SCHOOL-BASED UNIONISM IN A GAUTENG SCHOOL DISTRICT

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<u>DEDICATION</u>

This research is dedicated to my loving wife, Rebotile and my lovely five-year-old daughter, Olorato Jamesree Sarah Masenya, for the sacrifices they made to make sure that I completed this study.

And

My late mother; who's pride and her interest in her children's education engendered in me the will and courage to complete this course. This achievement is dedicated to her in memory of her wishing me well when I started with this study.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand school-based teacher unionism by conducting an empirical analysis of the views and experiences of stakeholder groups in a Gauteng district.

Participants saw the role of teacher unions at school level as being the protection of their members. Principals and SGB members and some SMT members thought school based unions protected teachers from being disciplined. Defending of teachers or members was seen as one of the most important roles of teacher unions. This was seen as important because it will ensure that the rights of teachers are not trampled upon especially by school principals. While school principals recognised the rights of union members to join union and the right of unions to organise in the schools they thought that they were unduly and wrongly defending bad teachers. This article also argues that principals were never adequately trained on how to manage union existence at schools.

Most participants thought that the role, responsibility and right of teacher unions at school level could not be overlooked. However they still felt that this was emphasised over the rights of other stakeholder groups in the schools especially the learners.

Principal and teacher participants, most notably SADTU members, expressed dissatisfaction with their union and did not seem to think that it plays a constructive role in schools. It is argued in this article that teachers' unions play a role in schools and that this role is either positive or negative. This article is based on my research of school based teacher unionism in one Gauteng district.

Keywords: protectionist-defensive unionism, teacher unionism, professional unionism, school governing body, school management team, site committees, stakeholder group experiences, stakeholder group views, rights, roles and responsibilities.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACFTU : All China Federation of Teachers Union

ANA : Annual National Assessment

ANC : African National Congress

AFT : American Federation of Teachers

CCP : Chinese Communist Party

COSAS : Congress of South African Students

COSATU : Congress of South African Trade Unions

DA : Democratic Alliance

DAS : Developmental Appraisal System

DoBE : Department of Basic Education

EEA : Educators Employment Act

EFA : Education for All

EI : Education International

ELRC : Education Labour Relations Council

GDE : Gauteng Department of Education

ILO : International Labour Organisation

KTU : Korean Teachers Union

LRA : Labour Relations Act

MEC : Member of Executive Council (a provincial department minister in South Africa)

NEA : National Education Association (American Teachers Union)

NAPTOSA : National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa

NATU   **:** National Teachers Union

NUE   : National Union of Educators

NYDA   : National Youth Development Agency

PEU   **:** Professional Educators Union

PSCBC   : Public Service Central Bargaining Chamber

PTSA   **:** Parent-Teacher-Student Association

RCL   : Learner Representative Council

SACE   : South African Council of Educators

SACP   : South African Communist Party

SADTU   : South African Democratic Teachers union

SAOU   : Suid Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie

SASA   : South African Schools Act

SGB   : School governing body

SMT   : School management team

TTU   : Tanzanian Teachers Union

QTLC   : Quality Teaching and Learning Campaign

ITU   : Independent Teachers' Unions

US   **:** United States of America

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Research Purpose and Parameters

1.1. Introduction

Teachers are highly unionised workers and their trade unions exert an important influence on the shaping and implementation of educational policy (Stevenson, 2003: 431). Stevenson (2003: 432) went further and posited that there is little empirical work that focuses on the role of school-based union representatives. This holds true in the South African context as well. With the advent of a new democratic dispensation in 1994 the South African educational landscape changed dramatically. Accordingly, new legislation was enacted to replace the apartheid laws that were meant to advance whites and oppress and suppress the black majority. The promulgation of these laws brought about changes that included the recognition of unions in the education sector. For the first time, teacher unions were allowed to organise in schools.

Consequently, a need for a public service with harmonious employee–employer relations became imperative and indispensable for smooth transformation in the country and the education sector in particular. To ensure this 'smooth transformation' of the education system several laws as outlined herein under, were enacted. Govender (2004: 272) suggests that the shape of teacher unions in the 1990s was influenced by the new education and labour legislation.

In 1993, the Education Labour Relations Act was introduced and this ensured that teachers like in any other trade could organise under the banner of trade unions in schools. This act has since been repealed and replaced by the Labour Relations Act no. 66 of 1995, the

purpose of which was to advance social justice and the democratization of the workplace as well as the regulation of organizational rights of trade unions in South Africa.

Soon thereafter the South African Schools Act (SASA) no. 84 of 1996 was promulgated to provide for, among other things, "a uniform system" for organisation, "Governance and funding of schools". Later, the South African Council for Educators Act no. 31 of 2000 was promulgated to provide for, firstly the registration of educators, secondly, the promotion of the professional development of educators and, thirdly, the maintenance and protection of ethical and professional standards for educators.

This marked the first time in South African history that the entire education system was regulated (Jansen, 2004: 2). The Employment of Educators Act (EEA) no. 76 of 1998 provides for measures to be taken in respect of incapacity and misconduct, as well as the legal foundation for the South African Council for Educators (SACE), which was constituted to oversee all professional matters concerning teachers.

After the 1994 elections, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 became the overarching law which necessitated all the changes in the country, including in education. Section 23(2), (a) to (c) of the Constitution gave effect to the formation and membership of trade unions, as well as participation in union activities, including strike action in the workplace. Consequently, the promulgation of all these pieces of legislation brought about the inevitable right of teachers to form and join trade unions.

Ratteree (2004: 6) argues that "meaningful dialogue involving teachers' representatives, unions and other associations begins with the legal recognition of the right to form" organisations independent of the "state or private employer control in order to promote and defend the rights and interests of teachers." This is in agreement with the approach

followed by the South African government post 1994 when, in the 1996 Constitution, it recognised the right of all employees to organise and belong to a union.

Ratteree (2004: 19) posits that the public service bargaining council (PSBC) was established as a means to regularise public service labour relations; its main purpose being the enhancement of sound relationships and labour peace between the department as the employer and teachers, being the state and employees respectively, and to provide a platform for dialogue and collective bargaining on issues of common interest. This is not the case at school level, as unions do very little or no bargaining with principals.

After the introduction of the new education legislation following the democratisation of South Africa, the dynamics in schools changed. It therefore followed that what managers used to do was affected by the new dispensation; for example, most school principals in the former fragmented education departments before 1994 were used to issuing instructions without consulting anyone in the schools. Principals themselves during the previous dispensation were used to receiving instructions from departmental officials (Steyn, 2002: 253). Currently, however, they (principals) have to consult teachers and other stakeholders in decision making (Chisholm, 1999).

This is what Steyn (2002: 254) calls school based-management or self-management whereby decision making process is geared towards the school managers and principal are therefore called upon to work with various stakeholders at school level to ensure participative decision making and democratic management. It is this change in operation at school level that made unions, a very important stakeholder group at that level. Therefore, since the role they play at this level has always been vague, an exploration of other school based stakeholder groups has been conducted.

This therefore gave rise to teachers challenging or resisting principals' decisions through their school-based teacher union leadership (site stewards or committees), mostly because they were not engaged, consulted or even informed when such decisions were taken, which would have created "the opportunities for participation of educators in decision making" at this level of the education system (Mahlangu and Pitsoe, 2011: 365). This young and militant teaching force, a generation that was born out of the struggle against apartheid, poses different challenges to principals, as they do to their school-based union leaders.

The impact that teacher unions will have on the provision of quality public education in our schools will principally depend on the union strength at that level. Schools reserved for black learners during the apartheid years are dominated mainly by SADTU and, to a lesser extent, NAPTOSA, with the smaller unions sharing the remainder of the cake. The table below demonstrates this fact.

A union like the Suid Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) had its membership reserved exclusively for whites with its members found mostly in former model C schools in upmarket suburbs and towns across the country. The focus of this study was on the township schools; hence very little reference is made to SAOU. Basically there are four major teachers union in South Africa: SADTU, NAPTOSA, SAOU and NATU (Letseka M et al, 2012: 1197).

Bascia (1997: 438) noted that teacher unions function at national, state (province) district and school level. The situation is much the same in South Africa. It is at the latter level where this study focussed.

Table: 1.1 Teacher unions in South Africa

UNION	YEAR ESTABLISHED	AFFILIATE	MEMBERSHIP
SADTU	1990	COSATU	256 000
NAPTOSA	2006	Independent Teacher Unions (ITU)	55 000
PEU	1906	ITU	Share the remaining 80 000
NUE	No record	ITU	
NATU	No record	ITU	
SAOU	No record	ITU	

Table 1.1 shows the different teacher unions in South Africa and the trade union federations they are affiliated to, as well as their year of establishment and membership strength by the time the study was conducted. It also shows that the smaller unions share 80 000 of the remaining teachers. According to Letseka et al (2012: 1199) SADTU's membership was at 140 000 plus but put at 256 000 on the COSATU website in 2012, what ever number is considered, it is more than four times that of NAPTOSA, and three times that of the Professional Educators Union (PEU), the National Educators' Union (NEU), the National Teachers Union (NATU) and the Suid Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) collectively. This shows the strength of SADTU in terms of membership and why SADTU is such a critical role player in the South African education landscape and in our schools in particular.

The table bears testimony to the assertion made by some researchers such as Letseka et al (2012:1198) that the teaching profession in South Africa is highly unionised.

1.2. Historical overview

Internationally, research on teacher unions and their activities traces its roots to the mid-19th century with the formation of the National Education Association, also known as the NEA, in North America in 1857 (Carini, 2002: 10.1). Stern (1997:1) posits that there is agreement in literature that trade unionism in public education is a recent development like other authors suggested elsewhere in this study.

Heystek and Lethoko (2001: 222) show that the earliest form of teacher unionism in South Africa was established along racial, language, cultural, geographical, political and ideological lines. Most teacher unions in South Africa and internationally did not begin as unions as we know them today but as professional associations (Heystek and Lethoko; Murillo, Tommasi, Ronconi and Sanguitti, 2002: 19) and were divided along racial, language and provincial lines and unionist functions (Heystek and Lethoko, 2001:223). The first union could be described as more child-centred with a more professional approach than the worker-oriented philosophy of today's unions (Myburgh, 1999:25).

According to Chisholm (1999), white teachers' unions were privileged to be recognised by the state during the pre-democracy epoch. They were allowed to contribute to policy development while black teachers' unions were purposefully excluded from policy development processes (Govender, 2004; Chisholm, 1999). Therefore, the major reason for the establishment of unions for black teachers was to fight for their rights and pursue their political interests (Heystek and Lethoko, 2001, 223). Hence, the majority of trade unions in South Africa arose from civil dissatisfaction with white minority rule and opposition to the

apartheid regime in particular (Buhlungu, 2003: 185). I deduce this may be the time during which teachers lost their moral compass and professional ethics. The state of civil disobedience was forced upon them by the apartheid regime and encouraged by those who let the mass liberation movement such as the Africa National Congress (ANC), Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), and Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) – my observation. No one sought to correct this after the advent of democracy but still expected this cohort to be docile and professional.

Chisholm (1999, 114) states that while the white, Indian, coloured and African teacher organisations of the 1960s espoused the traditional 'professional' approach, in which they relied on consultation and persuasion in their dealings with the education authorities, according to Hyslop (1990, cited in Govender, 2005), during the height of political struggle and its countering by the repressive apartheid government in the 1980s, some anti-apartheid and progressive teacher unions emerged and became allies to mass-based anti-apartheid political forces, in particular the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the African National Congress. It is at this time in the history of South African teacher unions that the different characteristics of teacher unions as they relate to ideology, approach and view of professionalism were developed (Govender, 2005, Chisholm, 1999: 114).

The former white unions and other racial groups that had the apartheid system's ear continued to shun militancy and saw it as anti-professionalism, while the majority of the African teacher unions adopted militancy as an overarching strategy to dismantle apartheid and bring about change in the education system.   The highly politicised atmosphere within which teacher unions operate has led to a situation where most in society believes that unions are only concentrating on politicking and furthering the ambitions of their leaders,

rather than improving the standards of education in our schools. Govender (2004, 269) suggests that there is always a political edge to the work of teacher unions.

The main objective of the education system in our country is a focus on the improvement of education standard in general and improvement in learner achievement in particular. This is bolstered by the fact that in this country there are still schools that perform dismally in standardised examinations.

The Annual National Assessment (ANA) has proven that this is not the case in grade twelve only. These challenges are observed as taking place in the rural and township schools mostly. On the other hand the main objective for the establishment of teacher unions (especially black unions) according to Heystek and Lethoko (2001: 223) was to fight for the rights of teachers and pursue political interest of black teachers. This means that black teachers have to be accorded the same rights as their white counterparts. This does not mean that aims for the existence of the education system and the existence of teacher unions are incompatible. It therefore backs the question, how committed are the unions to the objective of the education department in ensuring quality teaching and learning.

It is now important to look at the main South African teacher unions. According to Clarke (2007: 44), there are two major teacher unions represented in the Education Labour Relations Council provincial chambers: the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) and the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), although some smaller unions are also represented. SADTU is in alliance – like many other left leaning unions around the world which prop up leftist political parties – with the ruling ANC (Letseka et al, 2012: 1197).

The following table outlines the values of teacher unions and what their respective principles are regarding learning, teaching and management in schools. This table should help us understand how the different unions in this country view their role in the key aspects that comprise the purpose of existence of our schooling system; that is, teaching and learning. The table provides an insight into how various teacher unions pose as professional organisations and how they view their role as far as teacher development is concerned.

Table 1.2 South African teachers' unions: values/principles and their stance on learning, teaching and management

UNIONS	VALUES/PRINCIPLES	ON TEACHING	ON LEARNING	ON MANAGEMENT
NAPTOSA	Professionalism	Educators have professional responsibility to guide the learners	Shall ensure that the interests of learners are not prejudiced by employees.	-
NATU (NAPTOSA affiliate)	Professional approach to teaching promotes the right of the child to learn	Shall improve the quality of teaching	Shall improve the quality of learning	-
SADTU	To foster an esprit de corps among teachers and promote and maintain high standards of ethical conduct, professional integrity and efficiency	Promote good standards of teaching	Promote high standards of learning	
SAOU (NAPTOSA affiliate)	Committed to the highest Christian values and norms in serving its members, the profession and learners High level of professionalism Mother-tongue education for all learners Improvement of working conditions in the education sector	Assist educators to guide learners and prepare them to be responsible citizens	The union to take note of the educational needs of learners an d promote such Ensure that interests of learners are not unreasonably prejudiced	Shall promote professional growth of members

SADTU is the biggest teacher union in the country with more than 240 000 members (Letseka et al, 2012: 1199). SADTU's main objective is to eliminate all forms of unfairness, bias or inequality in education and struggle for a free and democratic system of education in South Africa. Furthermore, it is "strongly committed to overcoming the serious legacies of apartheid education" (SADTU, 2006: 1).

NAPTOSA is the second largest teacher union, a federation with several teacher union affiliates. NAPTOSA believes in the following principles: firstly, to ensure that the interests of learners are in no way prejudiced by any act or omission on the part of educators, whilst affirming the fundamental right of employees to strike; secondly, assert the professional responsibility of educators to guide learners and students in their care in the universal search for skills and knowledge and in the development of their full creative potential so that they may become self-supporting and responsible citizens of a democratic country; thirdly, the inalienable right of every child and student to quality education within an equitable and non-discriminatory system of education; fourthly, the professionalism of the highest level from all employees in the education sector; and last but not least, the enhancement of all aspects of the working life of education sector workers (NAPTOSA constitution: 2009).

The National Teachers' Union (NATU) is a historically black teachers' trade union, established in 1918. Its purpose is improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to bring about a general improvement in education. One of its main principles is a "professional approach to teaching inspired by children's right to learn."

The Suid Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) or (the South African Teachers Union, SATU), another NAPTOSA associate, has a predominantly white membership with the majority speaking the Afrikaans language. This union views teachers and school management as key among its priorities.

From the above preview of the major teacher unions in this country, it is evident that all of them stand for good, progressive, quality teaching and learning in schools. However, the anecdotal evidence and some literature seem to point to the opposite. The right of unions to strike sharply contradicts the interests of learners to learn. This is also supported by the earlier reference to what Heystek and Lethoko (2001: 223) suggested as the main aim of the education system and the main aim for the existence of teacher unions which showed these aims as being incompatible.

There are other smaller teacher unions (e.g. the Professional Educators Union (PEU) and the National Union of Educators (NUE)) that will not be referred to in this study because of their relatively small numbers with regard to the education terrain in this country. As suggested by Rottmann (2008:981), the teacher unions listed above share a responsibility to represent teachers at all public schools but have ideological and structural distinctions. Furthermore, unions, unlike federations and associations tend to build themselves as more labour propelled. Federations on the other side, tend to distinguish themselves from unions by having more autonomous affiliates.

1.3. The aims of the study

The main aim of the study is to provide new insights into teacher unionism at school level; specifically, the way in which stakeholder groups experience and view teacher unionism. A further aim of the study is to contribute to the limited existing knowledge base on the subject of school-level teacher unionism. The study also seeks to create a platform for dialogue among interest groups about the country's education system.

1.4.   Problem statement

Teacher unions across the world are being blamed for everything that goes wrong in education (Brimelow, 2003). Teacher unions have taken some of the strongest criticism for both real and perceived deficiencies of the public schools as opposing a variety of reform initiatives (Eberts et al, 2002: 31). They are also accused of protecting members who underperform in the classroom (Ribas, 2005). This accusation are not unique to the international context only, anecdotal evidence suggests that unionism in South Africa as well is blamed for the ineffective schooling system and general lack of professionalism amongst teachers.

 Ribas writes that the two unions in the United States, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA) make it difficult for poor performing teachers to be removed from the classrooms. Again, in the United States (US), Kahlenberg (2007:1) wrote that teacher unions are widely seen as disastrous for education and these criticisms comes from all sides; from the conservatives mostly, but also from the liberals and the moderates. In the case of South Africa politicians, civil society and academics are in the forefront in accusing unions, especially SADTU for the deplorable state of affairs in our

schools. The accusation is very clear – unions sometimes stop bad teachers from being fired (Letseka et al: 2012, 1199). The comments by Brimelow, Ribas, Letseka et al and Kahlenberg above also hold truth with teacher unions as found in this country.

Let me juxtapose what commentators in other countries say about teacher unionism and the realities in South African education setting. The public is irritated by what it perceives as the powerlessness of managers to get rid of poor teachers from the classroom. The public attributes the difficulty in firing bad teachers to the policies and legislation developed by the state and teacher unions (Ribas, 2005: 157).

About unions in the UK, Robertson (2002: 30) writes that "unions have also been discursively and practically undermined as passé` and impediments to flexibility and the development of a competitive teaching force."

While the above two paragraphs shows that there is empirical evidence elsewhere about how unions are viewed this is not the case for South Africa, hence my over-reliance on anecdotal evidence. Since the advent of democracy in 1994, there has been increasing concern regarding the declining state of the country's schooling system especially in the townships and rural schools. In part, the general public blame the unions for this decline.

This criticism is based on the view held by most that unions and SADTU in particular, stand in the way of the provision of quality education in South African schools (Letseka et al: 2012, 1200 and *Mail & Guardian*, 2012). This assertion by the Mail and Guardian supports the empirical assertion made above about the US and the UK; that unions are blamed for impeding progress in education. Recent South African scholarly work by Letseka et al (2012:

1200) proves that the blame apportioned to unionism regarding the crisis in education is justifiable.

While most of the criticism has been levelled against SADTU's national, provincial and regional structures, questions have never been asked about the effect of school-level unionism on the provision of quality public education at school level. SADTU, in particular, faces what Camp-Yeakey (2004: ix) calls a "barrage of pejorative views of labour unions." These views on teacher unions, according to Camp-Yeakey (2004, ix), "by and large condemn them as obstacles to efficiency and quality."

Seekings (2004:1) writes that because of self-interest, South African teachers and their unions oppose, block or impede some reforms. Consider, for example, their reaction to the developmental appraisal systems (DAS) and panel inspections at schools by districts aimed at improving schooling for the majority of poor children.

The challenges in education have resulted in some quarters of society calling "for teaching to be declared an essential service" and to be de-unionised. Among the notable persons who have called "for teaching to be declared an essential service" is the chairperson of the South African National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Andile Lungisa, and the president of the official opposition party in the national parliament, the Democratic Alliance (DA), who is also the premier of the Western Cape, Ms Helen Zille (*Mail & Guardian*, 2012; The new negotiator, 2010: 7).

At the time of finalising this research project, the ANC's sub-committee on education had put on its agenda the subject of declaring teaching an essential service – this meant that teachers would effectively be barred from engaging in strike action.

The unions rejected this move even before it could be clarified by the ANC, setting the stage for a major battle with the ruling party and possibly the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the government should the ANC proceed with its intention (Mail & Guardian, 2012 February 10). So some time now the relationship between the ANC government and the unions under COSATU have been one of mutualism, where at times teacher unions will win better perks for their members without exerting themselves because it is the year of election and the ANC acknowledges their support in advance by giving teachers higher salary increases.

Researchers such as Bascia (2006), Stevenson (2003) and Chisholm (2005) point out that the research base on teacher unionism at school level is thin. To shift focus from what has been researched before, this study does not focus on the higher union structures, but only on unionism at school level. In the past, teacher unionism has been studied at different levels and again for different purposes and reasons other than to specifically look at what happens in the school as observed through the eyes of school based stakeholder groups and not secondary sources such as the media and politicians.

1.5.   Purpose statement

According to Creswell, (2007: 103), a "purpose statement provides the major objective or intent, or the road map", of a study. Therefore, the purpose of this case study was to explore and understand school-level teacher unionism through an empirical analysis of stakeholder groups' views and experiences in a Gauteng school district.

1.6.   Research questions

The primary research question that this study seeks to answer is: How do stakeholder-groups view and experience teacher unions at school level in a Gauteng school district?

The following secondary or subsidiary questions were posed:

a) What are stakeholder groups' views of school-based unionism in one school district in Gauteng province?

b) What are the experiences of stakeholder groups with school-based unionism in one school district in Gauteng province?

1.7.   The rationale

School-based unionism is a fairly novel research phenomenon in South Africa. Prior research has focused on unionism at system or national level, and not at school level as is the case with this study. There were however previous studies that made transitory remarks on teacher unionism. I wish to, at this point, state how I developed an interest in the subject of trade unionism and teacher unionism in particular.

For over 10 years, from 1995 to 2007, I worked as a union leader holding various leadership positions, including media officer, branch secretary, branch deputy chairperson and regional education convenor in various areas. During this time, I worked as a teacher, served in school governance and as a school principal; and I made some observations regarding teacher unionism at school level and the dynamics in teacher professionalism as influenced

by union activities and other school-based stakeholder groups' views of teacher unions and the role they play at school level.

I have heard school managers castigate school-based union leaders and school-based union leaders resisting school management and, worse still, even witnessed the boycotting of classes by teachers unhappy with school management or their decisions. I have also witnessed territorial battles by different unions over teacher membership affiliation to these unions or even negative comments by one union about another.

The literature states that the educational activity associated with teacher unions remains "neglected" and continues to be of marginal significance (Bascia, 2005: 1; Stevenson, 2003: 342; Heystek and Lethoko, 2001: 223). Stevenson (2003:341) supports this view when he alludes to the fact that "there is little empirical work that looks at school-based union representatives" and "union impact at school level" Research further shows that unions do not really focus on teachers and their work at schools. This is eloquently put by Brimelow (2003: 57), who writes: "Unless union activities can be shown to make a difference in their daily work, most teachers ignore them."

Archer (2011:25) has the following to say about American schools and unions: "with teachers unions so clearly powerful in public education, there is no excuse for not studying them". The same can be said about the South African teacher unions, specifically SADTU. Our libraries should be awash with empirical studies on this subject. Doing a study on unions that focuses on schools in the South African context would provide new insight into teacher unions and the behaviour of union members at school level.

1.8.   Conceptual framework

This study is undergirded by a conceptual framework I devised specifically to guide my research and help focus the study on the research questions that the study posed and sought to answer. The conceptual framework in this study was developed after I had conducted a critical literature review on the topic. From this review, a number of key concepts were identified and a mind map that helps link these concepts to one another was developed to represent this study's conceptual framework.

The key concepts of importance are, firstly, "professional unionism" (Poole, 1997, and Govender, Kelly 1998, Eberts, R.W. et al 2002), sometimes referred to by other authorities on this topic as "new unionism" as Ribas (2002: 154) puts it. The other concept of importance is "adversarial unionism" or "protectionist-defensive unionism", which points to conflict between unions and management and/or other stakeholder groups at school level (Samber, 1997; Bridges, 1998; Brimelow, 2003).

Fundamentally, this study was conceptualised using a dichotomous approach that sought to define unionism as either professionally or teacher-protection oriented. Professionally oriented unionism is also described as new-unionism or professional unionism with a focus on teacher development and teachers projecting a professional identity, seeing themselves as collaborators. They therefore assist management in achieving the goal of the schools and prioritise the support they give to learners. Teacher-protection oriented unionism, on the other hand, is consistent with a traditional trade unionism approach (protectionist or defensive unionism) with a focus on defending or protecting their members especially against management. It is radical unionism, makes unreasonable demands on the employer

and organises protests and strikes (Letseka et al: 2012: 1198). This kind of unionism is blamed for the state of affairs in the country's education system (Letseka et al, 2012:1198) citing Fleisch, (2008), Bloch (2009) and Monare (2010) who referred to the education system in this country as being *"a crisis"*, "*a national disaster*" and in "*tatters*" respectively.

Teacher unions in schools

FORMS OF UNIONISM FOUND IN SCHOOLS

Professional unionism

Professional (new) unionism

protectionist-defensive unionism

Adversarial unionism

TEACHER UNIONISM IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Emphasis on teacher development & learner support

Secure teachers – raised teacher morale

Defended teachers become arrogant & abdicate duties

Opposes management & low teacher

Improved teaching and learning and improved productivity

Improved management, teaching and learning

No/poor management teaching and learning standards

Teaching and learning suffers/tensions /low

Unionism that has positive implications for management, teaching and learning and teacher Professionalism and on relations with stakeholder groups.

Unionism with negative implications for management, teaching and learning and teacher professionalism relationship with other stakeholder.

Marked increase in the levels of social dialogue
(Positive unionism)

A marked absence in social dialogue.

(Negative unionism)

FIGURE 1.1 A mind map of the relationship between concepts that undergird this study; the positive side and the negative side of unions – a conceptual framework.

The mind map shows two broad forms of unionism as alluded to earlier; that is, on the left hand side we have a more progressive and positive kind of unionism – professional unionism represented generally by the green writing. This kind of unionism emphasises according to Govender (2004) and Eberts et al (2002: 4) the following:

- ➢ teacher development

- ➢ support for school management

- ➢ learner support

- ➢ collaboration with other stakeholders

Improved teaching and learning, higher productivity and improved management are associated with this kind of unionism. On the right-hand side, the mind map shows a more aggressive or radical and negative form of teacher unionism represented broadly by two concepts: adversarial and protectionist-defensive unionism plotted in the red writing. It is this form of unionism according Jeremy (2010:299) that critics of teacher unions appear to be focusing on because it emphasises the following:

- ➢ Opposition to management because it views management as oppressive or opposition.

- ➢ defends and protects teachers even when they are wrong or unproductive

- ➢ teachers neglecting professional duties

- ➢ is prone to conflict with other school stakeholder groups

While analysing literature and during data analysis, my attention was captured by what Ratteree (2004) calls the three Rs, that is, the rights, responsibilities and roles. I find these three Rs as representing a cyclical framework, in which the concepts that illustrate the fact

that one should not and cannot exist without the others are interlinked. For example, all educators have the right to join unions and to be treated fairly at schools, but they also have responsibilities in terms of the quality of education they provide to the learners.

The teachers as members of unions also have an important collective role to play in ensuring that our schools run as smoothly as possible and that there is what is referred to as "labour peace" in our schools (Ratteree, 2004: 33). I used this as a supporting conceptual framework for the main conceptual framework, which characterises teacher unionism as dichotomous – positive unionism on the one hand and negative unionism on the other.

Figure 1.2. The three Rs, rights, responsibilities and roles – supporting conceptual framework

The school environment

Rights

(To join unions & be treated fairly)

Respect the rights of learners and other stakeholders.

Roles

(Teachers in decision-making)

(Collective responsibility to shape the teaching, learning environment & development of school policies)

Responsibilities

provide good quality education

adhere to high professional standards

(accountability to parents, learners, the employer/management)

1.9. The research paradigm

This study was conducted using an interpretive research paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007: 21), the main focus of this research "paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience". While exploring the views and

experiences of the stakeholder groups of school-level teacher unionism, an attempt was made to understand these views and experiences from the participants' perspectives. The use of this research paradigm afforded me, as a researcher, an opportunity to be immersed in the study and not to become detached from the phenomenon being studied.

1.10. Overview of the study and context

This research was conducted in township schools and one rural village school which displayed the characteristics of those schools that were likely to provide me with the relevant data. We often find that these are the schools that are generally labelled as well unionised with most of the militant SADTU membership employed in them.

1.11. Concept clarification

The concepts deployed and employed in this study have as their main purpose, deepening the research and education communities' understanding of the phenomenon being studied and providing a focus for the study. The concepts may therefore not be viewed as an end in the studied phenomenon, but a means to the exploration of the phenomenon. Ratteree (2004: 3) posits that in a multicultural world, it is always helpful to know what is meant by a particular concept. This study extensively employed the concepts 'professional unionism', 'protectionist-defensive unionism' ('antagonistic or defensive unionism'), 'managerial professionalism', 'professionalism', 'teacher unionism', 'trade unionism' and 'social dialogue.'

Antagonistic unionism: This is a form of unionism that sees school management as its opponent/adversary rather than as a partner in helping teachers do their work well. Members of this kind of union tend to find fault with management instead of helping management find solutions to the challenges facing schools. This concept, while not used extensively in the study, is sometimes used synonymously with 'protectionist-defensive' or 'adversarial unionism.'

Managerial professionalism: According to Sachs (1999), this ideology purports that management can solve any problem; it is inherently good (Pollitt, 1993, as cited in Sachs, 1999) and that practices that are appropriate for private sector conduct can also be applied to the public sector, for example the school. It also views managers as heroes who should be afforded the space and freedom to manage their organisations and that other parties accept their leadership and authority.

While this concept is not in the conceptual framework, it is referred to here because it relates indirectly to the way principals were viewed in South Africa during the previous dispensation. They were thought of as being capable of solving any problem and did not involve other stakeholder groups such as unions in decision making in the school.

Professional ethics: Professional ethics, according to Botha et al (2003:106), "constitutes that type of conduct which is exemplary within a particular profession". It places responsibilities upon the person (teacher) to conduct him/herself professionally when dealing with a particular situation.

Professional unionism: For the purpose of this study, Heystek and Lethoko (2001: 224) and Govender (2004) define professional unionism as teachers and management working

together (collaboration); it is no longer 'they versus us', but 'we'. In other words, this is a partnership for the attainment of the school's objectives.

Responsibilities: While teachers have the right to join and be active in teacher unions, they also have the responsibility to provide good quality education to the learners. They also have the responsibility to adhere to high professional standards and a code of professional ethics, as outlined in the SACE code of professional conduct. This makes accountability to learners, parents and the employer possible. SADTU and other unions' constitutions also outline how each of their respective members should conduct themselves as professionals.

Rights: Teachers in South Africa, like any employee, have the right to join unions, as well as the right to be treated fairly and with dignity.

Roles: The teacher unions and their members have various roles to play in schools; this refers to their collective responsibility for shaping teaching and learning and developing policies in schools (Govender, 2009)

School Governing Bodies (SGBs): SGBs are those bodies responsible for the governance function in all South African public schools. They came into effect with the promulgation of the South African Schools Act, Act no. 84 of 1996. While the abbreviation SGB is also used to refer to the Standard Generating Bodies (SGBs) came into effect in education, in this study it takes the meaning as ascribed to it, that is, school governing bodies.

These bodies have an important role to play at school level and often interact with unions, for example, during the short listings and interviews for teaching posts that take place at school level, hence my decision to interview them as part of the stakeholder groups at school level.

School management: There are various definitions for school management, but for the purpose of this study, I will define school management as those activities that are carried out by principals and their school management teams (SMTs) in order to realise the objectives of their schools using the contribution of all stakeholder groups (unions included). School management for the purpose of this study refers to the principal, the deputy principals and the subject heads of department (HODs). School management refers to the act of maintaining current organisational arrangements efficiently and effectively (Bush, 2007: 392).

Social dialogue: Ratteree (2004: 3–5) writes that the ILO/UNESCO committee of experts has provided a working definition of social dialogue, that is, "all forms of information sharing, consultation and negotiation between educational authorities, public and private, and teachers and their democratically elected representatives in teachers' organisations".

This expert also posits that the definition covers a broad spectrum of communication "and decision-making mechanisms that govern relations between teachers and educational authorities, public and private". They (members of the ILO committee of expert) noted that the concepts of information sharing, consultation, negotiation and collective bargaining broadly characterise social dialogue.

Teacher unionism: The Employment of Educators Act no. 76 of 1998 uses the term 'employee organization', which it defines as "an organization whose members consists mainly of employees (teachers), and includes a federation of such organizations". While the term chosen for referring to unions as teacher organisations in the EEA seems too broad and is applicable to a variety of groups of people with one objective, the term 'union' as in 'trade

union' seems more specific and deals with an organised group of people established to defend employees and further their interests and rights at the work place.

Trade unionism: This is an association of workmen or wage earners formed to maintain and improve conditions of employment (Rooke, 1972: 17). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a trade union is an organised association of workers in a trade, group of trades, or profession formed to protect and further their rights and interests.

1.12. Significance of the study

A cursory look at the literature on teacher unionism suggests that little research has been conducted on the subject of school-based teacher unionism. Stevenson (2005: 2) maintains that, in spite of the high unionisation of teachers in most countries, the organisation that represents teachers' collective interests is absent from academic studies researching education policy development and school management.

At best, teacher unions receive a passing mention, at worst they are rendered invisible. The area of school-based teacher unionism continues to see no or little empirical research with most studies focusing too much on the national, organisational aspects of teacher unions, and how they "seek to influence and shape government policy" (Stevenson, 2003: 342–343).

The findings of this study might have implications for policy making. Policy makers might find the results of this study helpful in policy review and drafting. Participants may also reflect on their roles and responsibilities as far as unionism is concerned. The study sought to clarify the phenomenon for all stakeholders: parents, SGBs, officials in education departments, the general public and the education fraternity in general. This study adds

new knowledge to the existing knowledge base on unions in education and in South African schools in particular.

The study contributes a unique and interestingly new perspective for examining the relationship between teacher unions and what happens in schools for all stakeholders. It may also provide a basis on which policy makers could make policy shifts in order to improve educators' and learners' performance in the schools of this country.

1.13. Delimitations

The study focused more on SADTU and less on other unions given the frequency of complaints levelled against SADTU by various stakeholders. Further reasons for focusing on SADTU include its influence in the national education policy domain, its conspicuous presence in most schools across the country including the sampled schools (research sites), its political influence (it obviously has the government's ear during policy-making debates) and its radical nature and propensity to challenge the powers that be.

The study also focussed on NAPTOSA because it was the second union found to be organising in the sampled schools. All the schools sampled are located in the townships. The focus on the townships was precipitated by the fact that most complains about teacher unions cite the poor state of the education in townships. These townships are based in one district in Gauteng province. While there are various accusations of what unions do to our schools at international, national, provincial and other levels of the education systems of nation states, this study focuses on the level of the school where the ordinary members of unions are working. It is my opinion that while union leaders in the upper structures of

these unions are often lambasted for the sorry state of affairs in our schools, those who are directly involved at this level (school level) have been spared the brunt.

1.14. Conclusion

This case study research was undertaken to explore and understand the phenomenon of school-based teacher unionism in the South African context. The main purpose of this chapter is to introduce the problem and the rationale behind my decision for selecting this topic by providing an outline for my research topic and stating the purpose and the aims of this study. The focus of the next chapter is a review of the literature on the topic. This chapter will deal with both international and local literature because I, as the researcher, wanted to find out what already exists in academic writings so that I could identify the gaps and formulate a convincing theoretical or conceptual framework.

CHAPTER TWO

2.   Literature review

2.1.   Introduction and context

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the existing literature on the topic. I followed Babbie's (2008:124) advice by using literature to identify what other authors had to say about the topic, what they did not say on the topic and what concepts and theories have been applied. In other words, as Creswell et al (2007: 26) posits, literature was used to provide an overview of the research appropriate to my topic and its salient facets, as well as to identify the gaps that exist in literature. The review was also intended to provide an overview of scholarship on this topic through the presentation of trends and debates, current as well as past (see also figure 2.1. on page 33).

2.2.   Views on teacher unionism

Researchers, the media and the general public tend to focus on the negative role played by teacher unions. They rarely, if ever, focus on the positive contributions that unions can make. According to Robertson (2002: 30), unions have been described as impediments to the development of a competitive teaching force. Their political nature can block educational reforms that threaten their interests, with their threats disrupting instruction, lowering teacher morale and disrupting community relations (Carini, 2002: 10.3).

There are at least four sources of discontent regarding the impact that school-based teacher unions have on schools in terms of teacher and learner performance and general labour

peace in our schools. These sources may be grouped into four main categories: the media, which include radio, newspapers and television; the politicians or public representatives; the general public; and the academic or scholarly literature. Figure 2.1 below depicts the four main categories that are the sources of discontent regarding school-based teacher unions in the national discourse.

Figure 2.1 Sources of concerns about the effects of teacher unionism in schools
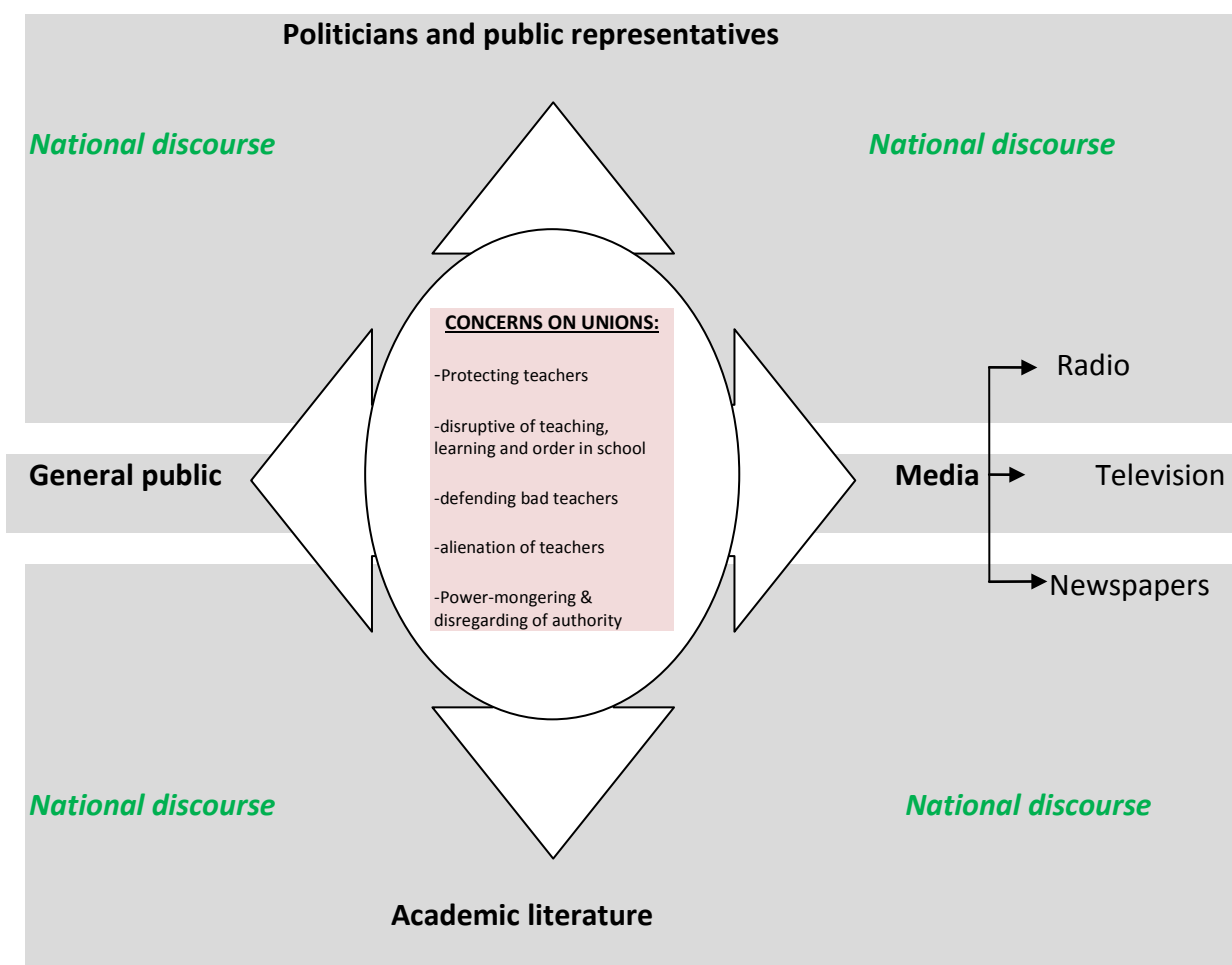
In a paper presented to the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) Conference in Melbourne, Sachs (1999: 4) wrote about the two competing discourses in

Australian education: democratic professionalism and managerial professionalism. The author states that the unions and other professional bodies advocate for democratic professionalism while systems and employers advocate for managerial professionalism. These two groups are often at loggerheads. This is not unique to Australia because in South Africa as well we are observing a strong push by union for a more democratic way of doing things at schools while on the other hand there is emphasis for school managers to act with authority over what happens in schools.

Govender (2004: 269) argues that an important factor in understanding teacher-state relations is the teachers' conception of the ideology of professionalism and unionism. He points to recent attempts in advocating for the complementarity of professionalism and unionism, leading to the concept he calls professional unionism. He further argues by citing Torres et al (2000: 12–13) that while professional unionism retains the traditional features of unionism, it also recognises the need for teacher unions to address issues of school productivity and efficiency, as well as mechanisms of performance management, discipline and dealing with incompetence.

Rottmann (2008: 983 & 985) noted that Canadian unions have embraced the concept of social justice unionism and that many teacher organisations call themselves "unions of professionals" thereby bringing together the industrial and professional objectives giving rise to what they call professional unionism. Unions elsewhere have made an about turn from their traditional membership service oriented unionism that focuses on protecting their members and also increasing their rights and benefits, to unionism that is more socially responsible ENGAGE (2011, March 09).

The study focused on school based teacher unionism because most of the union activities that are blamed for the poor state of our education are at this level. Peterson and Charney as cited by Rottmann (2008: 983) as if they wanted to help teacher unions fend off this criticism invited them to "defend public education and the rights of teachers," maintain a "strong emphasis on professionalism," and express a "commitment to children."

2.3.   Experiences with teacher unionism

Research together with anecdotal evidence suggests that teacher unions locally and internationally engage in practices that work against professionalism. A pilot study commissioned by SADTU (2010) itself noted that its members are criticised for a lack of professional ethics.

The impact of unionism on productivity has been researched to some extent. According to the *Mail & Guardian* (2012), a study conducted by an independent dispute resolution company, Tokiso, revealed that SADTU activities account for 42% of all work days lost between 1995 and 2009. Anecdotal evidence suggests that teacher union members in South Africa neglect their duties in favour of activities such as supporting fellow union members during court appearances. The media also links teacher unionism with dysfunction in schools. For example, a 2009 newspaper report described teacher unions as "the biggest obstacle to sorting out the dysfunction (poor performance of the 2009 matric class) in our schools, because 'they are very much feared by the government of this country'" (*Mail & Guardian*, 2009).

Anecdotal evidence also paints a picture of teacher union members who do not care about the success of the learners entrusted to them and care mainly about issues that affect them. A caller to one radio show labelled teachers (union members) as "just a bunch of professional hooligans who are interested in salaries only" (SAFM, 18 May 2012). The media also serves as a platform where politicians can hurl accusations at educators over issues such as union members opposing supervision and inspection; attending memorial services of deceased union members and attending meetings during school hours, sometimes without requesting permission from the principal.

In a February 2008 speech, the former Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education in Limpopo Province, Dr Aaron Motswaledi, accused principals of underperforming schools of abdicating their responsibility by letting unions "run" their schools during a principals' meeting. As indicated earlier, most of these accusations are laid at the door of SADTU.

Teacher unions, specifically SADTU, sometimes hit back at their critics. An example is a SADTU representative referring to the "ineptitude" of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in dealing with problematic educators during a radio talk show. They (unions) vehemently refused to take the blame for the defence of lazy teachers, putting the blame squarely at the door of the DBE for failing to act against these educators (SAFM, 18, May 2012).

Pienaar (2006) found that the existence of unions in schools lessens the perception of powerlessness among teachers because teachers concentrate on their work knowing that the union will speak for them. Therefore, according to this researcher union members show higher efficacy because they are confident that the unions will be willing to intervene in

their interests should it become necessary (Pienaar, 2006: 548). These findings, however, contrast sharply with the general perception in the national discourse.

This perception was also confirmed by a study done by respondents who made mention of disturbances caused by teacher unions "during normal working hours – holding meetings, taking time off", prolonging organised strikes or taking more time for teaching than necessary in order to organise for strike actions. This was not, however, the focus of the study and was merely mentioned as some of the reasons that led to the poor matric pass rate in South Africa. While literature, as shown above, acknowledges that teacher unions are important at school level and can make a positive contribution to improve education at school; it is not always clearly stated how or what the unions must do to achieve this.

2.4.   The positive role played by teacher unions

There is general agreement among researchers and union observers about the fact that teacher unions can play a positive part in the development of teachers (Heystek and Lethoko, 2001). According to Yeakey (2004, ix) and Henderson (2004: xi), despite the views of union "foes" unions have played and still do play a role in building a quality education system for all children.

Duncan-Adanusa (2006: 1), the president of Education International (EI) Africa and general secretary of the Ghana National Association of Teachers writes that unions in Africa are in various stages of development with those in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Kenya being well organised. She posits that "motivation and commitment of teachers" are the "raison d'être" of teacher unions (Duncan-Adanusa, 2006: 7). Carini (2002:

10.4) points out that the literature has shown that unions offer teachers a greater sense of professionalism and dignity, enhance teacher morale and job satisfaction, provide teachers with a collective "voice" to express ideas and concerns, support practices purported to boost student achievement and that they (unions) shock management, schools or both, into becoming more effective organisations.

A critical look at this assertion that unions provide members with a greater sense of professionalism appears to refer to professionalism as it relates to what Govender (2004: 286) calls "certification, social status and high salary levels" as features of professionalism rather than optimisation of ethical conduct of teachers as professionals. I believe that when a powerful union presence gives rise to complex teacher union-state relations as suggested by Govender (2004:285), our schools may not be ready for this powerful union presence at that level.

In his paper commissioned by the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report, Ratteree (2005, 9) writes that the Tanzanian Teachers Union (TTU) is working with the ministry of education to develop policies at national and district level. A lesson learnt in this study is the development of the capacity to do research by the TTU, which helps the voices of the teachers to be distinct and heard.

The literature shows that when teachers or their unions are involved in policy making and decision making at school level they take ownership of such policies and decisions (Maile, 2002: 334). Henderson (2004: 19 & 20) views decentralisation and departure from conventional bargaining methods to school-based decision making as providing opportunities for unions to help their members gain some control of their professional lives.

In Brazil, Myers (2008) states that the idea of collective decision making in schools has become a popular democratic education reform model. This implies that school-based teacher unions are there to be part of these collective decisions and are therefore part of what happens in the schools. Myers (2008: 952) shows that if teachers (or their unions) are involved in school decision making they are empowered, professionalised and given intellectual freedom, thereby changing the power relations between teachers and principals.

This model however is different from what happens here in South Africa because in our case the unions have been given the rights to organise within our schools without clear and precise regulating of union-school management relations. The onus is on those school principals and stakeholder groups to try and find each other or accommodate one another.

Stevenson (2003: 347) acknowledges the fact that school union representatives may act as a contact point between unions and school management on matters affecting their members. This dimension of teacher unions' role at school level is captured well by Maile (2002: 335) when he indicates that SGBs have to consult with the site stewards (shop stewards) when making institutional appointments (SASA s 20(4) and (5)), since they are an accessible communication link with the unions in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) and have a better idea of what teachers want.

The findings by Rottmann (2008:9 83) that the Canadian teachers' organisations accepted the invitation to "defend public education and the rights of teachers, retain a strong emphasis on professionalism and demonstrate a commitment to children and learning" illustrate how the Canadian teachers' organisations built internal organisational capacity that is crucial in empowering their members.

In the Far East, the Korean Teachers Union (KTU) advocated for education that is democratic (allowing for teacher participation in areas such as curriculum and school policies), humane (free from authoritarianism) and nationalistic (free from foreign intervention), demonstrating the move by the KTU towards teacher professionalisation. This followed poor working conditions such as long hours, difficult conditions, low wages and repressive principals (Synott, 2007: 5-7).

While anecdotal evidence mostly shows South African teacher unions, specifically SADTU, in a negative light, one study focused on the positive contribution made by this union. This study by Whittle (2007) showed the positive role played by SADTU in the process of teacher rationalisation in the Western Cape between 1990 and 2001. According to this study, SADTU played a very important role by ensuring that its members understood and participated in the process of teacher rationalisation in that province. This process was intended to ensure the movement of teachers from where there was high concentration or oversupply to where they were most needed. Although this process displaced some educators by removing them from their families, SADTU put the interests of the needy schools or communities first.

2.5. Teacher unionism and politics

Literature points to the fact that teacher unions have influenced education policy and social change throughout their history. The development and history of teacher unions are closely related to the "political relationship with the government of the day" (Govender, 2005: 268). While teacher unionism in South Africa has a history dating back to the early 20th

century, the rise of union power is inextricably intertwined with the height of the repressive apartheid regime and the strengthening of the counter- or anti-apartheid revolutionary forces in the country.

These mass democratic forces were in the main led by the ANC and its socialist partner, the South African Communist Party, as well as the working class, which were later organised into COSATU to complete a powerful political force to be known as the tripartite Alliance. COSATU's revolutionary responsibility was to organise the workers of the country in all the economic sectors including teachers. This culminated on the 6th October 1990 with the launch of what is today the most powerful teachers' union in South Africa and possibly the whole of Southern Africa. This was a momentous occasion that brought into one fold a variety of racially geographically split teacher organisations as a unified structure with a "progressive vision" that came to be known as SADTU.

SADTU is today the most powerful union representing about 256 000 of the country's more than 390 000 public schools' teachers (COSATU website, 2012). These numbers are sometimes mentioned "because it strikes fear into the hearts of any employer sitting in the audience, but also because it reminds us that the union is nothing more than the sum of its members," said SADTU deputy president, Thobile Ntola, at the Federal Conference of the Australian Education Union (Ntola, 2008: 1).

Murillo et al (2002, 25) argue that while political alignment may benefit the unions, it can also induce the propensity to strike by providing national coverage. SADTU is today the most powerful union representing about 256 000 of the country's more than 390 000 public schools' teachers (COSATU website, 2012). As the struggle against apartheid intensified, schools became staging grounds, and they became principal terrains for the struggle. Some

teachers took advantage of the irregular disruptions and exerted themselves minimally, while others took part in political activism; thereby politicising the teaching profession.

Jansen (2004: 1–16) highlights the level of this politicisation of schools when he writes that there is significant resistance to government intervention in schools. Jansen (2004: 2) also states that during the height of apartheid, black teachers were at the mercy of the school boards, as their appointment and dismissal were legally in the hands of these boards. The teachers also regarded principals as oppressive. However, power relations in schools were dramatically challenged owing to the growing strength of the unions and the democratic process (Chisholm, 1999: 117) and it is my take that those who run our schools were not adequately prepared for this sudden arrival of powerful 'foes'.

South African teachers' unions, SADTU in particular, enjoyed a much closer relationship with the state, became a permanent and unavoidable feature in the country's schools and the entire education system. They are having representation in the joint policy making forums such as the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), the South African Council of Educators (SACE) and the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) and also have two representatives employed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to ensure collaboration and exchange of ideas (Govender, 2004:267).

There is no statutory forum at school level however created to ensure that there is collaboration between SMT and or principals and unions at school level – it is left to principals or their SMTs. Literature has always acknowledged the existence of unions at schools without providing empirical evidence on how this existence must be managed, so that it benefits the learner or it promotes the objectives of the schools.

2.6. Teacher unionism, teaching and learning

Carini (2002: 10.5) notes that several studies sharply criticise unions for decline in student performance and high drop-out rates and that unions seem to be a plausible culprits for the depression of educational outcomes. Stern (1997: 10) maintains that despite the millions of dollars the unions "spend on public relations every year; they have been unable to convince the American people that the children's schools and classrooms are in good hands."

Archer (2011: 2) writes that the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), a New York City state-based union that is affiliated to the American Federation of Teachers ensured that teachers who were merely mediocre could not be touched and strongly defended the protections that make it virtually impossible to fire bad teachers, including those teachers who were on the payroll while doing nothing. Carini (2002. 10.2) further argues that "unions remove incentives for teachers to improve instruction by shielding ineffective teachers from dismissal and that increased" formalisation as a result of unionisation impedes principals' capacity to control and manage their schools.

In Latin America, Murillo et al (2002: 5) in their Argentinean study write that there is consensus that good teaching is a key to school improvement. However, it has been hard to achieve this owing to the opposition of teacher unions to policies perceived as hurting their members. The Argentine teachers unions are very militant and have organised more demonstrations and strikes than any other union in any sector (Murillo: 2002).

In South Africa, Mahlangu and Pitsoe (2011: 265) decry the "underperformance of the education system, abusive and violent learners, incompetent officials, unprofessional

behaviour and inadequate resources." This despite the fact that the unions and the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) entered into a pact to embark on the Quality Teaching and Learning Campaign (QLTC) in 2008 with departmental officials, teachers, learners, parents and community members each pledging their commitment for quality education (New Negotiator, 2010: 2).

A former South African minister of education, Mrs Naledi Pandor, linked the chronic underperformance of the schooling system with teacher unions and noted that South Africans should "demand better accountability from teachers and their unions"(*Mail & Guardian*, 2009). Legotlo et al (2002: 117), reckon that factors that contribute to poor learner performance are complex and intertwined. This therefore illustrate that it is not as simple as apportioning blame to teacher unions.

2.7. A summary of the literature review

Criticism of teacher unionism in the literature, as well as anecdotal, is in abundance, both internationally and locally, but the main focus of the commentators is on union effects on the education system broadly, union influence or participation in policy making, the history of teacher unions and the political nature of teacher unions as opposed to the professionalisation of the members. Very rarely are teacher unions researched in terms of their position as a stakeholder group in individual schools. The literature studied points to the following aspects:

The partisan nature of teacher unions – many studies regard teacher unions as organisations that support a particular political party. They are therefore working to ensure

that their party wins elections so that the union's members, in return for their political support, will benefit from favourable policies. Bloch (2012: 9) speaks of SADTU, for example, as having an inordinate influence in the ANC and the union movement, which is a direct reference to its affiliation to COSATU.

Professional-unionism – this is a phenomenon about which some authorities on teacher unionism have written extensively, especially since there is debate among scholars as to whether unionism and professionalism can ever coexist. There is a clear indication (albeit sometimes indirectly implied) of teacher unions 'metamorphosing' from 'traditional unionism' towards 'professional-unionism' (Heystek and Lethoko, 2001: 224; Stevenson, 2003: 3; Meyers, 2006: 1; Kelly, 1998: 37; Chisholm, 1999: 114; Henderson, 2004: 2) and that teachers are better adjudicators of professional competence than principals (Kelly and Philip, 1998: 3).

This is supported also by Rottmann (2008: 985) when she states that many teacher organisations refer to themselves as "unions of professionals" and combine industrial and professional objectives in their mission statements thereby challenging the claim that industrial unionism and professional unionism are contradictory.

Historical nature of unionism (traditional unionism) – historically, teacher unions were and still are in many quarters viewed as fighting for the narrow interests of their members and as having no interest in interacting with other stakeholder groups unless it is exclusively about pursuing their members working conditions.

Role in policy making – a number of studies have looked at the role of teacher unions in policy making, as well as policy implementation (Bloch, 2009). The policy-making role

ensures that policies that are favourable to union members or teachers are formulated and that the voice of teachers in this policy making process is conspicuous (Beutel, 2011).

Union power vis-à-vis the power of state officials – a substantial number of commentators have written on the now well-known flexing of muscles between state officials and union officials, often in bargaining chambers and sometimes through strikes and lockouts. However, this power-relations phenomenon as it relates to teacher unionism. The general discontent about teacher unions in the nation – a significant number of studies both internationally and locally points to the fact that there is general dissatisfaction with teacher unionism in schools.

The positives and the negatives – generally, the literature reflects on both the positives and negatives of teacher unions, depending on the lens through which authorities on this subject looked at teacher unionism at the school level.

Promoting social justice as one the key responsibilities of teacher unions, which is confirmed in various sources, is raised pertinently by participants in this study, who have worked with unions on school-based interview panels. Rottmann (2008: 997) posits that the "two most prevalent concepts used to describe social justice in the field of education are distribution" and recognition, with the former focusing "on the allocation of material resources and the latter on the attribution of social status related to identity." Unions that address the victimisation of women teachers, who are denied promotional posts because of their gender, are critical theorists in nature because they challenge systemic inequity and work towards revolutionary change.

2.8. Conclusion.

The purpose of this chapter, as outlined in the introduction, was to help focus the study by identifying the knowledge that already exists on the subject being researched. Literature reviewed on the subject included international, African and South African collections of journal articles, books, various constitutions of teacher unions, unions' conference resolutions, press statements, internet journals articles, dissertations, both published and unpublished, and conference papers among others.

These various forms of literature provided me with enough scope and depth to see which aspect of the topic has been covered by research. Literature also helped me in formulating the study's conceptual framework and understanding the theories and concepts used by other researchers who focussed on this topic. Literature also assisted me in seeing what methods were previously employed in studies of similar nature and in selecting the best method for my study.

Through literature one was able to check the conclusions and findings made in previous studies as well. Literature directed my studies in the sense that it helped me avoid duplicating and unnecessarily repeating what other researchers already wrote about. It was again through literature that I became aware of the weaknesses in my research questions and topic, which I rephrased. Literature reviewed affirmed that there are equally strong views for and against teachers unions.

The following chapter deals with the research methodology employed in this study. It also attempts to justify the choice of research methods used in this study. Moreover, the

chapter seeks to convince the reader about the rationale for choosing these methods and

the correctness with which these methods were applied.

CHAPTER THREE

3.   Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Babbie (2008: 97) argues that exploratory studies are appropriate for more persistent phenomena but that most studies of a qualitative nature have elements of both description and explanation. This study used an interpretive research paradigm. As mentioned earlier, according to Cohen et al (2007: 21), the main focus in this paradigm is "to understand the subjective world of human experience", a good choice for a qualitative study. This study, explored the experiences and views of participants in terms of teacher unionism at school.

Merriam (2009) posits that "qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences". It was for this reason that I elected to follow and employ this approach (qualitative method) because I wanted to understand the experiences of stakeholder groups with school-based teacher unionism and how they interpreted these experiences.

3.2. Research paradigm

In an interpretive paradigm no distinction is made between the subject (the research) and the object (the phenomenon being studied) according to Cohen et al (2007). Since human

behaviour is constituted by social convention, interpretation is subsequently required as the facts are not self-explanatory. This will afford me the opportunity to become immersed in the study and not be detached from the phenomenon, as would be the case in a positivist (traditional) research paradigm.

Ontologically, since the nature of the phenomenon being researched involves human interaction between the participants and the researcher, in order to understand the nature of the reality a constructivist-interpretive worldview was used. Creswell (2007: 20) suggests that social constructivism is often combined with interpretive in terms of which the participants develop subjective meanings for their experiences.

Epistemologically this has also helped me as a researcher to socially construct knowledge of the phenomenon that I studied. Given that this was a research work of limited scope, the amount of time I spent with the participants during the interview was enough to allow me to understand the participants and their responses better. Nevertheless, I visited all the research sites at least three times during the study just to make sure that I understood the participants. My stance as a researcher is that of a constructive-interpretivist.

Axiological assumptions: According to Creswell (2007: 18) all qualitative researchers not only bring values to the research but also make them explicit. In this study I acknowledged research as being value laden and acknowledged my biases. I also had to include my own views and interpretations of the participants' actions and views. Human behaviour and/or nature can only be interpreted through the individual's own understanding of the social context (Creswell et al. 2007: 60).

According to Creswell et al (2007: 33), paradigm assumptions and perspectives have a significant impact on the researcher's methodological preferences. In this case, various people were interviewed at their workplace.

Leedey (1993; 139) "identifies qualitative research methodologies as dealing with data that are principally verbal". In this study the researcher relied mainly on verbal information, therefore a qualitative approach was found to be the most appropriate, as it allowed for more flexibility in terms of methods and research processes. In qualitative research, for instance, researchers are part of the situation present or past, an important reason for choosing this approach. I had to guard against personal biases emanating from my experience as both a manager and a union member or leader.

Since the study was about human beings, I found it prudent to, at this stage, define my research methods orientation. Like it was earlier posited elsewhere in this study, my view about social reality is that experiences of individuals are subjective. Because my study focused on human behaviour, one could not look at human beings' actions as tangible straightforward reality that can be manipulated objectively as one pleases.

My subjective orientation let me to use those methods that would be used by researchers who subscribe to this view of social reality being subjective. I therefore opted for the case study research design, choosing purposive sampling, using interviews and document retrieval strategies to collect data and employing the coding and comparing of data to identify similarities and differences and identifying themes that emerged from the data collected.

3.3. Research design

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 46), a research design is "the plan of how to proceed in determining" the nature of the phenomenon being studied. This study used a case study design which, according to Cohen et al (2007), involves "looking at a case or a phenomenon in a real-life context, usually employing many types of data". This type of design stresses the importance of events speaking "for themselves, than being largely interpreted, evaluated or judged by the researcher". According to Cohen et al (2007), case studies are "a step to action".

A notable strength of a case study is that it can be embarked upon by one empirical investigator without a full research team. This proved very convenient for me as a novice researcher because, other than peer review, I did not need any assistance from other researchers.

I found a qualitative case study design to be more advantageous because of its benefits in dealing with the subtleties and intricacies of complex but natural situations, its ability to allow for the use of a multiplicity of research methods and its suitability for small-scale research by concentrating efforts on a single research site or just a few sites, as is the case in this investigation and as supported by Denscombe (1998: 38). In this research I sampled more than one site, which meant that I conducted multiple case study research. Four research sites were sampled to provide a thick description of the phenomenon.

3.4. Research Methodology

3.4.1. Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling, according to Cohen et al (2007), is usually used in qualitative studies; hence this study because it is mainly qualitative and employed purposive sampling. Babbie (2008: 204) avers that it is appropriate to select a sample on the basis of knowledge of the population, its elements and the purpose of the study. My sampling frame comprised a list of all unions, SGBs, principals and teachers in the chosen school district in Gauteng province.

My selection of the research sites was based on obtaining schools for study that are within close proximity to one another in order to save on time and costs and to ensure that I dealt with a largely homogeneous population. (Homogeneous in the sense that they are formerly disadvantaged township schools and anecdotal evidence points to these schools as being adversely affected by unionism and teacher union activities.) Participants were selected from four schools, two primary and two secondary schools.

a) Selection of research sites

While I had an idea of the kind of schools I wanted to form the study, I was unable to access some of the schools that I had initially earmarked (I felt that they would have provided me with participants who would be most relevant for the study). This delayed the start of the data collection process. I think the problem arose because the topic I had selected was contentious and of a political nature.

After losing valuable time waiting for access to two of the four schools as a result of appointments for the research interviews being postponed, I ended up committing to other schools as research sites. Fortunately, the decision to use other schools was not a difficult one since they were in the same vicinity as the schools I had initially chosen.

b)   Selection of participants

Four township schools in a Gauteng school district were sampled with the following participants being selected: school managers, ordinary members of unions (teachers)/union leaders), and the parent component of the SGBs. All teachers, SMT members and principals at the sampled sites were unionised, therefore they were able to provide me with a "thick and rich description" of what happened at their respective schools regarding the subject of school-level teacher unionism. It was important to hear their voices as the rank and file members of the unions at this level, because given their position in the union hierarchy they were better placed to provide data on the topic that were original and authentic.

Group interviews were conducted with SMTs at the sampled schools. In the SGBs, three to four parent members (with preference being given to the chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary and the deputy secretary in cases where all such office bearers are parents) of each sampled school were interviewed in group interviews. These participants were selected, as Latess (2008: 7) indicates, to provide input and to know that their voices are being heard. They were also seen to be able to "Provide a rich description of the participants' perceptions (experiences) of their life-worlds" in this case study, as Creswell (2007: 292) and others suggest.

Serious obstacles were at time experienced with the sampled participants from different stakeholder groups, because of the nature of their roles and their status in the schools. For example, it was difficult to arrange a time for the SGB members to be interviewed in groups as they resided in different sections of the townships, worked at different places and left work at different times. However, through persistence and constant communication and the creation of rapport between me and the participants, all of them were finally interviewed. The principals' and teachers' busy schedules at times resulted in several interviews being rescheduled. At one school the principal postponed the interview until she finally resigned as principal without having been interviewed.

3.4.2. Data collection

As Creswell (2007: 118) notes, data collection involves "a series of activities". Such activities enabled me to collect useful information to answer the research question. Before visiting the selected site/s, I ensured that proper arrangements were made with the powers that be at the sites (sampled schools) and a 'gatekeeper' was identified to avoid confusion and intrusion. At all the sites the principals served as gatekeepers and gave me permission to conduct the research and also made all the necessary arrangements such as organising the venues and the participants for me.

While sharing of participants' experiences of teacher unions at school level, it was I who became the student. According to Creswell et al (2007: 296), the fact that the researcher was involved with the participants, made it necessary to continually recognise participants' biases, values and personal interests with regard to the research topic and the process.

When interviewing the participants, I would ensure that there were few interruptions as I listened carefully to what they had to say about their experiences of school-level teacher unionism.

During the interviews my role was to observe and listen carefully so that I could maintain ethical behaviour at all times, for example it would have been unethical for me to interrupt respondents during interviews since this might make them feel that their responses were not appreciated or that they were not giving appropriate responses. During the interviews some of the participants sounded as if they were giving me exaggerated responses, thinking that I would enjoy hearing what they had to say.

However, I always patiently made sure that I gently pressed them until they gave me the answer that were intended by the questions; that is, providing data relevant for the study. In group interviews, especially with the SGBs, I often had to struggle with one or two dominant members. I sometimes directed questions to individual members/participants whom I thought were less involved to elicit responses from them as well.

Based on the above discussion it is evident that a variety of data sources were used in this study. These included people at the sampled sites: principals, SGB members, teachers and SMT members. Moreover, a variety of documents, such as the minutes of meetings, notices, unions' constitutions and books, were analysed.

From the outset I found it important to use triangulation as a process for validating the data I collected. I did so by comparing the information obtained from the documents (minutes, invitations to meetings, notices, union policy documents etc) with the data collected from

the interviews. In this way I was able to cross-check in order to "clarify the meaning" of the data collected (Stake, in Creswell et al, 2007: 296).

(a) Data collection strategies

(i) Document Sourcing

Documents are sources of information and include minutes of SMTs, SGBs and school-based unions. They also include notices, published and unpublished speeches, invitations to meetings and other relevant document sources. It proved very difficult to get hold of union documents from some schools as union committee members on site were sceptical about providing these documents. However, in some schools union members readily provided the documentary proof requested by the researcher.

One school union site committee provided union minutes and notices of meetings, while at another school the site committee provided a petition drawn up by members complaining to the principal about a variety of issues in the school. Minutes of the short listing and interview committee during which the union had declared a dispute relating to the selection process were also provided. The contents of these documents were analysed and interpreted to arrive at particular conclusions about the phenomenon being studied.

(ii) Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews were used as the data collection strategy in this study. An interview protocol, with open-ended questions, was designed prior to the interviews. The interviews were held with the identified participants and probed their experiences of teacher unionism at school

level. During the interviews I used a recording device so that I would not miss valuable information. The information obtained from the tape recording was later transcribed verbatim. The recording device was able to record sixty-eight hours of talk time and to store it permanently, thereby allowing me an uninterrupted and incorruptible data bank.

The choice of semi-structured interviews was encouraged by Creswell's (2007: 87) argument that they are commonly used to corroborate data emerging from other data sources and that they allow for the use of a predetermined set of questions the answers to which can be probed in order to obtain a deep understanding of them. Respondents were asked open-ended questions so that they could give their own views to the questions. Babbie (2008: 272) maintains that qualitative research relies almost exclusively on open-ended questions. During the interviews a number of challenges were experienced. As Bailey (1994: 175) suggests, it is not uncommon for an interviewer to return to one research site several times before an interview is finally granted.

 In this study I found it very difficult to get all the participants into the interviews sessions on my arrival at an interview site, even when I had satisfied myself that all the necessary arrangements had been made with the gatekeepers in advance. Another challenge was the fact that very often I found it crucial to rephrase questions to some respondents, making it difficult for me when juxtaposing responses from different participants; this had the potential of changing the originally intended meaning of the questions. Accordingly, I made sure that my paraphrasing sought to extract from the participants the same answers as the original question was intended to get. I always rephrased questions and brought the participants back to the topic. In addition, I sometimes directed the questions to those participants whom I thought were less involved to elicit responses from them as well.

I also noted all observations made before, during and after the interviews because these later became crucial for my interpretation of the data as they provided me with cues to the participants' emotions. My data collection followed a series of steps that included, among others, collecting data, transcribing the data, sifting the data to remove those which were unwanted and irrelevant, grouping the data according to emerging themes, interpreting the data and analysing the data so that meaning could be derived from the data collected. This process was both cyclical and iterative in nature; meaning that one had to move around from step to step or from one step to another and back to the same step again.

3.4.3. Data interpretation and analysis

(a) Data interpretation

Data interpretation entailed "a reflexive, reactive interaction between" me, as the investigator (researcher), and the de-contextualised data, which "are already interpretations of social encounter". Thematic analysis was applied in order to observe the emerging themes, during data collection, as well as after collection. I allowed the participants to interpret the data for me through their experiences by allowing them to reflect on what they had said during the research interviews. The data had to be interpreted as closely to what the participants wanted to say as possible.

(b) Data analysis

Cohen et al (2007:461) define qualitative data analysis as involving organisation, "accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the

participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities". Qualitative data analysis is heavy on interpretation and therefore the data are less a completely accurate representation and more a reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the decontexualised data (Creswell, 2007, 368). Selangor (2005) point out that "qualitative research has the unique goal of facilitating the meaning-making process" and that the construction of meaning is the task of qualitative research.

Content analysis was used in this research to analyse all the documents that were available to me prior, during and after the study was conducted. Content analysis is defined by Cohen et al (2007: 475) as the process of summarising and reporting written data. In this study documents that were analysed using this technique included minutes of meetings from two schools, notices of meetings, constitutions of teacher unions, and one list of grievances from SADTU members in one of the schools.

During content analysis I broke down the written text in the documents I had to analyse, and took account of the units that appeared and how frequently they appeared in the data. These units were then compared with the concepts in the conceptual framework and the research questions to identify any correlations. The use of both thematic and content analysis provided strong potential for generalisation. Content analysis was the most appropriate analysis strategy for collecting data for this study and, when doing so, I looked at the following:

➢ Word frequency, i.e. how often the word appeared in the data showed its importance.

➢ whether the word appears or not and,

➢ The strength or intensity of the statement or words used.

A closer look at Table 3.1 shows that union representatives are more likely to be engaged in activities that will remove them from the school than those that will assist teachers or learners. In comparison with the 31 union meetings attended by teachers, there was no attendance to teacher development issues and only one catch-up programme to assist learners lagging behind as a result of strike action or other union activities. In my analysis of the research data, I also looked at what Babbie (2008: 423) had to say about qualitative data analysis and also employed some of his guidelines on data analysis.

The simultaneous use of data analysis strategies, as proposed by Becker, Geer, and Babbie, would later provide me with a stronger base from which to generalise the research results, as well as increased transferability, dependability, trustworthiness and credibility – as a form of crystallisation (triangulation) during data analysis.

According to Babbie (2008, 423) open coding is the starting point for qualitative coding in data analysis. The researcher begins with a body of text and seeks to identify the concepts contained in it. During data analysis I developed my own way of analysing the data by highlighting the text in different colours as a form of coding, with similar concepts being highlighted in the same colour.

When I scanned through the data later to look for patterns I found it a lot easier to group concepts with similar meanings together. The concepts were then compared to the theory that I adopted earlier during the analysis of the literature to see whether there were consistencies and whether the data collected answered my research questions. This was done by comparing the codes with the conceptions that formed the basis of my theory.

3.5. Credibility, trustworthiness and dependability

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) write that if a piece of educational research is invalid, then it is worthless. In this study some of the ways that were employed to ensure a high degree of credibility were being honest, ensuring "depth, richness and scope of the data achieved", selecting participants who provided information that was relevant to my study, and reflexivity on my part as the researcher, that is, keeping my biases in check throughout the research process. At times, owing to the fact that I had in-depth knowledge of the topic, I felt tempted to air my views or challenge the participants' opinions of school-based teacher unionism. This would, however, have been unethical and insensitive on my part and in my role as researcher.

The suitability of the term 'reliability' in qualitative research is disputed by many researchers and therefore terms such as 'credibility', 'consistency', 'neutrality', 'conformability', 'applicability', 'trustworthiness', 'transferability' and 'dependability' are preferred. To ensure dependability (reliability), I employed the following strategies to ensure the findings from both the document analysis and interviews were similar: member checks, debriefing by peers and triangulation. As Creswell suggests (2007: 207), as the researcher, I had to prolong my engagement with participants in the field, conducting in-depth interviews so that I could build up trust with the participants and collect rich descriptive data.

In order to explicitly record my thoughts on the participants' responses, I kept a reflexive journal. I also ensured that an audit trail existed to assure "both dependability and conformability" (Creswell, 2007:204). The intention here was to show fellow researchers the exact path I had travelled in reaching my conclusions.

YEAR	Protection of members	Representation of members	Meetings to be attended during working hours	Memorial services during working hours	Involvement in sports	Disputes on interviews	Development of teachers by unions	Involvement in catch-up
							Table3.1: Frequency of identified concepts relating to teacher unions showing participation in school union activities since 2009	
2009	02	04	16	01	01	-	-	-
2010	02	01	07	02	-	01	-	01 (NAPTOSA)
2011	04	02	08	03	01	02	02 (NAPTOSA)	-
2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	08	07	31	06		03		01

3.6 Ethical considerations

The nature of ethical issues in qualitative research according to Orb, Eisenhauer, and Wynand (2000: 93) is subtle and different from quantitative research. I had to keep this important fact in the back of my mind especially during my visits to the research sites in order to ensure that my access into those sites might not create discomfort among my participants. According to Babbie (2008: 66) "ethical considerations are not always apparent to us."

I did everything possible, however, to consider all possible dilemmas that I would come across in this study. I ensured that I obtained ethical clearance from the ethics committee in the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Education. Moreover, I requested permission to conduct research in the schools that I sampled from both the provincial department of education (GDE) and the management of these schools, as well as writing letters to each school principal and the SGB requesting permission to conduct research at their respective schools. I also wrote and personally delivered informed consent letters to all the participants requesting them to participate in the study.

The participants were given honest and detailed information on this study, as well as a copy of the interview schedule. Accordingly, informed consent was obtained from all the participants.

Leedy and Omrod (2001) stated that the researcher must make certain that respondents are not exposed to any unwarranted physical or psychological damage. Accordingly, I was at all times respectful, honest, and sympathetic towards the participants and provided any clarification that the participants may have needed during the study. From the outset

I clarified issues regarding confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. For confidentiality purposes, participants' responses were coded and participants' names were deleted or pseudonyms were used. Further, the results were handled and shared in a manner that does not reveal the identity of participants.

Since I used group interviews as data collection strategy I had to warn and protect all the participants against possible victimisation by, firstly, allowing participants who wanted to reserve their comments until they could raise them privately with me; and secondly, to allow participants who feared they would be victimised to withdraw or to be interviewed as individuals outside the group even though they were supposed to be part of the group interview. Subsequently, three participants did not want to be interviewed as part of the groups at two different schools. One of these participants was an SMT member while the others were SGB members.

At all times I referred to the University of Pretoria's ethical statement to ensure consistent compliance. As Cohen and Manion (2007) state, I attempted to strike a cost-benefit balance so that the impact that the study might have on the participants could be balanced with the benefits that the study might have for the society. I tried to avoid betraying the participants' trust by ensuring that the data they provided in confidence are not revealed to the public in a way that will cause anxiety and embarrassment to them (participants). One way out of doing so was a member checking exercise.

This was done by submitting the report to the participants to let them evaluate their changing attitudes (Cohen et al, 2007) and to check whether indeed both the interview transcript and the report were in line with what they had told me during the interviews. This study was subjected to peer-review – fellow researchers were used to evaluate the

research. I also did not choose a theoretical framework to arrive at predetermined particular conclusions. Ethical considerations during the research analysis and reporting included listing of 'the shortcomings and limitations' of the study.

I also acknowledged my mistakes and errors committed during this study (Babbie, 2008: 73). Awareness on my part was a trait that I had to learn and maintain to ensure that I do not bring any form of harm to the participants who took part in this study voluntarily but with full knowledge that the researcher will take all the necessary precautions to protect them from any form of harm – be it emotional, physical, psychological or in any other form.

3.7. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the way in which I arrived at the methodologies that I chose and why and how I used these methodologies to collect, interpret, analyse and report on the data so that I arrived at the conclusions which I made at the end of this study. As proposed by Latess (2008), the basic way in which a researcher can investigate an organisation such as a school is through the experiences of people who make up the organisation or are involved in carrying out some facet of the process in that organisation. *"Social abstractions are best understood through the experiences and perspectives of those individuals or groups who are the stakeholders"* (Latess, 2008: 30). In this study therefore, in my attempt to collect data that would be useful, I explored the experiences and views of the different stakeholder groups on the phenomenon being investigated at the chosen research sites; that is, the schools.

This chapter also expounds on ethical issues considered during all the stages of this study, that is, from the formulation of the topic, the research questions, the purpose of the study to the sampling of both the research sites and the participants. It also deals with how the participants were treated during the study especially during and after the interviews, how the study's findings would be reported and how the rights of participants would be protected and what would be considered as wrong or right by the research community (ethical considerations).

The following chapter deals with the presentation of data. It presents in detail the processing of data; that is, how the data collected were interpreted and analysed and whether the data served the purpose for which they were collected. The chapter also provided detailed information about the research sites and the participants from which data were collected to help the audience understand the background to this study. The chapter also looked at whether the data collected answered the research questions and were aligned with the conceptual framework.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data presentation

4.1. Introduction and purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore teacher unionism in one Gauteng school district by focusing on the activities of unions at the site or school level. During this exploration, I concentrated on the types of unionism described in the literature, that is, professional unionism, protectionist or defensive unionism, and adversarial unionism. The data collected were analysed to find out if indeed the data were fit for the purpose of this study and to ascertain what the nature of school-based teacher unionism is and how teacher unionism is viewed and experienced by stakeholder groups.

I collected a variety of data, for example, documents (minutes, notices, newspaper articles, etc) and interview data. Interview data were obtained from interviews conducted with principals and groups comprising SGB and SMT members. The participants in the group interviews held with SGB members came from the parent component only, as the other components were interviewed in terms of their role as educators and the principals were interviewed in one-on-one interviews. The interviews were semi-structured and the same interview schedule was employed for all the various participants.

4.2. Overview of schools as research sites

It is essential here to include a brief outline of each of the schools from which data were collected so as to ensure that a correct interpretation is made taking into account the context of and the culture pertaining to each school. Selangor (2005:759, 760) makes the point that "many qualitative researchers believe that the best way to understand any phenomenon is to view it in its context and the best way to understand what is going on is to move into the culture or the organisation being studied and experience what it is like to be part of it". While I did not spent as much time at the research site as ethnographers would have; I did ensure that I visited the research site regularly to establish trust and rapport between myself and the participants as a way of affirming the preceding point made by Selangor.

With my audience in mind, I have provided a description of each of the research sites visited to allow the reader to obtain an understanding of what informed my interpretation and to bridge the gap between my interpretation of the data in this study and the understanding that my intended audience will have of the study's report. The context within which the study took place is that of schools that are fundamentally similar as they are all found in predominantly black townships, thus allowing for a generalisation to be made in terms of the conclusions arrived at in this study.

School A

This school was a primary school, consisting of about 900 learners and 35 educators. The school is headed by a male principal and two deputy principals, one being female and the other male. The female deputy head, who belongs to a different union to the other SMT

members, was not around when the principal issued the SMT members with letters inviting them to participate in the study. The principal, the male deputy and the HODs are all members of the same union – SADTU.

The setting for the interviews was the deputy principal's office, but the arrangements were not made well in advance, as I requested. On my arrival I had to wait for about an hour for the principal, who was somewhere in the school but could not be readily located by the administrator who received me, despite the fact that I had made prior arrangements for the research interviews and had agreed with the principal on the time the interview was to commence. When the principal finally arrived, he helped me by arranging for the SGB members to be interviewed to come to school immediately – according to the principal, the parent component does not stay at the school but comes to school when there is a matter to be attended to – of cause they don't have to be at school all the time because they are not employees of the schools.

It was apparent that even though these SGB members had signed consent forms and the principal had called me to inform me about their availability for the interviews at agreed times and dates, they were not prepared for the interviews. It was very noisy outside the interview room and the interview finally commenced exactly an hour and a half after my arrival. The table below provides information on the stakeholder groups or participants who took part in the study.

Table 4.1: Participant information at school A: a primary school

Research Site: School A – Primary School					
Participants & Position	**Structure/Union Affiliation**	**Gender**	**Race**	**Age Category**	**Years of Experience**
Principal 1A	SADTU	Male	Black	41–50	21
Educator 1A CS1	NAPTOSA	Male	Black	31–40	12
Educator 2A CS1	SADTU	Female	Black	31–40	10
Deputy Principal 1A	SADTU	Male	Black	41–50	19
HOD 1A	SADTU	Male	Black	41–50	16
HOD 2A	SADTU	Female	Black	31–40	17
HOD 3A	SADTU	Female	Black	31-40	18
HOD 4A	SADTU	Female	Black	41–50	21
Secretary	SGB	Female	Black	51–60	3
Chairperson	SGB	Male	Black	51–60	6
Deputy chairperson	SGB	Female	Black	41–50	4

Table 4.1 above provides demographic information on each of the individuals or stakeholder groups at the school level that participated in the study. This information was intended to provide a deeper interpretation and analysis of the data collected. The table shows the position the participant holds in the school, their union affiliation (if applicable), their population group, gender, age and experience as a teacher (principals, SMT members and teachers).

For SGB members, years of experience refers to the number of years an SGB member has served on the SGB. It should be noted that three of the four schools sampled for this study were situated in the townships and one in a small village. These schools were all staffed by black educators serving entirely black communities.

School B

School B was a primary school consisting of about 1 200 learners. An appointment was made to interview members of the SMT at seven o'clock in the morning. The principal, who is female and a former SADTU turned NAPTOSA member, arrived very early in the morning before everybody else apart from the gatekeeper, and welcomed me into her spacious office.

However, the SMT requested that the interviews be postponed to a later date since some members were away attending a district meeting – I acceded to their request. The SGB group interviews were also postponed because although the chairperson of the SGB, part of the parent component, turned up the other SGB members did not know I was coming. I, nevertheless, proceeded with the individual interviews with the principal and the two sampled teacher participants.

Later, during the SMT group interview, the deputy principal did not make herself or himself available. We called her/him twice without success until the other SMT members suggested that we continue with the interview session. All the SMT members except for one member of an advanced age and another junior member of the SMT (junior by virtue of her/his appointment and age) were members of the same union. The member of an advanced age was by her/his own confession not interested in the subject of unionism.

This HOD said that she/he joined the teacher union just because it sounded as if it were compulsory to do so. She/he said that she/he could not choose between the two unions operating in the school, hence she/he joined both. This showed, like she/he said, that she/he was not interested in what unions do but was pressured to join because it was thought to be compulsory to do so.

Although this member was present during the group interview with fellow SMT members, she/he refused to respond to many of the questions asked during the session, except for a few instances where she/he explained her/his stance on teacher unions. Later, after the interview session was concluded, the member confided in me that her/his religious beliefs did not allow her/him to participate in politics. This gave credence to my earlier suggestion that unionism is a sensitive and political topic. The participant indicated that she/he does not attend site meetings arranged by either of the two unions, NAPTOSA and SADTU.

Table 4.2. Participant information at school B – a primary school

Research Site: School B – Primary School					
Participants & Position	**Structure/Union Affiliation**	**Gender**	**Race**	**Age Category**	**Years of Experience**
Principal 1B	SADTU	Female	Black	51–60	19
Teacher 1B CS	NAPTOSA	Female	Black	41–40	15
Educator 2B CS1	SADTU	Male	Black	31–40	12
Deputy Principal 1B	SADTU	Male	Black	41–50	17
HOD	SADTU & NAPTOSA (Dual membership)	Female	Black	51–60	30
HOD 1B	SADTU	Male	Black	41–50	17
HOD 2B	SADTU	Female	Black	31–40	13
HOD 3B	SADTU	Female	Black	41–50	19

HOD 4B	NAPTOSA	Female	Black	41–50	19
Secretary	SGB	Female	Black	31–40	2
Chairperson	SGB	Male	Black	41–50	6
Deputy chairperson	SGB	Female	Black	41–50	3

School C

School C is a secondary school with an enrolment of about 800 learners from Grades 8 to 12 and 35 teachers. It is headed by a male principal who happens to be a SADTU member. The school falls into the category of underperforming schools (with a pass rate of less than 70%) in the district and receives constant curriculum support that includes the Secondary School Improvement Programme (SSIP) organised by the provincial head office of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE). This means that the school and others in the same category receive help from expert educators to teach their Grade 12 learners on Saturdays and during the holidays, in addition to resource packs to be used during these SSIP extra lessons.

I arrived at six in the morning for my interview with the principal, who arrived thirty minutes later for the interview. At the gate I was met by a friendly security official. The interview with the principal as well as that with the SGB took place in the principal's office. The atmosphere was conducive to conducting the research as it was very quiet. The principal was very friendly and insisted that I tell him if I needed any assistance during the interviews. After the interviews he took me to one of the HOD's offices where he had arranged for the SMT members to meet me for the group interview.

One SMT member did not participate in the research and declined to give any reason for this. I allowed her/him to leave the interview session without coercing her/him into taking part. The majority of SMT members in the school are SADTU members including the principal. The other union organising within the school is NAPTOSA which has a handful of affiliated teachers.

Table: 4.3. Participants information at school C – a secondary school

Research Site: School C – A Secondary School					
Participants & Position	**Structure/Union Affiliation**	**Gender**	**Race**	**Age Category**	**Years of Experience**
Principal 1C	SADTU	Male	Black	51–60	24
Educator 1C CS1	NAPTOSA	Female	Black	51–60	23
Educator 2C CS1	SADTU	Female	Black	41–50	19
Deputy Principal 1C	SADTU	Male	Black	41–50	19
HOD 1C	SADTU	Female	Black	41–50	15
HOD 2C	SADTU	Female	Black	41–50	13
Secretary	SGB	Female	Black	41–50	5
Chairperson	SGB	Female	Black	31–40	3
Deputy chairperson	SGB	Male	Black	41–50	6

School D

This was the smallest school among the participating schools with an enrolment of about 300 learners and 16 teachers. The principal was female. The school is categorised as underperforming by the district based on the Grade 12 results; accordingly it participates in the SSIP. The majority of teachers in this school are SADTU members. The Grade 12 results of the past three years were well below the fifty percent pass rate and for the previous three years this had been the worst performing school.

This was the first school that granted me permission to conduct interviews, but was the last school in which I actually conducted them because the principal kept moving the goal posts as far as interview dates were concerned. I even suggested to the principal that the research interview be conducted at home or at another neutral venue over the weekend, but the request was turned down.

During this time the principal cited various commitments as reasons for not taking part in the interview. I found this reasoning by the principal of the school consistent with some of the reasons Bailey (1994: 186 & 187) gave for participants refusing to participate in interviews. The fact that SGB parent component members were said to be no longer active or interested in the SGB activities and thus were unavailable was also cited.

I found this school to have all the hallmarks needed in a research site for my research and as having the potential to provide both interesting and relevant data for my study. I therefore hung in there until my requests were granted. The male SMT members who were the only two HODs in the school had to be interviewed individually because I could not secure an appointment with them at the same time. By the time I managed to make an appointment

to interview the first participant at the site, the management of the school was already

under a new acting principal.

Table: 4.4. Participants information at school D – a secondary school

Research Site: School D – Secondary School					
Participants & Position	**Structure/Union Affiliation**	**Gender**	**Race**	**Age Category**	**Years of Experience**
Acting principal 1D	SADTU	Female	Black	41–50	18
Teacher 1D CS1	SADTU	Female	Black	41–50	19
Teacher 4D CS1	SADTU	Female	Black	51–60	22
HOD 1D	SADTU	Male	Black	51–60	21
HOD 2D	SADTU	Male	Black	41–50	17
Secretary	SGB	Male	Black	41–50	4
Chairperson	SGB	Male	Black	61–70	4
Deputy chairperson	SGB	Male	Black	51–60	3

4.3. Document analysis

There was not much text material that I could retrieve from those sites where the research was conducted except for meeting minutes of the SGBs, SMTs and the staff, two petitions directed to the principal in one school, notices of meetings to union members and one letter and petitions to a principals notifying him/her of declaration of dissatisfaction (dispute) regarding recently held job interviews at one school. The analysis focused on, as earlier indicated the following:

➢ Word frequency, i.e. how frequently the word appeared in the document retrieved.

➢ whether the word appears or not and,

➢ The strength or intensity of the statement.

The table below shows those themes or categories that where extracted from the text data that was collected during the research. The table shows how frequently a theme appeared or was implicitly stated in the various documents that were collected. Short extracts of each of the themes from the documents are outlined below:

➢ **Safeguarding of teachers' rights:** "we feel that our members' **rights** to be represented in the interviews were ignored". This was, but one example of school based unions' belief that they only sit in the interview processes as their members' **representatives** but not to ensure that the proceedings run smoothly.

➢ **Representation of members:** "Dear comrades send one of the comrades to **represent** you..." In a letter to the principal one statement read: "it is our responsibility to ensure that our members are **represented** in this school..." in a

petition though this matter appeared to be misplaced the union alluded to the fact that they "will forward names of teachers to **represent** us in the SGB during SGB elections to be held next year." A particular union cannot forward teachers to the SGB to represent them. Teachers in the SGB are elected or should be elected by the entire teaching staff in that particular school irrespective of union affiliation.

➢ **Protection of teachers:** "We are worried about the unannounced visits in our classes, whether this is a witch hunting exercise or else" (sic). It appears here the union leaders at this site don't expect the principal or members of the SMT to pay random visits to classes to monitor and support teachers; instead they resorted to protectionist-defensive tactics in order to protect their members. This was in the petition to the school principal. In the SGB minutes the following was written; "they can **protect** their teacher but our children have their **right** to learn" (sic).

➢ **Disruptive nature of unions** – this was evident in the notices mostly because meetings were called during school hours and most of the notices were signed by the principals on the date of the meeting (as the date stamp bore testimony to this); meaning that the principals could not properly adjust the school programme to accommodate these meetings.

➢ **Power relations:** one SMT members directed a question to the principal: "We were told in the union meeting that we must not sign documents at schools because we will end up incriminating ourselves, now what must I do if a teacher refuses to sign a monitoring tool?" the principal retorted; "show him who is the boss, show him who has authority, charge him!" This appears to be a matter of power wielding and power relations between union leaders and principals in our township schools.

- ➢ **Collaboration with other stakeholder groups:** "We have requested the principal not to attend this meeting we want to help him run the school without charging you comrades, please let us do what we are here for."

These were, but just few examples extracted from the documents analysed for the purpose of this research.

The following table provides an analysis of the documents retrieved for this research project. It depicts themes that emerged from the data as analysed in the retrieved documents. The table also shows from which type of documents the data were retrieved. The regularity of the appearance of the themes in the data shows the importance the participants attached to each.

Table 4.5. Text data analysis according to themes

THEMES appearing in text	Petition/s	Minutes	Notices	Letters
Protection of members/teachers	Appeared three times.	Appeared four times.	Did not appear	Appeared twice
Defending of members/ teachers	Appeared four times.	Appeared Six times.	Did not appear	Appeared once
Disruptive character of unions.	Implied once	Implied twice.	Implied eight times (giving notice of working hours-meetings) and the school date stamp showed that the principals are informed late.	
Collaboration with other stakeholders	Not appearing	Appeared three times.	Not appearing.	Implied once.
Alienation	Not appearing	Not appearing	Not appearing	Not appearing
Power-relations	Once	Appearing once and implied once	Not appearing	Implied once
Representation of teachers.	Appearing thrice	Appearing four times	Appearing once (calling one union representative per site)	Once
Safeguarding of rights	Appearing twice	Twice	Appeared once	Appeared twice

4.4. General research analysis – responses to research questions

To familiarise myself with my data and focus the data I collected I used research questions and two conceptual frame-works I devised specifically for this purpose (refer to page 21, 24, and addendum B on page 146). I then categorised the data to isolate themes and see the emergent patterns. Data were mainly collected through interviews and to a lesser extent through document analysis (limited because of the limited volumes of relevant documents I could source during data collection) which provided me with an opportunity for triangulation. Documents used were minutes of the SMTs, SGBs, staff and union site committees (at a ratio of 3:1: 2 respectively) and notices and petitions to principals.

Document analysis was conducted using the content analysis strategy for the exploration of the phenomenon through the data that I collected to verify whether those data answered the study's research questions. The research questions are listed below and under each I tried to show how the study was able or failed to respond to each one of them (questions). Data analysis according to Dey (1993: 31) "is a process of resolving data into constituent components, in order to reveal its characteristic elements and structure".

In line with what Dey gives as the definition of data analysis, I designed the table below to give the data collected structure and make it a more meaningful product of the initial meaningless volumes of raw data. The two conceptual frame-works have been brought together in this table as devices to show the linkages between the concepts and or the themes that were not or were preconceived from literature and subsequently seen as emerging from the interview and documents data. The data here are analysed according to the secondary framework – three Rs; the roles, rights and responsibilities which are in turn categorised as being within positive (professional) or negative (traditional) unionism broad

themes or those that fall outside the scope of school-based teacher unionism. These broad themes were then broken into further categories or sub-themes, again guided by the research questions and the highbred conceptual frame-work as previously outlined (see addendum G ON PAGE 167, tables 4.6 and 4.8. on pages 88 and 116 respectively).

Table 4.2 depicts the themes according to research questions looking at both the views and experiences of all stakeholder groups but also those views and experiences that were not expected from the respondents which fell outside the scope of the school. This table also compares responses of these groups of participants. These two tables helped me ensure that data analysis process became a rigorous and intensive process that must yield dependable, trustworthy, credible and transferable conclusions and or findings.

Teachers', principals', SGBs' and SMTs' views and experiences were then merged to help me arrive at particular conclusions which were compared with the study's research purpose, conceptual frame works and the research questions (see also addendum B on page 131). Right at the beginning of data collection data were sifted and sorted in order to remove the chaff and superfluous or irrelevant masses of useless perceptions and concepts that might not help the study achieve its purpose.

I must state here that my data analysis process started right at the beginning of data collection and continued well into the last phase of the compilation of the research findings and report writing. This was an iterative process, meaning that I had to move backwards and forth to make sure that valuable bits of data that emerged at any stage would be compared with other sensible bits of data already identified. This was without doubt a tedious, nerve wrecking and back-breaking exercise but yes, worth doing, in order to make a contribution to the knowledge base in the realm of unionism in education and schools in particular.

During the content analysis I also checked whether the exploration of the phenomenon

through the data that I collected had indeed answered the study's research questions.

Table 4.6. Data categories or themes aligned to the conceptual frame work			
Main categories supporting the conceptual frame work(school based)	**Categories from the main conceptual framework**		**Categories outside the conceptual frameworks (issues that are not within the scope of the school)**
	Negative (traditional) unionism	**Positive (professional) unionism**	
1. Roles	- Protects teachers	- Focus on teacher development	- Play political role in the schools, e.g canvass votes for political party/ies. - Negotiate conditions of service for members/teachers
2. Rights	- Defends (unproductive) teachers - Disrespects others rights (e.g. learners' rights to uninterrupted learning) - Misuse the right to time-off during working hours.	- Safeguards learners' rights to uninterrupted learning. - Respect other stakeholders' rights. - Teachers have legal rights to join unions or take part in their activities but do this reasonably.	- Exercise the right to strike. - Exercise the right to join and organise for political parties – this right is abused when it interrupts the teachers' core business – in the main this is a challenge that bedevils SADTU members.

3. Responsibilities	- Act unprofessionally
	
	- Engage in union activities during teaching time.
	
	- School-based union leaders lack capacity to execute their responsibilities.
		- Observe teaching time
		
		- Support teachers.
		
		- Collaborate with other stakeholders
		
		- Keep educators informed of developments in education.
			- Anecdotes about bad experiences in other schools but not where participants are employed.
			
			- Irresponsible accusations against other unions.
			
			- Differences between SADTU and NAPTOSA such as:
			  • SADTU being more militant while NAPTOSA is more restrained.
			  • NAPTOSA being more professionally inclined than SADTU, etc.

Table 4.7. Emergent themes – how data were interpreted and analysed

PARTICIPANT GROUP	THEMES (views on unionism)	THEMES (views on school-based unionism)	Unexpected Themes (Responses)	Main Conceptual Framework	Supporting Conceptual Frame work (The 3 Rs)
Teachers	- Intervening on behalf of teachers - Protection of members - Focus on self aggrandizement. - Position mongering. - SADTU more politically oriented than professionally oriented.	- SADTU bullies everyone. - Sense of alienation among members. - Professional development of teachers - Power wielding	- Anecdotes about other schools.	- Protectionist-defensive unionism. - Professional unionism.	- Roles - Rights - Responsibilities
Principals	- Protecting members. - Safeguard rights of teachers. - SADTU is unprofessional. - NAPTOSA is more professional.	- No role for school based unionism. - Non-/collaborative. - Neglect of duties in favour of union activities. - Dereliction of duties due to arrogance.	- Shows interest in short listings and interviews and not other school activities.	- Defensive unionism. - More politics and less professional activities.	- Roles - Rights - Responsibilities
SGBs	- Protects teachers. - Don't care about learners' future. - Ensure gender parity.	- No consultation on the activities they hold in the school.	- Employer must give teachers higher salaries.	- Unprofessional conduct (negative unionism)	- Roles - Rights - Responsibilities
SMTs	- Protect members - Support members. - Represent members.	- Don't work with the SMT (un-collaborative). - Affect the SMT activities adversely	- Strikes are time wasting. - Involvement of unions in salary negotiations.	- Protectionist-defensive unionism – protects members. - Professional unionism – support members.	- Roles - Rights - Responsibilities

4.5. Responses to research questions

4.5.1. Responses to research question 1.

The research questions were meant to guide the study. Therefore, at all levels of the study these questions and the main purpose of the study had to be kept in mind. For example, the literature review was based on the main research questions and the research purpose. During this review, it was therefore critical to cross-check whether the questions posed for my study had not already been answered in previous studies of this phenomenon.

Research question 1: What are stakeholder groups' views of school-based unionism in one school district in Gauteng province?

This research question sought to assist me as the researcher in exploring the views that the various school stakeholder groups had of the phenomenon I studied. The stakeholder groups represented by the individual or group participants showed that the views they hold about school-based unionism are varied, sometimes similar but also divergent in certain instances.

The educators, including most SMT members and one principal of the four who were interviewed, thought that school-based teacher unions are good for ensuring that teachers' interests are taken care of at school level. However, there were a few cases where the teachers themselves thought that teacher unions were not doing anything significant at school level except for serving as messengers between the union upper structures and the teachers on site (at the school).

Members of NAPTOSA and SADTU also hold very divergent views about each other. SADTU members interviewed saw their union as proactive, democratic and radical and always taking an active interest in their members' welfare. They also thought of NAPTOSA as being too concerned about professionalism and procedures when dealing with their members' complaints, implicitly stating that their union (SADTU) is less interested in procedures and professionalism when attending to members' grievances.

a) Teachers' views on school-based teacher unionism (see addendum C)

Teachers were, out of all participants the ones who provided a thick and rich description of school-based unionism. While this study was in no way undertaken to juxtapose or contrast SADTU with NAPTOSA, it became apparent from the data that in most schools participants perceived the two unions as being miles apart as far as their role in education and their professional orientation are concerned. SADTU members castigated their site committees and labelled them as power hungry and only using these structures for the attainment of personal interests. SADTU and NAPTOSA members wittingly or unwittingly agreed that NAPTOSA was inclined to be more professional than SADTU, which was viewed as compromising democratic principles.

In the main, most teachers see school-based teacher unions as playing a role that is more about their members than anything else. The teacher participants all mentioned protection of members or teachers as the main role of teacher unions in schools, while others view unions as a unifying factor among teachers. Some described unions as less professional but more radical – an accusation directed at SADTU in particular.

The teachers who are also members of the school-level unions on which this study is focused had their own views regarding school-based teacher unionism. Generally, they see teacher unions at school level as playing a 'protectionist' role or as protectors or defenders of teachers' rights.

"The teacher unions I think they [sic] are very good because they protect us if we have problems"

The teachers interviewed, except in one school, did not see any role for teacher unions in helping the school management to run school as well nor did they see any role for these unions regarding the professionalisation of teachers. The following quotes by teacher T1A and T2B as extracted from the interview transcript bear testimony to this assertion respectively:

> *"Yeah! At the school level really if you refer to this school what i see happening is that only the reports that they (union site committees) bring from meetings but really in terms of meetings there are no regular meetings about things that happen in our school".* T1A;

> *"You know in the unions usually we (sic), the majority of teachers join for the fun of it or for reasons such as; 'so long as I can be appointed in a higher position and get better salary'. Personally there is nothing that interests me (about unions). If I was to choose to be a union member or not I will prefer not to (be one) because I don't see much gain from being a union member except that they always fight battles that they don't win".* T2B

The majority of educators interviewed, in their response to the interview questions, showed that the role of teacher unions is regarded more as being the role of traditional unions, dealing with, organising, protecting and representing teachers against what respondent T2A called "management". The following paragraphs discuss the broad views of teachers in terms of this role of teacher unions at school.

The role of teacher unionism at school level was put into perspective by respondent T1A when I asked: "If the union site committee in your school; despite what SADTU nationally was saying regarding catch up plan after the strike action; arranged one (catch up plan) for your school, do you think it could have been successful and why?" by responding as follows:

> "I don't think the educators would have agreed to that one because we were angry and anything that the department would come up with would have been rejected."

Participant T2B gave a similar answer, stating that the site committee would have not been listened to because what happens on site depends on the site members' views. It was, however, noted that most SADTU members interviewed appeared to be emphasising the protection of their members/teachers rights, while NAPTOSA emphasised teachers' obligations towards the learner. Two SADTU members referred to their union as being radical and democratic, while two NAPTOSA members referred to their union (NAPTOSA) as being professional and committed.

Teachers interviewed were all union members and in few instances some were even site committee leaders. In all the schools where the research was conducted SADTU and NAPTOSA had membership but in all instances SADTU had the majority of members. Coincidentally, in all the research sites at least one member from these two unions was

interviewed. The members were interviewed in their capacity as teachers, principals or as part of the SMT groups. To summarise teachers had two main views about school based teacher unions, i.e.

(i) Intervening on behalf of teachers (members)

The following quote bears testimony to the fact that teacher unions play an intervention role:

"If there would be something that is not well (sic) in the school they (unions) would intervene"

(ii) And protection/defence of teachers (members)

Teacher also view unions as having a protectionist or defensive role to play in ensuring maximum protection of their members in the schools, like one teacher participant said:

"They are (unions) meant to protect and defend us against principals who abuse their authority"

b) Principals' views on teacher unionism at schools

While most principals did not think it was a bad idea to have unions operating at school level they also did not think they (unions) are adding any value to the programmes at their schools. Surprisingly, this was also the view of the principal in whose school the unions had

called a joint meeting to help him/her by addressing the educators' unprofessional behaviour.

They believe this is because unions are not sure of the role they should play at school and, if they play any at school, that it is not positive except at school A, where the two unions SADTU and NAPTOSA once called a meeting to address teachers on their attitude towards their work. In this particular school teachers were said to have been dragging their feet when going to classes, arriving late for school and not taking part in some of the school activities. This was one good example of the role that can be played by school-level unions and their site committees.

All principals generally believe SADTU members do not take their teaching work seriously. The principals viewed unions and SADTU in particular as not being interested in the provision of quality education. They concurred with the teachers interviewed that SADTU members are less professional than NAPTOSA members because they conduct most of their activities during teaching time, give little or no feedback to their members even though they act as go-betweens for their members and the union's upper structures. The SADTU site committees are also said to be most active when there are promotional posts available in which they want their members to be appointed irrespective of whether they qualify or not.

SADTU is seen by all the principals interviewed as being more concerned with issues that are outside the school than those that are inside the school. One principal even went so far as to accuse site committee members of playing a role that is not in line with their union's constitution. Although principals do not have serious objections to the existence of unions in schools and see them as playing no positive role currently – except for principal P1A who thought that they should be banned from operating in schools.

Principals also pointed to the fact that school-based unions can at times be a law unto themselves in that they instruct teachers not to take part in management developed programmes. They also regard them as one of the causes of poor performance among learners, because they make teachers lose focus by concentrating on union activities rather than what they were employed to do.

The effects of school-level unionism on learners and their activities are huge; learners lose momentum if they are left by unionised teachers to attend to their union activities in the middle of the day or even the term. Even in schools where teachers are willing to do catch-up, learners are said to be finding it difficult to cope with the volume of work that needs to be covered within a short period.

The principals also pointed particularly to the fact that different unions operating in the same school do not necessarily have the same outlook on how their members should conduct themselves at work. Principals maintain that NAPTOSA is more inclined to follow school rules and procedures, while SADTU is more inclined to bypass policies to please its rank and file members. This union (SADTU) will even coerce or force principals not to take action against their wayward members.

Union site committees are also blamed for dividing staff members because of their political or union affiliation. While this research was not about outside school-based unionism and such activities, it needs to be pointed out that all participants did make mention of strikes as one of the union activities that are the school managers' Achilles' heel. School-based site-committees are perceived as not being able to manage the after-effects of strike action at their respective schools, where animosity results between teachers who want to follow the

instructions of the principals to do catch-ups and those who take the instructions from the unions not to do so.

a) SMT members' views on teacher unionism at schools (see addendum D)

The majority of the SMT members interviewed at all the schools were SADTU members. They view school-based unionism as good for schools. Most of them interpreted school-based unionism, as did most teachers, as being a protector for teachers' rights. Views of SMT members were obtained mainly from group discussions, except for one instance where one member of the SMT did not feel comfortable being interviewed with the rest of the group.

As a means of protecting this participant from possible retribution and victimisation by the group members, I acceded to the participant's request to be interviewed separately. The various stakeholder groups had a variety of views about school-based teacher unionism regarding the role played by these unions in the school. All members of the four SMT groups interviewed agreed that school-level unions are there to protect their members against possible abuse by management.

These SMT members appear not to regard themselves as abusers, but rather seemed to believe that the principals are the chief abusers of teachers' rights. The SMT members also see unions as assisting teachers when they come up against challenges at work, such as administrative problems, instances where they don't receive their salaries and or contractual issues. Two out of four SMT groups thought that unions trained members on labour matters, while the other two believed unions were not training their members. No group of SMT members interviewed alluded to the training of teachers on curriculum matters as a

responsibility of teacher unions. Only a single SMT group thought it was the role of unions to organise teachers in schools.

An overwhelming majority of SMT members interviewed felt strongly about the fact that unions should give feedback to members about the decisions taken by unions' upper structures. The SMT members, like the other stakeholder groups interviewed, thought that SADTU site stewards were outdone by NAPTOSA on the aspect of feedback from upper structures, which they said was done during union meetings. This perhaps explains why SADTU site stewards and branch office bearers leave their teaching responsibilities to attend many union branch meetings.

The issue of departmental officials' school visits to schools without informing SMT members seems to be a serious and thorny issue that encourages resistance by school-based unions. The interviewees accordingly believe that it is the responsibility of the unions to deal with this departmental attitude.

The SMT members also saw the role of school-based teacher unions as being one of protection – protection of their members' rights and interests. They also believe, however, that the unions promote laziness among their members. One SMT member, when asked what aspect of teacher unionism interests him most and why, responded by stating the following:

> "I think unions have challenges, especially SADTU which is seen as protecting the rights those teachers who are trespassing [sic] the law [sic], and only find that when you look at the policies of SADTU it is not like that. When you talk about SADTU you look at it as a union that promotes laziness."

The views of the SMT members in all the school were somewhat both in favour of the existence of unionism in schools and against.

b) SGB members' views on teacher unionism at schools

The SGB parent component appeared to have a fair opinion on the different unions operating within their schools. They also thought not all unions operating within the schools have the same effects on school activities or other stakeholder groups' activities.

From the data collected it was evident that most SGB members did not understand the role that teacher unions play at school level. They also saw the role of teacher unions as being one of *protecting* their members whenever action is taken against them by their managers. In all cases the parent component felt that unions want nothing to do with them as members of the SGB. They did not; however see the unions as conflict courting organisations at the school, but as having a role to play in the discipline of their members.

The SGB members abhorred the fact that teachers are often allowed to leave their learners when embarking on industrial action. The question of industrial action, that is, strikes by teachers; even though it is not a matter that is decided upon by teachers at individual schools – balloting for strike action takes place at national level – emerged throughout the interview sessions with the parent component of all the SGBs.

It was, however, noted that union members sometimes interfere in processes that do not require their intervention, for example at School X the educator union lodged a dispute regarding the interviews for a general assistant post. Although SGB members suggested that the unions were not doing this, they thought that they could help SGBs with the interpretation of policies through the teacher component of the SGB. SGBs regard the union

at school level as being uncooperative and having no regard for the activities of other components. As one SGB member put it:

"They don't tell us about their programmes, they disregard everybody else and put their members' interests above those of other stakeholder, especially the children."

According to most members of the SGB parent component interviewed, unions at school level appear not to have school-based programmes of their own. They are, therefore, seen as responding to programmes of the upper structures and, in the absence of school-based programmes, very few union activities are seen in schools. Unions are, however, seen as ensuring that their own members are appointed to promotion posts with no regard for the suitability of such candidates.

A number of SGB members, however, were ambivalent about unionism – they felt that it was good on the one hand, while bad on the other. They maintained that unions help teachers to understand departmental policies and laws so that they are not charged unnecessarily for contravening them. One participant demonstrated this ambivalence towards the unions with the following:

"I see this union thing as right and on the other side as not good. It can be good on helping their members when they are treated unfairly by the school management, but at times they protect wrong teachers when principals rightfully protect them."

The above point shows that there are indeed different kinds of unionism: that which protects without advising members on their shortcomings and that which emphasises professionalism among its rank and file at school level. Unions are also viewed as striving for social justice especially for women teachers through the promotion of gender equality. This

is done especially when the site or school-based union leaders participate in short-listing and interview processes for promotional posts. The following excerpt from one of the SGB participants bears testimony to this:

> *"It helps with gender equality issues especially during interviews where you find that female teachers are not promoted because of their gender but through unions they are assisted and end up being given those promotions".*

It is evident from the data collected that most members of the SGB parent component, while believing that unions are only concerned with protecting the rights of their members, also perceive them as not being helpful to them (SGBs) and their school going children. For example, in School C when asked about what she thought about teacher unions, participant C1 responded by saying: "*it is right but they must not disturb learning".* They (SGBs), like most of the principals interviewed, view SADTU as being less interested in teachers' professional standards than NAPTOSA, which they view as being committed to professional ethics and standards.

> *I think that meetings and memorials must take place after working hours (contact time)."*

In some instances, the SGBs displayed a naive view of what school-based teacher unionism is. Some members even went as far as indicating that teacher unions are represented in the SGBs; a reference to the teacher component members in the SGBs. There may be several reasons for this: firstly, because teacher component members in the governing bodies show a bias towards a particular union grouping when they carry out their responsibilities as SGB members; for example during short listings and interview processes for promotional posts in

particular. Secondly, it may be because of the fact that during SGB elections, unions lobby for their members to be represented in these bodies.

4.5.2 Responses to research question 2

Research question 2: What are the experiences of stakeholder groups with school-based unionism in one school district in Gauteng province?

a)   The teachers' responses relating to experiences of teacher unionism at school level

Strikingly, the experience of the teachers was consistent with what most principals (who were also SADTU members) and two SGB members had narrated. For example, principals said that they saw unions as playing no role in the smooth running of the school except in the increased interest they continually show during interviews for promotional posts. This exaggerated interest by SADTU site committees in particular in interviews at schools was laid bare by one principal when he narrated how the union had lodged a dispute against the management with regard to a non-teaching post even though they were not part of the interviews in question.

This assertion that unions and SADTU in particular, are active at school level only during interviews for posts was subtly raised by the members of the SGB parent component as well. The participants also reported that teacher union site committees in some of the schools have instructed their members not to cooperate with district officials who visit their schools and want to come into their classes during lessons if they have not made an appointment to do so.

Some participants described school-based teacher unions as only being useful as information carriers between the site (school) and the union's upper structures. The following quote bears testimony to this assertion:

> *"Yeah! At the school level really if you refer to this school what I see happening is only the reports that they (union site committees) bring from meetings but really in terms of meetings there are no regular meetings about things that happen in our school."*
> *T1A;*

In one school, teacher unions collaborated to call their members to order in a joint meeting. This was to ensure that those teachers, who were, for example, dragging their feet to classes and arriving late at school, changed their attitude. This is consistent with what Sachs (1999: 7) calls the "activist identity" of teachers. This occurs when there is "faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities for resolving problems" together.

This is a good example of professional unionism where the development and professionalisation of teachers takes precedence. It is said that after this meeting, which was convened by the site stewards of the two different teacher unions operating in the school, teachers started doing things better: arriving early, observing teaching time and submitting work as expected.

One SADTU member explained how dissatisfied s/he was with this union. S/he labelled her union site committee members as;

> "being p*ompous, power-hungry and only interested in getting promotional posts.*"

S/he claimed to have submitted a problem to them regarding registration for a skills development course with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) which was never

resolved, let alone being given feedback on by her union which promise to do everything to ensure that the matter is addressed. She said this was one of the *"worst experiences"* s/he had with her own union.

b) Principals' responses relating to experiences of teacher unionism at school level

There is no collaboration between teacher unions and principals. Principals are often informed about union meetings on the day the meeting is to take place, sometimes just hours before the meeting, a fact that was proven when comparing the school date stamps on union notices that reflect the dates on which the principals received these notices and the dates of the meetings as reflected on the notices.

One of the striking views of school principals on the existence of teacher unions at schools is that, although they say there is nothing to appreciate about what teacher unions (especially SADTU) are doing at school, they still believe there is a role for them to play at schools. Nevertheless, they could not state categorically what role they thought the unions could or should play.

Generally, principals did not view unionism at school level as a bad idea; however, they did seem to have had bad experiences when interacting with teacher unions and therefore interpreted the unions as interfering and lacking focus and only being interested in personal achievements, such as pushing for their members to be appointed in promotional post irrespective of them being suitable for those posts or not.

c) SMT members' responses relating to experiences of teacher unionism at school level

Except for the experience that has already been alluded to under teachers experiences where in one school union site leaders called a joint meeting to address teachers attitude towards their teaching responsibilities, SMTs did not appear to reflect much on their experience of teacher unionism in schools. This is because most of them said they were passive. Their assertion that unionism is good in schools was based more on opinion than experience.

d) SGB members' responses on experiences relating to teacher unionism at school level

The SGBs accuse SADTU of not informing the SMT and the SGB in time about their activities so that contingency plans may be put in place. This was confirmed during document analysis where signed invitations to and notices of union meetings were given to principals on the day that such meetings were to be held. Participant C4 suggested that there should be one union in education so that there can be peace in schools.

e) The SGBs also bemoaned the fact that unions arrange some of their school-based activities, such as memorial services, meetings and workshops, during working hours. While some of the activities are arranged by the site level or school-based union leaders, most are organised by the upper structures with the effect that there is very little union members can do to avoid disrupting lessons. However, this still does not explain why the school-based union leaders and members cannot influence their upper structures to change their approach mostly as regards time management. As

one SGB member puts it in the statement below with regard to union activities having an adverse effect on their children.

> *"As far as the school is concerned, during workshops many teachers leave the school and learners are left roaming around.*

This was confirmed by the minutes of one union meeting at one of the schools in which the names of teachers who should represent them in the SGB after the 2012 SGB national elections in that school were discussed. Thirdly, it may also be that the SGB has very little experience with teacher unions because, as SGB members confirmed, there is no working relationship between the two parties at schools. In a few cases where SGB members do appear to have interacted with school-based teacher unions they experienced them as generally destructive. One SGB member thought they were good because they ensured that women are also appointed to management posts; a reference to social justice unionism.

4.5.3. Themes emerging from data

THEME ONE: The role of school-level unionism (protectionist-defensive unionism and professional unionism)

Broadly speaking, the participants saw the role played by school-level unionism as being both positive and negative. The two main roles of teacher unionism are a protectionist-defensive unionism role and a supportive role, also referred to as professional unionism. These two main roles, as confirmed by the study participants, are in line with the main conceptual framework devised to direct this study from the outset.

Teachers view unions as protecting teachers against management, especially when teachers are involved in acts of misconduct. School-level unions are also viewed as protecting teachers against abuse of power by school managers. The view that school-level unions are protectionist or defensive was also elucidated by one teacher who saw them (unions) as protecting teachers' working hours, meaning that the unions ensure that teachers work for only seven hours a day, as indicated in departmental policy.

"In short teacher unions are very important part of the school especially the good running of the school. Furthermore they curb the abuse of power by the principals, so they are very important."

And one teacher stated that:

"They play a role in such a way that the smooth running of the school is there. They ensure that there is no act of nepotism played at our school because if nepotism is played at our school the school will be run like a 'tuck-shop' and teaching will be affected" [sic].

The role played by teacher unions was also viewed as negative by at least one participant in all participant groups interviewed, as is shown in the participant's responses below:

"They play a very negative role, things that they are supposed to take into cognisance they are not addressed" [sic].

THEME TWO: Alienation of teachers by unions at school level

A number of teachers, three to be precise, as well as two SMT members, felt that union leaders at school level were less interested in them as union members and more in their own advancement and personal interests. These participants viewed officials of teacher unions at school level as being more interested in, for example, seeking promotions for themselves.

> *"You (one) find that a person is active in union activities but the moment he or she obtains a senior position he or she becomes passive and that to me serves as conspiracy of silence – for example you (one) becomes a deputy principal you were active in the union; you change, you were a post level one teacher you become an HOD you change."*

Another teacher participant from a different school teacher concurred:

> *"I think at first their (unions') main objective was to help teachers where they were experiencing problems and now I think they are much on the government side than anything now. They are no longer doing what they are supposed to do because most of them are after positions. They are only after their interests because they want to satisfy their own needs. They always side with government even if there is something we are very much dissatisfied about."*

THEME THREE: Safeguarding of rights

The question of rights was captured clearly by the majority of participants from all the participant categories. One teacher put it this way: *"they stand for the rights of teachers,"* while another said: *"they safeguard teachers' rights"* and still another teacher became very personal when she/he said: *"they are fighting for my rights".*

THEME FOUR: Representation of teachers

Unions are seen as the only organ in the school that serves as the teachers' representative when dealing with management on matters concerning teachers' conditions of service.

THEME FIVE: Power relations

This theme is evident even in responses that are mainly about other themes, for example the sub theme of the protectionist-defensive role played by teacher unions. This implies that unions exert some power over management which is applied to ensure that their members are protected or defended against school managers who, in their turn, use their authority or positional power when dealing with teachers.

The issue of power relations is not only seen between unions and management, but can also be observed in the comments made by teacher participants; that is, that there are also power relations between unions and teachers with union leaders being seen as wielding power over the members. Power relations can also be observed between or among members of a particular union. For example one member put it this way:

"I won't leave SADTU, I fear doing that. I think there are a lot of bullies, I am very much afraid because I was once called 'sell-out' because they thought I was not taking part in the strike". S/he continued: *"if they call a meeting you just have to jump high, leave whatever you are doing and attend to their call... most of them are power hungry and are only looking for positions through us."*

An SGB member had the following to say about union–union power relations:

"When SADTU was on strike, NAPTOSA members were willing to teach, SADTU defeated them because it has power, forbidding NAPTOSA members to teach [sic]."

Another SGB member said:

"One union acts like it is the only one that is powerful."

When asked which union was acting like a bully, SGB group responded in unison and as a chorus:

"It is SADTU."

Another SGB member continued:

"It is SADTU because they are disrespecting, they threaten others, it is because they have many members."

THEME SIX: Effects of unionism on teaching and learning

All participants felt that union activities, which range from meetings to attending memorial services, have a negative effect on teaching and learning, as shown in the following

statements by each of the participant groups interviewed for this study. A teacher participant said:

> *"I have four periods instead of attending the whole four periods you attend three periods because you have to attend a meeting during the last period, the work that was supposed to be done in that classroom is affected. What are you (one) going to do? You (one) have to go to the learners and give them some few work [sic] to do. You have to finish the work tomorrow. Do you see you are behind? So the pace setter is affected and learning is affected badly".*

An SGB member argued as follows:

> *"What I think about unions is that they disturb us, why during school hours? Why not during holidays? Strikes and meetings [sic]. Why these activities are held during teaching and learning time [sic]?"*

THEME SEVEN: Differences between unions at schools (NAPTOSA and SADTU)

The differences between NAPTOSA and SADTU were alluded to in the responses of the teachers, principals and SMT and SGB members interviewed. Different stakeholder groups related the differences between SADTU and NAPTOSA as follows.

An SGB member at School C said:

> *"NAPTOSA tries to do the right things, they update the SGB on their activities and want learners to be taught while SADTU has many members and pushes teachers not to teach. We don't vilify SADTU but when they went on strike and saw others coming*

to teach they vandalised and locked the gates and doors and I as the former SGB chairperson had to break down the chains to open for the NAPTOSA teachers who are committed to their work – SADTU disturbs everyone."

THEME EIGHT: Lack of capacity by school-level unionism to lead

The school-level union leadership is seen as lacking in capacity to lead and therefore has a very narrow understanding of their roles at the level of the school. This was expounded upon by one teacher who is also a site committee member:

"We lack capacity; the members in the site committee are not that much active, there is nothing tangible we do because we don't know what actually the role of Site Committee members is."

An SMT member said:

"The only time we have contact with our union is when we have meetings about salary increments and it happened only twice at this school."

THEME NINE: Teacher morale

Teacher morale was one of the themes that became very conspicuous in the responses of participants. How teacher morale was affected by the presence of teacher unionism is capture in the response by one SMT participant below;

"You end up having backlog and end up being not in the position to exercise your power and this happens only in the teaching fraternity, it even demotivates [sic] you as a person."

4.5.4. Components of the conceptual framework addressed in responses

> **Teacher development**

An acknowledgement was made that teacher unions can play a major role in teacher development. This was evident in responses by all participant groups.

> **Roles of teacher unions**

All participants thought that unions have a positive role in schools even though they were not doing so according to participants' responses. Unions can play more constructive, collaborative role.

> **Teachers and learners**

Participants deplored the fact that unions emphasised their rights over those of learners.

> **Responsibilities of teachers vis-a-vis responsibilities of unions**

Participants thought teachers had responsibility to conduct themselves in a professional manner and their unions have a responsibility to ensure that teaching and learning is not disrupted and that learners rights to education are observed. Unions have the responsibility to develop and empower their members.

> **The negative and positive side of unionism**

Participant reflection on the negative and the positive side of unionism as outlined in the conceptual framework confirmed that the voice of those who feel that our unions affect schools negatively had a slightly upper over those who think they play a constructive role.

4.5.5. Themes that are neither views nor experiences of stakeholder groups

> Salary negotiations

> Anecdotes about teacher unions at other schools

> Political activities by union members at all levels.

The issue of salaries and salary negotiations, even though it had nothing to do with school-based teacher unionism, was raised so often in this study that I consider it worth mentioning here. This may be because teachers and South African employees put the issue of 'money' before any other issue in their contractual obligations. It is for money that our unions embark on strike action so regularly – other matters are just included in union demands when embarking on strike action.

Once the employer adequately addresses the money, other matters are likely to be shelved or labelled as "matters on which negotiations" are to continue while the teachers return to work. When asked what he thought the role of teacher union at school level was, an SGB member responded:

"They represent teachers on salary increase."

This may suggest that, other than this role which unfortunately is not a competency of school-level teacher unions, the SGB has seen very little of teacher unions at school level.

➢ **Negative effects of strikes**

Strikes are seen as having a more of a negative effect on teaching and learning than any other union activity. Strikes are generally organised at national level and although union members in a particular school may embark on a strike, this had never been the case in any of the schools which were part of this study, even though this is legally and technically possible. The SGB members lamented the fact that union members leave their learners alone to embark on strike action and that unions or teachers don't inform them when they take part in strike action which they say destroys the future of their children.

Table 4.5 gives a summary of the analysed data according to the three Rs, that is, the responsibilities, roles and rights of teacher unions. This data analysis is in line with the supporting conceptual framework that was devised as a backup to the main conceptual framework, which showed teacher unions as belonging to two main categories; that is, either positive or negative unionism, as represented by the two main concepts: professional unionism and protectionist-defensive unionism respectively. This analysis shows that the data collected fit the supporting conceptual framework well.

Document analysis played a very insignificant role during the analysis of the data because the number of documents that were obtained from the research sites were too insignificant to make a significant contribution to this study. Therefore the conclusions made in this study were in the main based on the interview data.

Table 4.8. Responsibilities, rights and roles of teacher unions in schools – a supporting conceptual framework

Responsibilities	Rights	Roles
NAPTOSA is more accountable according to principals, while SADTU is less accountable for its actions at school.	All participants feel that teachers have the right to join a union and participate in union activities.	Unions have no role to play according to principals.
Unions have a responsibility to protect their members.	Teachers have a right to be represented.	The role include among other representing, protecting and unifying teachers,
Unions have a responsibility to inform members about developments in education.	Teachers have a right to be treated fairly.	Most participants thought teachers can play a more positive role by ensuring that teachers provide quality education.
Unions must account to other stakeholder groups e.g. learners, parents and management.	Teachers have a right to be protected from physical, psychological and financial harm.	
Teachers have a responsibility to protect other stakeholders' (especially children's) rights.	Teachers have a right to participate in and influence decision making at school level or through their unions.	Unions have role in policy making at schools and participate in teacher development
Most stakeholders felt unions were disregarding them when it came to leaving learners unattended as a result of union members attending union activities.	Some teachers feel that their rights are not properly protected by unions	Unions are seen as playing mostly negative role and less positive role.

4.5.5 The discussions on data collected and their relevance to the study

The main conceptual framework devised to direct this study placed the unions broadly into two main categories as indicated earlier. These main categories fitted well with the data collected, for example when participants made comparisons between unions (NAPTOSA and SADTU specifically) they put the two unions at the opposing ends by reflecting on one as being more negative and the other as being more positive. At the school level, SADTU was seen as advocating for traditional unionism, that is, protectionist-defensive unionism, which is interested in its members' rights or that of its leaders.

NAPTOSA is generally viewed as more positive with a professional orientation, accordingly seeking to do what is right and developing its members. While SADTU, on the one hand, is viewed as being more prone to leaving learners unattended while attending union activities, NAPTOSA is, on the other hand, viewed and experienced as avoiding disruptions and making sure that teaching and learning are protected by engaging in union activities after contact time or by using less obtrusive methods like flyers, short message services (SMSs) and faxes to interact with its members.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter dealt with data collection, data presentation, data interpretation and data analysis. The data analysis was conducted by using content analysis for document analysis which did not play a significant role on the findings and conclusions made in this study because not many documents were found in the research sites. On the other hand data collected during interviews gave me a 'rich description of the phenomenon that was studied

and therefore helping me to arrive at credible, dependable and trustworthy conclusions that may be generalised to other similar contexts elsewhere in the country.

The conclusions made in this study were consistent with findings of similar studies albeit in different contexts than the one within which this study was conducted. An example of this consistency between this study and studies of similar kind is observed in the study conducted by Legotlo et al (2002: 116) on the "perception of stakeholders on causes of poor performance in grade 12 in a province" of South Africa; which among other factors found that teacher unions officials caused some disturbance during normal working hours by holding meetings or taking time-off.

The statement made by one SGB chairperson in Legotlo et al (2002: 117) that "teacher unions (particularly SADTU) played a most important role as they closed the school or took teachers out of school during school hours" with principals having no power over them (teachers) shows several issues that were confirmed by this study, firstly, that SADTU was the union that plays the most negative role in our schools compared to other unions; secondly, that there is an issue of 'power relations' between unions and principals and thirdly, that indeed teacher unions (particularly SADTU), like this study confirmed, are fond of calling meetings during working hours.

There is concord between the two statements made by two SGB members in these two different studies. It should be noted however that the study cited was not specifically focussing on teacher unionism at school level as this study did. Another study by Haar (1998) made the claim, like this study did, that unions *"impede both school performance and reform initiatives"* and are labelled as being *"formidable foes to educational reforms"*. An example to illustrate the above assertion is that one principal in this study decried the poor

performance of learners because "union activities are disruptive". In her book, conversations with my sons and daughters, Mamphela Ramphela (2012) makes a sobering point that the *"unionisation of 80% of teachers over the last three decades is the major factor in the underperformance of the school system."* In this study participants viewed unions as perpetuators of the declining state of affairs in our schools, confirming Ramphela's postulation.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction and purpose

In this chapter the research findings on the views and experiences of teachers, principals, SMT members and SGB members are presented. The findings of this study are therefore an attempt to provide answers to the research questions. The conclusions were made on the basis of the data collected and analysed, as well as on a comparison of the data collected from the interviews and, to a lesser extent, on an analysis of the documents supplied to me by participants and the observations I made when visiting the various sites. The strength of my conclusions is ensured through this data triangulation process.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to outline the findings of this study and the conclusions made on completion of this study, as well as how these conclusions were reached. The chapter also outlines the extent to which the findings answer the research questions and whether the research has achieved its purpose.

5.2. Research problem and purpose:

At the beginning of this study both the research problem and the purpose were succinctly and comprehensively stated. It is therefore imperative at this point in the study to verify whether the study has indeed provided some insight and, perhaps, some novel ideas about the phenomenon investigated, whether the research problem was justified and whether the

research purpose or research questions were answered by the data collected from participants.

5.3. Research findings

The findings are not in any way presented here as a definite truth or as being exhaustive in the generalisations they make about the phenomenon that was studied. However, they may provide empirical evidence for ways in which school-based teacher unionism can affect the running of our schools and the education in these schools in particular. The findings emanating from the literature and the data collected are hereby presented as evidence of what stakeholder groups view/perceive and experience as school-based teacher unionism.

The findings are outlined firstly in general; later they are examined in detail in order to ascertain whether they have responded to the research questions, and whether the findings of this study are consistent with the existing literature. The findings must be able to offer a foundation for the formulation of the research problem I identified earlier in the study. The salient points of the research findings can be outlined as follows.

5.3.1. The main findings

These findings are seen as being directly related to the conceptual framework and as answers to the research questions posed at the beginning of the study. These findings are also findings that are not on unions generally but school-based unions specifically. The

specific findings are grouped into two major categories; those that are about positive unionism and those that are about negative unionism.

The findings point to the fact that both camps (i.e. the pro-unionists and the anti-unionists) cannot be ignored as they have substantial support at the level of the school regarding their opinions on school-based teacher unionism. When looked at closely the data reflects an almost fifty percent for each group on each end of the pendulum.

In short, school-based teacher unions' characteristics can be described as dichotomous – those that are professionally oriented (professional-unionism) and those that care more about their members rights and conditions of service (traditional-unionism) than the professional development of their members – those that are negative and those that are positive in your approach.

❖ **Positive unionism (professional unionism)**

The participants' answers affirmed the following points about the school level teacher unionism. They saw teacher unions at school level as having an important role to play in ensuring the rights of learners to quality education and also having the responsibility of ensuring that teachers do their work properly by developing them. The following salient findings were made from the data:

➢ School-based unions should also be responsible for professional development of teachers according to participants.

➢ School-based unions do to a limited collaborate with school management to ensure teachers do their work and that has a positive effect on teaching and learning.

➤ School-based teacher unions support their members and management in improving the standard of teaching and learning.

➤ NAPTOSA members are viewed as the most professional in conduct as SADTU members.

❖ **Negative unionism (traditional or protectionist-defensive unionism)**

Here too, there were compelling arguments against teacher unions by participants in all the groups. This force of anti-unionist voice had a slightly upper hand over the pro unionists about how they view and have experienced school-based teacher unions.

➤ School based unions were viewed as protectionist by all the participant groups. They saw the role of teacher unions at school level as being the protection of their members. Most principals and SGB members and some SMT members thought school based unions protected teachers from being disciplined.

➤ Defending of teachers or members was seen as one of the most important roles of teacher unions. This was seen as important because it will ensure that the rights of teachers are not trampled upon especially by school principals. While school principals recognised the rights of union members to join union and the right of unions to organise in schools, they thought that they were unduly and wrongly defending bad teachers.

➤ Most participants thought that the role, responsibility and right of teacher unions at school level could not be overlooked. However they still felt that

this was emphasised over the rights of other stakeholder groups in the schools especially the learners.

➢ SADTU members at school level are seen as the most unprofessional in conduct as the members of NAPTOSA.

➢ Teacher participants felt abandoned by their union (SADTU was fingered here) leaders at school level who were concentrating on their own personal interests that those they were elected for.

- SADTU leaders are position mongers (both at school level and at political level).

- SADTU leaders are self-serving and want to satisfy their egos only.

➢ Some participants viewed school based unions as lacking capacity to do what they were elected to (a state of inertia)

➢ Unions' activities disrupt teaching and learning in schools.

➢ Representation of members is also viewed as a very important role of teacher unions e.g. during internal disciplinary hearings and job interview sessions.

(a) Discussion of main findings

In this research no findings were made regarding the Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) and other small unions because the unions do not have a membership in township schools where the research was conducted and therefore did not form part of this study. Only SADTU and NAPTOSA featured prominently in the study, as they have the majority of members at the research sites. It was clear that NAPTOSA, with the second highest number

of union members in the research settings, was the more professional of the two unions. SADTU was regarded as having the most unprofessional members.

SADTU appears to be practising what this study calls "antagonistic unionism" towards school managers, who it regards as being autocratic and not caring about the teachers' livelihoods. The following exemplify the specific findings about teacher unionism at school level. Unions at school level do not play a positive role and SADTU is the culprit in this regard. They are labelled as being:

> *"Disruptive", "uncooperative", "to be blamed for not attending learners", "having lost focus on the promotion of teaching and learning", "shortening contact time", "causing permanent conflict relations", "not motivating educators", "involved in lot of meetings during contact time", "don't follow right procedure when raising complaints".*

To mention just a few of the words and phrases uttered by some of the participants. Union leaders are more interested in their personal interests, rather than those of their membership at school level. Again here SADTU is the culprit. For example this union is labelled as being interested in promotional posts in schools; as one teacher said:

> *"I don't see any value in them, I think they were meant to promote quality teaching and learning, capacitating teachers, giving them chance to be work shopped and show them their rights on how to exercise their rights as employees, but as things stand they are doing nothing."*

Union leaders in schools lack the capacity to lead teachers at this level and therefore cannot represent teachers properly. This was clearly articulated by one principal when he said that union leaders in his school were supposed to represent teachers,

"But they may not have experience sometimes on issues that they want to engage on."

This issue was also emphasised during data presentation. A number of teachers felt that school-based unions lacked the capacity to represent them properly. It was noted by the respondents that NAPTOSA members were more inclined to be professional than SADTU. One teacher, who is a SADTU member, said that NAPTOSA *"wanted to do things right"* and the other said they *"like to be procedural in their approach".* All the principals interviewed thought that NAPTOSA was more professional than SADTU. Union activities held during contact time have a serious effect on teaching and learning and SADTU members are most often the culprits here respondents including SADTU members affirmed this in their responses.

SADTU holds most of its activities during contact time while NAPTOSA uses other modes to communicate with its members, thus limiting time spent in meetings during teaching time. A SADTU member said:

"They say they (NAPTOSA members) are technologically advanced and so they use technology to communicate with their members but we use meetings to communicate with our members because this is our right, it has been agreed to between our union and the employer – we have a right to time-off to do our union activities."

And a NAPTOSA member affirmed the above statement when she said:

> *"Our union contacts and communicates with us or keep us informed by SMSs, e-mails and faxes; so we don't have to attend meetings all the time."*

The main role of school-level teacher unionism is to protect, represent and develop teachers. It was found that teacher development is only done by NAPTOSA at this level. All participants mentioned this as the main role of teacher unions in schools.

Other than playing a mostly negative role, participants (principals, SMT members and teachers) felt that unions at school level are not as active as they would have expected them to be. All participants agree that the role of unions in schools should be positive; that unions have to protect teachers' rights in schools and that unions have to act responsibly in schools if they want to be taken seriously by all the other stakeholders in the school and the community. One participant, a principal said, *"we cannot isolate unions at schools",* thus implying that unions have a role to play in our schools.

One of the issues that emerged was that of the power relations between unions, unions and school managers, and unions and their members. SADTU is the most powerful of the two teacher unions because it has by far the biggest membership. Negative forms of unionism at school level were identified as protectionist-defensive unionism, which lowers educators' morale. This was confirmed by the following participant statements. One SMT member, speaking as a union member, when asked how does unionism affect you? s/he said that

> *"You end up having backlog and end up being not in the position to exercise your power and that this happens only in the teaching fraternity, it even demotivates [sic] you as a person – a reference to teacher morale.*

Unions, and particularly SADTU, are more concerned with politics in schools and one deputy principal captured the essence of this when he said that unionism had two approaches; the representation of educators and the political aspect of trade unionism and the latter brings about infightings, greed, distrust among members.

The above statement about unions being concerned more with politics is in harmony with the assertion made by Coulson, A.J. (2010: 155) when he wrote that *"public school employee unions are politically partisan and polarizing institution"*.

The findings of this study have shown that our schools might be democratic in structure; the policy makers have not, however, equipped the role players in these schools with the skills needed to ensure that the schools' activities are run in a democratic manner. This has led to a situation where school-level stakeholder groups view one another with scepticism and mistrust thereby providing a basis for conflict between management and union site committees in schools. In democratic schools there will be a platform for everyone to voice their opinions without being frowned on. As Sachs (1999:7) correctly suggests, "democratic schools are concerned with the reduction of exploitation, inequality and oppression".

5.3.2. General findings on school-based teacher unionism

By general findings here I refer to those findings of the study which were derived from the digression responses from the participants and which fall outside the framework as conceptualised. These findings are necessary to be mentioned because they show that research can often yield unexpected results. They also provide another dimension of the phenomenon being studied. The following were the unexpected themes that emerged from this study:

- A strong focus salary matters – this was raised by all participant groups even though salary matters are not school level matters.

- Policy formulation – this happens at systems level, but it was raised as though it is a matter that school level union leaders can engage in.

- The partisan nature of unions, SADTU in particular – this is a matter that characterise SADTU nationally and should not be viewed as the school based site committee focus. A site committee member or a teacher at school level who does not want SADTU to associate with the ANC may do very little about it except to join another union.

- A deep seated feeling among SADTU members that SADTU at national level is "selling" them because it is more on the side of government that what it stands for – standing for the rights of their members.

(a) Discussion on general findings

Generally, most participants in this study felt that unions at school level had a very important role to play. The following findings emerged;

- Three of the four principals interviewed felt that unions should not be allowed to organise in schools because they play no role at all. Principal-A1 put it more emphatically by suggesting that *"unions not be allowed to function in our schools"* because, he said, they did not add any value to the schools. However, it was evident from the data collected for this study that the unions have a very important role to

play at school level despite this principal's strong feelings about their presence.

o The fact that, during the interviews, most participants wanted to focus on issues and union activities as they are organised by the upper union structures from time to time shows that there are very few activities, if any, that are arranged by school-level union structures at most schools. It also shows that union members do not really know what their school-based committees are responsible for except that they see them as merely intermediaries between them (union members at school level) and the upper union structures.

o Most union members regard their unions as the protectors of their labour rights, and their shield (protection) against unreasonable school managers. However, it should be noted that members of both unions (i.e. SADTU and NAPTOSA) see themselves as highly professional, even though SADTU members feel very strongly about their right to strike and leaving learners unattended even with the slightest provocation they feel that learners are merely 'the casualties of war' during the strike action. The findings confirmed what other studies, and Rottmann in particular (2008:983), have found, that is, that there is a move by all unions towards merging professionalism and rational industrial unionism. Most participants interviewed, including SADTU members, regard SADTU's radical and militant approach to unionism as one of the causes of conflict between school

managers and site committees (school-level union leadership). SADTU emphasises teachers' rights above those of the learners.

o All the principals and a number of educators (all SADTU members) thought that if they had an option they would not join a union. They said they did not see union site committees playing much of a role; they only show an interest when strike action is threatening and promotional post interviews are coming up. Teacher unions in South Africa, SADTU in particular, see the responsibility for teacher development as being the role of the Department of Basic Education.

o NAPTOSA emphasised the development of its members (both teachers and principals), professional conduct in educators and the importance of following procedures when dealing with grievances. SADTU, on the other hand, advocated a speedy resolution to members' grievances on its own terms; its rationale being that it is the majority union. This is inconsistent with its mission statement, which emphasises quality teaching and learning through the professional development of its members.

o In this study it was found that unions at school level do not really play a significant positive role; however, where they do teachers are inclined to perform better and respond better to management, as well as show higher levels of motivation.

- However, the study has not been able to come to any final conclusion as to the extent to which a positive unionism contribution improves learner performance in the schools in the study. It was evident throughout this research that unions do not have a clear-cut role to play at school level because, as Mahlangu and Pitsoe (2011:371) argue, central government emphasises representative democracy over participative democracy.

  In my opinion, this would have given school union site committees more leverage to take part in decision making at school level. Mahlangu and Pitsoe (2011: 371) further argue that while the *"intention of legislators and policy makers is that the laws governing labour relationships should be harmonious and prevent conflict in the workplace, South African schools are still experiencing disruptions as a result of"* politics, economics and power relations. This assertion by Mahlangu and Pitsoe was confirmed by the respondents in this research. An example was what teacher T3C called the

- Over-indulgence of our union leaders in politics than in issues that affect us and one SGB member who said;

  "Unionists are playing politics with the education of our children."

- The other general finding of this study is the tensions that exist between school-based union members' interests and the interests of the profession, what I call self-interest vis-à-vis professional interest.

5.4. Limitations of the study

The group interviews presented more challenges than the individual interviews; for example, the group participants were not chosen but the group was and this increased the possibility of including in the group those members who might not be able to provide helpful data. For example SGB members who have not served in the school for longer period may not have an opportunity to interact with the school-based teacher union committees and therefore were unable to provide relevant information. However, I used several different groups in order to increase the trustworthiness, dependability and credibility of the study's findings. These qualities would be the equivalent of validity and reliability in positivist studies. I also found it difficult to get the members of the groups together at one time for an interview session.

One challenge that became evident during this study was that respondents were tempted to talk about their frustrations with the decisions taken by the upper structures of the unions, rather than at the school level. Examples of these issues were that in all the schools all participants, be it in the group or the individual interviews, had very strong feelings about the impact that strikes, as union activities organised by the upper union structures, have on the smooth running of the schools. This matter was raised by all participants even though the focus of the study was on school-level union activities.

Another issue raised was the working conditions of educators, which participants spoke about as if school-level unionism or school management have the power to address. The study's findings may not be generalised to all schools in the country since only schools in rural and township settings were sampled and also only four schools were involved. Findings may also not be seen as being representative of what happens in other schools in the country, particularly because in the schools sampled only two unions were active. Town and

suburban schools did not form part of this study and conditions in those schools may not be similar to the ones in this study, making generalisation possible to schools in similar settings only.

South Africa is a vast country with nine provinces and each province has its own unique cultural practices and provincial education authorities. Thus, some teacher unions are only dominant in certain provinces. This implies that the results of this study, because it was conducted in one province, one district and only four schools, may not be generally applicable unless a broader future study arrives at similar findings.

The areas in which the study was conducted had just the two dominant teacher unions operating there, namely, NAPTOSA and SADTU. There were glaring differences between these two unions. There is therefore high probability that in suburban schools where a union such as SAOU is dominant the views and experiences of stakeholder groups operating in those schools may differ from the views aired at the research sites by participants for this study.

5.5. Recommendations to address the main findings

The following recommendations are made to address the main findings of the study. In line with existing literature the study makes the following recommendations in order to address the main findings;

- **Collaboration:** That policy makers, school principals and school governors should consider viewing unions as collaborators rather than as adversaries in order to improve the general running of schools.

The possibility of school-based forums in which school stakeholder groups such as the SGBs, site committees, learners and others could participate, should be explored because, for example, unions only meet with SGBs during short listings and interview processes where there are often differences of opinion because these stakeholders treat each other with suspicion and mistrust.

The school principals may, in line with the principle of democratic professionalism, be better placed to initiate the convening of such forums. These forums must be school based and not ward, cluster, circuit or district based. This will help to address issues that are only peculiar to particular schools only.

The Quality Teaching and Learning Campaign (QLTC), which was launched at Tembisa township on the 9th October 2008 as a way of building partnerships with all the stakeholders, in particular between the DBE and the unions – should be broken down into cells or committees at school level where stakeholder groups such as the SGB, learners, the SMT and others from various sectors in the community can be represented and these stakeholder groups interact with each other on the direction each school should take and have a say in the quality of education being provided in those schools. Principals of schools must also prioritise this in their schools' programmes.

- **Teacher development:** That school-based union leaders need to place more focus and emphasis on the development of their members in order to achieve quality teaching and learning in schools.

- **Power-relations:** The issue of power relations between principals and unions may be a topical issue for future research, however union leaders and education officials need to take appropriate steps to limit the tug-o-war incidences between school

based union leaders and school managers to increase focus on the core business of the schools.

- **Union leaders' capacity:** I concur with Verhagen, Tweedie, and Tudor-Craig (2002: 3) that teacher unions should develop well-informed positions on debates about quality teaching and learning and ensure that their committees have this as a permanent feature of their school level meetings' agenda.

- **The role of unions at school:** Policy makers should develop a deep sense of how teacher unions function at school level in order for them to develop policies which will help increase the interaction between teachers and other stakeholders.

- The department should ensure that all principals, as key players in ensuring that our schools are managed as effectively and efficiently as possible, should receive ongoing, annual training on labour matters to help them keep abreast of what is happening in the bargaining chambers so that they are not dictated to by union site committee members who happen to be privy to these developments way before the principals do.

- **Teachers engaging in political work during working time:** The ANC through its leaders in the cabinet needs to take a stand by discouraging teachers from abandoning their learners (especially SADTU), to embark on electioneering campaigns every time there are national or local government elections. They must address this matter at the level of alliance meetings.

- The state needs to ensure that cooperation between teacher unions and principals and the other school stakeholder groups is institutionalised and formalised. I therefore do not agree with those who call for teaching to be de-unionised but see school-level unionism as an indispensable 'organism' that should coexist

symbiotically with other school-level 'organisms', such as the SMT, the SGB and the RCLs in the case of secondary schools. De-unionisation of teaching would be tantamount to removing what Verhagen, Tweedie, and Tudor-Craig (2002: 44) calls "the teachers' voice in the national discourse".

- **On members and society's view of SADTU:** If SADTU wants to continue to remain relevant to teachers and its members in particular and the society at large for the foreseeable future, it needs to consider being an autonomous politically non-aligned union otherwise it will risk its leaders being shunned by its members.

- The role of SACE at school level needs to be clear so that the unions do not apportion to themselves the responsibility of being custodians of teachers' actions or practices and the choice of what is good or bad for our schools.

The researcher makes these recommendations bearing in mind that the labour laws in this country do allow for union membership and office bearers at school level, some protections and or privileges such as time off to perform union activities and the right to take part in lawful strikes, as well as access to the workplace (Legotlo et al, 2002: 116). However these measures seem increasingly unwarranted when considering the various accusations made by the respondents against teacher unions (SADTU, to be specific) during this study. Teacher unions also misuse the time-off principle by calling mass meetings, memorial services and other union activities involving all other educators in the schools thereby affecting teaching and learning adversely. Principals need to learn how to negotiate the rights or time-off privilege with their teaching staff members who sometimes happen to be union leaders at various levels of the unions' structures who spent days on end away from their teaching responsibilities running union activities.

5.6. General recommendations and recommendations for future research

After conducting this study, I found the following aspects to be worthy of future research investigation, owing to the limitations of my study has.

This study was not aimed directly at obtaining the views of union site committees on the role of teacher unions at school level, except in cases where the sampled educators were coincidentally also members of site committees. It may be critical for future research to focus directly on union site committees as a population, because looking only at what other stakeholder groups think about school-level teacher unionism might promote subjectivity and bias given the strong views that some in the society hold about unionism in schools.

Most participants expressed the view that power relations come into play between the site committees and the school principal. While this study did not focus on the issue of contestation between school-level unions and principals, it is an issue that emerged from time to time during the research interviews. Thus, future research specifically on the matter of the power play between school principals and site committees may be imperative and interesting. Such research could, therefore, encourage many principals to work closely with unions should future research confirm this.

One of the major stakeholder groups in schools is the learners. As the main beneficiaries of the school system, the absence of their views and experiences on school-based teacher unionism was conspicuous by its absence in this study. Their inclusion in future research is thus indispensable, particularly because there have been instances where the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) has raised its voice about the state of education in the South

African schools. It would be interesting to hear the learners' views on the phenomenon of school-level teacher unions.

Taking lessons from our liberation history as South Africans, we cannot forget the role played by the youth of this country and students (learners) in particular when they rose up against what was then called Bantu Education in 1976 and beyond. According to Block (2012: 9), in 1981, for instance, COSAS was among the first to adopt the freedom charter with its extraordinary promise; "the doors of learning and culture shall be open to all". In the same newspaper article, Block further argues for an engagement with the concerns of learners and states that we cannot meet learners only in disciplinary committees. Therefore, the inclusion of a learner perspective in further studies on school-based teacher unionism may contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

There are also those departmental officials who visit schools on a regular basis, such as the institutional development and support officials (IDSOs) or circuit managers, as they are called in other provinces, and the subject facilitators (subject advisors). It was found that the union site committees in some of the schools are not comfortable with the visits of these officials to the schools and classrooms, especially when they do not announce an impending visit well in advance. It may be an appealing research direction in future to explore the experience and views of these officials about school-level teacher unionism and its role in advancing the vision of providing quality public education in schools.

It may also be prudent to look at the role of school-based teacher unionism on the professionalisation and or de-professionalisation of teachers, as this is an interesting aspect for future empirical studies on this subject. Without being postulated as the only truth on the subject, the current study should help create a national dialogue among South Africans,

teachers, academia and the organised teaching profession (unions) on the state of education in our country that will culminate in tangible solutions to the challenges that beset this system.

5.7. Conclusions

What was under the spotlight in most of the time spent in conducting this study, was how stake-holder groups view and experience school level unionism; and to what extend do these views and experiences correspond with the voices in the national discourse regarding unionism in schools. This research was not an attempt to apportion blame to school-based teacher unions as the only factor that has led to the declining quality of education in our schools because, as Heneveld (1993:6) put it, school level factors are not independent but come together within the school to form a social system so that conditions for learning can prevail in order that quality teaching and learning can take place.

Rottmann (2008: 999) argues that school-level teacher union committees, as representatives of teachers at a school and classroom level have a special and unique role to play in working to improve the standard of education in our schools by ensuring quality teaching and learning and changing the way stakeholder groups view and experience them. It should, however, be noted that the study has exposed glaring shortcomings of school-based union leaders. It was stated by participants that they lack the capacity to educate and develop their members on how they need to conduct themselves at their respective work stations (the schools) – this was most evident when respondents spoke about SADTU in particular. This responsibility apparently rests with the higher structures of the unions leaving school-based

union committees with no or very little responsibility other than being mere intermediaries between the members in the schools and the upper structures and or the school management.

The power interplay between union site committees and school managers was clearly stated by the respondents who often viewed school managers and union site committees as foes who never collaborate, thus giving rise to the concept of antagonistic unionism. It should also be noted that in view of the fact that there is little evidence in the literature of empirical studies that have been conducted on unionism at the level of the school in this country, this small-scale study may therefore provide a basis for more intensive and extensive research on unions at the level of the school nationally.

With the purpose of this study having been to explore the views and experiences of school-based stakeholder groups on school-level teacher unionism in one Gauteng district, it may be crucial for the DBE and the unions to develop policies and formalise the role that needs to be played by union committees in schools, since the same already applies at national and provincial level.

Some union members together with their counterparts in other sectors abandon teaching to campaign for the ruling party during elections. This needs to change if we are to see our education system changing for the better. Indeed, SADTU is very powerful, therefore its leaders should realise sooner rather than later that they can use this power to change the situation in our schools from the current poor state of education to one that assures quality teaching and learning with the rights of all learners protected irrespective of conditions that obtain at any given time in all our schools.

I also argue that comments by some in the media, famous political figures and the ANC itself, for teaching to be declared an essential service or de-unionised, are not bringing any possibility of education in schools to get back on track again. The department of Basic Education or the government itself need to find better ways to find solutions to the country's problems.

The 'de-unionisation' argument will bring more harm than good. It will never happen in this country as long as the ruling party continues to "run with the hare and hunt the hound." It is merely political bickering and posturing. It removes focus from engaging unions in meaningful dialogue regarding their role at school level. It removed focus from the real challenges bedevilling the South African education system. SADTU is too powerful to be intimidated by threats of its territory, the school, being declared a no go zone for unions.

Teaching in this country cannot be declared essential service merely to silence unions. It is not the unions who did not deliver textbooks in Limpopo for the whole of 2012 schooling year. It was not because of unions that financial mismanagement in the Eastern Cape Province led to cutting of essential services such as scholar transport catering about 100'000 learners and the school nutrition programme (Letseka et al, 2012: 1200). The call for teaching to be declared an essential service to me is just a smokescreen that takes the South African populace's attention away from the real issues that plaque our schooling system.

While there is noticeable improvement in the country's formerly disadvantaged communities' schools; some provinces like Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, other that merging the previously fragmented education systems of the apartheid era, have done very little to change the situation in schools in those parts of the country. I therefore agree with

Bloch (2009: 88) that what bedevils the country's schooling system is a "toxic mix of factors" and cannot be attributed to unions alone.

The actual fact is that if the unions' voice is removed from the schooling system's arena, it will be an epoch making decision that may usher in a period of rampant corruption, blatant patronage, social injustices, low salary levels for teachers, obliteration of internal democratic or participative decision making in schools and a situation where managers act with impunity and an avalanche of Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) fighting for the space that shall have been vacated by the unions. These NGOs, because will not be represented in the bargaining chambers will then have to battle it out with the DBE in courts. We have seen this with Equal Education and Section27 on the Limpopo textbooks saga (Mail and guardian, 2012). It will therefore take the tax payer's purse for the department to pay for legal fees instead of using this money in programmes like teacher development. The unions have fought this using only the muscle of its membership both in terms of membership dues and numbers.

Some of these challenges are already prevalent in schools but the presence of strong unionism in the sector has kept them at bay and ensured that they don't escalate out of control. While this study has found that indeed unions do contribute to the bad state of affairs in the schools, the officials of the department and the ruling party leaders cannot throw their hands in the air and do nothing except blaming unionism.

The unions also have to come to the party by ensuring that they educate their members on their responsibilities at work, the rights of the learners, professional conduct and collaborative attitude towards other stakeholder groups in schools. They must ensure professional growth of their members by conducting trainings in the form of workshops or

refresher courses, making publications available, conducting seminars and research; and must implement their and the SACE code of conduct by ensuring that their members who are supposed to be professional in all respects adhere to these codes.

Teacher unions must also shift their focus and address socio-economic, gender and race; and political ills that are ravaging the societies in which the schools they operate in are located in order to win sympathisers over to their fold. They don't have to abandon but must strengthen industrial unionism by embracing social justice unionism and professional unionism. Once that happens, the chorus about teaching to be declared an essential service will disappear slowly from the national discourse.

I therefore agree with the participants in this study that unions have a role to play in school and agree more with Gilmour et al (2012: 11 & 15) that raising capacity at school level is crucial for school improvement and that to improve school quality there will be a need to work with teachers, unions and school communities towards a shared solution. I therefore conclude that muzzling the unions is neither a solution nor an option for curing the ailing schooling system.

In conclusion I can state that this study has shown that unionism affects schools both in a negative and positive way; however the weight of the pendulum swung unfavourably against SADTU as the main culprit regarding this negativity when compared to the other union, NAPTOSA, which was part of this study. This negativity is partly because SADTU is so powerful that its chastising will bring the union or marriage between its parents (COSATU and the ANC) to the brink of devastating divorce or recurrent instability. The department of education must stop bickering and take action against teachers who are recalcitrant but take the lead in putting in place programmes to develop willing but unproductive teachers.

Addendum A

Views of participants regarding the role of teacher unions at school level

Role of school based teacher unions according to participants	Participant categories interviewed – frequency of responses			
	4 PRINCIPALS (Individuals)	**4 SGB** (groups)	**4 SMT** (groups)	**8 TEACHERS** (individuals)
Protect members	4	3	4	8
Assist members	-	1	4	8
Train educators on labour matters	-	1	2	
Train educators on curriculum	-	-	-	1
Represent charged members	3	2	4	6
Organize teachers	-	-	1	2
Give feedback on upper structure decisions	4	-	3	8
Assist school management	-	1	2	2
No role for school based unions except for union issues	4	3	-	1
Link teachers and management/department	1	1	-	-
Defend wrong teachers against management	4	3	2	3
Promote professional conduct by members/teachers	-	1	2	2
Promotes gender equity	-	1	-	-
Salaries	2	3	4	8

Addendum B

Comparison of participants' responses according to research questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions	Responses			
		SGBs	**SMTs**	**Principals**	**Teachers**
How do stakeholder groups' view and experience school based teacher unionism in a Gauteng district?	1. What participants think of teacher unions?	- Unions are good for education - Unions serve as a link between the employer and teacher - Unions don't treat parents with contempt.	- Unions are there represent members - Unions protect teachers against the abuse of power. - Unions are good because they represent teachers. - Political aspect of teacher unionism is bad because it brings about greed, favoritism, camps, cliques, in-fighting disturbance for school in general.	- Unionism is a good idea used improperly. - Unions are good for their members. - They are not helpful. - They are disruptive.	- Unions unite teachers. - Unions represent teachers. - Union at school level is dysfunctional. - Unions can have greater impact on learning. - They are supposed to negotiate on our behalf. - Unions inform us.
	2. How do teacher	- They affect us	- If union is	- They affect every	Not affected by union

	unions' activities affect participant?	because they don't tell us when we have their meetings, they just disturb everyone one's activities	uncooperative it affects the marketing of the school. - Some names are favored for promotional posts.	one's programme. - They disturb us with their many meetings.	activities because they are dysfunctional. The meetings affect us because we cannot finish our work on time. Sporting activities unite us Strikes cause enmity between us.
	3. What is the role that teacher unions play at school in the opinion of the participants?	- Must be used to workshop SGBs on policies.	- The role in the past was very destructive but currently I unions is quiet and insignificant, there is no unified voice. - When the union is positive the school benefits, and the opposite is true as well.	- Protect their members. - Represent their members. - They don't play any meaningful role.	- Unions lack capacity therefore they are ineffective. Nothing tangible. - They protect us. - They represent us - They negotiate on our behalf. - They give us information about what happens in the upper union structures and the decisions taken there. - They develop us. - They guide us and give us direction. - They explain policies to us.

					- They don t help us at all, they are just interested in their own achievements.
	4. Why do teacher unions exist?	- To protect their members.	- To represent teachers. - To develop teachers. - Union serves as platform for engagement.	- To represent their members. - To protect their members - To defend their members when they are charged.	- To protect us - To represent us - To defend us against the kind of management that may be meted to us. - To defend us against principals. - To negotiate on our behalf - To unify us - To bring uniformity. - To develop us. - They were meant to develop us but they don't do that they side with the employer.
	5. What union activities took place in participants' schools?	- Strike and meetings.	- No there is no political vibe.	- Strike. - Meetings - Memorial service.	- Meetings - Workshops for NAPTOSA.

				- Dispute for an advertised administrative post. - Nothing really. - Workshop for NAPTOSA members.	- Very little at all. - They are not active maybe they lack capacity (school-based union leaders. - A workshop for SADTU members on bullying. - Strike action. - Memorial services.
	6. How union activities impact on learning in participants' schools?	- Badly because they leave our children unattended.	- They are disruptive. - They shorten contact time.	- The impact is negative.	- Meetings affect learners negatively. - Learners become overwhelmed with work after union activities.

	7. How do union activities impact on teaching in participants' schools?	- They don't teach for all the time they are given because of their meetings. - They frustrate us.	- Several educators taken out of school to attend memorial services and learners loose. - SADTU forums takes out all teachers and learners are left alone. - It is improving but there were times when meetings were held during the day.	- Union infightings demoralize teachers. - Teachers are affected because they their work lags behind. - The work schedules won't be covered or completed.	- They impact negatively - They disturb teachers. - In a negative way. - Affect the work schedule and the pace setter. - Learners fail or perform badly.
	8. How do union activities affect participants' activities affect learning at school?	- They don't affect us but our learners sometimes come home early because teachers are attending their union meetings.	- Duty roster are affected by break-time meetings	- Badly because constant meetings affect our programme.	- Learners lose education because of contact time union meetings, this is unavoidable and teacher must sacrifice their time for catch ups.
	9. What aspect of	- When they help	- It does not	- Nothing really	- Unions are

teacher unionism interest the participants most and why?	with gender parity. - Their knowledge of policies. - How they help their members get promoted. - And, how they protect their members.	pertain to union in the school: salary negotiations, ANC politics and union influence. Union at school level is boring. At school and branch level union leaders need to learn a lot.	interests me. - Nothing. - How they are passionate about protecting their members.	dysfunctional and therefore we need to be trained as school based union leaders.
10. Description of working relationship between the participants and teacher unions?	- Their relationship is good but we don't work together. - We don't work with the unions. - They want their members to be promoted.	- Nothing at all because at this point in time we are focused and there is not much that is happening.	- There is no working relationship. - We get along well because there is relative peace. - But they don't help us (management) with anything.	- The working relation between us and the union is good. - There is a good relationship between us and our school managers. - There is no relationship because they don't do anything for us.

		11. What were general comments about teacher unions by participants?	- No comments.	- Unions that are successful are unions that are focused. - Some members of our union are pushing personal agendas, seek power and wield power even more than the principals.	- If I had my way I would recommend that unions be banned from operating in schools. - I don't have anything to say because union doesn't add value to this school. - I wish unions did not exist. - I don't care much about teacher unions they don't affect me, but they disrupt teaching and learning in a big way.	- They are only interested in themselves. - They use us. - They engage too much in politics than in education. - They help us a lot.

Addendum C

The codes, descriptors and themes that emerged from the data collected

Codes	Descriptive response statements	Themes
Protection	➢ Protect us against management(T1A) ➢ Protect teachers working hours(T1A) ➢ Protect us on misconduct e.g. drunkenness, rape of learners etc. (T2A) ➢ Deal with charges against teachers (T2B) ➢ Protect teachers against abuse by management (T2B) ➢ We do make thorough checks to ensure that our members are protected (T2C) ➢ Unions negotiate on behalf of guilty members.(T1A)	➢ Union role is protectionist ➢ Management seen as opponents/oppressors
Teachers' rights	➢ Stand for teachers rights ➢ I fear leaving SADTU because of bullies – I better resign.(T1C) ➢ What I like about teacher unions is fighting for teachers' rights(T2C)	➢ Unions fight for teachers' rights ➢ Unions sometimes disregard their members' rights.
Unity of teachers	➢ Brings teachers together (T2B) ➢ We coach one another to avoid being charged(T1A) ➢ Organize teachers(T1A)	➢ Unions play a unifying role amongst teachers.
Differences between	➢ SADTU uses its majority to bully management (power-relations) (T2B)	➢ SADTU uses its majority

unions		
	➢ SADTU calls meetings during working hours (T2A)	➢ Meetings disturb teaching and learning
	➢ NAPTOSA does not support strikes, (T2A)	➢ NAPTOSA reflect professional conduct
	➢ NAPTOSA follows rules	➢ Fear is enshrined
	➢ There are a lot of bullies in SADTU. (T1C)	➢ NAPTOSA use more technology while SADTU uses meetings to communicate with members.
	➢ I think NAPTOSA members are highly principled – they organize most activities after working hours.(T1C)	➢ NAPTOSA members are technologically advanced.
	➢ I have not seen meeting called by union called NAPTOSA(T2C)	
	➢ NAPTOSA is advanced they communicate with their members using advanced technology (SMSs, Phones, faxes, flyers) but we (SADTU) are more active in engaging our members on issues that affect them (T2C)	
Union Site committees role	➢ Help us with labour issues (T1A)	➢ Site committees are intermediaries between management and teachers and members and union upper structures.
	➢ Intervene when educators are not happy with aspect of their work (T1A)	
	➢ SADTU leadership at the school led the refusal to do catch up after strike. (T2A)	➢ Site committees' role seen as both negative in most schools
	➢ Mediators between upper structures and members	➢ Site committees' role seen as positive at least in one school
	➢ Some members see no real role	➢ Site committees are focus on political partisanship that serving members. (SADTU).
	➢ In two schools help management with wayward staff members.	
	➢ Unions exist to take care of members' welfare (T2B)	
	➢ The role is negative (T1C)	➢ Site committees police management
	➢ They forgotten their role they are now on the government site than anything.	➢ Site committees are helpless – upper

		structures don't care about them
	➢ Interfere with process that doesn't need them e.g. interviews of general workers who is not their member. (T1C) SADTU ➢ They discourage us from doing catch ups after this activities (T1C) ➢ They were supposed to deal with teachers problems (T1C) ➢ They ensure smooth running of the school - e.g. That there is no act of nepotism. (T2C) ➢ I believe we (site committees) are not taken seriously by upper structures, they take decisions on our behalf e.g. starting and stopping the strike(T2C)	➢ Roles not clear ➢ Safeguard principle of fairness. ➢ Poor consultation with SADTU members
Effects on teaching	➢ Meeting disturb teaching ➢ Workshops disturb teaching ➢ Union meetings disturb us (T2A) ➢ Memorial services contact time (T2B) ➢ Members don't do catch ups after union activities ➢ Strikes are a waste of teaching time (T2B) ➢ Memorial services attended before school out (T1C) ➢ We find ourselves not on par with the work schedule. (T1C) ➢ Incomplete syllabus (T1C) ➢ Negative – because if they call a meeting you have to jump high and leave everything and attend(T1C) ➢ As a worker you must have some certain hours to attend to union meetings	➢ Union activities disturb teaching ➢ Union members not encouraged to go extra mile ➢ Union activities disturb other stake holder groups' programmes ➢ Unions have a sense of entitlement to working hours used for union activities – therefore they are under no obligation to cover for time lost.

	➢ Memorial services do have a negative impact on teaching normal teaching time is affected (T2C) ➢ At mass meetings we do tell teachers that they have lost teaching time(failed to provide evidence) but not at school (T2C)	
Effects on learning	➢ Workshops during working time – we blunder by forgetting the children (learners) (T2A) ➢ Unions must stop disturbing learners (T2A) ➢ Union meeting affect learners ➢ Workshops affect learning negatively ➢ Memorials held during working hours affect learning. ➢ The strikes lead to high failure rate (T1C) ➢ NAPTOSA activities don't temper with lessons (T1C) ➢ Teachers are excused to attend union meeting and teaching hours are affected. (T2C) ➢ Memorial services do have a negative impact on learning normal learning time is affected (T2C) ➢ Yes you (Union members) cannot leave learners alone and go to meetings, so we (union members) release them to go home – there is no solution. (T2C) ➢ The pace setter is affected and learners lack behind (T2C)	➢ Union activities disturb learning and learners. ➢ Union activities lead to high failure rate. ➢ School time is negatively affected. ➢ Learners left behind in class' lives may be endangered.
Effects on teachers relationships	➢ They cause drift between us and our friends in the other union in the school (T1C)	➢ Conflict between members of different unions becomes evident.

	➤ Being forced to participate in strikes demotivate us (T1C)	➤ Intimidation and coercion leads to low morale.
Characteristics of unions ((Site committees)	➤ SADTU won't agree to do union activities over weekends or holidays (T2A)	➤ SADTU is in majority.
	➤ SADTU mass based	➤ More radical, and bossy and most of its members are unprofessional.
	➤ SADTU is majority in all the schools.	
	➤ SADTU is more radical in approach	➤ SADTU members are after positions are interested in party political issues than education.
	➤ They tend to be bossy and insubordinate (T1C)	
	➤ NAPTOSA is a minority union	➤ NAPTOSA has few members than SADTU.
	➤ NAPTOSA is more professional and moderate following rules	
	➤ Usually don't take orders from authorities (T1C)	➤ Professional conduct.
		➤ Indocility
	➤ In most instances their word is final (T1C)	➤ Irrefutability of decisions
	➤ They are after positions they are power hungry	➤ Power mongering is order of the day
	➤ You see them when we are supposed to vote for a particular party (SADTU is partisan) (T1C)	➤ Political opportunism
Benefits of union membership	➤ No much gain school based unions (SMT4D)	➤ Most principals see no benefit
	➤ Unions support us as members (T1D)	➤ Teachers think they gain Support of members
	➤ Fight for us at school (T2D)	
	➤ Teachers' rights are respected. (SMT2C)	
	➤ Teachers represented during interviews.(T1C)	

	➢ I see no much gain from the union (P1B)	
	➢ Unions not effective on curriculum issues (T2B)	
	➢ No much gain from being a union members (T2B)	
	➢ Salary issues (not school matter) (T2B)	
	➢ We coach one another to avoid being charged. (T2B)	
	➢ SADTU taught me laws I never knew about (T2B)	
	➢ They are after positions, they oppose even visits by district official but once they are promoted they are no longer interested with what is going on. (T1C).	
	➢ Most of them (SADTU site committee members) are power hungry and they are only looking for positions through us. (T1C)	
	➢ I don't think there is a reason for me to stay in the union (SADTU) there is nothing that interest me much in what they are doing(T1C)	
	➢ The union is limping, people who were active in union activities the moment they get senior positions they become passive – this happens at all the levels of the union – e.g. when a post level one educator becomes an HOD they change. You can see by their actions that they don't want teachers to do what they used to tell the to do.(T2C)	
Professional orientation	➢ SADTU do things democratically and we (NAPTOSA) do things professionally. ➢ They are insubordinate. (T1C) ➢ Usually SADTU gives us notices of meeting on the day the meeting is to be held – this is un professional(T1C)	➢ SADTU tends to be more democratic than being professional. ➢ NAPTOSA is more professionally oriented.

Collaboration & relationship with other stakeholders.	➢ SADTU and NAPTOSA called a joint meeting to address teachers bad attitude to their work - We were helping the principal (T2A) ➢ SADTU members refused to do catch up after strike when requested by management (T2A) ➢ We help our management (T2B) ➢ We do have a working relationship with our management (T2B) ➢ Strikes divides us as teachers of different unions in a school (T2B) ➢ I don't think SADTU works hand in glove with management (T1C) ➢ NAPTOSA does consult management (T1C) ➢ We pretend as if all is well, most SADTU members are dissatisfied, they don't see any pleasure in belonging in this type of a union. (T1C) ➢ Sometimes the unions are sidelined at site level by management during interviews (T2C) ➢ We do have a good working relationship because we (SADTU) are able to make recommendations if we see things are not going well (T2C)	➢ A rare instance that showed a positive union-union and union-management collaboration. ➢ Unsupportive attitude by SADTU. ➢ Strikes have divisive effects. ➢ Quiet discontentment with SADTU by members. ➢ Management disregard unions ➢ There is some collaboration.
Reasons for joining a union	➢ Some join for fun. (T2B) ➢ Some join because they need appointments in higher position in the department (P2B) ➢ As SADTU members we want money hence we strike a lot (T2B) ➢ I joined SADTU because of mob psychology (T1C)	➢ Variety of reasons why teachers join unions.
Views on unions	➢ I don't see any reason why there should be teacher unions (T1C)	➢ Teacher unions seen as irrelevant

existence in schools	➢ To foster transparency and curb abuse of power by principals (T2C) ➢ They exist to ensure there are no lots of things that raise eyebrows – even to parents. (T2C) ➢ To make sure that teachers are treated fairly at school (T2C) ➢ To educate our members about their responsibilities (T2C) failed to provide evidence	➢ Unions regulate power wielded by managers. ➢ Promote fair treatment of teachers. ➢ Teacher development.
Teacher representation	➢ Represent teachers when there are problems (T1C)	➢ Teacher representation at the core of teacher union existence.
Participation in Strikes	➢ Affect teachers' moral and finances. (T1C) ➢ We fighting a losing battle I won't participate again in strikes (T1C) ➢ I won't participate in strike again because I feel betrayed (T2C)	➢ Strikes negative effects on teachers ➢ Strikes are not seen as beneficial Most don't want to participate in strikes.

Addendum D

Data on SMT's responses – their views and experiences on school based unions

Codes	Descriptive statements	Conclusion/patterns
Protection	➢ They exist because they do protected teachers (SMT4C) ➢ They exist because there is no body within the department that looks after teachers interests (SMT3C)	➢ Protectionist-defensive unionism. ➢ Teacher alienation by employee.
Unity of teachers	➢ Bring uniformity among teachers ➢ Our unions unite us as teachers.	➢ Unions unify teachers.
Differences between unions	➢ No differences. ➢ SADTU is a radical and militant union. ➢ NAPTOSA is more professional. ➢ SADTU members are not really bothered for following procedures, and see learners as causalities of "a holy" war.	➢ Power wielding SADTU. ➢ Professional NAPTOSA. ➢ SADTU is more unprofessional.

Union Site committees role	➢ They serve as mediators between educators and management (SMT4B) ➢ They represent us if there is misunderstanding between members and management (SMT3B) ➢ They sensitise us on procedures to follow (T3B) ➢ They advice us (SMT3B) ➢ We get information (SMT1B) ➢ They represent educators against the principal as the employer (SMT1B) ➢ The most important role is that one of giving us information – we know what to do when we are charged(SMT1B)	➢ Teacher representation. ➢ School based union plays a role of Inform members.
Effects on teaching	➢ Teachers work piles up. ➢ Teachers' work lags behind because of union activities.	➢ The effects are negative ➢ Backlogs are observable.
Effects on learning	➢ Catch up after union activities are done in two schools. ➢ No catch up done in our school. ➢ Teaching and learning is disrupted by working hour meetings.	➢ Negative effects on learning. ➢ Poor learner achievement.
Characteristics of unions	➢ Radical, militant and democratic SADTU. ➢ Cautious and professional approach by NAPTOSA.	➢ SADTU more unprofessional than NAPTOSA.
Reason for joining	➢ I just joined because I am a teacher because I was told if you are teacher you must join a union (SMT2B)	➢ Naivety

	➢ I don't know why I joined SADTU.	
	➢ I joined both unions because I thought it is a must to join a union as a teacher – I did not know which one to join.	
Benefits of union membership at school	➢ Educate teachers on policies to avoid them being charged (SMT3B)	➢ Professional development.
Capacity among union site leaders	➢ They don't know what they are doing. ➢ Union activities at school level are boring because they are not equipped with the requisite skills to lead at this level. ➢ Site committees have no capacity to lead properly at school level.	➢ Lack of capacity

Addendum E

Findings according to three major unions in South Africa

SADTU	NAPTOSA	SAOU
SADTU is **more radical and unprofessional in** approach and emphasizes **protection of its members.**	**NAPTOSA more professional in approach and emphasizes teacher development.**	No findings (no membership in sampled sites)
SADTU **engages in political activities even at the expense of teaching and learning** (e.g. canvassing for votes during working hours)	NAPTOSA is **apolitical and politically non-aligned** to any party.	No findings (no membership in sampled sites)
SADTU **uses more teaching time for union activities** (attending meetings, memorial services etc)	NAPTOSA tries to, as much as possible **hold their meetings outside teaching time.**	No findings (no membership in sampled sites)
SADTU **creates problems for management** (don't provide notices for meetings on time, protect unproductive teachers etc)	NAPTOSA **helps management in getting solutions to problems and notify management on time** about impending union activities.	No findings (no membership in sampled sites)
Four out of six SADTU members interviewed felt **alienated by SADTU site leader.**	NAPTOSA is viewed as **caring for its members and provides opportunities for professional development.**	No findings (no membership in sampled sites)
Some SADTU members continue to be members against their will for **fear of victimization in case they relinquish their membership.**	Those who leave NAPTOSA Accuse it of being **soft and too much understanding** when dealing with management.	No findings (no membership in sampled sites)

SADTU is more **prone to striking** even at the slightest provocation.	NAPTOSA **prioritizes teaching (professionalism** above anything else.	No findings (no membership in sampled sites)

Addendum F

BOX 5.2. Teachers unions and the other school based stakeholder groups interaction aspects

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This research also found that the interaction amongst school based union representative to be to be at the fallowing levels broadly speaking. They also concurred on the following instance as times when the school level union representatives appear to be active in the schools:

- ➢ *Interviews:* all stake holder groups interviewed, i.e. teachers, SGBs and principals agreed that their interaction with unions is only visible when there are interviews for posts (especially promotional posts) in the schools. This has been seen as so because a claim is made that these union members are self-serving and more interested in ensuring that members are recommended that helping the schools appoint the best possible candidates. SADTU is seen as the chief culprit in this regard.

- ➢ *When there is perceived abuse of educators rights by management:* School level union representatives are accused of reacting to perceived abuse of their members rights and these are the other instances where they are seen to be active.

- ➢ *During and immediately after strike action:* This interaction is only with teachers and not with school management, parents, learners or school governors who were at the receiving end of what happened during the strike.

Given the above findings it is evident that there is very little interaction between unions at school level and other school level stakeholder groups except during interviews and where there are perceived abuse of power by managers – making these committees reactive rather than being proactive.

While unions are not interacting with stakeholders in the schools, there was no evidence that suggest that the other school level stakeholder groups wanted to involve the school level teacher unions in decision-making in the schools.

Like Ratteree said, there is little information to suggest that if these unions were consulted, they would have had significant influence on the quality of decisions that managers made in schools since a number of the participants decried the level of ability of most of these school level union leaders to engage confidently and convincingly with school managers and governors (2004: 9). This might have been the prime reason why these other school level stakeholder groups do not interact with union site committees during crucial decision making.

Addendum G

The link between the concepts or themes /categories in the study (a combination of the two conceptual frame works)
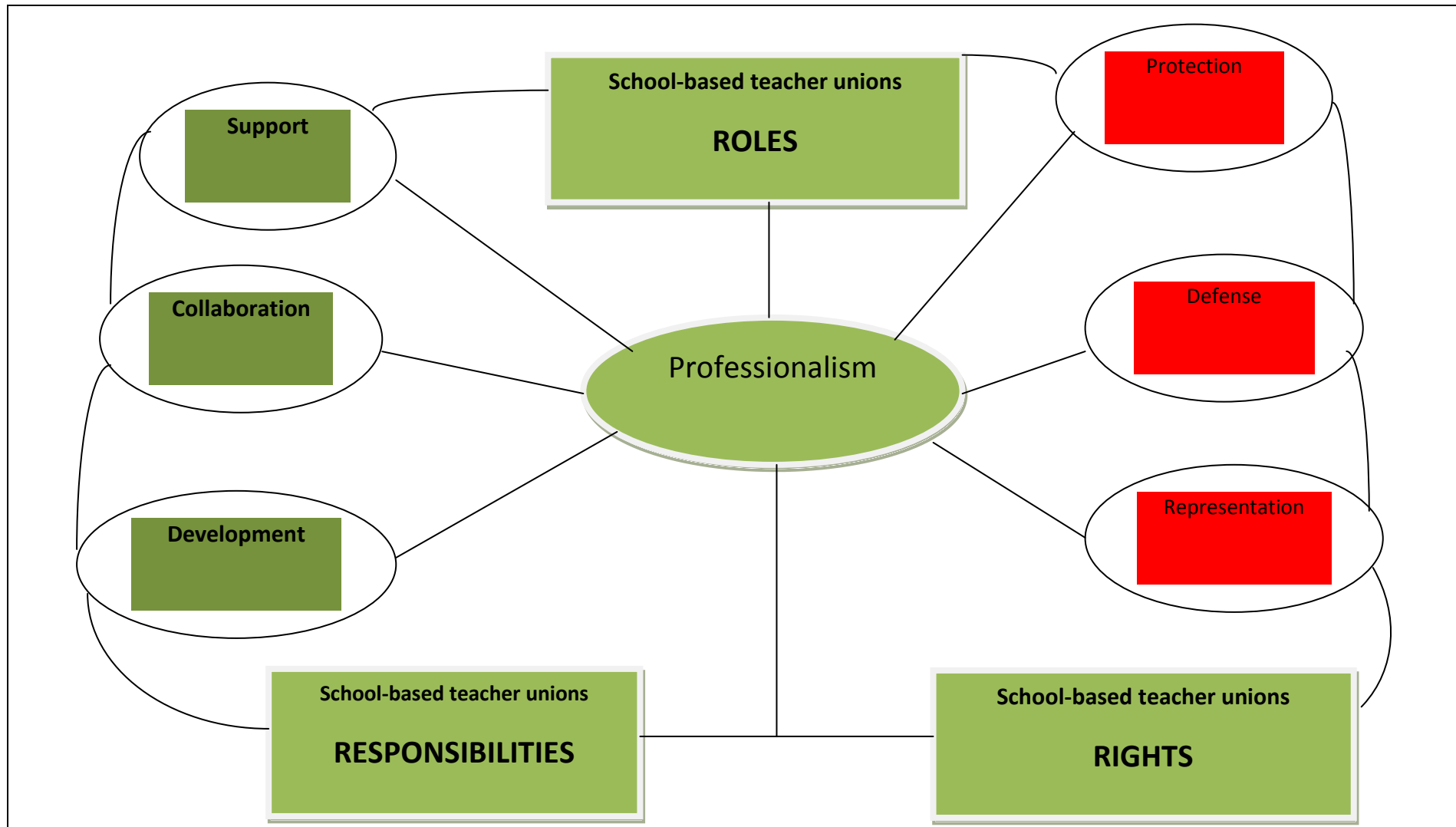
LIST OF ADDENDA

Addendum A : Views of participants regarding the role of teacher unions at school

level

Addendum B : Comparison of participants' responses according to research

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Addendum C : The codes, descriptors and themes that emerged from the data

collected

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Addendum E : Findings according to three major unions in South Africa

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interaction aspects

Addendum G : The link between the concepts or themes / categories in the study

(a combination of the two conceptual frame works)

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Annexure B : Invitation and informed consent to participate in the research project for SGB members.

Annexure C : Invitation and informed consent to participate in the research project for principal participants.

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Annexure E : Declaration to assist as an interpreter.

Annexure F : Application for study period extension

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Annexure H : Interview schedule for principals.

Annexure I : Interview schedule for SMT members.

Annexure J : Interview schedule for SGB members.

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Educational Studies
Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

Dear SMT member (participant)

INVITATION AND INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

You are cordially invited to participate **in a research project approved by the University of** Pretoria. The title of the research project is: **School based teacher unionism in a Gauteng school district**. The education and general legislation provides for unions to be active participants/stakeholders group in education generally and our schools in particular. It is important for all school based stakeholders to work together and recognize the important role that each group plays in the advancement of quality public education for all our children. I ask that two selected educators, three SGB members i.e. the chairperson, the deputy chairperson and the treasurer (parent component), principals, and all SMT members (a group) allow 40 minutes of their time for an interview, in which their views and experiences of school based teacher unions will be explored.

Your participation in this research project is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established, unless you are will be contacted for individual follow up interviews if necessary. Should you declare yourself willing to participate in an individual interview, confidentiality will be guaranteed and you may decide to withdraw at any stage should you wish not to continue with the interview.

Further more for your anonymity and confidentiality to be ensured, the following shall be done:

➢ I will always arrange for private interview from the group if you feel uncomfortable to say some questions during the interview.
➢ You may request that the entire interview with you be conducted outside the group and that will be respected and acceptable to me as the researcher.
➢ During reporting I will ensure that your names are not used, instead pseudonyms will be used.
➢ You will also be requested to see and check my final transcript on the interview I had with your group just to ensure that you become very sure that the information you provided is not phrased in a manner that may make you identifiable.
➢ At the beginning of each interview I will ensure that I explain to each member within you group the importance of confidentiality and anonymity of each participants just to make

sure that they understand that anything said by anyone it said in good faith and that it must only be used for the purpose of the intended study.

Since you will be interviewed as a group there would be a potential for victimization and pressure from those who will be interviewed in the same group with you; and to curb this, the following will be done by me as the researcher:

➢ At the beginning of each interview I will ensure that I explain to each member within your group the importance of confidentiality and anonymity of each participants just to make sure that they understand that anything said by anyone in the group said in good faith, that it must be viewed as part of the group's voice and that it must only be used for the purpose of the intended study.

➢ That each member of the group must as far as possible allow other members to participate or voice his opinions freely and without any unnecessary pressure.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter in the space provided below as a declaration of your consent to participate in this study willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from this research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the project does not oblige you to participate in follow up interviews; however, should you decide to participate in the follow-up interviews your participation will still be voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Furthermore, confidentiality will still be guaranteed.

The research will be conducted in English. However, I shall provide a translator if participants feel comfortable communicating in another language. If you have questions about this research project, please use the details below to contact Mr Masenya S.J. the principal investigator in this project and or Dr. Christina Amsterdam, a senior lecturer at the University of Pretoria and the promoter (supervisor) in this project. Principals are kindly requested to arrange a quiet room that will allow for round table sitting of at list twelve (12) people. All interviews, unless otherwise requested, will commence at 15h00 on the selected day/s.

Kindly send a response in the form of this signed letter to this request to the addresses mentioned below.

CONSENT: I, the undersigned, consent that I have read and understood the information on this page and therefore agree to participate in the project as outlined in this letter. By signing this consent form I am not waiving any of my legal rights and reserve the right to withdraw my participation at any time without giving any reason for doing so.

_____   _____

FULL NAMES OF PARTICIPANT   SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE OF SIGNING:_____CONTACT NUMBER:_____

Yours faithfully

MASENYA S.J.:_____   DATE:_____

(University of Pretoria student nr. 27626114)

Annexure B

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Educational Studies
Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

Dear SGB member (participant)

INVITATION AND INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

You are cordially invited to participate **in a research project approved by the University of** Pretoria. The title of the research project is: **School based unionism in a Gauteng school district**. The education and general legislation provides for unions to be active participants/stakeholders group in education generally and our schools in particular. It is important for all school based stakeholders to work together and recognize the important role that each group plays in the advancement of quality public education for all our children. I ask that two selected educators, three SGB members i.e. the chairperson, the deputy chairperson and the treasurer (parent component), principals, and all SMT members (a group) allow 40 minutes of their time for an interview, in which their views and experiences of school based teacher unions will be explored.

Your participation in this research project is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established, unless you are will be contacted for individual follow up interviews if necessary. Should you declare yourself willing to participate in an individual interview, confidentiality will be guaranteed and you may decide to withdraw at any stage should you wish not to continue with the interview.

Further more for your anonymity and confidentiality to be ensured, the following shall be done:

➢ I will always arrange for private interview from the group if you feel uncomfortable to say some questions during the interview.

➢ You may request that the entire interview with you be conducted outside the group and that will be respected and acceptable to me as the researcher.

➢ During reporting I will ensure that your names are not used, instead pseudonyms will be used.

➢ You will also be requested to see and check my final transcript on the interview I had with your group just to ensure that you become very sure that the information you provided is not phrased in a manner that may make you identifiable.

Since you will be interviewed as a group there would be a potential for victimization and pressure from those who will be interviewed in the same group with you; and to curb this, the following will be done by me as the researcher:

➢ At the beginning of each interview I will ensure that I explain to each member within your group the importance of confidentiality and anonymity of each participants just to make sure that they understand that anything said by anyone in the group said in good faith, that it must be viewed as part of the group's voice and that it must only be used for the purpose of the intended study.

➢ That each member of the group must as far as possible allow other members to participate or voice his opinions freely and without any unnecessary pressure.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter in the space provided below as a declaration of your consent to participate in this study willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from this research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the project does not oblige you to participate in follow up interviews; however, should you decide to participate in the follow-up interviews your participation will still be voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Furthermore, confidentiality will still be guaranteed.

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Kindly send a response in the form of this signed letter to this request to the addresses mentioned below.

CONSENT

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_____   _____

FULL NAMES OF PARTICIPANT   SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE OF SIGNING:_____CONTACT NUMBER:_____

Yours faithfully

MASENYA S.J.:_____   DATE:_____

(University of Pretoria student nr. 27626114)

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Educational Studies
Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

INVITATION AND INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear principal

You are cordially invited to participate **in a research project approved by the University of** Pretoria. The title of the research project is: **School based unionism in a Gauteng District**. The education and general legislation provides for unions to be active participants/stakeholders group in education generally and our schools in particular. It is important for all school based stakeholders to work together and recognize the important role that each group plays in the advancement of quality public education for all our children. I ask that two selected educators, three SGB members i.e. the chairperson, the deputy chairperson and the treasurer (parent component), principals, and all SMT members (group) allow 40 minutes of their time for an interview, in which their views and experiences of school based teacher unions will be explored.

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If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter in the space provided below as a declaration of your consent to participate in this study willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from this research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the project does not oblige you to participate in follow up interviews; however, should you decide to participate in the follow-up interviews your participation will still be voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Furthermore, confidentiality will still be guaranteed.

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Kindly send a response in the form of this signed letter to this request to the addresses mentioned below.

<u>CONSENT</u>

I, the undersigned, consent that I have read and understood the information on this page and therefore agree to participate in the project as outlined in this letter. By signing this consent form I am not waiving any of my legal rights and reserve the right to withdraw my participation at any time without giving any reason for doing so.

_____   _____

FULL NAMES OF PARTICIPANT   SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE OF SIGNING:_____CONTACT NUMBER:_____

Yours faithfully

MASENYA S.J.:_____   DATE:_____

(University of Pretoria student nr. 27626114)

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Educational Studies
Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

INVITATION AND INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear teacher

You are cordially invited to participate **in a research project approved by the University of** Pretoria. The title of the research project is: **School-based unionism in a Gauteng school district**. The education and general legislation provides for unions to be active participants/stakeholders group in education generally and our schools in particular. It is important for all school based stakeholders to work together and recognize the important role that each group plays in the advancement of quality public education for all our children. I ask that two selected educators, three SGB members i.e. the chairperson, the deputy chairperson and the treasurer (parent component), principals, and all SMT members (a group) allow 40 minutes of their time for an interview, in which their views and experiences of school based teacher unions will be explored.

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If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter in the space provided below as a declaration of your consent to participate in this study willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from this research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the project does not oblige you to participate in follow up interviews; however, should you decide to participate in the follow-up interviews your participation will still be voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Furthermore, confidentiality will still be guaranteed.

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Kindly send a response in the form of this signed letter to this request to the addresses mentioned below.

CONSENT

I, the undersigned, consent that I have read and understood the information on this page and therefore agree to participate in the project as outlined in this letter. By signing this consent form I am not waiving any of my legal rights and reserve the right to withdraw my participation at any time without giving any reason for doing so.

_____   _____

FULL NAMES OF PARTICIPANT   SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE OF SIGNING:_____CONTACT NUMBER:_____

Yours faithfully

MASENYA S.J.:_____   DATE:_____

(University of Pretoria student nr. 27626114)

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Educational Studies
Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

DECLARATION TO ASSIST AS AN INTERPRETER

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I have received special training from Mr Masenya S.J. regarding ethical requirements of the research project that he intends undertaking. I further declare that all ethical considerations pertaining to the University of Pretoria ethics statement have been explained to me during the training and that I will abide by such during all stages of the research and after the research has been completed. All information from participants that I shall been exposed to during data collection shall be treated as a matter between the researcher and the participants in the study, and shall be treated as confidential by me.

DECLARATION OF INTERPRETER'S LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

HOME LANUAGE			ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (√)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
LANGUAGE QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED							
	NO.	HIGH SCHOOL	TERTIARY	DURATION (e.g. 3 years)			
Qualifications	1.						
Languages taken as subject	1.						
	2.						
	3.						

I hereby declare that based on my language proficiency as listed in the table above, will assist the researcher as an interpreter in his project by interpreting the data from participants verbatim as far as possible for the purpose of the study.

I offer my assistance to interpret the data from _____ and or _____ (languages) to <u>ENGLISH</u> as requested by the researcher.

Contact numbers: _____ and, or   _____

Emailaddress: _____

_____   _____ _____

NAMES OF THE INTERPRETER   **SIGNATURE**   **DATE**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of Educational Studies
Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

TO: The Head of Department

Professor Sehoole

FROM: Masenya Selaki, J.

Student number: 27626114

DATE: 06 February 2012

SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR AN EXTENSION OF MY STUDY PERIOD

Kindly hereby receive my re-submission of an application for extension of my study period by at least six months. I am a Masters student doing a full dissertation in the Education Management and Policy Studies department. I was supposed to have completed my studies last year could not due to the reasons stated below. My research topic is; **"School based unionism in a Gauteng district."**

I started my studies very well and made good progress in my first year, passing the two compulsory modules OOG 810 and NME 810 with 91% and 56% respectively. I started to struggle when I took up a new position in Gauteng as a school principal. It took me a while to balance my studies and my new responsibilities as a school manager. Once I thought I have adjusted my mother and my only other parent who was still alive, passed on. As the bread winner, I was left with no option but to readjust my budget between my studies, my family and my siblings who were left alone back home.

I also experienced delays with the approval of my ethics application because it took a while before it could be approved. This was because it was not approved on my first application. I had to resubmit an application after I attended to comments from the review committee. Once I was given the approval it was during the fourth quarter of the year during which time I found it very difficult to visit schools for research purposes because they were busy with final examinations. I have however been able to visit some schools late in 2011 and the last two schools early in 2012. I am currently doing data analysis and have finalized three chapters of my dissertation.

I have struggled through hard times during my studies and think that I cannot falter now. Should the dean approve my application I will ensure that I use this second chance well.

In the year 2008 I was able to complete an honours degree and an Advance Certificate in Education with TUT and University of Pretoria respectively in the same year and believe that if I did it then, I can do it now. With the constant support and guidance I receive from my supervisor, I am convinced that I will be able to finalize my studies within the extension period I am requesting

Attached, kindly find a copy of the schedule of dates showing how I intend completing my studies, a copy of my late mother's death certificate and an affidavit confirming that indeed the deceased is my mother, even though our surnames are different.

I hope my application will be looked at favourably

Kind regards

_____   _____

APPLICANT: MASENYA SJ   DATE

_____   _____

SUPERVISOR: DR C. AMSTERDAM   DATE

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN INSTITUTIONS AND/OR OFFICES OF THE GAUTENG

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1. PARTICULARS OF THE RESEARCHER

1.1	Details of the Researcher
Surname and Initials:	MASENYA S.J.
First Name/s:	SELAKI
Title (Prof / Dr / Mr / Mrs / Ms):	Mr Masenya S.J.
Student Number (if relevant):	2762114
ID Number:	6808285726089

1.2	**Private Contact Details**	
Home Address		
5 Dennis street	**Same**	
Masada		
Bronkhosrtspruit		
Postal Code: 1020	**Postal Code**	
Tel: 012-732-0779		
Cell: 083- 771-7410		
Fax: (012) 732-0779		
E-mail:Selaki@lantic.net		

2. PURPOSE & DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

2.1	Purpose of the Research (Place cross where appropriate)	
Undergraduate Study – Self		
Postgraduate Study – Self		X
Private Company/Agency – Commissioned by Provincial Government or Department		
Private Research by Independent Researcher		
Non-Governmental Organisation		
National Department of Education		
Commissions and Committees		
Independent Research Agencies		
Statutory Research Agencies		
Higher Education Institutions		

2.2	Full title of Thesis / Dissertation / Research Project
School based teacher unionism in one Gauteng district.	

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR / PROMOTER / LECTURER
I declare that: - MASENYA S.J.
1. **The applicant is enrolled at the institution / employed by the organisation to which the undersigned is attached.**
2. **The questionnaires / structured interviews / tests meet the criteria of:**   • **Educational Accountability**   • **Proper Research Design**   • **Sensitivity towards Participants**   • **Correct Content and Terminology**   • **Acceptable Grammar**   • **Absence of Non-essential / Superfluous items**

Surname:	Amsterdam
First Name/s:	Christina

Institution / Organisation:	**University of Pretoria**
Faculty / Department (where relevant):	**Education Management and Policy Studies**
Telephone:	**(012) 420-5513**
Fax:	**(012) 420-3581**
E-mail:	*christina.amsterdam@up.ac.za*
Signature:	
Date:	**2011-05-11**

N.B. This form (and all other relevant documentation where available) may be completed and forwarded electronically Nomvula Ubisi (nomvulau@gpg.gov.za). The last 2 pages of this document must however contain the original signatures of both the researcher and his/her supervisor or promoter. These pages may therefore be faxed or hand delivered. Please mark fax - For Attention: Nomvula 011 355 0512 (fax) or hand deliver (in closed envelope) to Nomvula Ubisi (Room 525), 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg.

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

DATE: <u>To be confirmed</u>   Researcher   : <u>Masenya S.J. (27626114)</u>

TIME: <u>14H30</u>   School   : <u>A, B, C or D</u>

Participants: <u>Principals</u>   Interview type: <u>One to one</u>

Research Title: School based unionism in a Gauteng district.

Interview questions (semi-structured)

(may be adjusted when a need arises)

1. **What do you think of teacher unions?**

2. **How do teacher union activities affect you?**

3. **In your opinion which role do teacher unions play in your school?**

4. **Why do you think teacher unions exist?**

5. **Which union activities took place at your school in the last twelve months?**

6. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on teaching?**

7. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on learning in your school?**

8. **How do unions and their activities affect your activities at your school?**

9. **What aspect of teacher unionism do you think interest you and why?**

10. **Describe the working relationship between yourselves and the unions in this school?**

11. **Is there anything else you would like to add about teacher unions as you know them?**

Thank you for your time

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

DATE: <u>To be confirmed</u>   Researcher   : <u>Masenya S.J. (27626114)</u>

TIME: <u>14H30</u>   School   : <u>A, B, C or D</u>

Participants: <u>SMT</u>   Interview type: <u>Focus group</u>

Research Title: School based unionism in a Gauteng district.

Interview questions (semi-structured)

(may be adjusted when a need arises)

1. **What do you think of teacher unions?**

2. **How do teacher union activities affect you?**

3. **In your opinion which role do teacher unions play in your school?**

4. **Why do you think teacher unions exist?**

5. **Which union activities took place at your school in the last twelve months?**

6. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on teaching?**

7. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on learning in your school?**

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10. **Describe the working relationship between yourselves and the unions in this school?**

11. **Is there anything else you would like to add about teacher unions as you know them?**

Thank you for your time

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

DATE: <u>To be confirmed</u>   Researcher   : <u>Masenya S.J.</u> (27626114)

TIME: <u>14H30</u>   School   : <u>A,B,C or D</u>

Participants: <u>SGB</u>   Interview type: group interview

Research Title: School based unionism in a Gauteng district.

<u>Interview questions (semi-structured) (may be adjusted when a need arises)</u>

1. **What do you think of teacher unions?**

2. **How do teacher union activities affect you?**

3. **In your opinion which role do teacher unions play in your school?**

4. **Why do you think teacher unions exist?**

5. **Which union activities took place at your school in the last twelve months?**

6. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on teaching?**

7. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on learning in your school?**

8. **How do unions and their activities affect your activities at your school?**

9. **What aspect of teacher unionism do you think interest you and why?**

10. **Describe the working relationship between yourselves and the unions in this school?**

11. **Is there anything else you would like to add about teacher unions as you know them?**

Thank you for your time

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

DATE: <u>To be confirmed</u>   Researcher   : <u>Masenya S.J.</u> **(27626114)**

TIME: <u>14H30</u>   School   : <u>A, B, C or D</u>

Participants: <u>Teachers</u>   Interview type: <u>One to one</u>

Research Title: School based unionism in a Gauteng district.

<u>**Interview questions (semi-structured) (may be adjusted when a need arises)**</u>

1. **What do you think of teacher unions?**

2. **How do teacher union activities affect you?**

3. **In your opinion which role do teacher unions play in your school?**

4. **Why do you think teacher unions exist?**

5. **Which union activities took place at your school in the last twelve months?**

6. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on teaching?**

7. **In your opinion how do these activities impact on learning in your school?**

8. **How do unions and their activities affect your activities at your school?**

9. **What aspect of teacher unionism do you think interest you and why?**

10. **Describe the working relationship between yourselves and the unions in this school?**

11. **Is there anything else you would like to add about teacher unions as you know them?**

Thank you for your time