets of a school. DP 1, for instance, emphasised that everything the principal knows and manages must also be known and managed by the deputy-principal. Apparently, she regards it fundamental that principals and their deputy-principals ought to form formidable teams. DP 5, on the other hand, perceives deputy-principals as individuals who must constantly think on their feet. Distinctively, Principal V defines the deputy-principal as the "substitute principal". Or, as it is evident in the data, Principal V indicated that the deputy-principal is the "standby" or the *in loco parentis* – like the teachers are for the parents. To emphasise, Principal V boldly declared as follows:

"It is a given: the deputy-principal is *in loco parentis* for the principal."

Principal Z and DP 10 proposed that in a wider South African education context, it could be beneficial to have a streamlined definition for a deputy-principal. However, they consider it beneficial for School Z not to have a restrictive definition, seeing that the participants of School Z prefer to construct their own job descriptions and determine their own definition. Again, this can possibly be ascribed to the fact that School Z is applying such a broad and unique management model.

It became apparent throughout the study that principals rely on their deputy-principals' support. In confirmation, Principal V highlighted that the deputy-principal must strengthen his hand *("Die adjunkhoof moet absoluut my hand sterk maak")*. At the same time, DP 5 tended to present his definition for a deputy-principal as follows:

"You are the principal's shadow. As the principal's shadow, you must know what goes for what. I must be able to take over his duties any time. I don't want to say you are a principal on your own, but you are an extension of him [the principal – own insertion]. If you work against each other, you throw yourself to the wolves."

An aspect of the deputy-principalship that was not previously highlighted in this study, is that a few deputy-principals (except DP 1) indicated their aspiration to be promoted to headship. Bearing this in mind, DP 3 commented on the deputy-principalship as follows:

> "You are a deputy to become the principal one day. So, you are the principal-in-training. So, you must sit with the principal, you must help the principal. You must manage some things so that you can do it one day. Because it doesn't help if you do nothing and the principal does it all and you suddenly become the principal and you cannot do it."

All things considered, Principal W suggested that the DBE must enforce some form of uniformity or definition for deputy-principals. He clarified as follows:

> "But I think from the Department of Education's point of view, they must have uniformity. You cannot tell each school to have their own system."

With reference to the existence of a universal definition for deputy-principals though, the findings reveal that a majority of participants do not regard it practical to have a universal definition of a deputy-principal.

5.3   CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter the findings were presented and discussed. This was done according to the central themes which emanated from the data. The roles of a deputy-principal are regarded as twofold. On the one hand they are considered educators, on the other hand they are managers/leaders. Despite functioning independently and being called "specialists in their field", the data indicate that they also appear to work in relationship with the principal and their fellow deputy-principal(s). In fact, there are practical examples in the data which indicate that in certain situations deputy-principals are expected to work under their fellow deputy-principal. The findings furthermore outline the different viewpoints regarding the separation and allocation of duties of deputy-principals. The next chapter focuses on the conclusions and recommendations of this study. It also includes suggestions for further research and a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to explore how distributed leadership is manifested in the role of primary school deputy-principals in five primary schools in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria, Gauteng. The study furthermore aimed to determine the role and duties of primary school deputy-principals and how the participating principals view these roles. In addition, the study endeavoured to clarify who ascertains what a primary school deputy-principal does and what criteria are used to determine it. Finally, this study intended to establish how deputy-principals experience their role as both leader and member of staff. Using the above as the focal point, this chapter draws conclusions on the role of a deputy-principal within the milieu of a primary school. Suggestions for future research studies are also presented.

6.2 ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

6.2.1 How is distributed leadership manifested in the role of the primary school deputy-principal?

Contrary to the findings of Bush and Glover (2014a:217) who found that there is "little evidence" of the practice of distributed leadership in South African schools, the data indicates the exhibition of a purposeful, redesigned leadership structure in the participating schools which suggests a change in leadership role(s) of those in senior leadership positions, as well as a general commitment among the participants to grow and develop school leaders. This study therefore highlights the use of distributed leadership practices by the participating principals and the creation of open communication channels for the effective functioning of schools.

Even though this study is not primarily directed at the role of principals, there is consensus among the participants that the role of the school principal has intensified and developed to such a degree that schools increasingly need to allocate more leadership responsibilities to their deputy-principals. A general inclusion of deputy-principals in the active participation of shared or distributed leadership and management responsibilities was observed, coupled with a recognition of the leadership contribution of the participating deputy-principals – to such an extent that the schools would find it difficult to function without their leadership contribution. The participating principals seemed proud to reveal what measures they have taken and

the time they have set aside (Wilhelm, 2013:66) to develop and empower their deputy-principals. Teamwork and collaborative partnerships among the principals and their multiple deputy-principals are illustrative of the positive influence of the participating principals in the way they determine the relational conditions in their schools. This includes having an impact on the roles performed by the respective schools' management teams (SMTs).

The study presented sufficient evidence to conclude that the more educators employed by a school, the more leadership roles and opportunities are likely to be created. This is not intended to displace the crucial role of the school principal – it rather suggests a change in the overall leadership approach of the individual schools where the principal takes the lead in creating opportunities to establish an environment conducive for the distribution of leadership (Harris & DeFlaminis, 2016:142). Although only one participating school created internal promotional positions, it is evident that attempts have been made in all the participating schools to provide recognition for teachers' contributions towards leadership (Muijs & Harris, 2007:131). It appears as if the participating principals place great value on the functional involvement and leadership participation of their multiple deputy-principals in the overall decision-making process, and that the deputy-principals are included in visionary thinking processes.

It can be accepted that a school's size and circumstances play a determining role in the distribution of leadership responsibilities and duties (RSA, 2016a:A-11). While examples of delegation are noticeable, it is evident that individual deputy-principals take responsibility for their portfolios. In view of the complexity of leading and managing a primary school successfully, it is found that all the participating schools focus on harnessing and incorporating the expertise and qualities of their deputy-principals. As such, all the participating schools adopted a distributed leadership approach which displays a move away from focusing only on the formal position/role of the principal towards planned and purposeful shared participation and development of deputy-principals. Evidence suggests that this is an ongoing process led by the principal whereby adaptions in roles and job descriptions are continuously made according to the school's changed circumstances – to the benefit of the school at a given time.

The establishment of an empowerment culture plays a prominent role in the participating schools. Apart from implementing strategies and opportunities to develop their deputy-principals, the participating principals generally displayed a dedicated commitment to training their deputy-principals, not only for their current roles, but for future principalship as well. This corresponds with the views of Coleman (2003:182) who regards appropriate professional training of vital importance in clarifying a deputy-principal's role. The participants shared their experiences of regular, planned and personal interaction which form the basis of the effective, purposeful leadership development of deputy-principals. However, it was observed that none of the deputy-principals were expected to work in isolation. Rather, it was evident that the participating deputy-principals worked interdependently across various teams and within extended groups and networks. Thus, collaborative practices seem to be strongly entrenched in the culture of the participating schools. Despite their varying job descriptions, the participating deputy-principals generally appeared comfortable to offer their expertise to the benefit of the school and seemed proud of the responsibilities entrusted to them.

6.2.2 The role and duties of primary school deputy-principals

This study confirms that deputy-principals hold a unique position. One ought to take note that deputy-principals in the participating schools play an influential role in influencing and forming effective educational and social practices in their respective school environments. In addition, and in contrast to the findings of earlier studies (Muijs & Harris, 2003:7), the participating deputy-principals receive continuous support from their principals, and they are empowered to fill various leadership roles.

A mixed reaction was received from the participants regarding whether the role of deputy-principals has changed over the years. An individual school's culture and circumstances, and the individual portfolios allocated to deputy-principals will influence the particular leadership role(s) they are expected to play. It was found that some of the deputy-principals execute similar leadership roles in different schools, yet all the participating deputy-principals have a unique job description. Their leadership roles are thus both formal and informal and may be adapted to improve the management and leadership processes at their respective schools.

Corresponding to the Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship (RSA, 2016b:8), deputy-principals form part of the top management when they manage the school and accept full responsibility thereof, as when they deputise in the absence of the principal. For this purpose, deputy-principals in the participating schools are viewed as imperative for the supportive assistance they provide to their principals and are regarded as educational leaders in their own right. Although most participants view the roles of a principal and deputy-principal as being similar, the data suggests that a clear distinction should be made between a principal's duties and that of the deputy-principal. In practice this implies that deputy-principals are generally perceived as having to be adaptable individuals who simultaneously lead and follow. Although this role can be somewhat difficult and demanding, it is considered a normal part of deputy-principalship.

The findings propose that the number of multiple deputy-principals appointed at a school will affect their role(s) and duties in several ways. It was noted that the more SGB appointed educators a school has the more staff must be managed by the management teams of the school. Bearing in mind that their core duties and responsibilities stipulated in the PAM (RSA, 2016a: A-30-A31) are regarded to be too comprehensive for one deputy-principal to perform alone, it is generally accepted that more educators (including Post Level 1 educators) should take on leadership roles.

Contradictory to the guidelines in the PAM (RSA, 2016a: A-9), which attest that primary school deputy-principals are expected to teach 60% of the scheduled teaching time, and in correspondence with Bush (2011:258) who found that school leaders "gradually reduce the classroom work, for which they have been trained", it became evident that, due to their extensive workload and the leadership role they fill, deputy-principals cannot be expected to spend more than 50% of a school day teaching. Based on the overall findings, it needs to be acknowledged that the participating deputy-principals were found to be competent and skilled in handling a variety of roles and duties in conjunction with the principal. In fact, when the division of roles and duties between/among the multiple deputy-principals are determined, careful consideration is taken to utilise their competencies, experience, talents, skills and abilities to the maximum benefit of the school.

6.2.3 How do principals view the role of the primary school deputy-principal?

The study highlights a growing recognition of the important leadership role deputy-principals play. Without exception, the participating principals demonstrated their commitment to entrust their deputy-principals with the overall management and leadership of the school in varying degrees. Relying on their deputy-principals' support and assistance to manage and lead the school effectively, great emphasis is placed on deputy-principals being able to function independently, to demonstrate strong leadership skills and take full responsibility for their duties. As a rule, it was found that principals play an essential role in preparing deputy-principals for their wide-ranging functions, which includes deputising.

Considering the unique circumstances of the participating schools, all the participating principals exhibited dedication to develop, assist and empower their deputy-principals. Above all, the principals count on a good, stable relationship with their deputy-principals. For schools to function optimally deputy-principals are expected to be ambassadors of their school and show exemplary and professional conduct at all times. Some of the participating principals insist that their deputy-principals follow an invitational leadership style, are good public speakers and must have progressed through all the official prescribed promotional ranks for educators. It was also emphasised that, as prospective principals, deputy-principals should be progressive and strategic thinkers. Hence, it is recommended that deputy-principals follow a strategic planning course and that they ought to involve both the lateral and vertical dimension of leadership practice. As a rule, all the participating principals expressed their appreciation of the achievements, successes and hard work of their deputy-principals.

6.2.4 Determining the job description of primary school deputy-principals and the criteria that are used to determine it

In addressing the quest for a common, universal definition of a deputy-principal, no agreement was evident. Recognising that the deputy-principalship is a big responsibility, one participant proposed that a deputy-principal should be defined as "half leader in his own right and the other half is the supporter of the principal". It appears that deputy-principalship is vaguely defined because the principal's job description (in the PAM) is vaguely defined (RSA, 2016a: A-27-A-29). Although the

official policy prescriptions contained in the PAM (RSA, 2016a: A-30-A31) include a detailed description of the core duties and responsibilities for deputy-principals, it was emphasised that this description is too broadly defined, and that the words are not descriptive enough (RSA, 2016a: A-30-A31). The participants generally reported that, due to each school's unique circumstances, the implementation of a common definition is discouraged. One principal in particular defended this argument by anticipating that, although it could be beneficial in a wider South African context to have a streamlined definition of the deputy-principalship, he preferred the fact that there is no restrictive definition, seeing that his school prefers to construct its own management model based on its unique circumstances. Since principals cannot be expected to lead all aspects of a school successfully, awareness is being generated in the participating schools that deputy-principals are "principals-in-training" and that this is likely to influence what they do. Taking each school's distinctive circumstances and needs into account, it is found that the participating principals take the lead in creating an extensive organogram that ensures involvement at all levels, including how the formal leadership role(s) are divided and distributed between/among the deputy-principals. Considering to the above, the findings point to principals playing an important role in simultaneously supporting and assisting their deputy-principals.

In agreement with the PAM (RSA, 2016a:A-10) which states that "[m]anagement in education should be able to draw on the professional competencies of educators …", this study confirms that a deputy-principal's knowledge, talents, expertise, proficiencies and qualities influence the allocation of their duties. The findings substantiate the argument of Leithwood et al. (2007:62) that if and when regarded necessary, principals should reconsider and adjust the division of their deputy-principals' duties and responsibilities to serve the best interest of the school.

In view of what has been mentioned thus far, the role that the SGB plays in appointing additional educators (including deputy-principals) in all the participating schools needs to be stressed as it directly and indirectly influences what deputy-principals do. The findings presented evidence to believe that the more deputy-principals a school employs, the more duties can be divided, and the more leadership opportunities are created. Moreover, the findings suggest that the extensive workload that deputy-

principals experience, and the variety of duties that must be performed, call for the sharing of the professional management/leadership roles in the schools.

6.2.5 How do primary school deputy-principals experience their role?

Deputy-principals generally perceive their role as dynamic and continuously evolving. The specific role(s) that the respective deputy-principals fill is unique and aimed to strengthen their respective school's efficiency. Accordingly, when deputising they experience the same power that principals usually enjoy, yet they remain classroom teachers and are subject to the same circumstances (positive and negative) that any other classroom teacher usually experiences. Considering their crucial role in the hierarchy of a school and taking their role description into consideration, the study provides sufficient evidence to suggest that deputy-principals generally perform a broad variety of duties and responsibilities. This varies from managing the academic programme, conducting staff training and development, arranging staff development talks and/or managing induction programmes and the placement of student teachers. Although not likely to be found in empirical studies, it must be noted that the deputy-principals in this study experience that the DBE lately expects them to perform more administrative duties, although there seems to be no increase in their responsibilities. Since deputy-principals function in a variety of interlinked teams such as the SMT, school-based support team (SBST) and school assessment team (SAT), it is understandable why one of the participants described deputy-principals as powerful people who manage various elements of a school. Despite their diverse duties, the multiple deputy-principals concurred that their workload is distributed more or less equally and that they are satisfied with the way their duties are divided.

The majority of the deputy-principals aspire to become principals and accordingly view their position as valuable preparation for principalship. An important aspect that came to the fore is that deputy-principals greatly value the continuous support, and especially the time the principals invest in their professional development. Working under the supervision of their principals, the latter plays a prominent role in orchestrating and implementing a type of shared leadership. Significantly, the majority of the participating deputy-principals consider their role(s) to a lesser extend aimed at leading than what their principals in general perceive. In fact, the deputy-principals mostly understand their core duties being primarily focused on supporting and/or

assisting the principal, while conversely, the majority of the principals consider the core duties of deputy-principals being that of greater involvement in the overall management and leadership of their schools. This can possibly indicate that the participants have not clarified their individual expectations concerning the management and leadership role(s) of deputy-principals. In this study, where an overall cooperative relationship between the principals and deputy-principals is prominently evident, this did not play a part. In different circumstances, however, it could possibly result in conflict.

Despite a distinct division of their portfolios, the study found that overlapping of duties occurs. The deputy-principals all claim to handle this professionally and appear to work in harmony. It seems that the deputy-principals respect the management areas and professional discretion of their fellow deputy-principals. This could possibly be why the principals in this study believe that their deputy-principals do not experience grey areas between their different job descriptions.

There appears to be some discrepancy about whether or not the role of deputy-principals has changed over the years. Some participants reminded us that the role of the deputy-principal has always been subordinate to that of the principal. The analysis shows that some participants do not experience much of a gap between the principalship and deputy-principalship, the only difference being that deputy-principals also function on grass-root level with all the other educators, including Post Level 1 educators.

Deputy-principals generally experience teamwork as the most important component of their professional relationships. In fact, it is suggested that a school's success is linked to the collaboration between the SMT (including the deputy-principals) and the educators – their willingness to work together, to learn from each other and build one another up. To summarise, it is clear that regular interaction takes place between/among the deputy-principals, their principals and their situation.

6.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

This case study at only five purposively selected schools in one geographical area in Pretoria places a limitation on the generalisation of the findings. In discussing recommendations for future leadership development and based on the literature

review, it is evident that a limited number of researchers have addressed the distributed leadership practice(s) of South African primary schools, and even fewer on the role(s) of deputy-principals.

6.3.1 Recommendation with respect to the role of a primary school deputy-principal

In an attempt to limit any possible intrusion of the deputy-principals' domain, it is proposed that principals that have the luxury of having multiple deputy-principals should clarify the existence of grey or overlapping areas in the work distribution of their deputy-principals. The study revealed that multiple deputy-principals generally manage overlapping or grey areas professionally and without any conflict. This could possibly be a reason why the majority of the principals appeared convinced that no overlapping or grey areas exist. However, this could potentially cause problems in schools which do not have the same professional approach to shared or distributed leadership practices. Hence, there is a need to reinforce the implementation of a professional code of conduct (Triegaardt, 2013:190) in schools.

6.3.2 Recommendation with respect to distributed leadership

In support of the prescriptions of the Policy on the Standard for Principalship (RSA, 2016b:8), which states that "The DBE intends to build upon the quality of leadership and successful outcomes observed at well-functioning schools within the context of their communities, and to address poor leadership and inadequate outcomes of schooling at other schools", it is suggested that the implementation of a distributed approach to leadership should be encouraged and promoted by the DBE. In aid of establishing stability in their position, a good induction programme for deputy-principals on the features and practice of distributed leadership (Spillane & Orlina, 2005:164-168) and the principal's involvement therein is recommended.

In addition to the recommendations of Bush and Glover (2014a:211), Singh (2014:144-151) and Naicker and Mestry (2011:105), this study proposes that principals and the SMT receive specialist leadership training in the practical execution of a distributed leadership approach. The DBE, external organisations, teacher unions and even universities could be involved in such training. The participating principals in this study could be utilised to train other principals in the practical and successful execution of a distributed leadership approach. It is finally recommended that the district office of the

DBE should acknowledge those principals who exercise a distributed leadership approach for their valuable role towards transforming and leading successful schools, and especially for developing and empowering deputy-principals, some of whom are preparing for principalship.

6.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The participating schools are fee-paying urban schools in terms of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF) (RSA, 2013: Online) and are all situated in Pretoria. Non-fee-paying schools were excluded. As this study was conducted in a more affluent area of Pretoria, a similar study in other geographical areas in South Africa would not necessarily produce the same findings. A small sample was studied and only schools with multiple deputy-principals were sampled, which limits generalisation.

The study only focused on primary schools and only included the views of the principals and their deputy-principals. In addition, only larger primary schools and only schools that seems to be successful in terms of their management and leadership were included. Seeing that this study was only conducted at schools with multiple deputy-principals, some of the findings would not be applicable to schools with only one deputy-principal or even no deputy-principal. Only interviews were used as the data collection tool which limits being unbiased and objective (Struwig & Stead, 2001:226).

6.5   SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study provided comprehensive, valued data regarding how distributed leadership is manifested in the role of the primary school deputy-principal. The participants offered detailed responses which suggest sound, cooperative relationships between the multiple deputy-principals and also in relation to their principals. Against this background, this study has identified a need for further research, especially in an attempt to be able to generalise the findings. It appears from the interviews that all five of the participating schools are successful in terms of their school management and leadership. Relying only on the interviews as a data collecting tool and taking the small number of participants into consideration, an in-depth qualitative study and a large-scale quantitative study is suggested.

Considering the school settings and the profile of the participants, this study provided insight into schools located in a more affluent area in Pretoria. A comparative investigation in a less affluent area in Pretoria, as well as in suburban and rural schools could provide insightful contributions. A similar study could also be conducted at smaller schools. A comparative study between fee-paying schools and non-fee-paying schools is also suggested.

An in-depth study involving single deputy-principals in primary schools also merits further investigation. Such a study could possibly include the views of the HODs regarding the roles and responsibilities of deputy-principals. Research on the role of the DBE in training and empowering deputy-principals in terms of distributed leadership is also needed.

It is evident in the findings that all the participating deputy-principals receive ample opportunity to deputise and they are all considered to be leaders in their own right. Further research regarding the preparation process for deputy-principals who aspire to become principals could be particularly useful. In this regard, it is desirable that a comparison is made between primary schools who practice distributed leadership and schools who do not.

The number of years' experience of the participating principals varies from 11 years to 22 years. It would be helpful to investigate whether factors such as a principal's qualifications, experience and emotional intelligence would have an influence on whether distributed leadership is applied successfully, or not.

Performance Standard 9 of the IQMS refers to the professional development of educators (ELRC, 2003:27-28). It would be helpful to investigate what influence a distributed leadership approach would have on the IQMS. Schools in this study appoint additional deputy-principals. It is suggested that the role that the SGB plays in supporting a distributed leadership approach be investigated.

Finally, it can be concluded that the participating principals all, albeit unknowingly, practice a distributed leadership approach. More research is needed to examine how leadership roles are distributed and what professional development opportunities are available for SMTs. Taking into considering the Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship, which acknowledges the importance of shared leadership (RSA,

2016b:8), a need still exists to examine whether distributed leadership is included in the training and development of SMTs. By applying a distributed leadership approach, a new leadership dimension is added when leadership is distributed laterally and vertically. Formal training in distributed leadership would affect the management dimension of the SMTs (Naicker & Mestry, 2011:105) and result in the creation of more leadership opportunities in South African primary schools. Despite not being included in the Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship as a "main kind of leadership" that principals should practice at their schools (RSA, 2016b:13), it is suggested that the emergence of distributed or shared leadership in South African schools should be investigated. In addition, it is suggested that the role the DBE plays in training and equipping principals to apply a distributed or shared leadership approach at their respective schools should be examined.

6.6   CLOSING REMARKS

None of the participants seemed familiar with the term "distributed leadership" before this study was conducted. In line with international trends (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010:204), this study provided numerous examples of how the participating schools moved away from a traditional bureaucratic leadership practice to a more shared, collaborative approach (Harris, 2012:8). Leadership in the participating schools is not distributed randomly, but there is a general acceptance that the principal, who is involved in all aspects of the school's leadership, remains the central source of determining the allocation of leadership responsibilities. This is usually based on the principal's understanding of the school's needs and the availability of expertise within the school. This study accordingly cast new light on how a 'leader-plus'- approach (Spillane & Orlina, 2005:162-164) addresses the everyday practical leadership and/or management roles of a variety of individuals, including deputy-principals. Elaborating on this view, it was noted that the multiple deputy-principals collaborated effectively and supported their principals and fellow deputy-principals in various circumstances.

A point that could easily be overlooked is that a deputy-principal's job is not fixed in stone and can be re-designed whenever it is found necessary to serve the best interest of the school. The successful application thereof depends on the relationships, trust and unique culture of the school and whether a school is ready for the integration of this changed leadership practice (Harris, 2008:184). As has been noted, this study

does not merely concentrate on a top-to-bottom leadership practice but acknowledges the influence of a principal's personal leadership style in setting up the conditions for the distribution of leadership in vertical and lateral levels (Harris, 2010:59). In addressing the question of how distributed leadership is manifested in the role of a primary school deputy-principal, this study finds that without the overall involvement, support and commitment of their principals, deputy-principals are deprived of opportunities to grow and to be developed. In this study though, none of the participating principals appeared reluctant to develop and empower their deputy-principals. In fact, the participating principals demonstrated a remarkable willingness to relinquish power in more than one way. At the outset, the pivotal role that principals play in supporting and training their deputy-principals demonstrated their personal commitment to engage their deputy-principals in school leadership. The exceptional dedication of these principals can be seen as one of the outstanding findings of this study.

Distributed leadership is thus not primarily a good or bad leadership approach. On its own, distributed leadership is not sufficient. It is how the leadership is distributed that counts (Harris, 2012:9-10). In growing support of the development of the expansion of leadership capacity (Du Plessis & Heystek, 2019,5; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010:205; Madden, 2008:45), this study concludes that distributed leadership advances a break with leadership stagnation and confirms a change towards a deliberate decision to purposefully restructure and expand a school's management model with the idea of reinforcing a positive impact on the overall leadership synergy.

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ADDENDUM A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL – PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY-PRINCIPALS

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study forms part of a research project that will focus on investigating the role and responsibilities of the primary school deputy-principal within a distributed leadership perspective. The aim of this interview is to obtain your opinion and ideas regarding how distributed leadership is manifested in the role of the primary school deputy-principal.

SOURCES OF DATA TO BE COLLECTED

Data is collected by conducting semi-structured interviews with five (5) primary schools principals and ten (10) deputy principals in the Tshwane South District of the Gauteng Department of Education.

PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Please be assured that your identity, the identity of your school and all participants from your school as well as the responses and/or findings from the interviews will be treated with the highest confidentiality throughout the study. Anonymity will further be ensured by protecting participants from not being identifiable in print. Imaginary locations and coded names will be used. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are permitted to withdraw from the study at any time, should you wish to do so. Extreme caution will be taken to ensure that you will not be harmed in any way by your participation in this study. You will be given the option to choose a suitable venue and time for conducting the interviews. You will be asked to verify and authenticate the transcript of the interviews.

DURATION OF INTERVIEW

The semi-structured interview should not exceed 45 minutes. You will be given the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any uncertainties. The interview will be recorded and transcribed. A follow-up meeting will be held to verify and authenticate the transcript.

During the interviews, I will make use of a reflective journal for recording any relevant information.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

SECTION A: SCHOOL INFORMATION

1.	Staff provisioning	GDE	SGB
	Principal		
	Deputy-principal		
	Heads of Department (HOD)		
	Master/Senior educators		
	Post level 1 educators		

2.	Number of learners	

3.	GDE Quintile allocation	

4.	Language of instruction	Mark with X
	Afrikaans	
	English	
	Double medium Afrikaans & English	
	Other (specify)	

SECTION B: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION – PRINCIPAL AND DEPUTY-PRINCIPAL

1.	Post level 1		Years' experience	
	Post level 2		Years' experience	
	Post level 3		Years' experience	
	Post level 4		Years' experience	
	Post level 5		Years' experience	

2.

Professional qualification	Institution	Year obtained

3.

Academic qualification	Institution	Year obtained

ADDENDUM B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW – PRINCIPAL

How are the leadership functions of the deputy principal(s) determined at your school?

Who determines these leadership functions as performed by the deputy-principal(s) at your school?

What assistance and professional support do you give to the deputy-principals regarding the performance of their duties?

How are "grey areas" (if any) in the work distribution of the different deputy-principals handled?

What percentage time do you on average spend interacting professionally with the deputy-principals on a daily basis?

Deputy-principal A:

0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%

Deputy-principal B:

0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%

Give your view on the following statement by Nieuwenhuizen (2011:13-14): "Deputy-principals are mostly engaged with clerical duties rather than performing duties associated with a functioning administrative team."

Explain your viewpoint on the following statement: "The deputy-principal's role should be seen as a leadership role in its own right"?

The deputy-principals are expected to perform duties that require leadership. Provide examples and explain how both deputy-principals perform leadership in respect of the following:

Administrative duties;

Curriculum;

Extra- & co-curricular;

Staff development / mentorship;

The governance of the school (School Governing Body);

The School Management Team (SMT)?

The Personnel Administrative Measure (PAM, 2016) describes the core duties of the deputy-principal as "individual and varied, depending on the approaches and needs of the particular school". What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a primary school deputy-principal and how does it correspond with their specific job descriptions at your school?

No universal definition or job description is available for the deputy-principalship. In your view what effect does this have on the functioning of South African schools?

In your experience as principal, how has the role of the primary school deputy-principal changed over the years?

Literature claims that the deputy-principal holds a unique position, being both assistant to the principal and also a member of the teaching staff. Can you describe your experience in managing this position of "middleman"?

ADDENDUM C: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW – DEPUTY-PRINCIPAL

How are the leadership functions of the deputy principal(s) determined at your school?

Who determines these leadership functions as performed by the deputy-principal(s) at your school?

What assistance and professional support do you receive regarding the performance of your duties as deputy-principal?

How are "grey areas" (if any) in the work distribution of the different deputy-principals handled?

What percentage time do you on average spend interacting professionally with the principal on a daily basis?

0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%

Give your view on the following statement by Nieuwenhuizen (2011:13-14): "Deputy-principals are mostly engaged with clerical duties rather than performing duties associated with a functioning administrative team."

Explain your viewpoint on the following statement: "The deputy-principal's role should be seen as a leadership role in its own right"?

As deputy-principal you are expected to perform duties that require leadership. Provide examples and explain how you perform leadership in respect of the following:

Administrative duties;

Curriculum;

Extra- & co-curricular;

Staff development / mentorship;

The governance of the school (School Governing Body);

The School Management Team (SMT).

The Personnel Administrative Measure (PAM, 2016) describes the core duties of the deputy-principal as "individual and varied, depending on the approaches and needs of the particular school". What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a

primary school deputy-principal and how does it correspond with your specific job description at your school?

No universal definition or job description is available for the deputy-principalship. In your view what effect does this have on the functioning of South African schools?

In your experience as deputy-principal, how (if at all), has the role of the primary school deputy-principal changed over the years?

Literature claims that the deputy-principal holds a unique position, being both assistant to the principal and also a member of the teaching staff. Can you describe your experience in managing this position of "middleman"?

What do you regard as the most challenging aspects of your position as deputy-principal?