

**Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in
Johannesburg Central District**

by

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18299751

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Department of Education Management and Policy Studies

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at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

SUPERVISOR: Dr Diatleng Sebidi (SD)

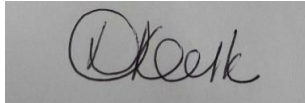
Co-Supervisors: Prof Maitumeleng Nthontho

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

In order to qualify for the degree of Magister Educationis (Education) at the University of Pretoria I, June Virginia De Klerk, student no (18299751) hereby declare that the M.Ed. dissertation titled “Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central District” is my original work. It has never been submitted to another higher education institution before. A complete list of references is provided for each source that was cited or used in this research.

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underperforming schools in Johannesburg

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APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY

12 April 2022

DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

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- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
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- Data storage requirements.

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ETHICS STATEMENT

I, June Virginia De Klerk, student no (18299751) obtained ethical approval for the investigation into “Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central District”. I declare that I observed the ethical standards and policy guidelines for responsible research in the code of ethics for researchers prescribed by the University of Pretoria.

The study complied with the aforementioned ethical guidelines. In Chapter 3 section 3.10 these ethical considerations are further discussed in depth.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my supervisor, my nieces, Lynsey Chutel and Caitlin de Klerk, and nephew, Chadley de Klerk. Thank you very much for the on-going support and motivation. If it were not for your motivation and support, I would have not successfully completed the study.

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Lastly, I thank God for giving me the wisdom, health and power to make it through complications I had to deal with during the process of this study.

ABSTRACT

There is a continuous debate about leadership approaches and their sustainability to enhance teaching and learning in schools. This study explored distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. The majority of the schools in the area had a change in leadership in the last three years and it is assumed that this change might have contributed towards the decline in their grade 12 learners' pass rate. This study adopted a qualitative approach anchored in an interpretivist paradigm and a case study research design. Collegial theoretical framework served as the foundation and support that guided this study. One principal, one departmental head and one teacher from each of the three secondary schools in Eldorado Park in Johannesburg Central District were purposively selected to participate in this study. Data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Thematic data analysis was adopted to analyse data. During the process of the study, the required ethical considerations were adhered to. This study found that the principals, departmental heads, and teachers have little understanding of distributed instructional leadership, and are not working as a collective. This deficiency in management hampered teaching and learning and also affected the general academic performance in their schools. This study recommends to the Department of Basic Education to induct and mentor newly appointed principals, departmental heads and teachers to ensure collegiality when executing their school responsibilities, to engage newly appointed principals, departmental heads and teachers in appropriate training programs to enhance their knowledge and understanding of distributed instructional leadership to ensure positive outputs in their schools.

Key words: Academic performance; collegial theoretical framework; distributed instructional leadership; induction; mentoring; training

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING



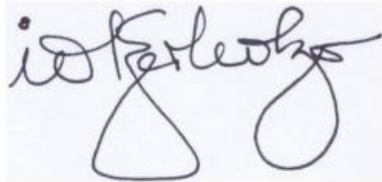
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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Yours faithfully



Isobet Oberholzer

12 August 2024

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|---|
| DBE | Department of Basic Education |
| DH | Departmental Head |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| EMPS | Education Management and Policy Studies |
| GDE | Gauteng Department of Education |
| NDE | National Department of Education |
| NSC | National Senior Certificate |
| PAM | Personnel Administration Measures |
| PED | Provincial Education Department |
| RSA | Republic of South Africa |
| SASA | South African Schools Act |
| SMT | School Management Team |
| USA | United States of America |

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1, I introduce and provide the background of the study on distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. International and national perspectives on distributed instructional leadership are also provided. The importance of distributed instructional leadership at secondary schools is discussed. This chapter outlines the research problem, the purpose of the study, its rationale, significance and contribution, and the research questions. A conclusion is provided at the end of the chapter.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Almost all the secondary schools in Eldorado Park are classified as underperforming. There are seven secondary schools in this area and five schools were classified as underperforming due to their poor performance in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) grade 12 examination results for the past three years. The majority of the secondary schools in this area are categorised under quintile 1-3 schools where learners do not pay school fees (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014).

The Department of Basic Education considers schools as underperforming if they do not achieve a 60% pass rate in the National Senior Certificate examinations. However, the Johannesburg Central District classifies schools as underperforming if they fail to reach the district target of an 80% pass rate. The pass rate of schools sampled for the study reflected the following decline in the pass rate from 2017 to 2019. The first sampled secondary school has previously been performing but the pass rate has declined from 80.0% in 2017 to a pass percentage of 73.2% in 2019. From 2021 to 2023 the pass rate has shown an upward increase from 83% in 2021 to 88.5% in the National Senior Certificate Examinations in 2023. The second sampled secondary school's pass rate has declined from 86.5% in 2017 to 62.4% in 2019. However, in 2021 the pass rate was at 58.1% and steadily increased to 66.8% in 2023. The third secondary school in the sample had a pass rate of 49.6% in 2017 and achieved 59.6% in 2019. The pass rate showed an improvement from 57.3% in 2021 to 77% in 2023. Some of the schools in this area have experienced a change in leadership and it is

assumed that this change could be a contributory factor towards the decline or increase in the pass rate.

It is it is assumed that the implementation of a different leadership approach which fosters a more functional relationship between the principal and the staff members might have a role in learner performance. According to Mehmet, Sedat and Yan (2020) one of the most important factors that enhance positive learner achievement is leadership and instructional quality. However, at the underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park, the principal leadership towards effective instructional quality appears to have been largely ignored, hence learners' underperformance. It is against this backdrop that the study intends to examine distributed instructional leadership at the underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District.

1.3 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This study examines distributed instructional leadership at the underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District, a low socio-economic area in the south of the Johannesburg Central District. During my years of teaching I have observed that the academic performance in many schools has declined. There is lack of teacher involvement in leadership roles and this creates disciplinary problems among learners as well as a low morale among teachers. It is assumed that the lack teacher involvement in leadership roles is a contributing factor in the decline of the learners' performance. This scenario motivated the me to conduct a study on the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District.

Principals are leaders in schools that must ensure effective teaching and learning. However, some of the principals focus more on their management role than on their leadership role. The reason for this behaviour might be due to the lack of leadership training. With the findings from this study, I intend to suggest solutions to narrow the knowledge gap of principals regarding leadership in secondary schools. The researcher was also motivated to explore the distributed instructional leadership approach as a mechanism towards more sustainable teaching and learning strategies in schools. According to Bellibaş, Gümüş and Liu (2020) principals at performing

schools practiced and prioritised distributed instructional leadership, and teaching and learning. They further established that distributed instructional leadership has an indirect yet notable influence on student performance. Distributed instructional leadership goes beyond the managerial roles of principals by infusing commitment and interaction between leaders and followers in situations where leadership tasks are performed (Gedik & Bellibaş, 2015).

Distributed instructional leadership emerged because of unprecedented pressure on accountability in education in recent years. The principal's role in the school became increasingly complex, beyond the capability of any single individual, no matter how charismatic according to Hartley (2007). This has brought about the distribution of the leadership roles in schools and the notion is overwhelmingly stressed in current literature (Gümüş, Bellibaş, Esen & Gümüş, 2018). Therefore, distributed instructional leadership practices are important for learner performance (Bellibaş, Gümüş & Liu, 2020). This suggests that distributed leadership might have an indirect effect on the quality of teaching and learning. It is against this background that the study on the role of distributed instructional leadership on the quality of teaching and learning in underperforming schools will be conducted. The study will provide guidelines to principals on using distributed instructional leadership as an instrument to improve teaching and learning in underperforming schools.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. Mehmet, Sedat & Yan (2020) state that an important contributing factor to a positive learning environment is instructional quality. They further state that the principal's role in effective instructional leadership has largely been ignored. Principals, as the leaders of the schools, do not engage teachers in leadership roles, because they possess inadequate skills to promote effective teaching and learning (Naicker & Mestry, 2013). Therefore, there is a need for new leadership approaches and expertise to address these challenges in order to enhance teaching and learning in underperforming schools. The study focuses on distributed instructional leadership at the underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. Principals are important role players in nurturing the environment and

climate in schools for distributed and instructional leadership (Mestry, 2017). The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Understanding the role of distributed instructional leadership approach in enhancing teaching and learning in underperforming schools.
- Establishing the significance of distributed instructional leadership in promoting effective learning and teaching.
- Identifying the challenges of implementing distributive instructional leadership at secondary schools.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main research question

- How is distributed instructional leadership used at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District?

Secondary questions

- How do distributed instructional leadership influence teaching and learning?
- How significant is the use distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools?
- What are the challenges of using distributed instructional leadership in underperforming secondary schools?

1.6 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

1.6.1 Introduction

Leadership has been a cause for concern for many years in the education systems of countries throughout the world. According to Lee, Hallinger and Walker (2012) the dominant trends in leadership theory were an increased focus on exploring the relationship between school leadership and learning, as well as on how leadership practices are distributed among members of the school. However, recently the focus is on shared or distributed instructional leadership (Mulford & Silins, 2009; Hallinger, 2011, Heck & Hallinger, 2014).

The emergence of distributed instructional leadership was due to the criticism levelled against orthodox leadership styles for their inability to sustain school improvement; hence the continued debate about which leadership approach is most conducive for sustainable learning (Harris & Muijs, 2005). The emergence of distributive instructional leadership is also attributed to the intensification of the managers' work responsibilities in ensuring effective teaching and learning in a school (Gronn, 2003).

1.6.2 International and national and perspectives of distributed instructional leadership

According to Harris & Muijs (2005) there is a continuous global debate about leadership approaches and its sustainability to enhance teaching and learning in schools. Researchers such as Naicker and Mestry (2013) have been calling for the reconceptualisation of leadership in schools. Wolfe, Knudsen and Mahaffey (2023) postulate that in the United States of America (USA) central office administrators primarily encourage school leaders to use distributed instructional leadership in respect of the curriculum to understand content, pedagogy, and to work with teachers to deliver the appropriate teaching to the students.

In countries such as Tanzania school leaders are obliged by legislation to involve teachers in performing school leadership responsibilities (Bush & Anania, 2023). They further accentuate that the school leaders are expected to spearhead the improvement of instruction, engage the school community, motivate teachers and hold them accountable, and supervise teaching and learning. Nyambo (2017) declares that leaders are also authorised through legislation to guarantee the implementation of educational policies, regulations, programmes, directives and monitoring instruction to enhance learners' achievements.

In Uganda distributed instructional leadership practice is founded on the believe that the inspiration and involvement of teachers in leadership roles is a critical factor in determining essential learning needs and interests of the school and the learners (Uganda National Teacher Policy, 2019). According to Bubale, Kasule and Mbabazi (2021) distributed leadership practices create an opportunity for teacher growth and contribution in school activities to guarantee effective teaching towards achieving learners' academic success. Bush and Oduro (2006) indicate that in South Africa research into leadership emphasises the need for a leadership theory relevant to the

South African context. The leadership practice of a school principal is crucial in determining the general school performance (Constantia et al., 2021). Principals are therefore regarded as the custodians of leadership who must distribute it to the deputy principals, departmental heads and the teachers to ensure school effectiveness.

Principals use different types of leadership approaches to enhance learner performance in their schools (Naicker & Mestry, 2013). Abay and Marishane (2023) opine that principals should adopt a leadership approach that emphasises teacher development. Distributed instructional leadership uses the tools of distributed perceptions to determine how the heads of institutions create and connect tasks, instructional resources, learners and teachers, school activities, professional learning and technology to create safe and effective learning environments (Halverson & Clifford, 2013).

1.6.3 The role of a principal as a leader

The principal's role as a leader is critical in enhancing teacher performance and student achievement (Pardosi & Utari, 2021). The principal represents a balance between instructional leadership and management (Botha, 2004). This view is supported by Dare and Saleem (2022:1) who assert that "principals are responsible for developing and implementing curriculum growth and facilitating staff and students' operations by motivating and guiding them along with the requirements of school goals". Most South African leadership studies reveal that principals have not received sufficient professional training, especially in distributed instructional leadership and this could explain why schools are underperforming (Zuma, 2019).

The South African Standard for Principalship (DBE, 2015) states that the principal is responsible *inter alia* for the quality of teaching and learning. The core responsibilities of the principal as a leader is set out in this policy. The South African Schools Act of 1996 (RSA, 1996) makes provision for schools to provide a high quality of education for all learners. The principal as a leader is to prioritise and promote the idea that everybody in a school setting should work toward the transformation process and make provisions for a desirable learning environment. The principal is not simply a school manager but the key leader who must influence change within a school (Dare & Saleem, 2022).

1.6.4 Underperforming schools

Extensive research has been conducted in South Africa regarding underperformance in secondary schools (Potgieter & Zuma, 2019). However, there is paucity of literature that accounts how school principals can use distributed instructional leadership to circumvent underperformance. According to Bayat (2015) the majority of public schools are underperforming despite funds allocated to disadvantaged schools in the post-apartheid era. These schools are in rural areas and townships, reflecting the legacy of the apartheid era in terms of spatial planning and the pattern of human settlements (Bayat, 2015). However, the Department of Education (2000) postulates that this dysfunctionality in schools emanates from the social environment in which they are rooted (DoE, 2000). In South Africa, an underperforming school is defined as a school failing to achieve a Grade 12 pass rate of more than 60% (Bayat, Louw & Rena, 2014).

1.7 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

1.7.1 Research paradigm

In this study I adopted an interpretive research paradigm to analyse activities relating to distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District, because people interact with their social worlds in order to construct their own reality (Neuman, 2006).

1.7.2 Research approach

I adopted a qualitative approach when conducting this study (Willis, 2007). A qualitative research approach enabled me to surface variables that are not easily recognised and to identify the conflicting problems which appeared at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District (Polkinghorne, 2005).

1.7.3 Research design

By using an interpretive paradigm for the study and a qualitative research approach to examine distributive instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools, a case study was considered a relevant strategy to use (Sebidi, 2019). I chose a case study because it allowed me to connect with the participants in their own environment

to share their experiences on the use of distributed instructional leadership (Maree, et al., 2016).

1.7.4 Research site and sampling

I chose three secondary schools to investigate for this study based on their common characteristics (Creswell, 2014). The schools that were selected to participate in the study are located in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. I used purposive sampling to select participants following the proposed selection criteria.

1.7.5 Data collection techniques

I used face-to-face semi-structured interviews to collect data from the participants. Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger (2020) regard interviews as “an exchange with an informal character, a conversation with a goal.” Face-to-face interviews assisted me to generate rich information from the experiences of the participants regarding the use of distributed instructional leadership in their own setting (Creswell, 2014).

1.7.6 Data analysis

I used a thematic inductive approach to analyse data for this study (Alholjailan, 2012). Following Braun & Clarke’s data analysis process, I familiarised myself with the data, generated initial codes, searched for themes, reviewed the themes, defined and named the themes and produced a report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

1.7.7 Ethical considerations

I applied for and obtained ethical clearance from the ethics committee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. I also requested and obtained permission from the Gauteng Department of Education, Johannesburg Central District and selected schools to conduct this study (Creswell, 2014).

1.7.8 Trustworthiness of the study

Ahmed (2024) opines that trustworthiness is of vital importance to establish the credibility and reliability of qualitative research. Other elements include transferability, dependability and confirmability (Maree, 2016). A comprehensive discussion of the research methodology and methods is offered in Chapter 3 of this study.

1.8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There is a need for more innovative leadership approaches to meet the challenges of education systems in the 21st century. The findings of the study could contribute towards improving the academic performance at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. The distributed instructional leadership approach might improve practice and contribute to quality teaching and learning in these schools. The study could provide a better understanding of distributed instructional leadership for principals, departmental heads, and teachers regarding the challenges of leadership in schools. The findings of the study could contribute to the body of knowledge of principals, departmental heads and teachers in respect of leadership in schools. The study could highlight how distributed instructional leadership sustains teaching and learning, as orthodox leadership approaches have failed to do so.

1.9. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Delimitations are primarily concerned with the scope of the study. Delimitations explain the set parameters of the study. They prevent the researcher from affirming that his/her findings are generalisable to the whole population. They are self-imposed boundaries to the study (Miles & Scott, 2017). Delimitations of this study addressed the field of this study as well as the area of study.

1.9.1 The field of study

The field of study was education leadership. This study focused on the use of distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District, a low, socio-cultural area south of Johannesburg. Underperformance also occurs in schools in the affluent urban areas of the Johannesburg Central District. Therefore, the findings documented by this study could be useful to such areas as well.

1.9.2 The area of study

This study was conducted in Eldorado Park. Most of the schools in this area are public schools. This study was confined to secondary schools categorised under quintile 1-

3, which are regarded as the poorest of the poor in terms of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (DoE, 2008).

1.10. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations are defined “as constraints to your study based on the research methodology and design. Limitations are constraints the researcher cannot control in the study. Primarily, limitations deal with the constraints to the research method” (Miles, 2019).

1.10.1 Methodological limitations

Eldorado Park is a small geographical area of the Johannesburg Central District and has seven secondary schools. The researcher purposely chose a small sampling of three schools out of seven secondary schools. The study excluded schools from other areas in the south of Johannesburg. The small sampling adopted by the researcher might have reduced generalisations of the findings. However, the different methods used for data collection assisted to collect data that contributed to the generalisations of the findings.

The study also excluded the circuit managers and subject advisors, the education official responsible for ensuring effective teaching and learning in schools. Negating the experiences of these officials underprivileged the findings of the study. However, participation in the study was based on what was experienced in a school on a daily basis regarding the implementation of distributed instructional leadership. The involvement of departmental heads and teachers assisted to enhance the findings of the study.

1.11. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.11.1 Department of Basic Education

The Department of Basic Education is a national department of education (NDE) of the South African government headed by the Minister of Basic Education that oversees all school education from Grade R to Grade 12, including adult literacy programmes.

1.11.2 Departmental head

A departmental head is person with specialised knowledge who is in charge of academic leadership and management oversight within a particular department in a school.

1.11.3 Distributed instructional leadership

Distributed instructional leadership is shared among teachers and principals in order in order to enhance teaching in secondary schools (Halverson & Clifford, 2013; Gedik & Bellibaş, 2015).

1.11.4 Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership focuses on collaboration, shared purpose, responsibility and recognition of leadership irrespective of the person's position in an organisation (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Keppel et al., 2010).

1.11.5 Education district

An education district is an education structure in the 9 provincial education departments (PEDs), administering circuits and schools to ensure that all learners have access to education of progressively high quality (Sebidi, 2008).

1.11.6 Instructional leadership

Instructional leadership refers to the leadership function directly related to teaching, focusing on the principal as the centre of expertise power and authority (Marks & Printy, 2003; Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2019).

1.11.7 Leadership

Leadership is the process of enlisting and guiding the talents and energies of teachers, pupils, and parents towards achieving common educational aims. Leadership is focused on vision, motivation, the future, and the teams and people in a school (Abay & Marishane, 2023).

1.11.8 Principal

A principal is a teacher who has been appointed by the Department of Basic Education or acting as a head of a school (RSA, 1996b).

1.11.9 Teacher

Teacher is any qualified person who qualifies to teach, educates or train other persons at an education institution or assists in rendering education services or education auxiliary or support services provided by or in an education department (RSA, 1996).

1.11.10 Underperforming school

In terms of the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) criteria, an underperforming school is a school that achieves less than a 60% pass rate in the Grade 12 National Senior Certificate (NSC) end of year examinations.

1.12 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This section provides an outline of how the study is structured by presenting the sequence that was followed when arranging the chapters for the dissertation.

Chapter 1

Introduction and background

Chapter 1, I introduce and provide the background of the study on distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. International and national perspectives on distributed instructional leadership are provided and the importance of distributed instructional leadership at secondary schools is discussed. The research problem, purpose of the study, rationale, significance and the contribution, and the research questions are outlined. A conclusion is provided at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 2

Literature review

In Chapter 2, the literature review regarding the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning is presented. The literature review discusses

issues regarding leadership, distributed instructional leadership, the significance of distributed instructional leadership, distributed instructional leadership and the culture of teaching and learning, as well as the challenges of implementing distributive instructional leadership. A conclusion is provided to end the chapter.

Chapter 3

Research design and methodology

In Chapter 3, I present the methodology and methods used to conduct the study. I discuss the research paradigm, approach and design that were used in the study. I also account for the choice of a particular methodology and methods. The discussions in this chapter also include the selection of participants, the techniques used for selection of participants, techniques used for data collection, letters of informed consent to the participants and the ethical and legal considerations contemplated during the expedition of the study. I provide a conclusion at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 4

Data analysis and presentation

In this chapter, I explain and analyse the data collected following procedures that I used during interviews. I outline principals, departmental heads (DHs) and teachers' views regarding distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I also include a detailed description and analysis of interviews I conducted with each participant in the search for a comprehensive understanding and answers to the research question and provide a conclusion at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 5

Summary of findings, recommendations and conclusion

In Chapter 5, I summarise, examine and report on the discussions of the findings from the secondary research questions on how distributed instructional leadership influences teaching and learning in underperforming schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I present recommendations on the efficacy of distributed instructional leadership in enhancing teaching and learning in underperforming schools.

Furthermore, I set forth recommendations for further studies to be conducted and provide closing remarks and a conclusion for the study.

1.13 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I introduced and provided the background of the study on the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. I provided international, regional and local perspectives on the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning. I also discussed the importance of distributed instructional leadership in secondary schools. I outlined the research problem and the purpose of the study, the rationale, significance and the contribution and the research questions. In the next chapter I discuss the literature collected during the expedition of this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present the literature review regarding the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning. The literature review addresses and discusses issues in respect of leadership, distributed instructional leadership, the significance of distributed instructional leadership, distributed instructional leadership and the culture of teaching and learning, as well as the challenges of implementing distributive instructional leadership. A conclusion is provided at the end of the chapter.

Snyder (2019) regards a literature review as the description of the existing literature to plan and evaluate the research area to stimulate the aim of the study and validate the research question and hypotheses. A literature review is an inspection of academic articles, books and other sources relevant to a particular issue under investigation, area of research, or theory, in order to provide a description, summary, and critical evaluation of these sources of data (Ramdhani, Ramdhani & Amin, 2014).

However, Cronin et al. (2008) proclaim that a literature review is an impartial, detailed summary and critical analysis of the pertinent existing research and non-research literature on the topic under investigation. A literature review is also denoted by Garrard (2017), “as an analysis of scientific material about a specific topic that requires the reviewer to prudently read each of the studies to assess the study purpose, determine the correctness and quality of the scientific methods, scrutinise the analysis of questions and answers modelled by the authors, summarise the findings across the studies and write an objective synthesis of the findings”.

Snyder (2019) further declares that there are different approaches that the researcher can use to conduct a literature review which include a narrative or traditional literature review, a meta-analysis, a meta-synthesis and a systematic literature review. A narrative review “is a scholarly summary along with interpretation and critique” (Greenhalgh, Thorne & Malterud, 2018:2). According to Sukhera (2022:414) “narrative reviews are a type of knowledge synthesis grounded in a distinct research tradition and often framed as non-systematic, which implies that there is a hierarchy of evidence placing narrative reviews below other review forms.” However, Greenhalgh

et al. (2018) postulate that “narrative reviews are often useful for topics that require a meaningful synthesis of research evidence that may be complex or broad and that require detailed, nuanced description and interpretation”. This kind of literature review is elastic and practical, and preferably offer a clear, relevant synthesis of various literature (Sukhera, 2022). However, Sukhera (2022:416) indicates that this kind of literature review is disadvantageous in the sense that it does not provide “an evidence-based synthesis for focused questions, nor do they offer definitive guideline statements”.

Meta-analysis applies statistical techniques to derive results based on numerous associated studies of data amalgamation (Mengist, Soromessa & Legese, 2019). “meta-analysis” to refer to “analysis of analyses,” specifically referring to “the statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating the findings” (Glass, 1976). Therefore, meta-analysis can be assigned when conducting a quantitative statistical analysis to combine individual results in order to estimate the common or mean effect (Glass, 1976).

This type of literature review does not consider a statistical type of literature review (Snyder, 2019). When qualitative research literature is reviewed using meta-synthesis, there is a thorough assessment and inspection of the findings with an intention of building on preceding conceptualisations and elucidations of the conducted studies (Cronin et al., 2008). The objective of using meta-synthesis is to move above synopses and to offer novel interpretations of the findings from primary studies (Mohammed, Moles & Chen, 2016). Meta-synthesis is a structure for integrating the results of the studies of individuals’ experiences (Clemmens, 2003). Therefore, one may claim that meta-synthesis aims at understanding the existing knowledge (Chrastina, 2018).

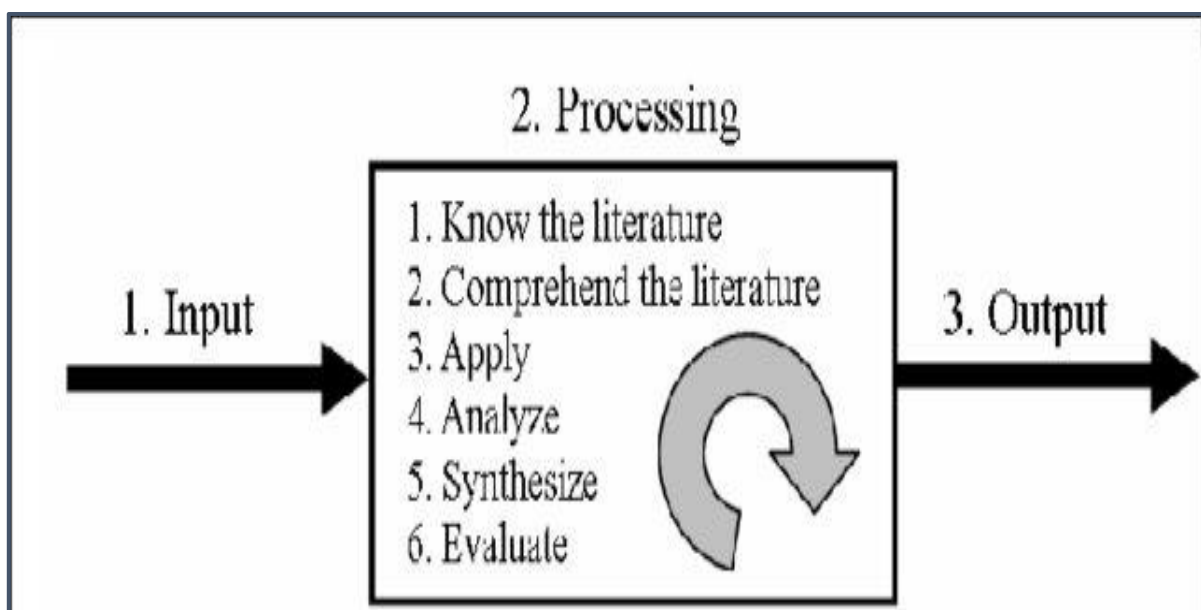
On the other hand, a systematic review, is regarded by Tawfik et al. (2019) as a review that uses a systematic method to summarise evidence on questions with a comprehensive plan of study (Tawfik et al., 2019). A systematic literature review assembles the entire related publications and documents that fit the researcher’s pre-defined inclusion standards to answer a precise research question (Mengist, Soromessa & Legese, 2019). When the researcher follows the correct procedure of conducting a systematic literature review errors are minimised; hence the study is able to provide reliable findings and conclusions that could assist decision-makers and

scientific practitioners to make proper decisions (Tansfield, Denyer & Smart, 2003). The type of literature review that was adopted for this study was systematic (Snyder, 2019).

Conducting a research study and connecting it to prevailing knowledge is the building block of all academic research activities, irrespective of the discipline (Snyder, 2019). I therefore conducted a literature review to disclose what other researchers have already established regarding the topic under research (Flick, 2008). Reviewing literature presented a contemporary insight into the dimensions and complexity of the problem, provided an explanation for the succeeding steps and a realisation of the importance of the research enquiry. I reviewed the literature based upon a concept-centric approach rather than author-centric approach (Sebidi, 2019).

I conducted a concept-centric review of literature to formulate a solid argument for the need for the study as well as to establish where literature fits into the proposed study. The literature reviewed also provided the grounds for the legitimisation of the proposed research questions and authenticated the approach proposed by the study (Levy & Ellis, 2006). The three steps of the literature review process are: inputs, processing and outputs. Figure 2.1 provides an overall view of the process followed for the literature review of this study.

Figure 2.1: Stages of an effective literature review process (Levy & Ellis, 2006)



The fundamental reason for conducting a literature review was to present links between existing knowledge and the research problem being investigated and to provide information about phenomena which can be incorporated into further study (Zuma, 2020). The literature reviews thus provided insight regarding the contribution of distributed instructional leadership to improve teaching and learning at underperforming secondary school.

2.2 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Maponya (2020) opines that school principals in the South African school context are perceived as leaders and managers and play an important role in setting the tone and ethos of learning activities. This implies that school principals are pivotal in enhancing instructional delivery at schools. Maponya (2020) further explains that in executing managerial responsibilities, principals need to have clear goals closely attached to the vision and mission of their schools. Therefore, school principals must refrain from being dictators when executing their tasks and should be involved in networking for the school. According to the South African Schools Act, principals are also expected to consult with stakeholders and implement departmental policies and encourage and ensure that schools are results-driven (RSA,1996). Among others, in terms of the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), the principal's responsibility is to assist teachers in developing and achieving educational objectives in accordance with the needs of the school to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum (DoE, 1998). Therefore, the principal has to use his leadership skills to achieve the educational mission and vision of the school.

2.2.1 Leadership

There is a difference between management and leadership. "Leadership portrays it as a fluid process, potentially emanating from any part of the school, independent of formal management positions and capable of residing with any member of the organisation, including associate staff and students" (Bush & Glover, 2014). Leadership resides with any member of the organisation including students.

Bush and Glover (2014:554) further postulate:

“Leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision.”

Abay and Marishane (2023) define leadership as the process of influencing others with the aim of achieving a desired objective. Yukl (2012) indicates that leadership in an organisation shapes the goals, motivation and actions of people in the organisation.

Leadership is also regarded as a transactional event between leaders and their followers that entails working together to achieve shared objectives (Yukl, 2012). Leadership is an indispensable component for the presence of an organisation and crucial for its performance and achievement (Lumby, 2012). A leader can influence subordinates, and leadership is what leaders do to influence others (Abay & Marishane, 2023). They further postulate that leadership steers individuals to engage in a collective effort to achieve shared objectives. To improve performance, a principal as the leader must have certain behaviours to accommodate the goal-oriented teaching-learning environment (Pardosi & Utari, 2021:3).

2.2.2 Management

The term management refers to the process of leading, regulating or controlling. According to Kambey (2006), management alludes to the efforts to guide the organisation by planning, organising, implementing and controlling to achieve the desired objective of the organisation. Kambey (2006) further postulates that management is imperative when carrying out leadership. An organisation or institution is presumed to be successful if its leaders understand and can implement management effectively (Tambingon et al., 2024). Management is the procedure of developing plans and collaborating with members in the group to achieve objectives of the organisation effectively and efficiently (Abubakar et al., 2017). The basic functions of management include planning, organising, as well as to provide guidance and oversight (Gutterman, 2023; Iriawan, Sasmita & Rusdi, 2019).

Education management is effective if it is overseen by a school manager who can distribute power and responsibilities to staff members without sacrificing his role as a leader (Klink, Thutulwa & Pelsler, 2023). Connolly, James and Fertig (2019), accentuate that educational management in practice necessitates delegation which involves being assigned, accepting and carrying the accountability for the proper functioning of the institution in which others participate.

Benmira and Agboola (2021) aver that leaders are generally regarded as visionaries and strategists whereas managers monitor and control worker performance and ensure order and stability in the organisation. They further point out that some researchers maintain that leaders and managers have well-defined roles and responsibilities while others argue that leadership and management are complement to each other and it is difficult to separate them in practice.

In the past school management and leadership have been interchangeably used (Diamond & Spillane, 2016). According to Adrin et al. (2023) traditionally, managers in education placed the emphasis on administrative tasks, resource allocation, and adhere to existing and trusted procedures. The authors argue that managerial skills are imperative, but at present educational institutions face dynamic challenges and the leadership required should transcend the confines of mere administration. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) argue that effective school leadership goes beyond the smooth functioning of schools and includes shaping the vision of the school, nurturing a positive school culture, and influencing and inspiring both educators and learners.

2.3 WHAT IS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

The concept instructional leadership has its origins from literature on educational leadership that dates back to the 70s and 80s (Hallinger, 2005). Instructional leadership is implemented by a person who sets out educational objectives for the school, who converses these goals to all the stakeholders in a school and monitors teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2003). Conversely, Bellibaş, Gümüş and Lui (2020) regard instructional leaders as persons who have a “bird’s eye view” on learner progress and performance, provide incentives for teachers and learners and ensure that professional development of the teachers at the school materialises. Instructional leadership enhances teaching by means of facilitating professional dialogue among the teachers at the school as well as ensuring that collaboration and peer coaching

transpire (Bellibaş et al., 2020). Instructional leadership ensures that new teaching methods emerge which give rise to teachers taking responsibility for improving their skills and ensuring better learner performance (Hallinger, 2003). Principals' instructional leadership is frequently linked with higher learner achievement, increased job satisfaction for teachers and a positive school climate (Boyce & Bowers, 2018; Day et al., 2016; Hou et al., 2019). Shaked (2023) points out that the essential role for the principal as an instructional leader embraces setting a clear vision for learner academic performance, working closely with teachers to improve curriculum implementation and fostering a positive school culture. Shaked (2023) further asserts that the principal as an instructional leader should be involved in activities such as managing and coordinating all the instructional programmes, observing teaching and learning in the classroom and imparting feedback to teachers, ensuring coaching, supporting professional development of the teachers, analysing learner performance and ensuring notional time is adhered to.

Consequently, Bush (2013) avers that principals are confronted with numerous challenges when implementing instructional leadership. Hallinger and Murphy (2013) declare that principals are challenged by instructional leadership because instructional and curriculum leadership require skills that go beyond those possessed by any one person. Although the principal plays a vital role in setting the tone for learner performance at the school by providing instructional leadership, there is a comprehensive acknowledgement that instructional leadership is a function that is shared by other stakeholders as well (Hallinger, 2019).

2.4 DISTRIBUTED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Distributed instructional leadership promotes the interactions of school leaders with their staff members (Wolfe et al., 2023). Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2019) declare that instructional leadership is perceived to be primarily concerned with teaching rather than learning and that it focuses on the principal as the centre of expertise power and authority. Distributed instructional leadership “acknowledges epistemic justice by appreciating various viewpoints and guaranteeing unbiased access to knowledge, recognises the proficiency and action of stakeholders in an organisation” (Nadeem, 2024). This leadership focuses on collaboration, shared purpose, responsibility and recognition of leadership irrespective of the person's position in an organisation (Harris

& Spillane, 2008; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Keppel et al, 2010; Naicker & Mestry, 2013). Harris and Muijs (2005:28) regard distributed instructional leadership “as the kind of leadership that opens up the possibility for ‘every person’ to act as a leader in one way or another”.

Distributed instructional leadership means vigorously facilitating and assisting the instructional leadership of others (Halverson & Clifford, 2013; Gedik & Bellibaş, 2015). It does not suggest that recognised leadership structures within the school are unnecessary (Harris, 2012). However, Murphy, Smylie, Meyrowetz and Louis (2009) postulate that this kind of leadership needs an essential change in the way in which leaders, such as principals, understand and perform their role. According to Singh (2014), distributed instructional leadership dictates that the role of formal leaders in schools should ensure that informal leaders have the opportunity to lead at appropriate times and are given the necessary support to make changes or to innovate. This view is supported by Murphy et al. (2009) who confirm that individuals with positional authority such as principals, deputy principals and departmental heads occupy formal leadership positions and can either move initiatives forward or kill them off quickly through actions or slowly through neglect.

Distributed instructional leadership refers to the leadership function directly related to teaching, focusing on the principal as the centre of expertise, power and authority (Marks & Printy, 2003; Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2019). According to Gyasi, Xi and Owusu-Ampomah (2016) distributed instructional leadership is a special kind of leadership in which the achievement of organisational goals is predominant. According to Griffin (2021) the principals’ role involves using organisational resources to help achieve the organisational goals. The core function of leadership can be defined as a set of activities that includes motivation, developing and supporting subordinates, encouraging collaboration and supervision. These leadership activities go hand in hand with functions such as communication and delegation (Mestry, 2017). The primary responsibility of a leader is to carry out the leadership process focusing on the engagement of subordinates in the activities that can assist the growth of an organisation (Gyasi et al., 2016).

Distributed instructional leadership tend to emphasise the role of deputy principals, senior teachers, school management teams (SMTs) and class teachers. The closer

leaders are to the core business of teaching the more likely they are to make a difference in learner's lives (Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2019). According to Bush and Glover (2002) distributed instructional leadership is about teaching and learning as well as the behaviour of teachers as they work with the learners. Pate, James and Leech (2005) postulate that principals are no longer the only instructional leaders but have the responsibility to distribute their leadership through delegation to the staff members. Delegation refers to redirecting tasks and initiatives to other team members (Prinsloo, 2016). Hence, leadership in schools have to be distributed to ensure that teaching and learning remain the core activities of the school. Therefore, distributed instructional leadership should be given prominence in schools to improve the effectiveness of the core functions of the school namely teaching and learning (Bush & Glover, 2002).

According to Mestry (2017), distributed instructional leadership is described as the actions implemented by the principal to expedite learning in the school environment. The principal as an instructional leader communicates shared goals, monitors and provides feedback on the teaching and learning process, and promotes the professional development of teachers. This implies that distributed instructional leadership is based on a relationship that motivates and supports educator's efforts towards instructional practices.

Through distributed instructional leadership the principal is assisted to establish the school vision, empower teachers and improve school strategies in order to improve teaching and learning (Mestry, 2017). The distributed instructional leadership approach stresses the idea that leadership needs to be part of the school organisational structure to ensure that the school becomes a learning community (Nadeem, 2024). Mestry (2017) indicates that instructional leadership demands credibility and empathy from teachers.

Credibility refers to truthfulness and transparency and dedication in teachers when executing their teaching and learning responsibilities (Ahmed, 2024). According to Riess (2017), "empathy was first introduced by aestheticians in the mid-19th century. They used the German word *ühlung*' to describe the emotional 'knowing' of a work of art from within, by feeling an emotional resonance with the work of art". Riess (2017)

adds that “Theodore Lipps expanded this concept empathy to mean feeling one’s way into the experience of another.”

2.5 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DISTRIBUTED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Distributed instructional leadership recognises that individual teachers are able to exercise leadership independently of the principal and the school management team (SMT) (Hermann, 2016). The distributed instructional leadership approach allows for collaborative work to be undertaken between individuals who respect and trust each other’s contribution (Mestry, 2017). The study proposes a direct and indirect association between distributed leadership and teachers’ instructional quality.

According to Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008) the school leaders have a greater influence on schools and students when leadership is distributed. Through distributed instructional leadership the potential leadership that influences the environment within the school is enhanced and, in this way, the principal’s support to teachers can improve teaching quality by fostering collaboration among teachers (Bellibaş, Gümüş & Liu, 2020). This implies that the principal, the DHs and teachers should share the leadership responsibility and decision-making in a collaborative fashion. Therefore, distributed instructional leadership is seen as a segment of collaborative decision-making that has shown to have a positive effect on teacher efficacy (Piotrowsky, 2016).

Studies have shown that distributed instructional leadership practices can improve student learning outcomes through the development of teachers’ academic capacity and the distribution of tasks (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Heck & Hallinger, 2014; Leithwood et al., 2008). Distributed instructional leadership focuses on collaboration, a shared purpose, responsibility and the recognition of leadership irrespective of the person’s position in an organisation (Keppel et al., 2010). This leadership style can be achieved through the interaction of many leaders within an organisation (Naicker & Mestry, 2013). In an institution such as a school where the core function is teaching and learning it is almost impossible to complete such a complex task without distributing leadership responsibilities (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Distributed leadership leads to the development and empowerment of teachers, thus contributing to the positive enhancement of teaching and learning as well as a positive

school climate (Heck & Hallinger, 2009). However, Harris and Muijs (2005) and Triegaardt (2013) declare that distributed leadership is not the delegation of duties which is prevalent in many schools, but it is about the empowerment of subordinates to perform particular responsibilities within the school environment. Spillane and Healey (2010) view the transformation of leadership in schools as key for improving learners' performance. In agreement with this statement, Mestry (2017) indicates that shared distributed leadership, which is also regarded as collaborative, has the potential to contribute to classroom achievement because decisions are made collaboratively and enhance the effectiveness of the school to achieve its goals.

Using distributed instructional leadership teachers are afforded greater responsibility as leaders in the school environment (Triegaardt, 2013). However, distributed leadership does not eradicate formal leadership structures but instead turns the focus on the inclination that leadership is an interaction among staff members (Naicker & Mestry, 2013). This implies that principals play a very important role in the school by creating a suitable school climate that fosters trust relationships and allows for the distribution of power and authority.

The study conducted by Spillane (2005) identified four key concepts associated with distributed instructional leadership, namely shared, collaborative, dispersed, and delegated leadership. These concepts are used interchangeably to denote distributed leadership in the literature. The distributed leadership perspective is based on the interactions between leaders and their followers, and their situation and the expansion of the leadership role to allow all the individuals within the organisation to contribute their expertise and skills in completing tasks or achieving goals (Torrance, 2011).

2.6 DISTRIBUTED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND A CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

According to Kruger (2003) South African school principals face two major challenges namely the managing of day-to-day responsibilities and the creation of a sound culture of teaching and learning. Kruger (2003) further states that the international trend in educational reform and restructuring centres around the decentralisation of decision-making powers at all levels in the school (Mestry, 2017). This reform implies that more responsibilities should be directed towards all the stakeholders within the school setting (Sebidi, 2019).

In line with decentralisation, the South African government has commenced on curriculum reforms and a general drive to improve teaching and learning in schools (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004). Garson (2004) states that restoring the culture of teaching and learning is the most salient factor to improve the quality of education in South African schools and this depends on the leadership skills of a principal. The principal plays a crucial role in setting the tone and ethos of the school and this in turn impacts on school programmes conducive for teaching and learning at the school (Nemukula, 2022).

Kruger (2003) states that a general belief in the education and government sectors is that the principal plays a crucial role in the academic standard of the school. Therefore, the principal as the leader of instruction should focus on raising teaching and learning practices in the school. Kruger (2003) further declares that the responsibility of the principal is to improve the culture of teaching and learning and to create an effective school. In effective schools, the principal plays a pivotal role in the efficiency and success of the school (Memela & Ramrathan, 2022). The instructional role of the principal is accompanied by the responsibility of ensuring that quality teaching and learning takes place at the school (Maponya, 2020).

Instructional leadership takes place when the principal provides direction, support and the necessary resources for teachers and learners with the aim of improving teaching and learning at the school (Kruger, 2003). A culture of teaching and learning refer to the attitude of all role players towards teaching and learning and the quality of teaching and learning that is prevalent at the school (Zulu et al., 2004).

2.7 CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING DISTRIBUTED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

According to Sibanda (2017) a key area for educational reform should be the quality of school leadership in the schools. Sibanda further iterates that due to the apartheid system in South Africa, school leadership was clouded with authoritarian, hierarchical and centralised leadership approaches where teachers' working environments were not conducive to teacher empowerment. According to Du Plessis (2019) a major challenge experienced by schools in South Africa is the decentralisation of authority in schools. During the previous dispensation all power and authority in schools rested

solely with the principal, and teacher participation in decision-making and leadership roles was minimal or absent in most schools (Sibanda, 2017).

Critique levelled against distributed instructional leadership is that when practiced by newly appointed principals and departmental heads they may experience challenges regarding the slow process of reassigning teachers as part of the school leadership community (Tian, 2011; Torrance, 2012). Distributed instructional leadership can be destructive and damaging if it is incorrectly implemented and may yield both positive and negative results (Sibanda, 2017). Those in formal leadership positions can sometimes discourage or prevent others from taking the initiative to bring about change due to power centralisation (Bush, 2011).

Harris and De Flaminis (2016) are of the view that a challenge related to the distributed instructional leadership approach is that it should not be assumed that everyone is a leader, but it is for those members that are best equipped or skilled to fulfil a particular organisational goal. This connotation implies that distributed instructional leadership ceases to have a positive impact if the leadership is done by anyone or all members without skills. On the other hand, distributed instructional leadership has the potential to undermine the authority of the principals and to negate their influence (Harris, 2013). Therefore, distributed instructional leadership can become destructive if it is misused or used by leaders who have inadequate understanding and knowledge and implementation skills. A balance needs to be maintained to ensure that the leaders of institutions do not hold and cling to power whilst failing to empower others (Whitworth, Wilson & Watson, 2021).

Williams (2011) posits that the implementation of distributed instructional leadership is problematic, because sometimes the conditions at the school are not conducive for the implementation of democratic leadership. These conditions may include the diversity of culture, the history, and the economic and political background of the school. A further challenge in implementing distributed instructional leadership as stated by November, Alexander and Van Wyk (2010) is that principals are traditionally power hungry, which makes them authoritative and undemocratic. In addition, a related challenge faced by principals while implementing a distributed instructional leadership approach is the complications in finding teachers that can manage and perform the delegated tasks (Tahir et al., 2016).

2.8 WHAT IS THEORY?

A theory is defined in different ways by various scholars. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:4), postulate that “a theory is an organised body of concepts and principles intended to explain a phenomenon”. Levine and Markowitz (2024:156) regard theory “as a set of logically coherent and inter-related propositions or conjectures that provide a unifying explanatory mechanism and which can be used to derive testable and falsifiable predictions”. Stewart, Harte and Sambrook (2011), refer to theory as “a supposition or a system of ideas intended to explain something”. Bryman and Bell (2011:34) claim that “theory” originates from the Greek *theoria*, meaning “contemplation” or “speculation”.

The basic functions of theory are thus to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomena in a variety of contexts. Conversely Moore (1991:2), sees theory “as basic to practices of knowledge construction and knowledge production”. In describing what theory is, Van der Waldt (2017) indicates that “theory normally reinforces research designs since it provides understanding of the phenomenon under investigation”. In this regard, one may claim that theory can be used as a mental model which endeavours to elucidate how features of social reality functions. However, Giles and Harrison indicate that without theory, it would be difficult for a researcher to conduct a research (Reeves et al., 2008).

Theory can be used in research in many ways. It can be used to assist in developing and guiding research questions. It can help decide what data you want to capture. It aids in the interpretation and analysis of findings, and it can also assist to clarify the phenomena under investigation (Reeves et al., 2008).

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) theory is a statement, suggestion or proposition that brings together concepts and constructs into a coherent framework or system which has clearly set limits and assumptions. Leedy & Ormrod (2005) posit that a theory is an organised body of concepts and principles intended to explain a phenomenon. These propositions correspond with Johnson & Christensen’s (2007) view that theorising explains ‘how’ and ‘why’ something operates as it does. Theoretical frameworks are regarded as the empirical or quasi-empirical theories of

social or psychological processes at a variety of levels and apply to the understanding of phenomena, allowing the researcher the opportunity to see what could seem familiar through a new and distinct perspective (Tavallaei & Abu Talib, 2010).

2.9.1. The purpose of theoretical framework for the study

The theoretical framework chosen for this study would determine appropriate theories, methodologies and concepts that are relevant to the topic under research and relate them to the broader areas of knowledge considered. It would reinforce and advance scientific knowledge for the study regarding the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning in underperforming schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District in accordance with the guidelines of Tavallaei and Abu Talib (2010) as indicated below.

- By providing clarifications about the pragmatic relation to a phenomenon.
- By being consistent with the already founded body of knowledge and the observed relations.
- By providing a device or confirmation and revision of the already existing studies.
- By motivating further research in the areas that need to be investigated.
- By helping to limit the scope of the relevant data by focusing on specific variables.
- By assisting to facilitate the understanding of concepts and variables according to given definitions and building new knowledge by validating or challenging theoretical assumptions.

According to Sebidi (2019) by the virtue of its applied nature, a theoretical framework for this study would undeniably be important because it would justify my main purpose of conducting this study. In precis, this would be to clarify the meaning, nature and challenges associated with a phenomenon often experienced, but inexplicable in the world in which we live, so that we might use that knowledge and understanding to act in more informed and effective ways (Luft et al., 2022).

2.9.2 Collegial theoretical framework

This study adopted the collegial theoretical framework by Bush (2003) as the lens guiding this study. The educational environment in South Africa is fraught with many problems such as the lack of involvement of the stakeholders in the execution of

organisational activities and decision-making progress (Mestry, 2017). The collegial theoretical framework emphasises that power and decision-making should be shared among all the stakeholders (Bush, 2003).

According to Shrifian (2011) the collegial theoretical framework assumes that power is shared among all the members in the organisation who have a shared understanding of the vision and mission of the organisation. Brundrett (1998) defines collegiality as the process of teaching where leaders and subordinates consult and collaborate with each other. According to Singh, Manser & Mestry (2007) collegiality is a key component in the transformation of traditional leadership in schools. The authors define collegiality as a collaborative process that involves the delegation of power to all the stakeholders that form part of the leadership process at school.

For this study collegiality would allow shared participatory roles for principals, departmental heads and teachers bolstered by shared leadership to enhance teaching and learning in schools. The theoretical framework would allow the principals, departmental heads and teachers to assume responsibility and accountability in their field of expertise to enhance teaching and learning at underperforming schools as it is change driven. According to the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 schools should change their management strategies and become more innovative and transformational in leadership. The theoretical framework is linked to the study as it would foster the opportunity for managers to involve teachers in the management of the school to become leaders and foster the change required for the quality of teaching and learning to address underperformance in schools (Bush, 2006).

Bush (2003) is of the view that the collegial theoretical framework is appropriate for organisations such as schools as they comprise of professional staff members who have the authority of expertise. Bush (2003) states that although teachers require a certain amount of autonomy, they also require involvement and collaboration to ensure effective quality of teaching and learning. This theoretical framework allows for sharing common values and beliefs.

The collegial theoretical framework assumes that decisions in the school are reached by consensus and that the staff members have shared values and a common interest to improve performance (Shrifian, 2011). The theory is aligned to the study as the researcher assumes that the common interest is to improve the quality of teaching and

learning at underperforming schools through the teachers' involvement in leadership and curriculum delivery. Collegiality is essential for the creation of a harmonious, effective and shared vision in schools (Singh, 2005).

2.9 CONCLUSION

In this Chapter, I presented the literature review and embarked on literature regarding the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning. The literature review was discussed following the issues regarding leadership, distributed instructional leadership, the significance of distributed instructional leadership, distributed instructional leadership and a culture of teaching and learning as well as the challenges of implementing distributive instructional leadership. In the next chapter the methodology and methods used when conducting this study are discussed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, I present the methodology and methods chosen and used during the study. I discuss the research paradigm, approach and design that were used in the study. I also account for choosing a particular methodology and methods. The discussions in this chapter also include the selection of participants, the techniques used for the selection of participants, techniques used for data collection, letters of informed consent for the participants and the ethical and legal considerations during the expedition of the study. I provide a conclusion at the end of the chapter.

3.2 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Methodology refers to the approach adopted by the researcher to collect and analyse data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003). The approach for this investigation was informed by the larger philosophical assumptions the researcher brought to the study and the nature of the research problem being addressed (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, in any research undertaking, the methodology is chosen to fit with the epistemological requirements of the researcher and research subjects (Kgwete, 2014). This implies that methodology justifies methods which enable the researcher to produce data and to conduct data analysis.

According to Mafuwane (2012) methodologies elucidate and describe the categories of problems that are of value for investigation; what constitutes a researchable problem; testable hypotheses; how to frame a problem in such a way that it can be investigated using particular designs and procedures; and how to select and develop appropriate means of collecting data. Based on the primary aims of the study, the selected methodology for the study assisted the researcher to generate theory that explained how distributed instructional leadership contribute to teaching and learning in underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is a whole system of thinking, including basic assumptions, the important question to be answered or a puzzle to be solved, the research technique and the example of what good scientific research is like (Neuman, 2014). Scholars *inter alia* Rocco, Bliss, Gallagher and Perez-Prado (2003), Babbie (2010:33), Babbie (2011), and Creswell (2014) refer to a paradigm as a “world view”, a basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guides a researcher’s inquiry or action. This implies that when researchers engage in a research enquiry, they bring their own world views, paradigms, or sets of beliefs to the research project, and these inform the conduct and writing of the study (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

The epistemological claim of this study reflects the interpretive theoretical paradigm because this study analyses the activities of human beings in organisations such as schools because of the interaction of groups and individuals within their social worlds to construct their own reality (Neuman, 2006). The epistemology in this study was exposed through interactions with principals, departmental heads, and teachers who are currently involved in distributed instructional leadership to enhance teaching and learning in their schools (Carter & Little, 2007). An interpretive paradigm, like the functionalist paradigm, belongs to the sociology of regulation and its determination is to recognise the world from the individual’s viewpoint. It is nomothetic, antipositivistic, voluntaristic and ideographic, using subjective first-hand knowledge (Mafuwane, 2011).

Nomothetic denotes the examination of classes or cohorts of individuals whereas idiographic describes the study of the individual who is seen as an exceptional representative with an exclusive life history with characteristics that isolate them from other persons (Hurlburt & Knapp, 2006). Nevertheless, anti-positivistic promotes ‘methodological dualism. Based on its advocacy the method of social sciences is fundamentally different from that of natural sciences, and most of its exponents debunk the idea of forming a ‘science’ of society (Tharakan, 2006).

Voluntaristic is defined by Snyder and Omoto (2008:3-5) as freely chosen and deliberate helping activities that extend over time, are engaged in without expectation of reward or other compensation and often through formal organisations, and that are performed on behalf of causes or individuals who desire assistance.

Through the adoption of this paradigm, the researcher observed the ongoing processes to understand individual behaviour in their lived world more clearly (Creswell, 2014).

Through the adoption of an interpretive research paradigm, the researcher examined what participants had to say about their experiences with an aim of understanding the social context of the phenomena under research and the processes whereby the phenomena influence and or is influenced by the social context (Rowlands, 2005). Interpretivism declares that the social world cannot be described by a single reality or truth, but a set of realities which are historical, local, specific, and non-generalisable (Sebidi, 2019). However, given the background and the nature of the problem under investigation, the advantage of locating this study within the interpretive paradigm enabled the researcher to explore the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning in underperforming secondary schools.

3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher conducting this study believed that the interpretivist paradigm uses the qualitative approach (Willis, 2007). In order to understand and interpret the meaning that principals, departmental heads and teachers attached to distributed instructional leadership, the researcher adopted an interpretive research approach (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Qualitative methods endeavour to understand various experiences within natural settings and can assist to describe the nature and crux of the phenomenon under investigation (Divan et al., 2017). Therefore, the researcher used a qualitative research approach to explore the role of distributed instructional leadership to teaching and learning in underperforming secondary schools.

Qualitative research is defined by Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger (2020) as the study of the nature of phenomena, including their quality, different manifestations, the context in which they appear or the perspectives from which they can be perceived”, but excluding their range, frequency and place in an objectively determined chain of cause and effect. This assertion concurs with Maree’s (2016) claim that qualitative research approach is a process of collecting and analysing non-numerical data such as language which is exploratory in nature.

A qualitative research approach was selected to be used for the study with an aim of experiencing the lives of people and to speak from the depth of their experiences regarding the phenomenon under investigation (Yin, 2011). Qualitative studies are frequently framed with concepts, models and theories which allow the inductive process to be used to support or challenge the theoretical assumptions (Merriam, 1998). Using this research approach, the researcher wanted to excavate meaning that contributes to theory development by proceeding inductively (Creswell, 2014).

By using a qualitative approach for this study, meaning was not realised by looking at particular features of many instances of the phenomenon, but rather by looking at all aspects of the same phenomenon to see the interrelationships of the people involved and to establish how they come together to form a whole (Sebidi, 2008). Through the use of a qualitative research approach for the study the researcher was able to surface variables that were not easily identifiable and the conflicting problems which appeared in various social fields, which the theory could not explain (Polkinghorne, 2005).

3.4.1 Qualitative and quantitative research approaches

3.4.1.1 Qualitative research approach

Qualitative research is defined as a naturalistic process of inquiry that attempts to ascertain an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting (Ahmed et al., 2019). Qualitative research relies on the personal experiences of humans as meaning-making agents in their daily lives. This research approach uses multiple systems of inquiry for the study of human phenomena which include case study, discourse analysis, historical analysis, biography, ethnography grounded theory, and phenomenology.

Qualitative research is an unstructured, exploratory research method that studies a complex phenomenon that cannot be clarified using a quantitative research method (Ahmed et al., 2019). Qualitative research sets out to gain an in-depth understanding of human behaviour, their experiences, attitudes, intentions, and motivations by imploring techniques such as observation and interpretation to discover how people think and feel (Ahmed, et al., 2019). Qualitative research approach uses open ended questions and interviews to collect data from participants in their natural environment.

The researcher generates a rich narrative from the participant's interviews and the data is analysed to answer the research question (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2023). Maree (2016) states that qualitative research relies on linguistics instead of numerical data to employ meaning to a phenomenon. Qualitative is naturalistic in nature because interactions occur in a natural setting. Qualitative research uses exploratory research questions and focuses on understanding the phenomena (Maree, 2016). A qualitative research design is centred around non-numerical data which include narratives and observations, thus providing an in-depth understanding of complex human phenomena (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2023). Qualitative methods are well suited for disciplines such as sociology and anthropology as they provide the abyss of subjective experiences in a cultural context.

3.4.1.2 Quantitative research approach

Quantitative research refers to strategies, techniques and assumptions used to investigate social, psychological and economic process using numerical patterns (Ahmed et al, 2019). Quantitative research uses numerical data. The methodologies employed by qualitative research include questionnaires, face to face structured interviews, observations, ethnography and focus groups. Quantitative research design is to generate knowledge and produce understanding about the social world. Quantitative research is commonly used by social scientists as well as communication researchers to observe phenomena affecting human beings. Quantitative research aims to investigate phenomena about a particular group of people, known as a sample population.

Maree (2016) defines quantitative research as objective and uses numerical data process that is systematic from a sampled group to generalise the findings to the phenomena that is being studied. A quantitative research approach is research that relies on the methods of natural sciences based on numerical data and hard facts (Ahmed et al., 2019). Quantitative researchers aim to uncover the cause and effect relationship between variables. It uses mathematical and statistical methods to establish this relationship. This research is also known as empirical research as data is accurately and precisely measured (Maree, 2016). Data is collected in a systematic and objective way. Quantitative research aims to quantify patterns and trends within a sample (Ahmed et al., 2019). The characteristics prevalent in quantitative research is

objective measurement, statistical analysis, large sample sizes, and replicability (Dehalwar & Sharma 2023). Objective measurement relies on numerical data and use structured instruments such as surveys, questionnaires, or experiments to gather data. In quantitative research data is subjected to statistical analysis which involves mathematical models to identify patterns and trends that emerge from the data (Ahmed et al., 2019). Large samples are employed in quantitative research to ensure generalisation to the population at large. Data collected in quantitative research allows for replication of studies by other researchers to ensure that the initial findings are validated or challenged (Maree, 2016). Quantitative research is pivotal to disciplines such as psychology, economics, and public health where the numerical data provides accurate insights into trends and patterns (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2023).

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

In choosing an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative research approach to investigate the role of distributive instructional leadership in teaching and learning at underperforming secondary schools, a case study was considered a relevant strategy to use for the study (Sebidi, 2019). A case study is a research design used to produce an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex subject in its real-life setting (Crowe et al., 2011; Heale & Twycross, 2018).

A case study is a general term for the exploration of an individual, group or a phenomenon (Mohajan, 2018). Yin (1984:23) defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. A case study may be exploratory, interpretative and descriptive (Thomas & Hodges, 2010). It is a general term for the exploration of an individual, group or phenomenon with an attempt to discover the theory by directly observing a social phenomenon in its “raw form” (Starman, 2013).

A case study can also be particularistic, descriptive and heuristics (Zuma, 2019). It becomes particularistic when the researcher chose a particular manifestation of the phenomenon to understand a distinctive problem that arose from the daily practice in a social context. This research design was appropriate for this study because it was a preferred strategy by the researcher to pose “when” why” and “how” questions to

answer the research questions. It was also through the adoption of a case study design that the researcher established a close connection with the participants and enabled them to narrate their own stories through the interviews (Maree, 2016).

A case study was advantageous for the study, because it provided new perspectives as well as the nature and kinds of social and personal interactions that existed among the participants (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2011). Therefore, a case study was used to determine the boundaries of the study and to find reasons why the phenomenon occurred in their settings. It also provided a detailed understanding of a contemporary problem within its realistic context and situation (Biggam, 2018; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). In addition to the advantages espoused by Gay et al. (2011) and Biggam (2018), a case study was adopted for the study because study method allows for a thorough inspection of the data within a precise context (Zainal, 2016).

It is the nature of a case study that it selects a small geographical area or a very restricted number of persons as the participants in the study (Zainal, 2016). Yin (2011) postulates that case studies investigate current real-life phenomenon through comprehensive background analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships. According to Yin (2003) case studies use an in-depth longitudinal inspection of a solitary case. Yin (2003) further accentuates that the longitudinal exploration used in case studies offers a systematic observation of proceedings or events, gathering data, analysing data, and reporting the outcomes of the examination.

3.6 RESEARCH SITE AND SAMPLING

This study focused on the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning in underperforming secondary schools in Johannesburg. The study considered the research site as an important component for data collection. Research site refers to the physical location of organisations or schools where a researcher or an investigator conducts a study. These locations must meet the criteria for inclusion in the study (Burns & Grove, 2007).

Purposive sampling was adopted to select elements that meet the criteria for the study, namely underperforming schools and people who participate in that setting (Creswell, 2014). Purposive sampling was preferred based on its judgmental nature where the researcher chose participants with a specific purpose in mind which was to reveal their

understanding regarding distributed instructional leadership in enhancing teaching and learning in their own setting (Sebidi, 2019; Zuma, 2019). Therefore, secondary schools which underperformed in the Grade 12 end of year results in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District were included in the study. These secondary schools were targeted because they did not fulfil the mandate of the Johannesburg Central District of attaining an 80% pass rate in the NCS examinations.

The selection of participants in this qualitative study was purposeful. Therefore, participants who were considered best to inform the research questions and improve understanding of the phenomenon under investigation were chosen for data collection of the study (Sargeant, 2012). One of the most important responsibilities of the researcher is to identify appropriate participants in terms of their typicality (Sebidi, 2019). The participants selected to participate in the study were secondary school principals, departmental heads and teachers drawn from secondary schools that underperformed in the NCS end of year examinations.

Departmental heads and principals were chosen based on their current involvement as the managers and leaders in their schools. Teachers were chosen based on their teaching and leadership experiences in secondary schools for at least three years. One principal, one head of department and one teacher from each of the three secondary schools were selected based on the criteria as set above.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Data for this study were collected from three secondary schools located in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District using face-to-face semi-structured interviews.

3.7.1 Face-to-face semi-structured interviews

Data collection techniques have to develop during the discussion with the unfolding nature of social settings and the developing relation between the researcher and the participants in the research process (Machado & Gil, 2017). Guided by this suggestion, the researcher conducted individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the principals, departmental heads and teachers in order to understand how they interact with their social setting regarding the phenomenon under investigation.

The interview questions were developed in advance and the initial questions were followed by brief probes and follow-up queries (Yin, 2011). Similar schedules of questions were used as an *aide-memoire* for all the participants to ensure consistency in questioning and to ensure that relevant subjects are addressed systematically and with the same uniformity ((McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Yin, 2011). This data collection strategy gave participants an opportunity to describe personal information in detail and allowed them to explore the meaning they attach to their lived experiences (Kgwete, 2014). The researcher adopted face-to-face semi-structured interviews to allow the participants to respond in whatever way they choose (Sebidi, 2019).

Data collection using face-to-face semi-structured interviews is open and flexible, considering the relation between the researcher and the respondents (Triegaardt, 2013). During the interviews the researcher used language that the participants understood and this allowed them to describe and to express data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the participants (Sebidi, 2008). The researcher also took notes, mostly of the significant data that spoke directly to the research questions. The interviews were conducted with the participants after school hours in their offices behind closed doors to ensure the confidentiality of the data that was provided.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

In a qualitative study data is analysed qualitatively (Creswell, 2014). The qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive, which implies that the research outcome is ultimately the product of the researcher's subjective interpretation of the data (Machado & Gil, 2017). Given the epistemological (Interpretivists) and methodological (qualitative) paradigm on which the research was based, a thematic inductive approach to data analysis was used. Braun & Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis is a useful method for examining the perspectives of the different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and generating unanticipated insights. Therefore, the study used thematic data analysis to deconstruct, interpret and reconstruct the data collected through the interviews.

Deconstruction refers to breaking down the data into components to understand what is included in the data. During this process the researcher reads and rereads the interview transcripts and breaks down the data into categories to describe the content.

Interpretation encompassed associating data codes and categories within and across transcripts and across variables deemed important for the study (Alhojailan, 2012). Reconstruction was done by creating the prominent codes and themes in the way that they depict relationships and understanding resulting from the interpretation phase that explains them broadly in view of existing knowledge of theoretical perspectives (Sargeant, 2012).

By providing this systematic element of data analysis, a thematic approach to data analysis was the most appropriate choice for the study that pursued to explore how distributed instructional leadership amplifies teaching and learning in underperforming secondary schools. Thematic data analysis is a useful method for examining the perspectives of the different participants, highlighting resemblances and differences, and generating unexpected understandings regarding the phenomenon under investigation ((Alhojailan, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The thematic analysis was also convenient for summarising key features of a large data set, as it forced the researcher to take a well-structured approach to handling data and assisted to produce a clear and organised final report (King, 2004). Through its theoretical freedom, a thematic approach to data analysis provided the researcher with a highly flexible approach (Nowell et al., 2017). Using the thematic inductive approach, the data collected was contextualised and developed into findings in a traditional manual way as prescribed by Alhojailan (2012).

In summation, following the data analysis method suggested by Alhojailan (2012) and Braun and Clarke (2006), this exercise was executed in order to facilitate the understanding of the phenomenon being studied as follows:

- Data analysed was compacted into succinct structures, charts and tables from the data collection process to provide an opportunity to identify, compare and determine the data upon which to focus.
- A distinct relationship between the summary in the structures and the research objectives was established.
- The primary and secondary research questions were then descriptively answered.

Having adopted the thematic inductive approach for the study, its high flexibility when data was analysed resulted in inconsistencies and non-cohesion of the findings. However, the researcher averted the situation by applying and making an epistemological position that coherently and explicitly underpinned the study's empirical claims (Holloway & Todres, 2003).

3.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

In qualitative research trustworthiness can be realised by employing multiple strategies (Ngozwana, 2018). This study adopted four principles to pursue trustworthiness for the study namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Maree, 2016).

3.9.1 Credibility

To establish the credibility of the research findings, I ensured that they accurately represented plausible information derived from the participants' authentic data and faithfully interpreted their original views (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). Thus, credibility was maintained through regular debriefing meetings with my supervisor and by maintaining a record of interview progress, as well as confirming the accuracy of participants' statements during interviews (Maree, 2016).

3.9.2 Transferability

According to Nowell et al. (2017) in qualitative research transferability is about the generalisability of inquiry and it is concerned only to case-to-case transfer. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont (2011) and Korstjens and Moser (2017) state that transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of the study can be applied or generalised to other contexts or settings. To ensure that the findings of the study were trustworthy, I crafted interview protocols that were then reviewed and authenticated by the supervisor and later submitted to the supervisor and the ethical review committee of the University of Pretoria for final approval before implementation.

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability in this study required that participants should evaluate the findings, construct interpretations, and recommendations regarding the data they provided during the research process (Nowell et al., 2017). To ensure dependability, I

meticulously maintained a journal as a backup record of data collected in the field (Maree, 2016). Additionally, storing relevant documents in respect of data collection allowed readers to trace how the data was gathered, interpreted, and analysed, ultimately leading to the findings of the study.

3.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability concentrates on ensuring that the researcher's interpretations and findings directly stem from the data. It compels the researcher to transparently reveal how conclusions and interpretations were reached (Nowell et al., 2017). In this study, confirmability was established when credibility, transferability, and dependability were all attained (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Triangulation and maintaining an audit trail were essential to ensure confirmability (Maree, 2016).

Triangulation in the study was achieved by using interviews and a literature review to confirm the results of the study. During the interviews I also employed facilitating skills such as follow-up questions and asking one question in different ways. This procedure enabled confirmation of the responses given by the participants. Triangulation was employed in the study and the credibility was heightened, ensuring that only the themes and codes revealed by the data collection tools were interpreted.

Data collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews and literature reviews were compared to identify analogies and highlight specific points (Sebidi, 2019). I also furnished explanations for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices throughout the entire study, so that others who have an interest in the study can easily understand why decisions were made and how they were made (Nowell et al., 2017).

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Fieldwork takes place in a real-world setting where individuals are involved with their actual world roles (Yin, 2011). Based on this suggestion, I had to observe the ethical principles and follow the legal procedure of conducting a research. The following ethical principles were maintained when this study was conducted.

3.10.1 Requesting ethical clearance and permission from authorities

Once I received approval for the research proposal by the reviewers and the defence panel at the University of Pretoria, I applied for an ethical clearance certificate from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria to conduct the study. After permission was granted, I observed the procedures stipulated in the ethical clearance letter when conducting research.

3.10.2 Gaining access to schools

In line with the ethical guidelines as stipulated and in consonance with the standard set (Neuman, 2006; Creswell, 2014), I then composed a letter addressed to the Gauteng Department of Education, Johannesburg Central District, and the selected schools. In this letter, I formally requested permission to conduct my study. I outlined the purpose of the study and emphasised the ethical considerations that I would observe. Additionally, I included the clearance certificate issued by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria, granting me permission to proceed with the research.

As soon as the district granted approval for the study within the designated data collection area, I proceeded to write letters to the principals of the earmarked schools, seeking their permission to conduct the study.

3.10.3 Getting informed consent from participants

Following an approach suggested by Neuman (2006) and Creswell (2014), I prepared consent letters and provided explanations of how I intended to conduct the study and provided reasons why they were chosen as participants, what I was expecting from them, how much time was going to be spend with the researcher and the activity they would be engaged in. I also assured the participants that the information they shared will remain anonymous and confidential and no part of the information they provided can be linked back to them either verbally or through writing.

3.10.4 Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality to the participants

Confidentiality is crucial because information that is divulged by the selected participants is highly sensitive and it might endanger their lives if not kept confidential (Neuman, 2014). In accordance with the research ethical standard of protecting the

participants' rights to confidentiality, I allocated letters of the alphabet to rigorously ensure anonymity and non-traceability of their geographical settings and provided pseudonyms for the participants (Creswell, 2014). In adherence to the ethical standards of the study the participants were assured that their personal information would not be disclosed. The letters of consent also explained the purpose of collecting the data, and full assurance was made that no part of the data assembled would be disclosed to parties outside this academic enquiry.

3.10.5 The right to withdraw from the study at any stage

Issuing the consent letters for participation in the study implies that the participants have the autonomy to decide whether or not to participate in the study. The participants were then informed of their right to withdraw from the study and their liberty to respond if they considered the study proceedings to be offensive and intrusive. Through letters of informed consent, I provided the participants with complete information about the risks associated with the study. Participants were also informed that the responses they would make would be recorded to get their consent (Sebidi, 2008). The participants were asked to sign the consent form as an indication of their understanding and their agreement to participate in the study.

3.10.6 Participants' benefits from the study

I made a full disclosure to all the participants that the objective of the study was to generate knowledge in order to contribute to the existing knowledge and to enhance practice in the area of research interest. This was emphasised to the participants because Vanderstoep and Johnson (2009) caution that researchers have the tendency to use financial reimbursement or incentives to encourage participation in the study

3.11 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 3, I presented the methodology and methods which I chose and utilised to conduct the study. I explored the research paradigm, approach and design employed in the study. I also accounted for the reasons for using a specific methodology and methods. The deliberations in this chapter also covered how participants were selected. Additionally, I accounted for the techniques employed for the selection of the participants, as well as the techniques used for data collection. I presented the letters of informed consent for the participants and the ethical and legal considerations during

the expedition of the study. In the next chapter I analyse and interpret the data that I collected from the participants through face-to-face interviews.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I investigate distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I explain and analyse data collected following procedures that I used during interviews. I outline principals, departmental heads and teachers' views regarding the distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I also include a detailed description and analysis of interviews I conducted with each participant in the search for a comprehensive understanding and answers to the research questions and provide a conclusion at the end of the chapter.

This study was guided by the following main research question:

- How is distributed instructional leadership applied at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District?

4.2 PERSONAL DECLARATION

In this study, I investigated distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I conducted this study at three underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District in Gauteng province. The Gauteng Department of Education declares all the secondary schools that have obtained less than 80% as underperforming.

These underperforming secondary schools are located in the nearby townships of the Johannesburg Central District including the township where I reside. I conducted this study as a post level one teacher who is teaching at one secondary school in the area of the Johannesburg Central District. The underperforming secondary schools that I included in this study, are well known to me as I have been teaching in the same area for approximately 31 years. The teachers, deputy principal and principals of the secondary schools I purposely selected to participate in this study, were also known to me. However, I had no personal relationships with them nor any personal contact prior to the time when this study was conducted.

4.3 SCHOOLS PROFILES

The underperforming secondary schools included in the investigation are all located in the Johannesburg Central District in Gauteng province. The learners attending the schools are from the nearby townships and informal settlements.

4.3.1 Profile of school A

The school has three stories and a large and spacious administration block. There are sufficient desks for all the learners. The school is well-fenced with palisade partitions. It has an enrolment of 1549 learners and a staff complement of 49 teachers. This a Section 21 school categorised under quintile 3. Most of the educators and learners at this school come from the neighbouring townships and use public transport to travel to school. Most of the parents whose children are enrolled in this school are unemployed and poverty stricken. This school is using the woodwork centre as a school hall. The Home Economics centre is used as food storage for the feeding scheme. The school has a computer lab, but the internet connection is very poor due to continuous cable theft.

4.3.2 Profile of school B

This school has three story buildings and a technical centre in the northern part of the schoolyard. It is a comprehensive school specialising in academic and technical subjects. It is a Section 21 school categorised under quintile 3, which implies that the school depends on funds allocated by the national Department of Basic Education to run its school activities. It has a learner enrolment of about 1389 and 45 teachers. Fifty percent of the learners at the school are from the nearby townships. The school is surrounded by low cost housing. Electricity supply at this school is a huge challenge caused by cable theft. The smartboards installed in the classrooms are non-functional, because of electricity disconnections. The school is well-fenced. The Grade 12 end of year results for this school declined drastically from 2021 to 2023.

4.3.3 Profile of School C

This school has two double story blocks and one single story block. The learner enrolment at this school is 1274 and has a staff complement of 36 teachers. There is sufficient furniture for the learners, but classes are overcrowded as the school was

built to house only 600 learners. It is a no-fee paying school categorised under quintile 3. There are no sporting facilities at this school because the school is surrounded by flats for human settlement. The parent component of the school is mostly unemployed. The palisade fence of the school has been vandalised. Electricity connection is very poor due to cable theft. There is no proper kitchen and food storage area. The school end of year Grade 12 results declined drastically from 2021 to 2023.

4.4. BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Data for this study was collected from participants at three selected secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. Participants were one principal, one head of department and one teacher drawn from each of the three selected secondary schools; a total of nine participants. To keep the information provided by the participants confidential and to protect the schools' and the participants' identities, codes and pseudonyms were used. Principals were referred to as PA-PC, departmental heads were referred to as DHA-DHC and teachers were referred to as TA - TC. Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 present the biographical data of the participants who participated in this study.

Table 4.1: Biographical profiles of the participants in school A

| Pseudonyms | PA | DHA | TA |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Gender | Male | Female | Female |
| Experience in teaching | 15 years | 23 years | 32 years |
| Position in teaching | Principal | Departmental head | Teacher |
| Qualifications | STD ACE B.Ed. (Hons) | ACE HDE B.A. | STD B.A. ACE |
| School band | FET | FET | FET |
| School quintile | 3 | 3 | 3 |

The principal of school A was a male with 15 years' experience in education and 5 years' experience as a principal. He has a Secondary School Teachers Diploma (STD), an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) and a Bachelor of Education Honours B.Ed. (Hons) degree in Education Management and Policy Studies.

The departmental head was a female with 23 years' experience as a teacher and seven years' experience as a departmental head. Her qualifications are a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree, an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) and a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE).

The third participant was a female with 32 years' experience as a teacher. Her qualifications are a Secondary School Teachers Diploma (STD), a Bachelor of Education (B.A.) degree and an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE).

These profiles indicate that all the participants have the necessary knowledge and skills to be employees at a secondary school.

Table 4.2: Biographical profiles of participants in school B

| Pseudonyms | PB | DHB | TB |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Gender | Female | Male | Female |
| Experience in teaching | 13 years | 8 years | 15 years |
| Position in teaching | Principal | Departmental head | Teacher |
| Qualifications | B.Ed. (FET) B.Ed. (Hons) | B.Ed. (FET) B.Ed. (Hons) | B.Ed. (FET) B.Ed. (FET) |
| School band | FET | FET | FET |
| School quintile | 3 | 3 | 3 |

The principal of school B was a female with 13 years' experience in education and four years' experience as a principal. She has a Bachelor of Education in Further Education and Training B.Ed. (FET) degree and a Bachelor of Education Honours B.Ed. (Hons) degree in Education Leadership and Management. The departmental head was a male with eight years' experience as a teacher and three years' experience as a departmental head. His qualifications are a Bachelor of Education in Further Education

and Training B.Ed. (FET) degree and a Bachelor of Education Honours B.Ed. (Hons) degree in Education Management and Policy Studies.

The teacher was a female with 15 years' teaching experience. Her qualifications are a Bachelor of Education in Further Education and Training B.Ed. (FET) degree and a Bachelor of Education Honours B.Ed. (Hons) degree in Education Management and Policy Studies.

Profiles of these participants indicate that they are correctly placed as educators in the Further Education and Training (FET) band in the Johannesburg Central District.

Table 4.3: Biographical profiles of participants in school C

| Pseudonyms | PC | DHC | TC |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Gender | Male | Male | Female |
| Experience in teaching | 17 years | 10 years | 11 years |
| Position in teaching | Principal | Departmental head | Teacher |
| Qualifications | B.Ed. (FET) B.Ed. (Hons) M.Ed. | B.Ed. (FET) B.Ed. (Hons) | B.Ed. (FET) B.Ed. (FET) |
| School band | FET | FET | FET |
| School quintile | 3 | 3 | 3 |

The principal of school C was a male and had 17 years' experience in education and eight years' experience as a principal. He has a Bachelor of Education in Further Education and Training B.Ed. (FET) degree, a Bachelor of Education Honours B.Ed. (Hons) degree in Education Leadership and Management and a Master of Education degree (M.Ed.).

The departmental head was a male with 10 years' experience as a teacher and two years' experience as a departmental head. His qualifications are a Bachelor of Education in Further Education and Training B.Ed. (FET) degree and a Bachelor of

Education Honours B.Ed. (Hons) degree in Education Management and Policy Studies.

The teacher was a female with 11 years' teaching experience. Her qualifications are a Bachelor of Education in Further Education and Training B.Ed. (FET) degree and Bachelor of Education Honours (B.Ed. Hons) degree. The profiles of these participants indicate that they were correctly placed as educators in the Further Education and Training (FET) band in the Johannesburg Central District.

4.5 DATA PRESENTATION

Data are facts or information, especially when examined and used to find out things or to make decisions (Olson, 2021: 1567). In the case of this study, data presentation is a process or procedure of revealing information and the inspection of the results in a manner that is comprehensible and logical to the envisioned audience.

The participants in the study were selected based on their job descriptions as set out in the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) GN 22 of 1999 published in the Government Gazette No. 19767 of 8 February 1999 and in the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 (EEA, 76 of 1998). The nine participants' selection was based on the common characteristic that they are secondary school principals, departmental heads and teachers at underperforming secondary schools situated in the Johannesburg Central District. The participants were interviewed based on evidence that a small sample can deliver more credible results than those in a large sample with uncontrolled variables (Indrayan & Mishra, 2021).

All the participants were interviewed at their schools after working hours. At the beginning of the interview participants were made aware of the procedure and the ethical principles were explained (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The same interview schedule was followed to maintain consistency when asking the interview questions (Maree, 2016). The participants agreed to the use of a smart phone to record the discussions and a research journal was also used to document the responses from all the participants that emerged during our sessions (Cohen et al., 2018).

Table 4.4 presents the themes and sub-themes of groups of data that emerged from the interviews with all the participants in respect of the research questions.

Table 4.4: Themes and sub-themes from the interview

| Research questions | Themes | Sub-themes |
|---|--|---|
| Main research question: How is distributed instructional leadership applied at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District? | | |
| 1. How do distributed instructional leadership influence teaching and learning? | Theme 1: Collaborative leadership as a strategy to improve teaching and learning. | <p>Sub-theme 1: Frequency of subject meetings.</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: Teacher empowerment.</p> <p>Sub-theme 3: Team teaching.</p> |
| 2. How significant is the use distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools? | Theme 2: Leadership in curriculum implementation. | <p>Sub-theme 1: Sharing of workload.</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: Teacher intervention strategies.</p> <p>Sub-theme 3: School discipline.</p> |
| 3. What are the challenges of using distributed instructional leadership at in underperforming secondary schools? | Theme 3: Teacher participation in the decision-making process. | <p>Sub-theme 1: Lack of trust in teacher leadership.</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: Teacher involvement in school activities.</p> |

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, I present and discuss the data from the participants' responses regarding distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in the Johannesburg Central District. The data analysis for the study favoured the data analysis procedure as expounded by Creswell (2014). The main aim of data analysis was to give meaning to the data (Cohen et al., 2018). The data was qualitatively

analysed as indicated in Chapter 2. When analysing the data from the interviews, I organised the raw data and field notes, read it, coded it, generated themes and interpreted themes for the generation of theory.

4.6.1 Theme 1: Collaborative leadership as a strategy to improve teaching and learning in schools

4.6.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Frequency of subject meetings

Bonyo (2017) suggests that staff meetings are a crucial aspect of running a school and are powerful opportunities that can be used by the principals to convey policy directives from the Department of Basic Education, and to alert staff members about internal and external policy imperatives to meeting the school's and the students' educational desires. However, when participants were asked about the frequency of staff or curriculum meetings, this is what they said:

PA: Well, meetings are a compulsory activity that I as a principal hold with staff members to inform them about how we should conduct ourselves and manage our different curriculum responsibilities.

PB: We normally hold a staff meeting once a quarter, but most of our meetings are not well attended by staff members. Departmental heads do not hold their curriculum departmental meetings regularly and this is why I always fight with them.

DHB added:

Meetings are held minimally in our school because of workload. Remember, we have 1300 learners in this schools and I am always engaged in classes. When am I going to have time to call teachers to regular meetings?

TC lamented:

In this school we have serious problems with meetings, whether a staff meeting or curriculum meeting. Staff members will not attend [meetings] as they should. Some of them will claim that they have a personal commitment while some will cite teaching and learning commitments.

Narratives from the participants revealed that neither staff meetings nor curriculum meetings are held and attended regularly by staff members to address issues that might impede the general conduct of teachers and learners as well as the curriculum needs of a school. Abu-Shreah and Al-Sharif (2017) accentuate that meetings between staff members in the field of education are essential tributaries to augmenting their experiences, enhancing their abilities and developing their performance. However, when the principal or departmental heads do not hold meetings with their subordinates, the functionality of the school would be paralysed and lead to learner underperformance.

4.6.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Teachers empowerment

Distributive instructional leadership fosters teacher growth and empowerment, positively impacting teaching and learning as well as creating a favourable school climate (O'Shea, 2021). Samancioglu, Baglibel, and Erwin (2020) view distributed leadership as a means to actively involve school staff members in the leadership process. When participants were asked about staff empowerment in their schools, they responded as follows:

PA: Truly speaking, I don't engage my staff members in internal curriculum workshops and also SMT members are scantily involving teachers in a serious curriculum empowerment programme.

TA bemoaned the situation by indicating the following:

I don't remember being empowered by our departmental head on curriculum management issues. I manage my work using curriculum directives from our education provincial office and the policies that are available at school. Whether I am managing my work correctly, who knows?

PB mentioned:

Honestly, because of the many programmes that we have here at school as well as time constraints, I rely on the empowerment workshops provided by the Department of Education to the departmental heads and teachers such as 911 and Syavula as well as the engagement with the colleagues in

cluster meetings. The only capacity building workshop I had with my teachers was four years ago.

In agreement with PB, TB added:

We do attend capacity building workshops sometimes on Saturdays, but they are not organised internally. We have organisations such as Pearsons and sometimes K-Way who assist us with our curriculum challenges in their workshops. Okay, and then when teachers struggle with the content, I sometimes advise them to visit my office to assist them.

PC: Teacher development programmes that we run here...Remember, we are just coming out of Covid-19 where there was no physical contact at all and most of the things were done online. What I do for my teachers: twice a year I ask the facilitator to come and run certain things, but we first sit down in our meetings and highlight areas that need development.

According to Omoresemi-Ogiamien (2022) distributed leadership is the expanding of leadership roles outside of the formal management positions and administrative authorities. Narratives from some of the participants revealed that they are struggling to empower their staff members with much-needed curriculum knowledge and leadership skills through distributed instructional leadership. This is because of their inability to engage them, and they are dependent on the mandatory workshops and meetings to skill their personnel.

This is in conflict with the job description of principals and heads of departments as articulated in the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 (EEA). Section 4.2 e(iii) of this legislation clearly indicates that “*the principal must develop staff training programmes, both school-based, school-focused and externally directed to assist educators, particularly new educators in developing and achieving educational objectives in accordance with the needs of the school.*” Section 4.4 e(iii) dictates that the departmental heads must participate in the agreed school/educator appraisal process for the purpose of regular reviews of their professional practice with the aim of improving management, teaching, and learning.

4.6.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Team-work

Mestry (2017), indicates that shared distributed leadership, which is collaborative in nature, has the potential to contribute to classroom achievement because decisions are made collaboratively and enhances the effectiveness of the school to achieve its goals. When responding to how their school management teams use team-teaching to ensure distributive instructional leadership, the participants mentioned:

PB: Well, each and every SMT members is involved in leadership in his or her own department. Teachers have been assigned with leadership responsibilities for their classes and also take part in different committees that we have here at school.

PA: Every SMT member has a role to play. I'm not managing the school alone. In all of the departments they analyse the results, they do interventions, they moderate question papers, they set question papers, they galvanise learners to come for extra lessons and interventions. They monitor the SSIP during the holidays.

PC explained further by adding:

Teachers are always guided by SMT members to carry out their duties, more especially in teaching and other committees. A teacher is either a committee member or a chairperson of committees such as LTSM, sports, and curriculum. They have latitude. We allow them to work together with committees in other school. In this way they learn good practice among themselves and their external colleagues.

DHA: My role is mandatory. The Department of Education expects me to lead my department and work in collaboration with teachers for them to become leaders in the subject areas and classroom. I do share with them curriculum policy implementation knowledge, how to do their work and to lead students to do their work as well.

However, TC had this to say:

We are practically not involved in executing the leadership role in this school. We only have the allocation of duties on paper. It is like we are two

schools. The SMT do their own things and we are seldom consulted in decision-making. Things are forced down our throats; that is why we always underperform. We are not working as a unit.

It emerged from some participants that to ensure that distributive instructional happen in their school, they work as a collective when managing the affairs of their schools. This concurs with Don & Raman's (2019) assertion that team work make leadership easy in an organisation because it involves quite a few people in a process of leadership making it easier to achieve the set organisational goals. They also mentioned that they encourage the teachers to become members of committees that exist in their schools and also encouraging them to work in collaboration with members of committees in other schools to learn good practices. This is advocated by Germuth (2018) who states that professional learning communities support teacher collaboration and change practice.

Participants also claimed that they share curriculum policy implementation expertise and knowledge with staff members in order to develop their management and leadership skills. Contrary to what was mentioned by other participants, some of the participants divulged that they are hardly involved in any collaboration; including when important decisions are taken on how they do their work, hence their poor performance in executing their teaching and learning responsibilities. This concurs with Germuth (2018) who declares that poor teacher performance might result from insufficient support during the curriculum implementation stage, including lack of encouragement and guidance when implementing new curriculum approaches in the classroom. Don and Raman (2019) further accentuate that without proper team-work and the cooperation of staff members, all planned programs would be difficult to execute.

4.6.2 Theme 2: Leadership in curriculum implementation

4.6.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Sharing of the workload

Siagian and Artha (2023) declare that teaching quality and teacher quality are significant aspects influencing school quality and student performance. Olsson (2019) also postulates that teachers who share their responsibilities and engage in new and innovative ways of learning are more likely to develop better instructional strategies.

When participants were asked how the sharing of leadership responsibilities is helping to improve academic performance in their schools, they mentioned the following:

TA: *In our school we share curriculum management responsibilities with our departmental head. The teaching and learning outcomes are reported to her. She has also taught all of us in her department how to do some of the work she is doing. I personally have been seconded to assist her with the moderation of the scripts because our learner enrolment is big. So, I'll do the pre-moderation and she will do the post-moderation.*

PC: *Curriculum management should be a shared responsibility. However, I have realised a disjuncture in the whole process. Well, the departmental heads are supposed to manage the curriculum in their departments by engaging teachers to ensure learner performance, but they are working in silos. Truly speaking, the curriculum is not managed in the way it is supposed to.*

TC added:

Collective curriculum management in this school is not functional. I need to blame the principal for not trying to coordinate us to work as a team. Each department works in its own way using its own curriculum management tools. The departmental heads check our work only when they know that an official from the department will be visiting our school. That is the problem that creates underperformance in this school.

PB: *Yeah, I am trying by all means to encourage staff members to work in consultation with one another, because no one in the history of education has ever worked alone and succeeded in accomplishing the goal of an institution. However, I am failing because when departmental heads have to give curriculum reports, they will always pass the buck and claim insubordination.*

DHB added:

One area that needs to be fixed in this school is the way the curriculum is managed. Working relationships and the coordination of curriculum

activities are the problems. The principal and the departmental heads do not have a clear strategy on how to make sure that everyone in this school is involved; except to remind us that we have to teach the learners and give them work. I think this is not enough.

Narratives from the participants revealed poor management of the curriculum, minimal involvement of teachers, lack of coordination of curriculum activities and working relationships as factors that contribute in poor learner performance in their schools. Although some of the participants revealed that distributive instructional leadership works well for them, there were those who lamented the situation. According to Lamaro and Lalam (2023) the involvement of teachers has been known as a substantial component inducing staff performance which translates into learner performance. Nsangi et al. (2017) also postulate that if teachers' participation in curriculum activities is high, management results could be effective. This implies that when the SMT provides a favourable environment for teachers to interact in curriculum management there would be an improvement in teaching and learning.

4.6.2.2: Sub-theme 2: Curriculum intervention strategies

Teacher curriculum intervention strategies are distributed instructional plans used by school leaders to influence teachers to improve learners' academic achievements (Bahtilla & Hui, 2020). When responding to the leadership strategies they use to assist teaches to perform better in their school work, participants had this to say:

PA: I urge departmental heads to organise teachers to have Saturday learner support lessons in the learning areas that hinder our grade 12 school performance. These classes are led by departmental heads and it is also their responsibility to indicate all the resources that they need so that I can assist them.

In confirming what PA mentioned, DHA explained:

Our principals give us a role to play in leadership by engaging teachers in my department in extra classes where during the staff briefings each and every department gives a report on how successful or unsuccessful is the program that they are leading. Specifically, in my department I am also given the latitude by my principal to organise excursions for the learners that I

always delegate to teachers to oversee in order to improve our learners' academic performance.

DHB also remarked:

Through the mandate given to me by my principal, I assist teachers with the modern ways of facilitating the content matter. Whenever I realise that teachers are struggling with the content and content delivery of their subjects, I organise a departmental curriculum meeting where I assist them to overcome their challenges. I also encourage them to form subject teams in order to assist one another.

PC: In my school the departmental heads and teachers are working in collaboration with the parents. Although I have difficulty in maintaining this collaboration, some of the parents are assisting teachers to deal with their children who are underperforming by continuously visiting the school to be informed on how their children are performing. Working as a team with departmental heads and teachers we have one-on-one sessions with parents and learners to assist in improving their performance.

However, TB expressed dissatisfaction with the situation when she mentioned:

Our departmental heads assist us to by visiting us in class to evaluate our lessons and the methodologies that we use when we teach. They check our work progress against our Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs) and where improvements are due, they recommend as such. However, this is done once in a lifetime.

Narratives from the principals revealed through distributive instructional leadership they allocate departmental heads and teachers' responsibilities of leading their departments and their subjects and also organising teaching and learning activities and programmes that would be beneficial to improving learners' academic performance. The submission is advocated by Rechsteiner et al. (2022) who opine that teachers' collaboration with a leadership practice that emphasises motivation is positively associated with their organisational commitment, which, in turn, can impact learners' academic performance. Although such engagement and leadership roles are

visible in schools, some of the participants were aggrieved by the frequency and the manner in which such engagements occur.

4.6.2.3. Sub-theme 3: School discipline

The primary goal of the education system is to provide quality education. Consequently, the effectiveness of teaching and learning is evident through students' academic performance (Simeon & Favour, 2020). However, this goal can certainly not be achieved without school discipline. The principals and their management teams play an important leadership role in maintaining discipline at schools to foster constructive teaching and learning (Memela & Ramrathan, 2022). When participants were asked how do they use distributive instructional leadership to foster effective teaching and learning, this is how they responded:

PA: I'm always at the forefront. I have requested departmental heads and teachers to lead by example much as I do. I sacrifice so much time to be the first at school so they should. We conduct daily assemblies to ensure that all the teachers are on time so that when teaching and learning starts time on task is respected.

TA in support of PA, responded:

We work in collaboration with our principal and departmental heads to make sure that learners are always present at school and in class. If ever a learner happens to be late or absent for school, it is a policy imperative that the parent should report such behaviour to the school to avoid any punitive measure that can be imposed on a learner.

PB: Well, in my case this is a collective effort. I have designed a weekly disciplinary team that work on a rotational basis to ensure that learners are not late for school and in classes and stay in their classes during teaching and learning. This is assisting us because you rarely see learners late or bunking classes.

DHB added:

Our principal has introduced a monitoring system where all the teachers are involved in ensuring that ill-discipline doesn't hinder us from realising our

teaching and learning objectives. We have all hands-on deck; we make sure that learners are on time at school and in classes before we commence with teaching and learning.

PC: All the teachers have been assigned with the responsibility of reporting all the learners in their classes who do not do their work or who are always absent from school. I have introduced a demerit system where a learner who continues to default and transgress the school rules is detained, especially on Fridays. This has been agreed in consultation with the parents.

TC also had this to say:

Through the monitoring system that have been introduced in our schools and the directives given to us by our principal, we make sure that we avert disciplinary incidences by sometimes managing discipline by walking around if we are not committed in our classes. This assist us to have learners in classes all the time during teaching and learning.

Tan, Heng and Ratnam-Lim (2017) declare that the school management team can create an effective teaching and learning environment by establishing conditions that foster conditions for improved curriculum supervision and also by leading the group through example. Based on the narratives provided by the participants, staff members work as collaborative disciplinary management teams and have also introduced procedures to be followed by both the parents, teachers and learners to ensure that teaching and learning take place without any hindrances.

This implies that leaders should not be self-centered but use a collective way of management to sway their followers in a positive way to realise the collective institutional goals (Tan, Heng & Ratnam-Lim, 2017). Participants have also revealed that they have also introduced procedures to be followed by both the parents, teachers and learners to ensure that teaching and learning take place without any hindrances.

4.6.3 Theme 3: Teacher participation in the decision-making process

4.6.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Lack of trust in teacher leadership

A major challenge experienced by schools in South Africa is the decentralisation of authority in schools (Du Plessis, 2019). The apartheid system allowed for all power and authority in schools to rest solely with the principal, and this resulted in teacher participation in decision-making and leadership roles being minimal or absent in most schools (Sibanda, 2017). Therefore, through distributed instructional leadership, the potential leadership that influences the environment within the school is enhanced and principals support teachers to enhance teaching and learning quality by promoting collaboration among teachers (Bellibaş, Gümüş & Liu, 2020; Zuma, 2019). In responding to the challenges, they experience with distributed instructional leadership in their schools, participants responded as follows:

PA: Well, some of our managers lack the skills to involve teachers in decision-making. At times, they even lack the skills to take decisions immediately when a challenge arises. Instead of consulting with the teachers they don't and this creates insubordination. Some of our managers are not bold enough to convince a senior teacher or master who is on Post Level 1.

PC: Some of the teachers resist my instructions regarding how curriculum matters should be handled, and as a result we experience obscured reporting. Of course, we find it difficult to fix the problems because normally such problems are detected very late. Hence, we find ourselves in a predicament of managing teaching and learning effectively.

Adding to what PA has mentioned, DHA had this to say:

Teachers are very reluctant, unlike departmental heads who have a formal mandate to lead curriculum management. When you request them to perform a particular responsibility, they sometimes delay the process by taking their time to complete a particular task; they do it incorrectly, or do not do it all. These are the problems we are faced with.

TB: The SMT will inform you about how you must do your work rather than asking about how best you can do your work. They are used to centralised decision-making. The biggest mistake that derail our functionality in this school is that we are not involved in decision-making of our subjects, which is our core business.

Baş and Şentürk (2019) accentuate that teachers' opportunity to participate directly in the plans and make decisions about how the curriculum objectives can be realised is very important to achieve teaching and learning goals. Narratives from the participants revealed that staff members are involved in curriculum decision-making, however, some of the middle managers are not skilled enough to involve them in what matters most in their subject area. They also mentioned that some of the teachers do not carry out their responsibilities and even carry out their responsibilities incorrectly. Some of the participants lamented that some of their leaders do not involve them and make decisions on their behalf and this is what contributes to underperformance in the schools.

4.6.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Teachers involvement in school activities

According to Korzeniecka-Bondar (2018) teachers' involvement in school activities is an important indicator of a well-functioning school. Korzeniecka-Bondar (2018) further suggests that it upholds the democratic principles at a school - extrinsically directed by school leaders or intrinsically directed by teachers' desires to take part in school life - and focuses on particular goals or on the achievement of the school's mission or vision. When participants were asked how distrusted instructional leadership involves teachers in school activities, they mentioned:

PA: The SMT engages teachers in interventions programmes. We also encourage them to go the extra mile by taking part in school committees and the SGB. So, we are really concerned about the well-being and the success of our educators so that they can produce good results.

DHA: Our teachers are engaged in training organised by us although it happens once in a while. I encourage them to attend the workshops that are organised by the Department of Education. "Work without play makes Jack a dull boy". Teachers are also encouraged to lead different extra-curricular

activities in order to know learners better and to improve relationships so that they can perform better in their school work.

TA: Our principal encourages us to participate in school activities. However, he is an authoritarian. He doesn't trust us because sometimes when you are in charge of a particular activity he overrules your leadership and ask departmental heads to take over.

PB: I engage my teachers in planning and organising the activities in our school, but it is not easy. You know teachers enjoy their comfort zone. If you ask them to do something outside their teaching and learning responsibilities, you will always have a problem before you win their cooperation.

TB: One thing that is problematic with our SMT is that they would involve us in planning other school activities except the curriculum-based ones, which in my view are important for raising the academic performance of the learners. Therefore, sometimes we resist their endeavors to engage us because they are selective.

Narratives from the participants revealed that teachers engage in the interventions programmes that are organised by the school and are encouraged to be part of or lead the committees and extra-curricular activities that exist in their schools. According to Hensch (2020) extra-curricular activities are important for both teachers and the learners in creating positive relationships that may provide an opportunity to create positive learning and teaching in the classrooms. They also alluded to the fact that they train teachers although the training is not effective. However, some of the participants indicated there is resistance from the side of the teachers to engage in such activities because they want to remain in their comfort zone. Submissions made by some of the teachers indicate that their reluctance to participate fully in school activities is because leaders would involve them in planning school activities, but because of mistrust take over during the implementation phase.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I investigated distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I explained and analysed data

collected following mechanisms that I used during interviews. I outlined principals, departmental heads (DHs) and teachers' views regarding the distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I also included detailed descriptions and an analysis of the interviews I conducted with each participant in the search for a comprehensive understanding and answers to the research questions. In the following chapter I outline the overview, the summary of the findings, recommendations and the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 5

OVERVIEW, SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises, examines and reports on the discussions related to the findings from the secondary research questions regarding how distributed instructional leadership influences teaching and learning in underperforming schools in the Johannesburg Central District. Additionally, recommendations on the plausibility of distributed instructional leadership in improving teaching and learning outcomes in underperforming schools are offered. Finally, areas for further research are proposed and a conclusion for the study is provided.

The primary research question of the study was:

- How is distributed instructional leadership used at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District?

Following the primary research question, the secondary research questions assisted the researcher to address the primary research question:

- How do distributed instructional leadership influence teaching and learning?
- How significant is the use distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools?
- What are the challenges to using distributed instructional leadership at in underperforming secondary schools?

5.2 REFLECTION ON THE JOURNEY OF THE STUDY

My research journey started in 2021 and was divided into a number of phases. The first phase was to develop a research proposal for a mock defence. For the sound development of a research proposal, I had to consult both national and international literature relevant to research methodology and methods for my study, data collection instruments and data analysis techniques. It took me seven months to structure a well-developed proposal and after that, my proposal was presented for mock defence. The

research proposal was presented and defended on 23 November 2021 online to the defence panel of the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education in the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies (EMPS).

My research proposal presentation session was successful and the University of Pretoria granted permission to apply for ethics clearance to do fieldwork. The ethics application was approved on 12 April 2022. After receiving the approval from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria, I then applied for approval to conduct research in the Gauteng Department of Education and envisioned secondary schools where my study was to be conducted. However, countless challenges such as Covid-19 protocols, secondary school's administrative issues and the planned timing of the collection of data at the schools of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) delayed the approval of the application.

The ethical clearance and the permissions to conduct my study were eventually issued by the above-mentioned authorities and I was able to continue with the data collection process which started in September 2022. Three secondary schools were sampled and the participants were purposefully selected. The sample of participants consisted of one principal, one departmental head and one senior post level one educator per selected secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District in Gauteng.

5.3 OVERVIEW

The study was designed to investigate the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning at underperforming schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District.

In Chapter 1, I introduced and provided the background of the study on the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. I provided international, national and local perspectives on the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning. I also discussed the importance of distributed instructional leadership in secondary schools. Furthermore, I outlined the research problem, purpose of the study, rationale, significance and the contribution of the study, and the research questions. A conclusion was furnished at the end of the chapter.

In Chapter 2, I presented a literature review regarding the role of distributed instructional leadership in teaching and learning both nationally and internationally. The literature review was explored under four sections. The first section related to the use of an instructional leadership approach to ensure effective teaching and learning. The second section dealt with the significance of distributive leadership to teaching and learning. The third section articulated distributed instructional leadership and a culture of teaching and learning and lastly the challenges when implementing a distributed instructional leadership approach. A conclusion was then provided at the end of the chapter.

In Chapter 3, I detailed the methodology and design of the study. I discussed the research paradigm, approach and design used in the study. I explained the preference for the methodology used. The chapter also covered the selecting of participants, the techniques used when selecting the participants, techniques used for data collection, letters of informed consent to the participants and the ethical and legal considerations reflected upon when conducting this study and concluded the chapter.

In Chapter 4, I provided an explanation and analysis of the data collected following mechanisms that I employed during interviews. I outlined principals, departmental heads (DHs) and teachers' views regarding distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I also included a detailed description and analysis of the interviews I conducted with each participant in the search for a comprehensive understanding and answers to the research question and provided a conclusion at the end of the chapter.

5.4 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In this section, I discuss the overall findings relating to the role of distributed instructional leadership in enhancing teaching and learning at underperforming schools in the Johannesburg Central District. An analysis of the participants' responses to the questions were used to find answers to the research questions of this study.

5.4.1 Findings with regard to the secondary research question 1: *How do distributed instructional leadership influence teaching and learning?*

Research shows that principals are no longer the sole instructional leaders. Leadership in schools have to be distributed among the deputy principals, departmental heads and the teachers (Agyare-Opoku, 2021). Data indicates that principals and the school management teams at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District do not adequately engage teachers in developmental school meetings. According to the findings this impedes teachers to be on par with the new teaching methodologies, issues of learner discipline and content knowledge of their learning areas. Gada and Hassan (2018) regard staff meetings as important avenues to be considered by both the principal and the SMT to allow teachers to discuss curriculum, learner progress, subject leadership and contemporary methods of teaching to ensure the improvement of teaching and learning.

Teachers have an unbearable job description with insufficient formal training. Therefore, they are in dire need of assistance from their managers to train them, assist them in crafting lesson plans, and planning instructional materials (Rashid, Subhan & Imran, 2022). The finding also revealed that teachers are not sufficiently engaged in mandatory workshops and other subject activities to reskill them. Mestry (2017) indicates that shared distributed leadership which is collaborative in nature can assist teacher to improve learner performance. Porcenaluk, O'Neachtain and Connolly (2023) suggest that teachers form professional learning communities (PLCs) to learn from one another and to create a school culture focused on collective growth. This assertion is confirmed by Don & Raman (2019) who posit that team work gives an organisation a pulse because more than one person is involved in a process of leadership, making it easy to achieve the envisaged organisational goals.

Finding 1: Principals and SMT do not use distributed instructional leadership to engage teachers in the activities of the schools. Poor staff development, insufficient engagement in workshops and collaboration among the principals, deputy principals, departmental heads and the teachers create a situation of underperformance in their schools.

5.4.2 Findings with regard to secondary research question 2: *How significant is the use of distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools?*

To ensure that distributed instructional leadership is implemented in a school, principals should share responsibilities with the teachers to have equal influence in teaching and learning. Olsson (2019) accentuates that teachers who share their responsibilities and engage in innovative ways of learning are more likely to adopt better instructional strategies. The findings revealed that teachers share the teaching and learning workload to afford them a collective engagement in teaching and to ensure a conducive teaching milieu to achieve the educational vision of the school.

The findings also revealed that principals use a distributed instructional leadership strategy to ensure that the curriculum is well coordinated in their schools. According to Bahtilla and Hui (2020) teacher curriculum intervention strategies are distributed instructional plans used by school leaders to influence teachers to improve the learners' academic achievements. However, some of the findings refuted these claims and participants were aggrieved when they mentioned that distributed instructional leadership is poorly implemented and sectional in their schools. Rechsteiner et al. (2022) opine that for distributed instructional leadership to be successful, it should not be sectional, rather a practice that is sustained on an equal basis to make teachers feel that their contribution to leadership is valued in their schools.

The findings indicated that discipline is the foundation of both teacher and learner performance in schools. This notion concurs with Simeon and Favour's (2020) view that positive teaching and learning outcomes can never be achieved without a solid foundation of school discipline. Principals employ different mechanisms of distributed leadership to ensure that discipline in the schools is maintained to ensure constructive teaching and learning. Among others, principals engage both teachers and learners in assemblies to avoid late coming and some have introduced monitoring systems to ensure that issues of ill-discipline are averted. Therefore, the principal, the management team as well as teachers through their leadership skills maintain discipline at their school to foster effective teaching and learning (Memela & Ramrathan, 2022).

Finding 2: Contrary to views expressed in the literature review and positive claims made by the principals, it is evident from the data collected during the interviews that distributed instructional leadership is not properly implemented in underperforming schools.

5.4.3 Findings with regard to research question 3: *What are the challenges when using distributed instructional leadership at the underperforming secondary schools?*

The literature review highlights that a significant challenge experienced by schools in South Africa is the decentralisation of authority in schools (Du Plessis, 2019). During the apartheid era all power and authority in schools rested solely with the principal, and thus teacher participation in decision-making and leadership roles was minimal or absent in most schools (Sibanda, 2017). The findings revealed that staff members are participating in curriculum decision-making; however, some of the managers are not skilled enough to involve them in what matters most regarding their subject. This concurs with the views of Tian (2011) and Torrance (2012) that it may be cumbersome for newly appointed principals and middle managers to implement distributed instructional leadership due to the lack of knowledge and experience. This implies that these managers may experience challenges regarding the process of reassigning teachers to be active participants in the school leadership community.

It was also revealed that when some of the teachers are assigned with leadership responsibilities, they either do not carry them out or execute them incompetently. This finding is corroborated by Tahir et al. (2016) who opine that sometimes principals experience difficulty to find teachers that manage to perform the appropriate tasks that are delegated to them. Nevertheless, this amounts to poor training of teachers by their principals and their immediate managers before they are assigned with leadership responsibilities. Some of the principals do not use distributed instructional leadership to engage teachers in leadership roles and prefer to centralise power in leading their schools. This concurs with the view expressed by Van Wyk and Alexander (2010) that some of the principals are traditionally power hungry, which makes them authoritative and undemocratic.

Finding 3: Some of the principals are autocratic, lack knowledge and skills to implement distributive instructional leadership in their schools and this has a negative

bearing on teachers' learning of leadership skills to improve teaching and learning in their schools.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to investigate the role of distributed instructional leadership towards enhancing effective teaching and learning at underperforming secondary schools in Eldorado Park in the Johannesburg Central District. Recommendations are made on the basis of an analysis of the data collected during face-to-face semi-structured interviews and a literature review supported by the theoretical framework of this study.

5.5.1 Recommendations with regard to research question 1: *How do distributed instructional leadership influence teaching and learning at underperforming schools?*

Distributed instructional leadership leads to the growth and empowerment of teachers and contribute to a positive teaching and learning environment. However, schools are focused primarily on the managerial tasks of the principals. Many principals refuse to develop teachers' leadership skills thus preventing them to acquire comprehensive knowledge and understanding of what is required to improve teaching and learning in their schools. According to Tadesse and Derza (2020:11) "...giving attention and improving teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes are ways to improve the quality of education."

Recommendation 1: This study recommends to the circuit managers to enforce the implementation of distributed instructional leadership in schools to improve teaching and learning as well as learner performance at underperforming schools. This can be done by empowering principals, deputy principals and teachers in implementing distributed instructional leadership.

5.5.2 Recommendation with regard to secondary research question 2: *How significant is the use distributed instructional leadership at underperforming secondary schools?*

Distributed instructional leadership necessitates an essential change in the manner in which formal leaders, such as principals, understand and perform their leadership roles in schools (Ling, Bai, Li & Yang, 2023). Significant leadership actions of effective principals include creating strong leadership teams, distributing tasks throughout the

team members and selecting the precise work for the staff members (Kempa, Ulorlo & Wenno, 2017). Based on the findings of this study many principals in underperforming schools lack the knowledge and understanding of distributed instructional leadership which encourages teachers to participate in teaching and learning as well as leadership roles to enhance learner performance. This has been evident from the performance record of these schools over three consecutive years.

Recommendation 2: The study recommends to the principal and the SMT to create a favourable environment for teachers to interact in curriculum management to improve teaching and learning. The study further recommends that the principals should refrain from using outdated leadership approaches and infuse distributed instructional leadership in their schools to accommodate the collective effort of all the role players. This can be done by engaging teachers in team work, creating strong leadership teams and sharing competence with all the staff members.

5.5.3 Recommendations with regard to secondary question 3: *What are the challenges in respect of implementing distributed instructional leadership at the underperforming secondary schools?*

Inadequate or poor engagement of teachers in school activities may result in poor school performance and poor learner performance (Du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020). Williams (2011) posits that the implementation of distributed instructional leadership is challenging because sometimes the conditions in school are not conducive to democratic leadership. These conditions include the diversity of culture, history, economic and political background of the school. These contextual factors must be taken into consideration when implementing distributed instructional leadership in the school. The findings reflected the lack of interest in distributed instructional leadership from some of the teachers as well as the lack of understanding of distributed instructional leadership by some of the principals.

Recommendation 3: This study recommends to the district officials and circuit managers to engage the principals and SMTs in leadership workshops and training. The study further recommends to the principals and SMTs to encourage teachers to be engaged in distributed instructional leadership. This can be done by allocating teachers curriculum leadership responsibilities and mentoring them throughout the process of leadership execution.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of distributed instructional leadership in enhancing teaching and learning in underperforming schools in the Johannesburg Central District. The study was limited to schools in Eldorado Park which forms part of the Johannesburg Central District. The data for the study was collected from three underperforming secondary schools within the Johannesburg Central District. These secondary schools share a similar geographical background, infrastructure, resources, culture, values and are classified as underperforming schools. Despite focusing on the role of distributed instructional leadership in these school, further studies could uncover the root cause of underperformance in secondary schools.

Effective leadership is crucial for improving constructive teaching and learning, thus contributing positively to learner academic achievement. This study recommends to the Department of Basic Education to induct and mentor newly appointed principals. Principals should engage departmental heads and teachers to ensure collegiality when executing their school responsibilities. Newly appointed principals, departmental heads and teachers should be engaged in appropriate training to enhance their knowledge and understanding of distributed instructional leadership to realise positive educational learner outputs.

5.7 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 5, I provided a summary and an analysis and reported on the findings related to the secondary research questions about the role of distributed instructional leadership on teaching and learning at underperforming schools in the Johannesburg Central District. I also presented recommendations regarding the effectiveness of distributed instructional leadership in enhancing teaching and learning outcomes in these underperforming schools. Additionally, I outlined suggestions for future research studies to be conducted.

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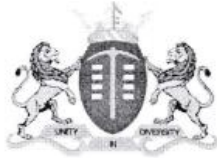
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5.9 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Permission to conduct research from Gauteng Department of Education



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Caroline Tladi
File no: 3/2/1
Tele: 011 983 2135
Email: Caroline.Tladi@gauteng.gov.za
Chief Directorate: Education Planning and
Research

MS J.V. DE KLERK
MASTER'S IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
23 ROBBERN LANE
ALAN MANOR

By Email: junedeklerk@gmail.com

Dear Ms De Klerk

SUBJECT: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESEARCH APPROVAL

Correspondence received from you on 09 June 2022 titled: *The role of distributed instructional leadership in underperforming schools in Johannesburg* refers.

Thank you for informing the District Office of your intended research in three secondary schools in Eldorado Park namely, Eldorado Park Secondary, Klipspruit West Secondary and Lancea Vale Secondary.


The following attachments are acknowledged and received:

1. GDE Research Approval letter from the Knowledge Management and Research Directorate at GDE Head Office – 26 May 2022.
2. Letter to the District Director
3. Research Proposal
4. Ethics Clearance
5. List of schools

You are welcome to proceed with your research however, in the execution thereof, kindly be reminded to adhere to the COVID-19 restrictions and protocols when rolling out your research plans for data gathering. In the interest of protecting the safety and well-being of learners and staff, please be mindful that third parties are discouraged from visiting schools, thus remote data gathering is anticipated.

The District Office wishes you great success with your research and reminds you to comply with the terms and conditions against which approval has been granted by the Knowledge Management and Research Directorate.

Yours sincerely


MS B. L. T. SEATE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
DATE: 10/06/2022

17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001 | P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355 0000

www.gautengonline.gov.za | Hotline: 08600 11 000

Appendix B: Request for permission from principals to conduct research



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Enquiries: J. V. de Klerk
Cell phone: +0828987959
Email: Junedklerk@gmail.com

23 Robben Lane
Alan Manor
2091
22.06.202

The Principal

.....
.....
.....
.....

Sir/madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is **June Virginia de Klerk** and I am doing M.Ed. research under the supervision of **Dr Diatleng Sebidi (SD)** in the department of Education Law and Policy Studies at the University of Pretoria (UP). The topic for my study is “**Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central district**” I hereby apply to conduct this study in the school. The purpose of the study is to understand the use of a distributed instructional leadership approach in enhancing teaching and learning in underperforming schools, establish the significance of distributed instructional leadership in learning and teaching and to identify the challenges of implementing distributive instructional leadership at secondary schools.

To collect data, individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the principal, Departmental Head and a teacher after school hours. I request to use of a recordings device during the interviews to records all the discussion during the process. I will also use my research journal to take notes of the significant data that speaks directly to the study. Through this exercise the I will establish the use distributed instructional leadership and how it contributes to learner performance.

The study will be beneficial in that it will contribute to the use of a new leadership approach that can improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Participants will not be remunerated for the contribution to the study.

No school will be held liable for any cost incurred during the study and participation is voluntary. The data collected from participants will be treated with confidentiality therefore participants may withdraw from the study at any time if they deem it intrusive, biased or misrepresenting. Consent forms will be sent to all the participants to attach their signatures as a sign of their willingness to participate in the study. The data will be securely stored at the University of Pretoria by the supervisor for fifteen years.

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the study, I will use triangulation, member checking and audit trail. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, I will use pseudonyms to represent the names of participants.

I wish to thank you for your assistance in conducting the study. May you please sign the attached form should you decide to grant me permission to commence with the study. Any questions or concerns pertaining to the study, should be directed to jundeklerk@gmail.com

Thank you

Signature:

Date.....

DECLARATIONS

1. Principal Investigator

I, **June Virginia de Klerk** declare that all the statements made above are true and correct. I promise to submit the copies of my thesis to the Gauteng Department of Education upon completion of my study.

Signature:

Date:

2. Supervisor

I declare that **June Virginia de Klerk** is a Med student enrolled with the University of Pretoria. I am aware of the conditions for conducting a research in education. I will ensure that a copy of the completed Masters in Education Degree is submitted to the Gauteng Department of Education without fail.

Full names of supervisor: **Dr Diatleng Sebidi (SD)**

Signature: 

Date: 23/06/2022

Thank you

June de Klerk (UP Student Researcher)

Principal Investigator: June Virginia de Klerk

Student number: 18299751

Post Graduate Student

University of Pretoria

Cell phone number: +0828987959

E-mail address: Juneklerk@gmail.com

Supervisor: Dr Diatleg Sebidi (SD)

E-mail: sebidi.sd@up.ac.za

Telephone number: 0124202571

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, _____, (principal) in Johannesburg Central District hereby grant/refuse **June Virginia de Klerk** permission to conduct a study on is **“Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central district”**

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Stamp

Appendix C: Letter of informed consent for principals, departmental heads and teachers



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Mr/Mrs./Dr/Prof.....

Dear Sir/Madam

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I **June Virginia de Klerk**, a student at the University of Pretoria, currently studying towards a Master of Education degree, hereby kindly apply for permission to include you as a participant in the study titled “**Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central district**”, kindly invite you to take part in this study as a participant in the face-to-face semi structured interview process. Participation in the study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time. The interview will be held at your school at the time of your convenience. The interview process will last for at least 30-40 minutes.

In order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of participants in the study, I will make use of pseudonyms. This means your name will never be revealed anywhere in the study. Participating in this study is voluntary; therefore, no participant will be remunerated or reimbursed for taking part in the study. However, principals and educators may benefit knowledge of how to maintain learner discipline successfully and lawfully at schools. You have the right to reject this application or accept this request application. To ensure that you accept this invitation, please attach your signature on the space provided below. Please feel free to contact any of the stakeholders of the study listed below should you have any questions or concerns regarding the study.

Yours sincerely

Principal Investigator: June Virginia de Klerk

Student number: 18299751


Post Graduate Student

University of Pretoria

Cell phone number: +0828987959

E-mail address: Juneklerk@gmail.com

Supervisor: Dr Diatleng Sebidi (SD)

Signature: 

Email address: sebidi.sd@up.ac.za

Appendix D: Interview schedule for principals



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
 UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
 YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

| School: | | |
|--|--|----------|
| Participant: | | |
| Participant rank: | | |
| <p>Introduction: Good day. I June Virginia de Klerk, a student at the University of Pretoria, currently studying towards a Master of Education degree. The title of my study is “Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central district” I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. The interview will take 30 to 40 minutes.</p> | | |
| No | Interview questions | Response |
| 1 | What is the composition of your staff | |
| 2 | How are learners performing in your school | |
| 3. | How do you involve DHs and teachers in curriculum meeting? | |
| 4. | How do you empower DHs and teachers in leadership activities? | |
| 5. | How do you encourage staff members to work together in teaching and learning activities? | |
| 6. | How do you distribute teaching and learning responsibilities among your staff members? | |
| 7. | Do you have any disciplinary problems in your schools? | |
| 8. | How do you encourage DHs and teachers to be engaged in leadership activities | |
| 9. | Which leadership activities to you normally distribute to DHs and teachers? | |
| 10. | What leadership challenges do you experience when working with DHs and teachers | |

Appendix E: Interview schedule for departmental heads



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
 UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
 YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

| School: | | |
|--|---|----------|
| Participant: | | |
| Participant rank: | | |
| <p>Introduction: Good day. I June Virginia de Klerk, a student at the University of Pretoria, currently studying towards a Master of Education degree. The title of my study is “Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central district” I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. The interview will take 30 to 40 minutes.</p> | | |
| No | Interview questions | Response |
| 2. | How is the performance of learners in this school? | |
| 3. | How do you do to ensure that teachers perform their duties in this school? | |
| 3. | How often do you involve teachers in curriculum meeting? | |
| 4. | Do you have any disciplinary problems in this school? | |
| 5. | How do you empower teachers in leadership activities? | |
| 6. | How do you encourage teachers to work together in teaching and learning activities? | |
| 7. | How do you distribute teaching and learning responsibilities among teachers in your department? | |
| 8. | How do you encourage teachers to be engaged in leadership activities | |
| 9. | Which leadership activities to you normally distribute to teachers? | |
| 10. | What leadership challenges do you experience when working with teachers | |

Appendix F: Interview schedule for teachers



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

School:

Participant:

Participant rank:

Introduction: Good day. I June **Virginia de Klerk**, a student at the University of Pretoria, currently studying towards a Master of Education degree. The tittle of my study is “**Distributed instructional leadership at underperforming schools in Johannesburg Central district**” I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. The interview will take 30 to 40 minutes.

| No | Interview questions | Response |
|-----|---|----------|
| 1. | How is the performance of learners in this school? | |
| 2. | How do you do to ensure that you perform your duties in this school? | |
| 3. | How often are you involved in curriculum meeting? | |
| 4. | Do you have any disciplinary problems in this school? | |
| 5. | How are you empowered in leadership activities? | |
| 6. | How are you encouraged to work together in teaching and learning activities? | |
| 7. | How is teaching and learning responsibilities distributed among in yourselves in your department? | |
| 8. | How are encouraged to engage in leadership activities | |
| 9. | Which leadership activities are you normally distributed with? | |
| 10. | What leadership challenges do you experience in this school? | |