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The Role of the Principal in Leading and Managing Teaching and Learning: A Case Study of Distributed Leadership in Two Secondary Schools in Gauteng

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Research Report submitted to the School of Education, Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

Johannesburg, January 2012

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university. I have used books, journals and the internet as sources of information that have been carefully referenced through the required referencing conventions.

Daryl R. Govender

6th Day of January 2012

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ABSTRACT

Bush and Glover (2003) argue that, in order for principals and other leaders to focus on the management of teaching and learning, they need to be instructional leaders. Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning in a school, with a major emphasis on the management of teaching and learning as a key activity of the principal. This research is, however, underpinned by Lambert's argument (2000), cited in MacNiel and McClanahan (2005:1), that one administrator cannot serve as the instructional leader for an entire school and that the participation of all other educators is necessary. This sharing and participation is necessitated by the fact that the task of management of teaching and learning is too huge a task for one person to accomplish. Furthermore, Elmore, cited in Harris (2004), points out that teaching and learning is a 'knowledge-intensive enterprise' involving many complex tasks that cannot be performed without distributing the responsibility for leadership amongst others in the school.

The inception of the new democratic dispensation in South Africa in 1994 has been associated with a move to a decentralized system of schooling – a site-based education system. Thurlow (2003:27) has argued that inherent in this new model is a move towards institutional autonomy, to a more school - based management system (SBM). SBM involves the devolution of power and responsibilities to principals, the empowerment of educators and increased participation of parents in the decision making process. This new system is vastly different from the 'control' model of school leadership during the Apartheid era (Chisholm 1999), cited in Moloi (2007:466). Within the SBM system it becomes necessary for the school principal to share and distribute his/her leadership role in order to cope. Rutherford (2006), cited in Khumalo and Grant (2008:3) points out that the decentralizing of management in schools lends itself to the distribution of leadership throughout a school. Distributive leadership involves the view that leadership can be distributed or shared among those not only in formal leadership positions but those members of staff not in leadership positions. The movement towards a decentralized or school based management system falls within the transformation agenda of education in the new South Africa, which is committed to building democracy in schools by emphasizing the sharing or distribution of school management.

This study entailed a small scale purposeful case study of two secondary schools in Gauteng, investigating the role of the principal in managing teaching and learning. It examined how

and to whom principals distributed the management of teaching and learning in schools. Various qualitative research methods and approaches were used to collect relevant information on the role of the principal in the management of teaching and learning, and on how the management of teaching and learning was distributed in the two schools. Questionnaires and structured interviews were used to collect relevant data from Principals, deputies and HODs.

The research findings revealed that the principal's role in managing teaching and learning is to create the necessary environment that will enable effective teaching and learning to take place. Principals therefore ensure that educators have all the necessary resources to teach, that educators are in class, that discipline is maintained and that educators are prepared to teach. It can therefore be argued, as Kruger did (2003:209), that the principal's role in managing teaching and learning is an indirect and supportive role.

The study did, however, show that the task of managing teaching and learning was predominantly that of the HODs. They were involved in monitoring of educators' work through learner's books, conducting class visits on a regular basis to observe educators teaching, ensuring that educators planned for lessons and had the necessary resources to teach.

The study revealed that the leadership distribution in both schools was based either on the hierarchy of the school or distributed among staff as a whole. An important criterion for choosing who would be involved in sharing tasks was the skills and knowledge of the staff. Both schools tended to distribute tasks among those staff that had the necessary skills and knowledge to complete tasks successfully.

Key Words

Instructional Leadership
Principal
Distributed leadership
Teaching and learning

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SBM: School Based Management

HOD: Head of Department

MEC: Minister of Executive Council

SGB: School Governing Body

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Leadership: Influencing others actions in achieving desirable ends. It involves initiating change to reach existing and new goals and shaping the goals, motivations and actions of others. (Bush, 2007:392)

Management: Involves maintaining, efficiently and effectively, current organizational arrangements. (Bush, 2007:392)

Distributed Leadership: Leadership practice is viewed as a product of the interactions of school leaders, followers and their situation. Distributed leadership indicates that school leadership involves multiple leaders rather than one individual. From a distributive perspective, school leadership and management can involve more than those who are in formal management positions. Others in the school may take responsibility for providing leadership and management. Spillane et al (2007: 109)

Instructional Leadership: Instructional leadership occurs when the principal provides direction, resources and support to both educators and learners with the aim of improving teaching and learning at a school. Good instructional leadership is the path to good teaching and learning and instructional leaders ensure a sound culture of learning and teaching in their schools at all times. (Kruger, 2003:206)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Educational leadership research, both internationally and within South Africa, has recognized the management of teaching and learning as one of the most important activities for principals and other school leaders. Bush and Glover (2003) argue that, in order for principals and other leaders to focus on the management of teaching and learning, they need to become instructional leaders. However, given the enormity and complexity of the instructional leadership task, and the impossibility of one person accomplishing this single-handedly, the participation of all other educators is necessary (Lambert (2000), cited in MacNiel and McClanahan (2005:1). How this can be done has been suggested by Lambert (2000, cited in MacNiel and McClanahan 2005). In his view, different players have different spheres of influence: the principal's interest is school-wide; the SMT manages teaching and learning in a phase, subject or grade[1], while the classroom educators manage teaching and learning in their classrooms.

This study examines the role of principals in the leadership and management of teaching and learning, focusing on the use of distributed leadership practices in schools and decision making processes. The study further investigates the perceptions of principals, the SMTs and educators regarding the distribution of leadership of teaching and learning and decision making at school.

Two schools were involved in the study in which the principals, two deputy principals, three HODs and three educators from each school completed questionnaires and were involved in semi-structured, one-to-one interviews that lasted approximately 60 minutes.

[1] Through HoDs, phase heads or subject heads.

1.1 BACKGROUND

South Africa is a very diverse country with a population of approximately 43.3 million people. The population is made up of approximately 78 percent Black, 10 percent White, 9 percent Coloured and less than 3 percent Indian. These social and economic inequalities, according to Jansen and Taylor (2003:5), have resulted in more than 60 percent of black people being mired in poverty.

Education in South Africa, during apartheid, was characterised by racially determined educational inequalities. The major characteristic of this education system was inadequacy: under-funding, high teacher-learner ratios, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate teacher training, inadequate management training and lack of resources, especially in schools in historically Black townships. Moloi (2007:463) observes that most of today's black school leaders and educators began their careers under the apartheid regime.

The education system for the White population was the complete opposite, characterized by adequate funding, resources, a fully developed infrastructure and adequate training for educators and principals. The implications of the inequalities in education resulted in educators that were ill-prepared for teaching and managing. Furthermore, other Apartheid laws such as the Native Land Act of 1913, the Native Affairs Act of 1920 and the Native Act of 1923 forced Black South African educators to live and work in particular communities that were separated along racial lines. These three Acts, argues Moloi (2007:464), further led to black educators and principals being marginalised in South Africa.

South Africa, since 1994[2], has seen the dismantling of the 19 previous racially, ethnically and regionally separated education systems and departments and their reformulation into one national department, regionally divided into nine provincial education departments. Within the new education system, the Ministry of Education sets national policies that are implemented by the provincial departments. Each province has a legislature headed by a Premier and a cabinet made up of Members of the Executive Council (MEC). A MEC for Education heads each province. The provinces are divided into education districts, with directors responsible for each

[2] After the first democratic elections

district. The schools are governed by the School Governing Body (SGB) made up of parents, teachers and learners. This gives parents, learners, educators and non-teaching staff an opportunity to participate in the governance of a school. The South African Schools Act (SASA, Act no 84 of 1996), through the formalizing of school governing bodies, allowed, for the first time, all stakeholders to be formally legislated within the governance structures of the school.

But, according to Jansen and Taylor (2003:5), post-apartheid South Africa (1994) remains one of the most unequal societies in the world. One of the major challenges is to redress these inequalities through social and educational reforms in line with the goals of educational transformation i.e. equity, efficiency, quality, effectiveness and democracy (Jansen and Taylor (2003:6)[3].

The new democratic dispensation in South Africa since 1994 has been associated with a move to a decentralized or site-based system of schooling. This new system is:

> "*...in line with the constitutional imperatives for transformation expressed in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.*" (The South African Standard for Principalship, 2005:3).

This decentralized system has been seen as key to the success of educational transformation in South Africa. Thurlow (2003:27) observes that, inherent to this new model is a move towards institutional autonomy, to a more school-based management system (SBM). Botha (2006:341) notes that this move towards 'self-management' in schools is part of a global trend. It involves the devolution of power and responsibilities to principals, the empowerment of educators and more participation of parents in the decision making process. School leadership must therefore be looked at within this context of decentralization i.e. the devolution of power to the school. With it comes new roles and responsibilities for staff, that, Hoadley and Ward (2009:3) maintain, must be accompanied by strong accountability and auditing mechanisms.

[3] Through the introduction of the South African Schools Act of 1996, the South African government began the transformation of the educational system in South Africa.

The nature of the new school leadership is vastly different from that of the Apartheid era. Chisholm (1999) cited in Moloi (2007:466), describes the apartheid management model as a 'control' model. Fleisch and Christie (2004), cited in Hoadley and Ward (2009:4), point out that principals had no influence on the budget, the choice of resources such as textbooks, the hiring of staff and no decision making powers when it came to the curriculum. Principals therefore had no or little experience with financial management, resource management, curriculum management or instructional leadership. With little experience in these areas of school management, there was bound to be confusion among principals as to what they are supposed to do (Hoadley 2007:3). Botha (2006:341) explains further that the new, school-based management approach means a major change in terms of power relations and involvement of all stakeholders. Within the SBM system it becomes necessary for the school principal to share/distribute his leadership role. The concept of distributive leadership involves the view that leadership can be distributed across many in the school and not just be the domain the few. Furthermore, Rutherford (2006), cited in Khumalo and Grant (2008:3) points out that the decentralizing of management in schools lends itself to the distribution of leadership throughout a school.

Within this context of school-based management, this study attempted to explore the role of the principal in managing teaching and learning in a secondary school.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The introduction of legislation such as The South African Schools Act of 1996 saw the process of decentralization of decision making (school based management) in the education system. This has led to focus being placed on all stakeholders in education working in a democratic and participative way in the leadership and management of schools. This requires moving away from the traditional roles and functions of management and leadership. Botha (2006:341) alludes to the change that is required when he states that:

> "*The participative management required of SBM structures means that authority is delegated from higher to lower levels and entails a major changing of roles."*

The roles which principals have been accustomed to have changed as decision making is now shared among stakeholders, the principal having to share his authority and leadership with others. Similarly, Botha (2006:341) points out that:

> "*The current position of the principalship renders not only authority, but also leadership, to the incumbent.*"

Steyn (2003:329) has stressed that the legacy of apartheid has left many schools with poor management, a collapse of teaching and learning and a hierarchical structure with authoritarian management styles. One of the focus areas of education in a post apartheid society is to restore the culture of teaching and learning. To this end, the department of education has focused on building democracy by moving towards a decentralized or school based management system that emphasizes the sharing or distribution of school management.

Post 1994, principals of schools are expected to develop and empower others who work with them. The principal is expected to provide opportunities for shared leadership, teamwork and participation in decision making (The South African Standard for Principalship, 2005:20). Poo and Hoyle, (1995) cited in Thurlow et al (2003:53) have shown that educators were strongly in favour of and wanted to be included in the decision making processes at school. The challenge for principals is to encourage staff to be involved in the decision making process and make possible opportunities for involvement in decision making and sharing of leadership and management.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Bush et al (2009:3), through their research[4], show that principals have a weak grasp of teaching and learning and that school management teams should share the overall responsibility for the management of teaching and learning This study, likewise, aims to explore the practice of distributing leadership as a critical area with regard to the management of teaching and learning.

[4] The principle aim of their research was to explore the leadership practices employed by principals in selected secondary schools. The second was to explore how principals lead and manage teaching and learning in the selected secondary schools.

1.4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Bush (2007:391) has argued that there has been worldwide recognition that schools require effective leaders and managers, enabling schools to provide quality education for learners. Together with trained and committed educators, highly effective principals are required to ensure effective teaching and learning in schools. There has also been the recognition of the need for effective leaders and managers in South Africa (Bush, 2007:392). Furthermore, the principal has the responsibility to set the framework for effective teaching and learning, giving him/her direct responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning (Bush et al. 2009:3).

Given the nature of changes that have taken place regarding the role of the principal under school based management and the vast increase in workload that accompanies it, it is necessary to examine the role of the principal in managing teaching and learning, focusing on the principal as a practitioner of distributed leadership. It is also necessary to examine the decision making process within the school. In other words there needs to be a focus on how distributed leadership is enacted within schools. This is precipitated by the lack of empirical research on 'distributed leadership in action' as highlighted by Bennet et al, (2003) cited in Harris (2004:13). Similarly, Lashway (2003:2) adds that there is a considerable theoretical background to distributed leadership, but very little empirical knowledge about how, or to what extent, principals actually use distributed leadership.

A systematic review of the literature on school management in South Africa, conducted by Bush et al (2009:1), revealed a lack of sources on the topic of managing and leading teaching and learning in South Africa. Furthermore, nothing in the literature provided a comprehensive view on the topic based on empirical work. Moloi (2007:467) also stresses the limited research base. However, as Moloi (2007) cited in Bush et al (2009:1), has pointed out:

> *"...there is a developing awareness of its significance for South African schools."*

In the light of this, the findings of this research could therefore add to the body of knowledge and literature pertaining to the management and leadership of teaching

and learning in South Africa. This could then pave the way for research of a deeper scale and scope to be conducted.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

The study seeks to answer the key question: What role does the principal play in managing teaching and learning?

The sub-questions are:

1. How is leadership of curriculum and instruction distributed across the school?
2. How do school leaders practice distributed leadership?

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Over the past few years there has been an expansion of leadership tasks and responsibilities within the schooling context, both globally and within the South African context. This has created increased demands and pressures on schools. It has therefore become necessary to actively and purposefully distribute leadership within a school, in order to deal with these pressures and demands and to ensure that leadership within the school is effective. Harris and Spillane (2008:31) maintain that leadership requires diverse expertise and, consequently, diverse forms of leadership are required to meet the demands and challenges that schools face. The old organizational structure that relied on the principal as the sole 'expert' in the school will not be able to meet the needs of a changing school environment. Therefore new approaches to school leadership will be necessary.

Lashway (2003:1) agrees, arguing that after 20 years of school reform, the principals 'job jar' has been stuffed with new chores. Oduro (2004:2) reasons that the task of transforming schools is too complex a task for one person to accomplish on his/her own and that leadership should therefore be distributed throughout the school instead of being vested in one person only. It is therefore the researcher's contention, in this study, that a distributed leadership approach is necessary in order for principals to cope with managing and leading teaching and learning in school.

The case for distributed leadership is further supported by Elmore (2000), cited in Harris (2008:14), who points out that:

> "*In a knowledge intensive enterprise like teaching and learning there is no way to perform this complex task without widely distributing the responsibility for leadership among roles in the organization.*"

In defining distributed leadership, Spillane et al (2001), cited in Harris and Spillane (2008:32) shows that it implies a social distribution of leadership in which the leadership function is stretched over a number of people and the leadership task is accomplished through the interactions of many/multiple leaders. Harris (2008:173) points out that the distributed perspective focuses on how leadership practice is distributed among formal and informal leaders.

Wallace (2002:167) affirms that leadership as distributed, involving people working together, is becoming more popular. He describes principals as being pivotal in ensuring others' contribution to leadership and management, but also, importantly, to depend on their colleagues to share the leadership and management burden placed on them.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research was limited in depth, scope, scale and complexity, due to time constraints faced by the researcher in collecting data[5]. If more time had been available, a more comprehensive study focusing on more than two schools and more participants would have been undertaken.

Data collection was limited by the administration of questionnaires, as some participants did not fully complete these.

A major limiting factor is the lack of research or literature on the management of teaching and learning in South Africa. Hoadley and Ward (2009:10) have pointed out that there are no studies that focus specifically on the principal and how s/he manages the curriculum and teaching and learning. Much of the literature focuses

[5] The researcher due to being a full time worker and a part time student experienced problems with time available during school hours to gather data.

on policy rather than actual practices, on the needs of school managers and the availability of training.

1.8 CONCLUSION

Hoadley and Ward (2009:4) have argued that through the research of Tsukudu and Taylor (1995), there has been some consensus around what principals in South Africa, post-1994, need to know in terms of their new roles and responsibilities. They have identified, among these, training in financial and human resource management. But, more importantly, research has shown that it is the principal who primarily creates the conditions necessary for quality teaching and learning to take place. The focus of this study is not what principals should be doing in terms of the management of teaching and learning but on how and what role distributed leadership plays in the management of teaching and learning.

In the next chapter the researcher will look at how the previous research and theory relates to the problem being investigated. The purpose of the literature review is to establish a link between existing knowledge and the research problem being investigated, thereby enhancing its significance. Sourcing included literature from online journals, reviews and/or professional books.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Distributive leadership is a means of empowering and getting educators to participate in the management of schools, thereby creating democratic schools. Hatcher (2005:254) argues that through distributed leadership the commitment of educators to the management agendas of schools can be achieved.

In this model, the knowledge required to solve complex problems in a school is dispersed throughout the school. The work process in the school has become more complex and intensive, leading to principals being dependant on their educators to implement reforms. Hatcher (2005:254) agrees by stating that, if principals are to cope with the demands of management and leadership, they need to distribute or share their leadership roles and functions throughout their schools.

The South African Standard for Principalship (2005), which aims to develop necessary skills and expertise in school principals, places emphasis on the shared leadership role of the principal. This means that good principals will not act in isolation but lead and manage schools democratically, involving all in decisions that the leaders must make. The general trend worldwide is to challenge 'the power of the one', as Southworth (2002) cited in MacBeath (2005:349) attests:

> "*There is* much *more talk about shared leadership, leadership teams and distributed leadership than ever before.*"

2.2 LEADING AND MANAGING

In order to distinguish between what is meant by leading and managing, we can refer to the distinction that Cuban (1988), cited in Spillane et al (2007:104), makes between these two concepts. Management refers to the maintenance of current arrangements, whereas leading refers to moving towards new circumstances. When applying these definitions to the work of the school principal, the terms 'managing' and 'leading' include administrative as well as instructional activities such as budg-

eting, personnel management, appraisal, decisions about what is being taught and how it is being taught. The processes of leading and managing are not mutually exclusive. Lingard et al (2002) cited in Hoadley (2007:4) has distinguished between leading and managing, by referring to where they take place, in that leadership operates throughout the school and can be carried out by different people, all at different levels within the school, whereas management cannot be carried out by people throughout the school, but rather by people occupying a formal structural position that have specific roles and responsibilities.

This research refers to both leading and managing, because it is difficult to establish whether principals are merely maintaining existing arrangements at their schools or are changing existing arrangements. Spillane et al (2007:104), note that, in practice, leading and managing usually happens together, therefore making it difficult to separate them. Furthermore, the researcher is working from the premise that leadership and management are necessary for schools to perform effectively and that both the processes of management and leadership are often done by the same person. This view of management and leadership as functions that overlap and being carried out within the same role is shared by Coleman (2003), cited in Khumalo and Grant (2008:2). Morrison (1998) cited in Khumalo and Grant (2008:2) also views leadership and management as one and suggests that the role of leader and manager are interlocked with each other.

2.3 CLASSIFYING DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP APPROACHES

Leadership literature has been classified in many different ways by different authors. Hoadley (2007:5), for example, refers to two broad categories: those built on the differing assumptions that underlie them, or through definition of different leadership styles[6]. With reference to Lingard et al (2003), Gunter (2001), according to Hoadley and Ward (2009:7) provides one of the most useful ways to classify leadership, by setting out the theories of leadership in tabular form: i.e. *trait, style, contingency* and *transformational*, with the key questions of the different approaches.

[6] Such as trait theories, situational theories, transformational leadership and Spillane et al (2004) who refer to trait studies, sets of behaviour, leadership styles, contingency approach, cognitive tradition and institutional theory.

Leadership style classification organises leadership as technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural. Other models of leadership, provided by Leithwood and Duke (1998), cited in Hoadley and Ward (2009:8), include instructional leadership, transformational leadership, moral leadership, participative leadership, managerial leadership and contingent leadership. However, what each of the different models, approaches or styles mean is not a focus of this study. The researcher is focussing on instructional leadership and the role of distributed leadership in schools.

2.4 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

> "*Instructional leadership models emphasise the principal's role in directly supporting teaching and learning, defining mission and managing curriculum and instruction.*" (Wright, 2008:9)

Instructional leadership focuses on the role of the principal in ensuring that effective teaching and learning is taking place. Kruger (2003:206) states that instructional leadership involves the principal providing direction, resources and support to educators, supervising teachers and teaching, as well as monitoring learner progress and learners in order to improve teaching and learning Furthermore, Hallinger and Murphy (1985), cited in Bush and Glover (2003:11), emphasise the role of the principal within instructional leadership by defining three broad categories that an instructional leader is involved in, namely:

- defining the school mission,
- managing the instructional programme and
- promoting the school climate.

This view of instructional leadership, as being concerned with teaching and learning is further supported by Southworth (2002:76). The essence of instructional leadership is encapsulated by Bush and Glover (2003:12) when they state:

> "*Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students. Leaders' influence is targeted at student learning via teachers. The emphasis in on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself.*"

Instructional leadership has been defined in many ways. In providing definitions of instructional leadership, the researcher has drawn from Southworth (2002:77) who refers to Leithwood at al. (1999) and Blasé and Blasé (1998). Leithwood et al conclude that the focus of instructional leaders is the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities that affect the growth of learners, thus agreeing with Hallinger and Murphy's three broad categories above[7]. Blasé and Blasé (1998) view instructional leadership differently, as a blend of supervision, staff development and curriculum development. They also maintain that one of the most influential instructional leadership practices is the promotion of teachers' professional development. Both these definitions show that instructional leadership is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, professional learning of teachers and student growth.

Sheppard (1996), cited in Southworth (2002:78), refers to a 'broad' and 'narrow' definition of instructional leadership. The broad definition, he argues, includes organisational and teacher culture issues whereas the narrow definition focuses only on the behaviours of educators that enhance the learning of pupils, (i.e. the actions that are directly related to teaching and learning). Southworth (2002:78) argues that, for instructional leadership to be effective, it must be conceptualized as broad. By adopting a broad view of instructional leadership, other leaders, as well as the principal are allowed to play a role in leadership. The narrow definition, however, relies heavily on the influence of individual leaders.

Research within the field of instructional leadership has identified ways in which a good principal can promote teaching and learning. Blasé & Blasé (1998), cited in Southworth (2002:80), conducted a study in 800 schools in the United States on effective instructional leadership behaviour. From the data, they concluded that there were three main aspects of effective instructional leadership behaviour, namely: talking with teachers (conferencing), promoting teachers' professional growth and fostering teacher reflection. These three aspects are linked to the head teacher being visible, praising results and extending autonomy. At the core of instructional supervision is conferencing, that requires knowledge and skills of classroom observation,

[7], Hallinger and Murphy (1985), cited in Bush and Glover (2003:11), that instructional leadership consists of three broad categories of leadership practice i.e. defining the school mission, managing the instructional program and promoting the school climate.

data gathering methods, teaching methods and skills, communication skills, learning styles and background of educators. The vast list of skills and knowledge required in conferencing led Southworth (2002: 81) to conclude that instructional leadership "requires a high level of professional knowledge, skills and understanding about pedagogy, pupil learning, adult learning and human interaction"

Further studies conducted by Southworth (2002) on leadership in small primary schools in England found three strategies that improved the quality of teaching and learning in the schools, i.e. modelling, monitoring and professional dialogue. First, modelling involved the heads of schools using their teaching as an example of what and how things could be done. The heads would work with staff in their classrooms, coaching. Secondly, monitoring involved the heads checking the plans of teachers, visiting classrooms, looking at learners' books, reviewing and analyzing learners' assessment records. Through the use of subject meetings, curricular policies and joint planning, heads were able to enter into professional dialogue and discussion. These strategies were then supported by structures and systems such as school policies, developmental plans, schemes of work to assist with lesson planning and policies for teaching and learning.

Both these studies, conducted by Blasé & Blasé (1998) and Southworth (2002), have highlighted important aspects of instructional leadership: first, professional dialogue is an important aspect of instructional leadership, with emphasis on monitoring and modelling; secondly, the importance of structure and systems to support teaching and learning must be present; thirdly, instructional leadership must be supported by formal organizational processes and structures, and lastly, principals must be able to influence teachers, both directly and indirectly. These studies have also shown that instructional leadership requires high levels of competency in many areas of knowledge and skill and knowledge of teaching and learning. The problem with this is that many school leaders may not have the necessary knowledge or skills to provide adequate instructional leadership.

Parker & Day (1997) cited in Kruger (2003:207) state that an effective instructional leader (principal) must be able to:

- Define, communicate and set, together with educators, the mission, goals and objectives that can help the school attain high levels of teaching and learning,
- Manage the curriculum and teaching so that teaching time is optimally used and ensure that resources are available to enable educators to carry out their work,
- Supervise educators and ensure that they receive all the necessary support and guidance so that they can teach effectively,
- Ensure that programmes are implemented that enrich the teaching experience of educators,
- Regularly monitor and evaluate learners' performance through tests and other forms of assessment and use these results of assessment to provide effective support for learners, and
- Create a positive school climate in which teaching and learning can take place

The problem with the focus on instructional leadership is that the principal cannot be responsible for all leadership issues in a school or, as Wright (2008:9) has pointed out, it is unrealistic for the principal to be viewed as the expert in all matters. School leaders are expected to perform not only management tasks but also need to act as instructional leaders. It is impossible for principals to meet all the instructional needs of the school, therefore principals need to distribute leadership across the school to middle management and classroom teacher level. This is supported by Elmore (2004), cited in Robinson (2008:246), who has indicated that one of the reasons for the current emphasis on distributed leadership is the belief that distributed instructional leadership will result in the improvement of learning and teaching.

2.5 ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

"*The principal has the overall responsibility for developing and implementing plans, policies and procedures that will allow the school to trans-*

> *late its vision and mission into action and outcomes and for the creation of a safe, nurturing and supportive learning environment that will allow for effective teaching and learning taking place.*" (The South African Standard for Principalship, 2005:10).

The South African Standard for Principalship (2005:7) further describes the principal as the leading professional in the school who is responsible for providing leadership and direction and for ensuring that the aims and goals of the school are met. The document identifies six key areas of principalship that constitute the generic role of the principal. These include:

- Shaping the direction and development of the school which involves the principal working with the different roles players in the school, (i.e. The SMT, SGB and other community members), in order to create a shared vision for the school, to motivate all in the school to work hard and to develop plans aimed at sustained school improvement;
- Assuring quality and securing accountability: the principal and SMT are responsible for assuring the quality of teaching and learning in the school by establishing effective systems and procedures to ensure effective ongoing evaluation;
- Developing and empowering self and others: together with the SMT, developing and providing opportunities for others within the school to achieve the highest quality of teaching and learning, be involved in decision making, having opportunities for shared leadership and building the leadership and management capacity among other staff members of staff;
- Managing the school as an organisation: ensuring that the school is properly resourced in order to carry out its functions in an effective, efficient, safe and nurturing learning environment;
- Working with the community (i.e. SGB, SMT) collaboratively for the benefit of both community and school; and
- Leading and managing the school: focusing on the principal's responsibility to create and maintain a learning culture for the learners and staff.

The importance of this role is illustrated by Leithwood et al. (2006) cited in Bush and Glover (2009:4) when they assert that talented leadership is required if a school wants to successfully turn around pupil achievement.

The principals' responsibilities include setting a framework for effective teaching and learning, developing policies to address issues of teaching and learning and ensuring that curriculum delivery is successfully implemented. This constitutes a 'school-wide' view of managing teaching and learning (ibid.), a view supported by The National Guidelines for Head Teachers in Wales[8].

Bush and Glover (2009:6) argue that this can be done, by the principal involving him/herself in the overseeing of the curriculum across the school, ensuring that lessons take place, evaluating the performance of learners in examinations and all other assessment, monitoring the work of the HODs through their work plans, ensuring that HODs monitor the educators in their teams, arranging for class visits and feedback sessions and ensuring that appropriate LTSMs are made available. Similarly, Kruger (2003:207) outlines the broad functions of the principal which involves defining and communicating the mission of the school, managing curriculum and instruction, supervising teaching, monitoring learner progress and creating and promoting a positive instructional climate at schools.

The essence of principalship in any context can best be summarised by the following quote:

> "*…to provide leadership and management in the school to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning take place and which promote the highest standards of learner achievement…*" (The South African Standard for Principalship, 2005:10)

[8] This document states that a major function of the principal is to lead learning and teaching and, together with his staff, to create conditions and structures to support effective teaching and learning. It goes further to say that the principal has also the responsibility to ensure quality teaching and learning takes place and to ensure learner achievement.

2.6 THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Educational institutions throughout the world, including South Africa, are moving towards self-management and self-governance or school based management (SBM). Research conducted has shown that with the introduction of SBM, the role of the school principal has changed. Botha (2006:341), for example, suggests that, within the SBM context, authority needs to be entrusted to all levels in the school. This therefore entails a major changing of roles within the school, including the role of the principal. Rather than being the chief decision-maker, s/he has to develop the ability to convince, inspire, bind and direct followers to realize common ideals (ibid)[9]. This is consistent with the view of Mosage and Van der Wetshuizen (1997), who state that it is the collaborative setting of SBM which calls upon school principals to exercise leadership via distribution to the various roles in a school. Furthermore, Woods (2005), cited in Khumalo and Grant (2008:2), has suggested that the role of the principal has changed under the new democratic culture of South Africa. Moving from a structure where schools were organised around a hierarchical system with the principal at the top, school principals are now expected to exercise leadership that promotes the participation of all stakeholders.

Caldwell, (1992), agrees that the role of the principal in a decentralized system has changed. The hierarchical forms of decision making have disappeared and principals are now expected to consult and reach consensus with a wide range of individuals before decisions are made.

Kruger (2003:206) observes that principals, within the site-based management context, have to divide their time between curriculum issues, instruction and other non-educational matters such as financial management, labour relations and dealing with governing bodies. Yet, although the principal has all of these different roles to play, his/her main role is to create conditions in the school in which the learners can receive quality instruction.

[9] In a study conducted by Botha (2006), he found that principals started to take on new additional roles which differed from their traditional roles. These new roles included the principal being an innovator; providing all stakeholders with opportunities to participate; as motivator; to encourage staff to be involved in decision making; as coach, to teach and train staff on how to participate, as a change agent and liaison officer.

Steyn (2003:330) shows that the principal is now expected to lead rather than instruct, to introduce more participatory management structures, to share responsibilities with the School Management Team (SMT), empower others to make decisions about the operation of the school rather than controlling them and create a culture of learning rather than controlling behaviour.

2.7 DISTRIBUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Distributive and democratic leadership is necessary in order to meet the transformation agenda of education in South Africa together with the increased demands placed on school principals. Added to this, Harris and Spillane (2008:31) have argued further that distributed leadership has become popular for three main reasons (all of which are applicable to the current schooling climate in South Africa):

- "*It reflects current changes in leadership practice in schools*" and an "*alternative approach to leadership*". With the expansion of leadership tasks and responsibilities it has become necessary to distribute leadership within the school;
- The realization that the work of leadership requires "*diverse types of expertise and forms of leadership flexible enough to meet the challenges*". Distributed leadership is seen to accomplish this; and
- "*There is increasing research evidence that distributed leadership makes a positive difference to organizational outcomes and student learning.*"

2.7.1 DEFINITION OF DISTRIBUTIVE LEADERSHIP

A broad definition of distributive leadership is provided by Gronn (2000), as 'a product of conjoint activity'. This involves people working together by pooling their initiative and expertise. He provides two broad meanings of distributed leadership:

- Numerical or additive, which refers to the "*aggregated leadership behaviour of some, many or all of the members of an organization…., leadership which is dispersed rather than concentrated.*" and
- "*Distributive leadership as concertive action: the demonstrated or presumed structuring influence attributable to organization members acting in concert*".

Spillane (2005:144) maintains that distributive leadership is about leadership practice rather than the leaders' roles, functions or leadership structures. Leadership practice, in its turn, from the distributive perspective, is seen as a product of the interactions between leaders, followers and their situation. Such leadership can involve more than those who are in formal management positions. Others in the school may take responsibility for and provide leadership and management (Spillane et al., 2007: 109) Therefore, as Harris (2008:175) asserts, distributive leadership is a form of "*lateral leadership*" in which the practice of leadership is shared among the members of an organization.

Harris (2008:173) indicates that there are many "*competing and sometimes conflicting interpretations of the term*", distributive leadership. She goes further to indicate that the idea of distributed leadership overlaps with concepts of shared, collaborative, democratic, and participative leadership. In its most basic form, distributive leadership will refer to any form of devolved, shared or dispersed leadership practices. Similarly, Oduro (2004:4) & MacBeath et al (2004:11) have referred to distributed leadership being used interchangeably with shared leadership, participatory leadership, democratic leadership and collaborative leadership approaches. This overlap and use of the term, Harris (2008) believes, leads to distributed leadership being misused often to mean any form of team or shared leadership practice or that distributive leadership means that everyone leads. Distributive leadership theory recognizes that many people within an organization have the potential or ability to be a leader, but Harris (2008:174) indicates that what is key is the way leadership is facilitated, orchestrated and supported (ibid.). While these forms of leadership are used synonymously with distributed leadership, distributed leadership differs in that it is a product of interactions between people and situations.

Oduro (2004:11) says that the problem of defining distributed leadership is further evident when one looks at the distinction made between 'distributed and distributive' leadership. He refers to distributed leadership as: "*A gift of the head teacher which he/she allocates magnanimously while holding on to power*"
He defines distributive leadership as referring to "*holding or taking initiative as a right rather than it being bestowed as a gift*" (p11). Both definitions have in common the idea of 'sharing' leadership.

In a study conducted by The National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) in 1999, and National College for Leadership[10] (NCSL) in 2001, it was found that successful principals recognized the limitation of a single leader approach and saw their leadership role as being concerned with empowering others to lead[11]. They gave their staff the confidence and responsibility to lead development and innovation.

Further studies, conducted by Harris (2009), found that a distributed approach to leadership influenced approaches to problem solving and decision making. In the institutions studied, leadership activity was distributed through a redistribution of power, by giving those not in formal leadership positions of responsibility for important development tasks. This was achieved by involving others in decision making, allocating important tasks to teachers, rotating leadership responsibilities within the school, deliberately choosing to distribute leadership responsibility to others and putting systems in place and incentives to ensure that this happened and encouraging and supporting teacher-led initiatives and development.

[10] Both in Britain

[11] Evidence from the study showed further, that the type of leadership that was commonly used, by these principals, was a form of leadership that was distributed, through collaboration and joint working (Harris, 2004). These heads were involved in, amongst other things, professional development and teaching improvement and the empowering of others.

5 Study of 10 schools facing challenging circumstances, conducted by the Department for Education and Skills

2.7.2 VARIABLES THAT INFLUENCE DISTRIBUTIVE LEADERSHIP

The choices made concerning the operations of distributive leadership result in varying types and forms of leadership. In an extensive review of literature on distributed leadership, Bennet et al (2003:8) identified three variables that influence distributed leadership: the degree of control and autonomy, the context and sources of change.

First, degree of control and autonomy refers *to what degree* and *how* does an organization allow or enable its members to take initiative or contribute to the development of policy or practice. The level of control or participation is either controlled by the internal hierarchy (formally constituted leaders) or the external context of the institution.

Secondly, context refers to the social/cultural context in which an institution is based and how these may influence the creation and sustainability of distributed leadership. These can be divided into the external context and internal context. Knight and Trowler (2001) cited in Bennet et al (2004:38) indicate that the external social and cultural context in which an institution is located may act in a positive way to create and sustain the conditions for distributed leadership to flourish, or it might hinder a more distributive style. The internal context is also important. For example, Coad (2000) cited in Woods et al (2004:443) highlights the effect that an institution with a sustained culture of non-participation can have on participation, resulting in people being passive when offered opportunities to be participative.

Thirdly, there are three sources of change. The first source of change may occur as a result of external initiative in the form of policy issues and ideas from outside an organization which can provide the impetus for developing distributive leadership (Bickmore (2001 cited in Bennet et al, 2003:8). This, Woods et al (2004:445) argue, might result in structural reorganization. The second source of change might be internal, in the form of a strong leader within the organization, (a ‘top-down’ initiative). The third source of change comes from the lower levels of an institution, usually in response to policy requirements within the organization. This will place pressure on the leadership of the institution.

2.8 HOW IS LEADERSHIP DISTRIBUTED IN SCHOOLS?

The manner in which leadership is distributed within a school depends largely on the processes that are used to share the leadership functions. Literature has shown that the pattern of leadership distribution across the sources of leadership is either planned or spontaneous.

Using the categories of planned or spontaneous, MacBeath (2005:357) describes different processes of how leadership is distributed in a school. These include:

- Formal
- Pragmatic,
- Strategic,
- Planned,
- Incremental
- Opportunistic
- Cultural
- Spontaneous.

Distribution formally is through designated role/job description. Distribution pragmatically might be done on an ad hoc basis when the need arises to spread the workload. Distribution strategically is when individuals are appointed to an institution because of the contribution that they can make towards the leadership of the school. Distribution incrementally could be when the principal makes decisions on who can be entrusted with a leadership role. Distribution opportunistically occurs when leadership is taken by members of staff who are capable and willing. And distribution culturally occurs when the practicing of leadership is a reflection of the school's culture, ethos and traditions. MacBeath (2005:356) points out that while the above processes describe how leadership is distributed, applying them to all schools should be done with caution. All schools are different; therefore the different processes should be neither fixed nor mutually exclusive. Depending on the context and time, different processes would be appropriate for the different schools.

Similarly, Mascall et al (2008:216) identify four patterns of leadership distribution. They also distinguish two categories of distribution, planned and spontaneous, i.e.

planned alignment, spontaneous alignment, spontaneous misalignment and anarchic misalignment Firstly, planned alignment is when the tasks or functions of the leaders are given careful, prior planning by all members. This pattern involves determining which leadership tasks or functions are best carried out by which source of leadership. Secondly, spontaneous alignment involves the distribution of leadership tasks and functions with little or no planning. Therefore it may be found that leadership functions appear to be aligned across leadership sources. However, this alignment may be as a result of *"chance, habit or for some other reason"* (p216). Thirdly, spontaneous misalignment, also results from lack of planning and can result in the misalignment of leadership tasks and functions. This misalignment may have negative consequences for the school. And lastly, anarchic misalignment, involves lots of planning and alignment at departmental level but not at organizational level.

2.9 WHO IS INVOLVED IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP?

The potential to lead is spread across the school with anyone within the staff of the school having the potential to take on a leadership role. Bolden, (2004) cited in Oduro (2004:6) agrees that individuals at all levels in an organisation, not only those in formal leadership positions can exert influence over their colleagues and thus influence the overall direction of an organisation. Spillane et al (2007:104) refer to a study conducted by Camburn, Rowan & Taylor (2003) that shows that principals, assistant principals, subject areas coordinators, teachers and other professional staff took the responsibility for leadership and management and that the responsibilities of leadership and management functions were distributed across three to seven formally designated leadership positions. Spillane et al (2004:104) also refer to studies conducted by Spillane (2006) and Heller & Firestone (1995) that showed it is mostly classroom teachers that take responsibility for school leadership and management and that found that teachers contribute to many leadership functions, including sustaining the instructional vision.

2.10 DISTRIBUTIVE LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The more other members of staff are involved in leadership activities within the school the greater the likelihood of improvements in the performance of learners. Studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between distributive leadership and school improvement/learner performance. Harris (2004:14) has referred to research by Silns and Mulford (2002), Louis and Marks (1996), and Harris and Chapman (2003), that showed that student outcomes are likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed throughout the school, where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them and where principals are working with teams and involving a wide range of stakeholders in decision making.

Harris (2004) supports this, suggesting that under a distributed pattern of leadership, more expertise and talent of the staff is identified, developed and utilized. This results in staffs that are more knowledgeable and take more responsibility for student outcomes. The retention of these committed teachers, in turn, will result in school improvement efforts being protected.

2.11 ORGANIZATIONAL BENEFITS OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Research has shown that the practice of distributed leadership is beneficial for a school. Harris (2008:177), for example, has shown that distributed leadership enhances the ability of an organization to reap the benefits of the individual strengths of staff and that it provides greater opportunity for members of an organization to learn from each other.

Another benefit of distributed leadership is that it has the potential to increase on-the-job leadership development experiences. Harris (2008:178) has also indicated that those to which leadership is distributed tend to improve their experience of work. She argues that by distributing leadership, formal leaders "*better anticipate and respond to the demands of the organization's environment"* (p178). Through distributed leadership, Harris (2008:178) has argued that solutions to challenges faced by an organization may be found that would have been unlikely to happen if there were only individualist leaders. Finally, through distributed leadership, the influence of the leader is further strengthened and reinforced.

2.12 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND SHARED DECISION MAKING

With the increase in the responsibilities of school principals, the workload of the principal has become more unmanageable making it necessary for leadership roles to be shared or distributed among members of staff. This has meant that decision making which was previously the domain of formal management (the SMT), is being shared with educators. Taylor and Bogotch (1994:307) define teacher decision making as "*participation by teachers in making decisions about issues that affect their activities or job assignments" (p307).* Having educators involved in decision making, has its benefits for a school. Taylor and Bogotch (1994:307) have shown that educator participation in decision making allows for the management of the school to have direct and increased access to information about the problems experienced in schooling, allowing for better quality decisions to be made. Another benefit of educator participation in decision making is that when educators are involved in the decision making process they are more committed to the decisions taken.

Although educator participation in decision making has benefits for a school, the conditions that promote their participation must exist. Smylie (1992:56) identifies these conditions as:

- The principal-educator relationship: if educators are influenced by the traditional views of the principal's authority they are less likely to participate in decision making.
- Working relationships among educators: educators develop working relationships with other educators. Educators may be reluctant to participate in decision making.
- The educators' perceptions of their own ability to contribute to decision making.
- The educators' sense of responsibility and accountability towards their work

Further research conducted by Conley (1991), cited in Smylie (1992:54) has shown that educators desire to be involved in decision making that is related to classroom instruction.

2.13 CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Implementing change presents challenges to organisations. Harris (2004:20) has identified three possible challenges that will be faced when implementing a change to distributive leadership. She argues that distributive leadership poses a threat to the status of the hierarchy within a school, as it requires formal leaders to relinquish some of their power to others. Leaders may feel vulnerable as their egos and authority are challenged when they no longer have direct control over activities in the school. Harris (2008:180) further points out that the current top-down hierarchical structure of schools may work against distributed leadership by creating barriers that prevent the development of distributive leadership. With power residing within leadership teams (SMT), educators may be prevented from taking on leadership roles and from working together (Harris, 2004).

Another barrier to implementing distributed leadership lies in its practical implementation. Harris (2004:20) argues that, if the leadership is widened to include more than the traditional leaders, who then are to be brought into leadership or contribute to the leadership of schools? A further implementation questions that may arise includes who distributes the leadership roles and how these roles are are distributed. The drawback of distributed leadership theory is its lack of guidance on these implementation issues.

Furthermore, Harris (2008:179) points out that the coherence that is needed to ensure the success of improvement issues is threatened when those, to whom leadership has been distributed, have a different agenda to that of the positional leaders. And lastly, conflicts between teachers who take on leadership roles and those who do not may destabilise organizations when teacher leaders may experience disrespect and disregard because they do not carry formal authority (Harris, 2008:179).

While Harris (2008) focuses on how existing structures within the school can create barriers to implementing distributed leadership, Hatcher (2005) focuses on how the principal of the school can be a barrier to implementing distributing leadership. He argues that principals:

- Hold on tightly to power and often do not let go of control;

- Do not develop the leadership capacity amongst other staff in the school; and
- Select who to involve in leadership by selecting only those who support his/her own agenda.

The ability to overcome these challenges will determine the success or failure of distributed leadership.

2.14 CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP DISTRIBUTION

The success of distributed leadership is dependent on the individuals tasked with leadership roles having the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out such tasks. This view is supported by Leithwood et al (2007), cited in Harris (2008:181), who stipulate that leadership must be distributed to those who have or can develop the knowledge or expertise required to carry out the leadership tasks expected of them. They suggest further that distributive leadership needs to be co-ordinated in a planned way in order to be successful.

Related to these two conditions, Harris (2008:184), reasons further that the challenge facing institutions is for those in formal leadership roles to: first, create the cultural conditions and structural opportunities where distributed leadership can operate and flourish, secondly, consider how best they can develop and harness the leadership capacity and potential in their school and lastly, for schools to move away from the 'leader-follower' relationship towards a flatter leadership structure that is characterized by people working together.

2.15 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND MANAGERIAL POWER

Distribute leadership as a concept involves multi-level leadership. The implication of this is that there has to be participation at all levels in a school. Hatcher (2005:255) refers to this as "active democracy", in which the opportunity for educators to be involved in leadership within the school can be created by:

> "*...creating a non-hierarchical network of collaborative learning alongside and separate from the hierarchical structure of power.*" *(p 255)*

This multi-level leadership has implications for the power relations within the school. The power of the leader has to be 'shared or delegated' among the staff of the school. Hatcher (2005:256) argues that within the school the principal has the dominant position of power, a source of power that is derived from outside of the school and that is delegated to the principal by the State. Therefore any form of distributed leadership within the school is delegated on behalf of the principal. Distributed leadership therefore means the transfer of power from the principal to those to which the leadership has been delegated/shared/distributed to. Harris (2003) cited in Hatcher (2005:257), agrees by stating that distributed leadership "*implies a redistribution of power and a realignment of authority within the organisation*". Power must be redistributed from the control of the hierarchy (principal and SMT) to all staff. Harris (2003), cited in Hatcher (2005:257) agree by concluding that within the distributed leadership model, the power base is diffused and authority dispersed within the teaching community. The distribution of power enables the distribution of leadership functions that are currently assigned to head teachers (Hatcher, 2005:264).

Blasé and Anderson, (1995:13) define power as the exercise of "*when A gets B to do what B would not otherwise do*". In other words, power involves getting people to do things that they would not ordinarily do on their own: the ability to persuade people. They go further to explain that power is "*exercised overtly and covertly by individuals in specific situations that are observable*" (p13). Blasé and Anderson (1995:13) also refer to power in three forms i.e.: '*power over*', '*power through*' and '*power with*' and link each of these forms of power to a type of leadership. Depending on the type of leaderships that operates within the school, different forms of power exists, for example:

- With authoritarian leadership it tends to be based on the assumption of 'power over'. Here power is associated with dominance and control. This is usually associated with strict hierarchical systems. Power within this framework is seen as a scarce resource (Blasé and Anderson, 1995:14).
- Facilitative approaches to leadership tend to use the 'power through' approach. In the 'power through' assumption goals are achieved by motivating

individuals and groups. This assumption is used to implement policies that emanate from higher levels of the hierarchy.

- The 'power with' assumption encourages principals to empower other members of staff, thereby challenging the traditional, hierarchical approaches to leadership. This approach is closely linked to distributed leadership.

Distributing leadership can however be risky for principals. If management agendas are not met, the principal is held accountable. Wallace (2001), cited in Hatcher (2005:260) points out that with the amount of accountability placed on principals, they may be inhibited from sharing because this may "backfire should empowered colleagues act in ways that generate poor standards, alienate parents etc." Furthermore, educators may misuse the power that they get from distributed leadership to challenge and resist policy issues.

2.16 CONCLUSION

Research and literature on leadership has suggested that leadership can be distributed, shared or dispersed. It has also shown that the principal is primarily the instructional leader of the school and that we need to take into account the expertise of the principal as evidenced. Similarly, further research as shown that, as MacBeath et al (2004) have declared, distributed leadership is "*...an indispensable ally of the learning organisation.*" *(p17).* The task of leading and transforming schools is too complex a task for a single individual to achieve. Therefore leaders must lead schools in collaboration with others i.e. Deputies, HODs and educators. As Lambert (2002) cited in MacBeath et al (2004) states in support:

> "*The days of the principal as the lone instructional leader are over. We no longer believe that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for an entire school without the substantial participation of other educators.*" (p17).

The implication of multi-level leadership is that there has to be a sharing of power among all members of staff within the school. Elmore (2000), cited in MacBeath et

al (2004), indicates that distributive leadership can be achieved when officially appointed leaders become:

> "*...committed to building learning organisations and providing opportunities for all ...to develop their skills and to have access to leadership that is not dependant on one's place in the hierarchy...*" (p12).

The next chapter outlines the research methodology and rationale for employing this particular methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Researchers interested in the complexity of human behaviour and the dynamics of behavioural change use qualitative methods to discover information that cannot be easily discovered by other means. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:321), qualitative research is concerned with understanding social phenomena from the participants' perspectives, their own points of view, in their own voices. The researcher has therefore chosen to use these methods because they provide an efficient way to examine social life and phenomena. As pointed out by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:315), qualitative research methods are used because they allow the study of variations in context:

> "*Qualitative research is inquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to- face situations by interacting with selected persons in their settings (e.g. field research). Qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions.*"

Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting, without intentionally manipulating the environment. It typically involves highly detailed descriptions of human behaviours and opinions. In this study, it provided the researcher with a detailed description and analysis of practices, processes and events in the sampled schools and also helped to provide an understanding of two social situations from the participants' perspective.

The researcher therefore conducted the study on site, (i.e. at the school), as the natural setting for the participants. Respondents completed the questionnaires and interviews were conducted in their classrooms and offices. In a familiar environment, they were more relaxed and responsive.

The research comprised a small-scale case study of two secondary schools in the Ekurhuleni South District in Gauteng, the object of which was to determine the role of the principal in the leading and management of teaching and learning. Case studies are useful for illustrating an issue (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:344) and because they are "strong in reality; allowing for generalization" within a specific context, Adelman (1980) cited in Bassey (1999:23).

> "*A case study examines a bounded system, or a case, over time in depth, employing multiple sources of data found in a setting. The case may be a program, an event, an activity, or a set of individuals bounded in time and place.*" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010:24)

This chapter outlines the research methods, procedures and instruments that were used, the type of school that was selected and the data collection strategies that were used.

3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Qualitative methods of research use different sources of information that include individuals, groups, documents, reports and sites. McMillan & Schumacher (2010:325) indicate that, regardless of the data source, purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research. Both schools in the study were previously white schools, located within a previously 'white-only' suburb, but at the time of the study included learners from different racial groups. Purposive sampling was used to select these two schools as the researcher had worked extensively in them in his capacity as a District Subject Advisor and had seen evidence of distributive leadership in both. Also, having worked with the SMT and educators of both schools for a period of about 10 years, the researcher had developed a working relationship and familiarity with respondents. Respondents were therefore comfortable with the researcher and, because of established trust, were open to questioning. This was advantageous for the study in that vital information was gained fairly easily.

MacMillan & Schumacher (2010:325) indicate that "*...purposive sampling involves selecting subjects with certain characteristics…on the basis of the researcher's knowledge of the population.*" These subjects are chosen because they "*...provide*

the best information to address the purposes of the research." and furthermore, they "*...are more likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating.*" (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:325).

HODs and educators were chosen from the Languages, Mathematics and Life Orientation learning areas, the reason being that these are core, compulsory learning areas taken by all learners. The principal, deputies and HODs were chosen because they were considered to be most knowledgeable about the management practices of the school. MacMillan & Schumacher (2010:351) suggest that researchers choose persons that are most likely to yield fruitful data about the research question and are most knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena of interest.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES/RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The data collection strategies included (i) questionnaires and (ii) semi-structured interviews for the principals, deputies, HODs and educators. These methods are useful for the qualitative approach, operating within the natural setting of the school. McMillan & Schumacher (2010:355) argue that interviews permit a clearer understanding of how the participants understand their worlds and allow for behaviours to be studied as they naturally occur.

After obtaining permission from The Gauteng Department of Education and the school, the principals of each school were contacted to arrange times for the questionnaires to be administered and dates and times for the interviews to be conducted. The responses of the individuals during the interviews were recorded in writing by the researcher, as permission had not been given for interviews to be recorded[12]. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) point out that "*In many situations, handwritten notes may the best method of recording*" (p 360). The recording of interviews by hand proved to be a difficult task, as it was taxing to keep pace with the replies and this sometimes necessitated repetition. However, this did not influence the integrity of the interview process or the data that was being collected. In hindsight, though, the researcher realises it would have been more prudent to conduct fewer interviews

[12] Although every attempt was made to ensure the anonymity of the recording of interviews, participants expressed reluctance to the interviews being recorded. The principals of both schools indicated past bad experiences with tape recordings and therefore will not like the interviews to be recorded.

per day and have more time allocated to each interview, considering the scope of the project.

Semi structured Interviews:

Standardized open-ended interviews were conducted, in which the questions were predetermined. The principal, deputy principals and three HODs were interviewed for approximately 30 minutes each. The interviews allowed for direct data collection from the informant. "*In a standardized open-ended interview, participants are asked the same questions in the same order….*" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010:355). The use of open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide more information, including feelings, attitudes and understanding of the subject, giving the researcher better access the respondents' perceptions on the issue.

Questionnaires:

In order to ensure reliability and validity of data collection, questionnaires were also used. The principal, deputy principal, three HODs and three educators in each school were asked to complete the questionnaire, through which the perceptions, beliefs and practices of the SMT regarding the management of teaching and learning and the practice of distributive leadership were elicited. Educators were also asked to complete the questionnaires in order to maximize the validity and reliability of the results obtained from the principals. The uses of questionnaires had both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages were that they were relatively quick to administer, covered a large number of participants and ensured anonymity (MacMillan and Schumacher, 2010:195). The disadvantages of the questionnaires were that they did not allow the researcher to probe certain answers, so preventing him from gaining clarity on certain issues. In the future, follow-up interviews would be useful in order to get clarity on issues emanating from the questionnaires.

There was a hundred percent return rate on the questionnaires, although two participants did not complete some of the biographical information details. With regard to the interviews, of the 12 individuals identified for the interviews, four respondents from school B were not available, citing work, time and study commitments as the reasons.

3.4 ANALYSIS OF DATA

From the transcripts taken during the interviews and from the questionnaires, brief summaries were typed for manual review.

As indicated by McMillan & Schumacher (2010:355), interviews and questionnaires are designed to elicit the opinions, feelings and knowledge of the subjects. In order to analyse these, the researcher highlighted and identified relevant emergent themes. This was done by coding the data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010:371) show that highly structured qualitative data (e.g. open-end responses from surveys or tightly defined interview questions) is typically analysed using codes. Coding involves reading the data and demarcating segments within it. Each segment is labeled with a "code" – usually a word or short phrase that suggests how the associated data segments inform the research objectives. MacMillan & Schumacher (2010:371) then further define codes as the perspectives or views of participants.

The researcher read through the data sets and identified the different data codes. The responses of the participants were read and words were chosen to describe what they said these were used to generate the initial codes. After generating a list of codes, the codes were compared to see if duplicate codes existed. Thereafter a list of the main codes was complied. The codes that were generated were:

- The understanding of the role of the principal in schools with regard to the management of teaching and learning
- The changing role of the principal
- The understanding of 'distributed leadership' and how it occurs
- Who is involved in the decision making processes at school?
- Challenges faced when distributing tasks

3.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

> "*Validity, in qualitative research, refers to the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world*." (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:330)

In order to enhance the validity, the researcher employed multi-method strategies of data collection (i.e. Semi structured interviews and questionnaires). These multi-method strategies allowed for triangulation of data, thereby providing different insights into the topic of research and making the findings of the research more credible.

Triangulation is a strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:379), triangulation uses different sources, situations and methods to see whether the same patterns keep recurring. Methodological triangulation involves using more than one method to gather data, such as interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documents. By using different data collection strategies, the researcher was able to ensure that the research was adequate and accurate. This allowed the researcher to compare responses during the interviews and questionnaires and find consistency in the responses.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Qualitative research is, by nature, likely to be personally intrusive, therefore care was taken regarding ethical issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and privacy. First, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education, after completing and submitting a research request form. Secondly, principals of the case study schools were presented with a request to conduct research, together with the permission letter from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct research and proof of ethics clearance. Verbal permission to conduct the study was also obtained from the relevant school principals. Thirdly, at each school, all participants were informed of the nature and purpose of the study through the use of an information letter. Participants were required to sign a consent form. The participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary and they were free to withdraw from participating at any time. Participants were assured that all data collected would remain anonymous through the use of pseudonyms (in place of the names of the schools and participants).

3.7 CONCLUSION

Qualitative study methods were used to study the role of the principal in managing and leading teaching and learning in two secondary schools. Two research methodologies were used in the study:

- Questionnaires
- Semi structured interviews

Both these methodologies rely on self-reported data. The problem with self-reported data, as explained by Hoadley and Ward (2009:28) is that responses could be:

> "*...reflected subjective perceptions or socially acceptable answers rather than being actual reflections of reality*."

In other words, respondents may say what they think the researcher wants to hear or what they believe to be socially acceptable answers, instead of reporting on what is actually happening. In order to minimize this subjectivity bias, responses were triangulated between the principal, two deputies, three HODs and three educators. For future studies, the researcher will consider using observation and a study of documents such as minutes of meetings, in order to ensure the responses are independently verified.

The next chapter looks at the analysis of the data collected.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the role of the principal in managing and leading teaching and learning at the chosen schools and how the school leaders in general practice distributed leadership

The research was conducted in two high schools, both in the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Area. School A, a former Model C school in a former 'white' group area, was founded in 1981, as a co-educational English-medium school. It currently has an enrolment of 1200 learners, made up of learners from all racial groups from the surrounding residential areas of Brackendowns, Eden Park, Brackenhurst, Palmridge, Katlehong and Tokoza. The school has a current staff of 62. School B was opened in 1920, with 14 learners only. After having moved premises several times and undergoing a name change, the school was finally relocated to its current location in 1932. When it was opened, School B was for 'white' learners only. School B is a former Model C, co-educational English medium school, with an enrolment of 1600 learners. The school draws learners from all racial groups from the surrounding residential areas of Boksburg, Reiger Park and Vosloorus and has a staff compliment of 72.

All data for the study was collected using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews in order to solicit information about the management of teaching and learning, decision making, the role of the principal and how and what leadership tasks were shared at the school Nine members of staff from each school i.e. principal, two deputy principals, three HODs and three educators were involved in the study. Participants all completed a questionnaire, while the principal, two deputies and three deputies were involved in semi structured interviews. The researcher made an appointment with the principals of both schools.

At school A, the questionnaires were handed over to the principal who agreed to administer them to the selected participants. The researcher then collected the questionnaires from the school a week later. The principal of school A provided the researcher with the date and times on which the interviews could be held. The participants were available at specific times during the school day due to their involvement in the end of year examinations. The interviews were conducted over one day. At school B, with the assistance of the deputy principal, the questionnaires were administered to the participants. A week later the questionnaires were collected from the school. The researcher found that some participants had not completed the forms and had not disclosed biographical information. The researcher then made appointments with the participants to conduct the interviews. In school B, the three HODs and deputy were not available for the interviews, citing work commitments and lack of time as reasons[13]. Attempts were made to reschedule appointments, but these were unsuccessful. The data presentation, interpretation and analysis presented in the following chapter are based on the questionnaires administered and interviews conducted at the two schools.

4.2 CODING OF PARTICIPANTS

All participants were assigned a participant code. The prefix A was used to denote participants of School A. and B for school B. This was done to ensure anonymity and make presentation and analysis more clear and accessible. Table 4.1 shows the codes that were attributed to the participants.

[13] Because of the administration of the internal and external examinations

Table 4.1- Participant Codes

School A		**School B**	
Participant	**Participant code**	**Participant**	**Participant code**
Principal	AP	Principal	BP
Deputy Principal	ADP1	Deputy Principal	BDP1
Deputy Principal	ADP2	Deputy Principal	BDP2
HOD	AHD1	HOD	BHD1
HOD	AHD2	HOD	BHD2
HOD	AHD3	HOD	BHD3
Teacher	AT1	Teacher	BT1
Teacher	AT2	Teacher	BT2
Teacher	AT3	Teacher	BT3

4.3 SCHOOL A

4.3.1 PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 4.2 – Participant profile for School A

Participant	Qualifications	Gender	Total Teaching experience	Teaching experience in current school	No. of years in management position
Principal	Honours degree	Female	30	25	25
Deputy Principal	First degree, FDE	Male	38	27	25
Deputy Principal	Honours degree	Female	33	23	28
HOD	BA (Ed)	Male	25	16	16
HOD	First degree, teacher diploma	Female	44	28	20
HOD	Teacher diploma	Female	17	15	2
Teacher	Honours degree	Female	15	4	0
Teacher	First degree, teacher diploma	Female	35	20	0
Teacher	Honours degree	Female	3	3	0

Table 4.2 shows that all but two participants have been at the school for 15 years or more. This would indicate that they had a sound knowledge of the school, the inner workings of the school and most probably of each other.

The SMT (principal, the deputies and HODs) had the most experience in total number of years in the teaching profession. All but one of the SMT members had more than 15 years of management experience. These participants, due to their experience at the school and management experience, provided valuable insights into teaching and learning in the school[14].

[14] The researcher has also worked with the SMT of the school over the last 10 years. This has provided the researcher with a good working knowledge of the participants and their level of competence.

In terms of formal qualifications, one participant had a teachers' diploma, eight had a first degree, while four of these had an honours degree as well. The post-graduate educational qualifications of the participants seemed to indicate a better knowledge base than that of the average teacher and the probability that this would reflect favourably in their professional competencies.

4.3.2 PARTICIPANTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

The South African Standard for Principalship (2005:10) describes the role of the principal as:

> "*…provid(ing) leadership and management in the school to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning take place and which promote the highest standards of learner achievement…*"

The principal of school A supported this expectation by summing up her role as principal thus:

> "*I have to make sure children are taught, that effective learning takes place and to keep order*[15] *in the school.*"

The ADP1, similarly, commented on the principal's role when he described the role of the principal as:

> "*...determining the ethos and work ethic of the school.*"

AHD3 agreed. The role of the principal was:

> "*...setting the tone of the school and maintaining discipline*"

Further support for the role of the principal in determining the overall ethos and work ethic was provided by ADP2 when she described the principal's role as:

> "*...a leader, coordinator, ensuring curriculum implementation...*"

[15] The researcher has interpreted the reference to *'keep order'* as ensuring that the conditions under which effective teaching and learning occur are maintained within the school, therefore ensuring that teaching and learning takes place.

AT1, however, explained that the role extended beyond maintaining teaching and learning, and included the support of the staff of the school. In this regard, she stated that the principal should be able:

> "*...to motivate staff, develop, counsel and reward performance...*"

It is possible that AT1's perception could have been attributable to feelings of hopelessness and low morale among educators in general. Steyn (2003:331) suggests that these feelings are generally found in educators in schools with poor teaching and learning cultures. However, a case can be made[16] for the existence of a general feeling of hopelessness and low morale at many schools, even in those with positive cultures. This could also be understood in poor management terms, in which those who work in a vacuum of non-motivation, disinterest and lack of reward feel alienated and unsupported.

To AT2, the role of the principal could be summed up thus:

> "*To ensure day to day running of school...*"

AHD3 expanded on the role of the principal further to include the tasks of:

> "*...liaising with parents and the district office and controlling the school's finances.*"

These responses indicate that the staff understood the principal's role well. Having, many of them, worked together for fifteen years, this understanding came automatically, as did the fact that the teachers understood clearly what was expected of them without being told.

However, one of the participants, AT3, described the role of the principal:

> "*...to support educators and be the 'middle man' between school and district.*"

[16] The researcher noted this during his interaction with educators there.

This statement pointed to the need for some form of formal distance the District Office as well as liaison[17].

From the above responses, it would seem that teachers had an idea of the generic role of the principal. The South African Standard for Principalship (2005:7) divides these into six key roles: shaping the direction and development of the school; assuring quality and securing accountability; developing self and other; managing the school as an organization; working with and for the community and leading and managing the learning school.

There was consensus among participants that the role of the principal had changed in recent years. AP, for example, explained that this was:

> "*...from a role that was mainly an academic one, to now including being a business, personnel and financial manager...*"

She also noted that:

> "*...we are constantly multi- tasking and changing roles.*"

The principal, referring to issues of staffing and finances[18], pointed out:

> "*I now have to also worry about recruiting new staff, appointing educators to promotional posts and control of school finances, (all of which) were previously done by the education department. I did not have to worry about those things*"

By making on-site decisions regarding spending of money and staffing, principals have to be personnel and financial managers (Botha 2006:341).
In addition, ADP1 indicated that:

> "*...there is now a lot of paper work, with statistics...*"

[17] This view could be due to AT3 being fairly new to the school and the teaching profession (three years) and may not have a full understanding of the role of the principal, or may have had a bad experience with a district official.

[18] Which were previously handled by the Education department, but are now left in the hands of the principal.

and:

> "*There are also too many meetings, leaving no time to run schools.*"

Similarly, Botha (2006:349) found in his study that principals commented that they were spending more time in meetings and dealing with more paper work than before.

AHD2 and AHD3 contended, however, that the role of the principal had not changed, commenting that other participants had not fully understood the principal's previous roles and therefore could not compare the two. To them, the consensus on role change could point to the socialisation of the participants within the school.

4.3.3 PARTICIPANTS' UNDERSTANDING OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Harris (2008:173) has affirmed that, within the existing literature, the idea of distributed leadership overlaps with shared, democratic, participative leadership concepts. This could account for why the participants in school A linked distributed leadership to these concepts.

AT1, for example referred to distributed leadership as:

> "*...the delegation of managerial functions to the SMT.*"

AHD2 stated that in distributed leadership, the:

> "*...SMT shares in the running of the school (administration, discipline, control of work)...*"

AT2 however, while agreeing that responsibilities are shared in distributed leadership, further explained:

> "*...distributed leadership must also involve giving leadership to educators who have different expertise...*"

ADP2 agreed by stating that distributed leadership should:

> "*...involve the empowerment of middle management and educators to take control...*"

Similarly, Harris (2008:173) posits that the notion of "distributed" leadership recognises that many people have the potential to exercise leadership in any organisation, that each member of an organisation has leadership abilities (p174) and that it is the responsibility of those in formal leadership roles to provide opportunities and support for those in informal leadership roles to lead (p175).

The reasoning behind the comments of AT2 and ADP2 can be best described by the comment made by ADP1:

> "*...principals cannot do everything themselves, they must guide others to take responsibility...*"

This would imply that the staff knew that, as a team, they needed to share the work load. AP alluded to the team work that existed within the school when she stated:

> "*Leadership needs a team effort. It cannot be done by one person…we share the workload for learning areas – each member of a team is given a share of the work to do*"

AP also recognised, from the above comment that the role of leadership could not be done by one person. Similarly, studies conducted by The National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) in 1999 and National College for Leadership (NCSL) in 2001 found that successful principals recognized the limitations of a single-leader approach and saw their leadership role as being concerned with empowering others to lead.

4.3.4 ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN MANAGING TEACHING AND LEARNING

The principal of school A played a supportive role regarding the management of teaching and learning. AP explained her role in managing teaching and learning when she stated:

"*I visit classrooms and walk around school (visibility[19]).*"

"*I have to ensure that all necessary LTSMs is (are) made available*."

"*I do not do class visits for the purpose of observing (all) educators. I do, however, do class visits for new or less experienced educators*."

Blasé and Blasé (1998) cited in Southworth (2002:80) have observed that when principals are visible, this has a positive effect on teaching and learning. The principal ensures that the necessary conditions exist that will enable effective teaching and learning to take place, such as having all the resources to teach and that an environment conducive for teaching and learning exists. Kruger (2003:209) points out that this supports the findings in other studies which demonstrate the effectiveness of an indirect and supportive role rather than directly attending to teaching and learning.

The research evidence showed that the task of managing teaching and learning was, predominantly, in the hands of the two deputy principals and HODs in school A. ADP1 described his role:

"*I do classroom visits and 'walk about' to ensure that educators and learners are in class.*"

ADP2 described her role:

"*I am responsible for ensuring that the training needs of educators at school are met...control of teacher absenteeism, ensuring quality control by HODs (ensuring that class visits are done, learner's books checked and assessment records checked), and ensuring educator attendance at workshops to improve their knowledge.*"

Evidence from the study also indicated that at school A the HOD had a bigger role to play regarding the management of teaching and learning at the level of subject

[19] Bush et al., when highlighting the importance of the principal in managing teaching and learning (2009:1), indicate the particular roles and responsibilities of the principal, including: oversight of the curriculum across the school; ensuring that lessons take place; evaluating the performance of learners in examinations and all other assessment; monitoring the work of the HODs through their work plans; ensuring that HODs monitor the educators in their teams, arranging for class visits and feedback sessions, and ensuring that appropriate LTSMs are made available.

areas, including classroom visits to observe educators teaching. The principal explained the process involved in observing educators in class:

> "*The HOD does report on the educator (on monitoring results of assessment, teaching and learning [including learner's books] and learner discipline). These reports are then handed in to the deputy, who does a random observation, to verify the report from the HOD. I get the reports from the deputy principal. If I need to do a visit then I do.*"

This was confirmed by the HODs when AHD1 indicated that they:

> "*...observe educators in the classroom twice a year*."

AHD2 further indicated that these visits and observations were planned with the educators for each of the different subject areas. The researcher noted, through interaction with the school, that HODs only observed educators in the subject areas that they were responsible for. Observation, while primarily the role of the HOD, sometimes involved the principal. AP explained this:

> *"We have a young science educator at the school who is really struggling with learner discipline and lesson planning. I spend every afternoon with him planning for the next day… and we have a camera in his classroom and I continuously monitor him …the HOD has no time to only concentrate on him. I visit him in the classroom as often as I can."*

Here the principal intervened for practical reasons and because she was also a science teacher. The setting up the camera in the educator's class was discussed with the educator and explained to be part of his development. This allowed the SMT to continuously monitor the educator and identify areas in which he needed assistance and development. The SMT then organised training for the educator in the relevant areas.

AHD3 further pointed out that, as HODs, it was their task to ensure:

> "*...that all educators are familiar with subject matter*."

AHD2 indicated that:

> "*Our main function is to ensure that educators do work and that learners are disciplined. The focus of the HOD is on curriculum issues.*"

Similarly, in a study conducted by Ali and Botha (2006:17) it was shown that HODs are responsible for: ensuring that educators plan for lessons, that educators have the resources that are needed to teach, that learners' work is monitored and that they conduct class visits to observe educators. Furthermore, HODs have to "*...spend more time in supervising the teaching and learning activities that occur daily in their subject.*" (p17), a point made by the principal:

> "*Each member of a team is given a share of the work to do, for example, preparing notes and settings tasks.*"

ADPI noted the HOD's role:

> "*The task of grade head is to ensure that all educators have the notes for their subject.*"

For AHD1, the role of the HOD was to:

> "*...set the pace and progress for the grade, while others have other activities that they are responsible for*."

Similarly, Khumalo and Grant (2008:7) found that the majority of teachers (90%) led in areas of their own teaching and in their classrooms, 45% of teachers helped with providing curriculum knowledge for their colleagues and 35.4% of teachers assisted with the selection of instructional materials for their learning areas.

4.3.5 HOW ARE RESPONSIBILITIES SHARED?

It is evident from the responses of participants that School A distributed responsibilities among the staff. The distribution of tasks was based on the premise that it is difficult for one person to manage teaching and learning on his/her own and that one individual may not have all the requisite skills.

AP commented:

> "*It is not possible for one person to do it all…we don't have the expertise or time to do it.*"

The research evidence pointed to distribution of tasks based on skills, knowledge, willingness to participate and track record with previous tasks of the staff. AP commented in this regard:

> "*Who's good at what…based on their strengths and skills they are given tasks to do.*"

AHD1 agreed:

> "*We identify people for tasks, based on their willingness, strengths and weaknesses…look at their track record…have they done tasks before? …how did they perform? Are they approachable?*"

ADP2 commented:

> "*...get to know your staff...*"

In school A they used what MacBeath, Oduro & Waterhouse (2004:37) refer to 'pragmatic distribution'. The principal made decisions on who led and when, based on the demands placed on the school. Those chosen to lead were carefully chosen on the basis of their skills and knowledge and their track record. MacBeath, Oduro & Waterhouse (2004:37) argue that in the current environment, where the demands on the principal are increasing, a decision about the 'right people' is a pragmatic one. This decision on who to involve in leadership is informed by knowing the capabilities of your staff and choosing those who can be entrusted with leadership roles. In order to know the strengths and weaknesses of staff, MacBeath, Oduro & Waterhouse (2004:37) reported a principal saying:

> "*You've got to be clear about those you can trust to do a job ... tap the talents*."

4.3.6 WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES/TASKS ARE SHARED?

The researcher, using the questionnaire designed by Hoadley and Ward (2009) as reference, identified nine main tasks related to the role of the principal. The SMT had to identify which of these tasks they were most involved in and those tasks that they were least involved in. MacBeath, Oduro & Waterhouse (2004:26) argue that knowing what head teachers do helps to understand the extent and mechanism or strategies adopted for distribution.

An understanding of roles is helpful when planning, as AP indicated:

> "*I have the role of overseeing teaching and learning… by ensuring that there is support for educators in class,….*"

And support could entail encouraging division of the workload (AP):

> "*…sharing of the workload for learning areas (each member of a team is given a share of the work to do, for example, preparing notes and settings tasks.)*"

But principals have a heavy administrative load. Hoadley and Ward (2009), for example, found that principals in their study reported that administration takes up most (29%) of their time, as pointed out by AP. She was:

> "*...involved in a lot of administration work (paper work) and this takes up a lot of …. time*".

AP reported that it was not possible for her to do everything and that responsibilities were shared:

> "*The subject heads are responsible for the management of all aspects of the particular subject, including work allocation, time tabling and supervision.*"

Kruger (2003:209), in a study of instructional leadership in two secondary schools, indicated that the responsibility of curriculum leadership and management was shared between the deputies, HODs and subject heads.

Perusal of the questionnaires showed that the following tasks were distributed among the members of the SMT:

- ADP1: responsible for school finances, supervising teachers, liaising with district officials, administration, ensuring that the school buildings and grounds are maintained and the monitoring of all PS staff;
- ADP2: responsible for discipline of learners, dealing with parents, time tabling; and
- AHD1, AHD2 and AHD3 indicated that they are involved in supervising teachers, administration, discipline of learners, overseeing teaching and learning in their departments and timetable allocations.

4.3.7 DECISION MAKING AT SCHOOL LEVEL

The South African Standard for Principalship (2005) highlights the role of the principal in developing and empowering all staff by involving them in decision making. All participants indicated that they participated in decision making but that their participation seemed to be limited to the post level that they occupied at school. AP explained decision-making took place through existing structures:

> "*Through the HODs issues are presented to the staff, to discuss in their subject meetings. The HODs then bring these decisions to the SMT meetings, where they make the final decisions.*"

Butt and Gunter (2005) cited in Harris (2008:180) show that structures are being redesigned in many schools to accommodate new ways of working.

AP explained further:

> "*Usually we get ideas and input, then sit together and reach some kind of conclusion... but the ultimate decision is mine and if it comes to it then I will cast the deciding vote (seldom).*"

This principal therefore used what MacBeath (2005:355) refers to as consultation in order to make decisions, a process in which the head listens to other teachers but holds the right to make decisions.

All the teachers indicated that they were involved in decision making at school. Educators are more likely to participate in decision making if they perceive that their own ability to contribute to decision making or to make decisions is high at their school (Smylie1992:56). However, at this school their role seemed to be limited to their subject areas and classroom teaching. This was confirmed by AP who said that:

> "*They work in terms in their subject … making decisions about notes, lesson plans and activities.*"

This type of participation in decision making is described as 'technical core', which deals with making decisions about classroom instruction Schneider (1985) cited in Taylor and Bogotch (1994:303)

ADP2 illustrated the involvement of educators in decision making:

> "*There are subject committees [made up of HOD, junior HOD, grade head and educators]… (who) give their input in terms of syllabus completion, teaching aids. The subject committee develops notes, summaries, activities for their learning areas and share with all educators. The work load is not only shared but all educators have an opportunity to make decisions about the curriculum and their subjects.*"

AP also indicated that:

> "*Educators are involved in decisions around extra-curricular activities such as sport. For example, they can choose the sport code they would like to be involved in.*"

Similarly, Khumalo and Grant (2008:7) found in their study that 45% of teachers were involved in planning and decisions about extra-mural activities.

4.3.8 CHALLENGES FACED WHEN DISTRIBUTING TASKS

The comments from the SMT highlighted some of the problems experienced when tasks were distributed among the staff, with the unwillingness of many staff to take on responsibility over and above their daily work in school A:

AP: "*Some people are averse to taking responsibility...*"
AHD1: "*People are reluctant to take on extra responsibility...*"

The reason for this could be that the staff felt overworked. Similarly, Oduro (2004:11) believes that the pressures from their workload may prevent teachers from taking on additional leadership responsibilities.

Further analysis of the results found that another problem that School A faced when distributing tasks was the issue of competency of those to whom tasks had been allocated. As ADP2 stated:

> "*Sometimes staff is incompetent …tasks need to be re-delegated. This means that the tasks take longer to complete (and) also means that we have to consistently monitor these people.*"

ADP1 also pointed out that:

> "*The job is not always done as you (would) expect.*"

AHD3 further pointed out that:

> "*Sometimes they do not know what to do.*"

In line with this finding, MacBeath, Oduro & Waterhouse (2004:57) found that some teachers lacked the capacity to take up leadership roles.

ADP1 made an interesting observation:

> "*Sometimes there is resentment from other staff members towards those that are given management tasks.*"

Harris (2008) has warned that conflicts between teachers who take on leadership roles and those who do not may destabilise organizations when teacher leaders experience disrespect and disregard because they do not carry formal authority.

4.4 SCHOOL B

4.4.1 PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 4.3 - Participant profile for School B

Participant	Qualifications	Gender	Total Teaching experience	Teaching experience in current school	No of years in management position
Principal	Honours degree	Male	35	17	28
Deputy Principal	Teachers Diploma	Female	Incomplete*	20	25
Deputy Principal	First degree	Male	29	17	22
HOD	Incomplete*	Female	Incomplete*	Incomplete*	Incomplete*
HOD	Teacher Diploma	Female	Incomplete*	32	12
HOD	Honours degree	Female	22	20	10
Teacher	First degree	Female	4	4	0
Teacher	Masters degree	Female	9	3	0
Teacher	Honours degree	Female	24	24	0

(*Information that was not completed by the participant on the questionnaire)

Table 4.3 shows that all but two participants have been at the school for 15 years or more. This would indicate that they have a sound knowledge of the school, the inner workings of the school and most probably of each other. From the participants that completed all the biographical information four have 15 years or more total teaching experience. The principal and the deputy principals have the most experience in total number of years in the teaching profession. All but one of the SMT members has more than 10 years of management experience. These participants, due to their ex-

perience, number of years at the school and management experience, may provide valuable insight into teaching and learning in the school.

Six of the participants in School B had a first degree, three of which had an honours degree as well and one held a masters degree. Two participants had a teachers' diploma. The postgraduate educational qualifications of the participants point towards the teaching knowledge and competency of the participants[20]. The participant profile presented on school B is not comprehensive due to three participants not completing the necessary information. Due to time constraints it was not possible to do follow up with the participants. The researcher, however, felt that the omission of this information did not influence the results of the study.

4.4.2 PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

The roles of the principal are outlined in a study by Kruger (2003:207). These are: defining and communicating the mission of the school, managing curriculum and instruction, supervising teaching, monitoring learner progress and creating and promoting a positive instructional climate at schools.

Views expressed by respondents on the role of the principal were very similar to that of those provided by Kruger (2003). The principal of school B saw himself as being 'in charge' of the school, describing his role as:

> "*The captain of a ship deciding on the direction of the ship and culture that exists.*"

This view of the role of the principal was supported by BDP1 who stated:

> "*It is the role of the principal to provide direction for school.*"

[20] The researcher made the assumption that having more than the basic teaching qualification indicates that participants have been able to gain a better understanding of the teaching profession through their studies, which will make their contribution to the study invaluable.

Further consensus on the role of the principal was provided by BDP2 as:

> "*Providing leadership, decision making, and providing stability and protect(ing) the school from officials.*"

BHD3 added that the principal role:

> "*...included having a vision and direction for the school.*"

But, added also that the principal has to:

"*Set an example and lead from the front.*"

Further reference was made to the role of the principal regarding teaching and learning when BHD2 pointed out that the role of the principal was:

> "*...to facilitate learning within the school.*" [21]

Participants in school B, in their responses, tended to focus on a broader view of the role of the principal with emphasis on the principal's role in creating an appropriate organisational and cultural context in the school. As indicated by BP, his role in determining the culture and direction of the school was constantly communicated to the staff. He indicated that all staff knew that he was in charge and accepted this.

However, the data suggested that participants believed that the role of the principal had changed in recent years. BP, for example, indicated that:

> "*There are more problems now with learner discipline ('due to regulations that work against the school'), teacher supply, time lost with all the paper work*[22] *that educators have to do ... principals have now to deal with these issues.*"

Kruger (2003:206) points out that the principal has to divide her/his time between curriculum issues, instruction and other non-educational matters such as financial

[21] The comments of participants on the role of the principal are encompassed in the responsibilities of the principal as outlined by Bush et al (2009:3) i.e. setting a framework for effective teaching and learning and The South African Standard for Principalship (2005:7) i.e. managing the school as an organisation.
[22] Administration

management, labour relations and dealing with governing bodies. This differs from the old role of the principal were the focus was only on teaching and learning.

Furthermore, indicated by BHD2 and BHD3:

> "*A lot of time (is) spent on the discipline of learners.*"

but that:

> "*Power has been taken away by (the) education department and no recourse (is available to) the principal*."

Both participants felt that principals spent too much time on disciplining learners and that principals had no power to deal with these learners. BHD2 and BHD3 could therefore merely be echoing the sentiments that are felt by schools in general[23].

BDP1 had a different view: it was the *type* of leadership expected from principals that had changed; not the functions that they performed but rather the manner in which they carried out their role. He stated that:

> "*Leadership has changed from autocratic to distributive leadership.*"

Steyn (2003:332) is of the view that leadership in South African schools has changed from one dominated by an authoritarian, hierarchical, top-down management expectation to one that encouraged participation by all.

The role of the 'new' principal is best summed up by Sherman (2000) cited in Trail (2000:1):

> "*Research tells us that principals are the linchpins in the enormously complex workings, both physical and human, of a school. The job calls for a staggering range of roles: psychologist, teacher, facilities manager, philosopher, police officer, diplomat, social worker, mentor, PR director, coach.*"

[23] The researcher has found from his experiences with other schools that principals and educators in general find that the discipline policies of the Department of Education have rendered schools powerless in dealing with problematic learners.

4.4.3 PARTICIPANTS' UNDERSTANDING OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Hallett (2001) cited in MacBeath, Oduro and Waterhouse (2004:12), argues that:

> "*...leadership is not restricted to the school administration as teachers may become active leaders.*"

All the participants demonstrated an understanding of the concept of distributed leadership, and many used terms familiar in the literature, such as 'sharing' and 'delegation' to explain it, consistent with the findings of MacBeath, Oduro and Waterhouse (2004:11). BDP2 referred to distributed leadership as:

> "*...shared responsibility...*"

BHD3 agreed by describing distributed leadership as:

> "*...sharing the work load and responsibility by getting more people to lead.*"

BHD2 referred to:

> "*The principal delegating aspects of running the school to the management team.*"

BT1 agreed that distributive leadership referred to:

> "*...delegation and giving responsibility to others.*"

But pointed out that the principal must:

> "*...trust others to do work.*"

Furthermore, BT2 indicated that distributed leadership involved:

> "*...the identifying of leaders within the school and giving them responsibility.*"

Similarly, Elmore (2000) cited in MacBeath, Oduro and Waterhouse (2004:12) have maintained that distributed leadership takes place when people who are officially

appointed as leaders provide opportunities for all to develop skills and have access to leadership roles.

BDP1 stated that distributed leadership:

> "*...deals with decision making, everyone is involved in decision making.*"

BP illustrated an overall understanding of distributed leadership at the school when he stated that the:

> "*...principal decides on the leadership of the school, then distributes it to SMT members but maintains accountability. The principal delegates authority and responsibility to others.*"

Evident in the participants' understanding of distributed leadership was the notion of collaboration or working together in a team, as a term to "*denote collaboration enterprise in order to achieve the school's goals*" *(*MacBeath, Oduro and Water-house (2004:11)

4.4.4 ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN MANAGING TEACHING AND LEARNING

> "*The responsibility for managing teaching and learning is shared amongst principals, SMT's, middle managers and classroom educators.*"
> Bush and Glover (2009:5)

In the case of school B these tasks are distributed predominately among the HODs. Tasks were distributed strictly along hierarchical lines. BP, for example, described his role as:

> "*...ensuring that time spent on teaching and learning is adhered to.*"

and to:

> "*...ensure educators are prepared and well equipped to teach.*"

These roles involved the principal managing the instructional programme and promoting a particular school climate. These are both crucial principals' roles required for the teaching and learning to take place (Bush and Glover 2009: 6).

The development of teaching expertise in the school can be achieved by arranging a programme of class visits with educators (Bush et al 2008). In school B the task of visiting educators in class is allocated to the HODs, as BDP1 indicated:

> "*...the HODs do classroom visits*".

BP explained the process involved in monitoring teaching and learning, saying that:

> "*...the HOD manages this process. They hand in management plans for monitoring educators, discipline and learners' work as well as contact time. Reports are then compiled and handed in to the deputy principal.*

BHD3 confirmed the process mentioned by BP by stating that (they):

> "*...conduct monthly class visits and hold regular subject meetings. The reports of this monitoring are handed over to the deputy principal.*"

BHD2 explained that these class visits were conducted in order to ensure that educators were familiar with subject matter and were well prepared for teaching. The HODs were further responsible for ensuring that all the necessary LTSMs (resources) required for their departments were available. BDP2 stated:

> "*HODs are responsible for their departments' budget, to decide what resources they need.*"

HODs monitored the work of educators by examining the work of learners, checking educator's workbooks and portfolios and observing educators in class (Bush et al 2008). BP pointed out that, in School B,

> "*...educators are responsible for everything in their classroom, i.e. teaching, lesson planning, learner activities, assessment, discipline.*"

Monitoring was done by writing a report. BDP1 indicated that once HODs monitored educators, the reports were given to them to verify.

In order to promote effective teaching and learning and the professional growth of teachers, the principal indicated that the SMT continually supported staff by arranging regular educator conferences that highlighted best practices and continuous in-service training sessions. Promoting teacher's professional growth was one of many behaviours of a principal concerned with ensuring effective teaching and learning.

4.4.5 HOW ARE RESPONSIBILITIES SHARED?

School B distributed leadership in what MacBeath, Oduro & Waterhouse (2004:36), refer to as 'formal distribution', or designated leadership and management roles. The principal delegated responsibility to the deputy principal, who allocated tasks to the HODs. As BDP2 stated:

> "*Tasks are shared according to the hierarchy and protocol of the school.*"

BP described how responsibilities were shared:

> "*...we use the line diagram … all tasks are divided into two sections – academic and administrative. Each deputy is in charge of one section. They divide the tasks among the HODs.*"

BP explained further:

> "*We look at the strength of people, for example, those with good administration skills work with the admin deputy principal… the HODs identify the strengths and weaknesses and use this to get people to assist.*"

> "*We look for particular skills for a portfolio, certain skills, personal skills and work related skills.*"

School B tended to be more hierarchical in nature, allowing tasks to be shared among the formal leaders only[24]. While illustrating that distribution of leadership

[24] MacBeath et al. cited in Oduro (2004:7) that this is similar to schools in England.

tasks can occur within a hierarchical system, the danger with this exclusion is that leadership capacity is not developed in all staff at a school.

4.4.6 WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES / TASKS ARE SHARED?

Spillane et al (2007:111) point out that principals do not have a monopoly on leadership and management work. Their research evidence has shown that a range of school staff (assistant principals, subject area specialists, mentor teachers) can take on responsibility of leadership and management. In the schools studied, BP provided a concise list of some of the tasks that were given to others to do:

> "*Administration and discipline are given to the deputies; all educators manage their classroom; exam co-ordination (i.e. timetable and invigilation) is given to the HODs; assembly and (the) academic timetable is given to a committee made up of all staff and HODs do class visits.*"

Although the deputies were involved in all aspects of the school, they were not involved in the financial issues at the school. BDP2 stated:

"*...everything is our responsibility… dealing with parents, pupils…academics to faculty heads…from teaching to blocked drains. I however, do not touch the finances.*"

BHD1, BHD2 and BHD3 indicated that they were involved with discipline of learners, dealing with parents, supervising teachers, overseeing teaching, learning and administration for their respective departments[25]

In school B, the discipline of learners was given to the deputies to control as well as the dealing with parents. Hoadley and Ward (2009), however, found that discipline was handled by principals and took up much of their time, but that dealing with parents was more of the deputy's role.

[25] The list of tasks that are distributed in school A provides the researcher with an idea of the degree of distribution that exists at the school. Consistent with the research of Hoadley and Ward (2009:30) the principal does not spend much time overseeing curriculum[25]. This task seems to be the main focus of the deputies and HODs.

4.4.7 DECISION MAKING AT SCHOOL LEVEL

With regard to the decision making processes, all participants agreed that they were included.26 BP explained the process followed when making decisions. The staff members were:

> "*...all involved in decision making. Educators are allowed to provide alternatives to what is being done – through HODs suggestions are received from educator… Final decision taken by SMT.*"

This decision making process was confirmed by the BHD1, BHD2 and BHD3 who indicated that principal and deputies made final decisions. BDP1 also stated that:

> "*...all staff is involved in decision making, but principal makes the final decision because he is accountable.*"

Participation in decision making however, seemed to be voluntary. Educators were not forced into being involved in decision making. As BDP1 added:

> "*They can be involved if they choose to...*"

4.4.8 CHALLENGES FACED WHEN DISTRIBUTING TASKS

BP indicated that they generally did not experience problems when tasks were given to others to do. The main reason for this was, according to BP that:

> "*Tasks are shared among the SMT (who are very competent) and are given to people who are willing and have the necessary competence to undertake and complete tasks successfully*."

Some of the problems however, in implementing distributive leadership are practical in nature. Distributed leadership sometimes needs to cross cultural and structural boundaries (Harris 2008:179). School B, for example, found that many of the older educators did not want to take on extra responsibilities. BP stated, when referring to 'older' members of staff, that:

[26] Harris (2008:181) referred to a study by Copland (2003) in which schools that were committed to whole school reform, involved staff extensively at all levels of decision making.

"*...they wait for instructions before doing something…they don't volunteer… they are like 'mules' that must be kicked into action.*"

This reticence could stem from habits formed from years of obedience expectation. Also, older educators would also probably believe that many of these tasks were the domain of the school principal and would therefore not undertake them.

BP explained that in order to prevent problems with distributing tasks, school B only distributed tasks to the formal leadership of the school. HODs, for example, were given additional management tasks and other educators who were willing to assist were given opportunities to get involved in management issues. The tasks that were distributed to HODs were those stipulated in their formal roles and responsibilities and they could recruit other willing educators to assist. School B encouraged educators to volunteer their participation in leadership activities. Blasé and Blasé (1999) cited in Bennet et al (2003) argue that when educators are encouraged to participate on a voluntary basis in different committees and task teams, participation levels are increased. Harris (2008), however, has warned that conflicts may arise between teachers who take on leadership roles and those who do not. The principal deals with the issues by stating:

"*If you are not willing to participate, then you have no reason to be upset with others. I do not tolerate or entertain these kinds of issues.*"

BDP2 pointed to two specific problems with distributing responsibilities:

"*People sometimes do not take full responsibility for the tasks that have been given to them.*"

and

"*Sometimes communication is a problem …trying to get information from educators is difficult …these delays.*"

Good communication is vital in ensuring the success of distributed leadership (Oduro 2004:10).

4.5 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter, data obtained from semi structured interviews and questionnaires was reported, analysed and interpreted. The analysis and interpretation focused on the role of the principal in managing teaching and learning and how this task was distributed.

The study revealed that participants of both schools were able to clearly articulate the role of the principal. This understanding of the role of the principal by participants could be attributed to the experience of the participants. Seventy-eight percent of the participants had more than 15 years of experience. During these years they could have developed an understanding of the roles of the different levels of management in the school. This could also point to the transparent nature in which these schools were managed, were all staff knew their roles within the school. The main role of the principal, highlighted in the research study, was their role in ensuring that teaching and learning took place at school. Both principals and other members of staff saw this as their main role, thus linking the role of the principal with the purpose of schooling, as stated by Bush and Glover (2009):

> "*The main purpose of schooling is to promote learning and teaching.*"

The study revealed that in both schools, the management of teaching and learning was shared among the SMT and staff and not done by the principal alone. The study revealed that both schools seem to focus on ensuring educators were in class and that educators had the necessary resources (LTSM) in order to teach. Their role therefore was to ensure that the conditions necessary for effective teaching and learning existed at the school.

The study further revealed that the HODs in both schools took on major responsibility for ensuring that effective teaching and learning took place. HODs in both schools were responsible for ensuring that educators planned for lessons, that educators had the resources that are needed to teach, learners work was monitored and that they conducted class visits to observe educators.

The research showed that tasks in both schools were distributed. The difference was in the manner in which tasks were distributed in the two schools. In school A, for

example, tasks were distributed by the principal who might ask people to take on added responsibility. The principal made decisions on who was leading and when, based on the demands placed on the school. In school B, on the other hand, leadership was distributed in terms of the designated leadership and management roles. The principal delegated responsibility to the deputy principal, who allocated tasks to the HODs. The SMT could then recruit educators to assist them in their responsibilities. However what was common in both schools was that both schools considered the skills and knowledge of staff before allocating tasks to them. The difference could be attributed to School A having a flatter hierarchy, which lends itself to sharing leadership responsibilities with those who are not in formal leadership positions, whereas School B tended to be more hierarchical in nature, allowing tasks to be shared among the formal leaders only.

Evidence from the research study showed that decision making was shared among the entire staff in both schools. While the staff were involved in decision making, the level at which they participated, at both schools, was determined by the post level of the individual. Structures existed within both schools that allowed educators to give input. Educators, at both schools, participated in decision making through their subject area HODs. Discussion was held in subject meetings and proposals were forwarded to the SMT meetings through the HODs. Final decisions were then made by the SMT. Responses received from participants during the interviews and questionnaires at both schools indicated that all staff members were encouraged to participate in decision making. One hundred percent of the educator participants indicated a good working relationship among educators and the same percentage of the educators agreed that their contribution to decision making was positive and educators had a sense of responsibility and accountability towards their work. Smylie (1992) argued that if these conditions are present in a school then educators are more willing to participate in decision making and leadership distribution is successful.

The participants of both schools highlighted some of the problems associated with distributing responsibilities among the staff of the school. An issue that was strikingly evident at both schools was the unwillingness of staff to participate or take on additional responsibilities. A second challenge that both schools faced was the lack

of competence among staff to take on leadership responsibilities. Lastly, a common challenge that both schools faced was the issue of friction and resentment between those that have been given additional responsibilities and those who had not.

The findings of the research study indicated that both schools had created an enabling environment for distributed leadership. All the respondents believed that there was generally a culture of trust and collaboration between educators and management in school; that there was good communication; that contributions made by educators towards teaching and learning in the school were always valued and that educators worked together and helped each other with teaching and learning. Oduro (2004:10) argued that distributed leadership thrives when these conditions exist in a school.

The researcher believes that leadership distribution at both schools has been successful due to them meeting two key conditions identified by Leithwood et al (2006) cited in Harris (2008:181) i.e. first, leadership is distributed to those who have the knowledge or expertise required to carry out the tasks given to them, and secondly distribution of leadership tasks is coordinated in a planned manner.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The research findings have raised two major issues. First, it corroborates the international research that the management of teaching and learning is too huge a task for one individual to undertake and therefore there is a need to distribute this task among the staff of a school. Secondly, principals are the key to ensuring the success of such distribution. In order to ensure the success of this distribution they need to:

- Value individual differences of personality, skills and knowledge
- Share information
- Develop transparent decision making processes
- Widen participation in decision making to include all staff
- Develop trust with staff members
- Develop shared responsibility and accountability
- Ensure that staff are trained for leadership
- Respect the views of all

- Be prepared to stand back
- Identify leadership potential in staff
- Motivate people to initiate leadership,
- Encourage risk taking,
- Provide staff with material help,
- Allow sufficient freedom for people to initiate and implement,
- Provide opportunities for continuous professional development

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to explore the practice of distributing leadership as a critical area when considering the management of teaching and learning[27]. A case study of two secondary schools in Gauteng was undertaken.

New demands placed on school principals in financial management and administration leave less time for the management of teaching and learning. In addition, new calls for school transformation, (a very complex task), requires the commitment and contribution of the whole organisation. Leadership requires diverse expertise and diverse forms of leadership are required to meet the demands and challenges that schools face (Harris and Spillane 2008:31).

In response to the main research question, the role of the principal in managing teaching and learning, the findings revealed that principal's role in managing teaching and learning was to create the necessary environment that would enable effective teaching and learning to take place. Principals therefore ensured that educators had all the necessary resources to teach, that educators were in class, that discipline was maintained and that educators were prepared to teach. It can therefore be argued as Kruger (2003:209) did that the principal's role in managing teaching and learning is an indirect and supportive role.

The study revealed that the role of managing teaching and learning was predominantly that of the HODs. Their role in the management of teaching and learning required that they monitored educators work through learner's books, conducted class visits on a regular basis to observe educators teaching, ensured that educators planned for lessons and that educators had the necessary resources to teach. In both schools the work of the HODs was planned and structured.

[27] Bush et al (2009:3) argue that school management teams should share the overall responsibility for the management of teaching and learning

According to the research findings, both schools distributed management tasks. The study suggests that while tasks may be distributed in schools, the approach that schools take to distribution will differ. School A used a pragmatic approach (MacBeath, Oduro and Waterhouse, 2004:37) in which the principal spread the workload when the situation demanded. School B tended to be formal in its approach to distribution. Tasks at school B were distributed by the principal among the formal leaders although other members of staff were able to volunteer their assistance. What is common, however, is that when distribution of tasks is done, principals choose people that have the relevant skills and knowledge to undertake tasks successfully. Both schools used the combined capabilities, skills and knowledge of all staff members to manage teaching and learning. MacBeath, Oduro and Waterhouse (2004:37) argue that if distributed leadership is to be successful tasks must be shared with people that have the necessary skills and knowledge.

The research study revealed that the staff were involved in decision making at the schools. However, their participation in decision making was limited to making decisions about their classroom and subject practice only. Educators were involved in making decisions about lesson planning, learner activities, resource materials. There were structures in place at both schools that allowed staff to contribute to decisions Staff were allowed to provide alternatives and motivations in subject meetings with the HODs, which then taken into the SMT meetings, but the final decisions are made by the principal and SMT. The accountability of the principal was cited as a reason for why final decisions are taken by the principal.

The study further highlighted some of the problems that can arise out of the distribution of leadership roles. Three such challenges have been identified. First, the issue of staff that are unwilling to undertake extra responsibility, second the lack of competence that exists among staff to take on leadership responsibilities and lastly, friction that might arise between staff that are given responsibilities and those that are not.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher believes that the Department of Basic Education must ensure that first; schools are given greater autonomy to determine where they want to be and how they are going to get there[28], and secondly, to ensure that all the necessary resources are available to all schools. Principals require professional development support that focuses on the principles that underlie the distribution of leadership and prepare principals to share their authority with teachers and, ensure that the reach of leadership programmes is extended to include all. If the reasoning is that everyone in a school can act as a leader and contribute to decision making then everyone must have access to opportunities for leadership development, not only senior staff or middle managers. Drawing on the recommendations made by Bennet et al (2003), the researcher suggests that such professional development programmes should include (at a minimum):

- The basic ideas of leadership and management
- Working constructively in teams
- Involving participants from different levels of the hierarchy of the school in leadership
- The role of informal leadership alongside and interacting with formal leadership
- The importance of school culture which supports distributed leadership
- Team work skills

This research covers a small sample of two secondary schools. The findings from this study cannot be generalised to all schools in the country. There is however, a need to conduct in-depth research that focuses on several issues, namely:

- Identifying, documenting and analysing those leadership practices that appear to contribute to the creation and maintenance of distributed leadership (Bennet et al, 2003).
- Developing a model/tool kit, to implement distributed leadership in South African schools. This model should focus on how schools achieve distributed leadership, what leaders must do to promote distributed leadership and

[28] (Oduro, 2004).

what must be done to develop it systematically in schools rather than leaving to chance.

- Investigating if and how distributed leadership contributes to better teaching and learning processes at schools. As Harris (2004), argued, unless distributed leadership contributes to school improvement, unless it impacts directly on the quality of teaching and learning, it will encourage schools to operate more openly and collaboratively.
- Exploring issues of educator leadership including an understanding of why educators avoid leadership roles and/or responsibilities.
- Effectiveness of distributed leadership strategies in raising learner achievement

5.3 CONCLUSION

The researcher believes that the study has been able to answer the research question. The role of the principal in managing teaching and learning is primarily to oversee teaching and learning in schools. The study has revealed that the leadership of curriculum and instruction is distributed across the school. It is the heads of department that play a crucial role with managing teaching and learning at schools. The study also revealed that different approaches are used by school leaders to distribute tasks in schools.

The role of the principals in South Africa is to transform their schools and transform learning. The researcher believes that through distributing leadership school principals will be able to achieve this. Like Harris (2008), cited in Bowen and Bateson (2008), the researcher believes that successful schools sustain their performance by sharing leadership responsibility and involving educators in decision making. In order to achieve this there must be a shift away from hierarchical leadership to a flatter leadership structure that utilises the skills and knowledge of many rather than a few.

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APPENDIX ONE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PRINCIPAL, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

Instruction: Please tick as appropriate

School Information
District _____

Type of school: ☐mixed ☐girls only ☐boys only

Total numbers of learners: -_____
Total number of educators: _____

Biographic information

A. Gender: ☐Male ☐Female

B. Level of Qualifications:

Masters	☐
Honours	☐
First Degree	☐
Teacher Diploma	☐

Other (specify) _____

C. Total numbers spent as an educator: _____

D. Total number of years spent as an educator in this school: _____

E. Total number of years in a leadership position: _____

F. What is your position at the school:

Principal	☐
Deputy Principal	☐
Head of Department	☐

Leadership Experience

G. What is your understanding of the role of the principal in schools?

_____

_____
_____
_____

H. Has the role of the principal changed in the last five years?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

I. If Yes, How?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

J. What do you understand by distributed leadership?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

K. How do you ensure that teaching and learning takes place at your school?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

L. Which tasks do you spend most of your time on?

- **a. Discipline of learners** ☐
- **b. Dealing with parents** ☐
- **c. School finances** ☐
- **d. Teaching** ☐
- **e. Supervising educators** ☐
- **f. Overseeing teaching and learning** ☐
- **g. Liaising with district officials** ☐

h. Administration ☐
i. Other. Specify _____

M. Which tasks do you spend least of your time on?

a. Discipline of learners ☐

b. Dealing with parents ☐

c. School finances ☐

d. Teaching ☐

e. Supervising educators ☐

f. Overseeing teaching and learning ☐

g. Liaising with district officials ☐

h. Administration ☐
i. Other. Specify _____

N. Do you observe educators in the classroom?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

O. If yes, how is this done?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

P. Who is responsible for academic issues in the school?

The principal ☐

One of the deputy principals ☐

One of the HODs ☐

One of the subject heads ☐

Individual teachers ☐

Q. Who is responsible for overseeing that educators cover the whole curriculum

The Principal	☐
The Deputy Principal	☐
The HOD	☐
Grade heads	☐
Subject heads	☐
The educators themselves	☐

R. Who is involved in the decision making processes at school?

The Principal	☐
The Deputy Principal	☐
The HOD	☐
Grade heads	☐
Subject heads	☐
The educators	☐

S. Who makes the final decisions regarding teaching and learning issues in the school?

The Principal	☐
The Deputy Principal	☐
The HOD	☐
Grade heads	☐
Subject heads	☐
The educators	☐

T. Give one example how the management of teaching and learning is shared among members of the staff. ----------
----

Thank you.

APPENDIX TWO

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS

Instruction: Please tick as appropriate

School Information
District _____

Type of school: ☐mixed ☐girls only ☐boys only

Total numbers of learners: _____
Total number of educators: _____

Biographic information

A. Gender: ☐Male ☐Female

B. Level of Qualifications:

Masters	☐
Honours	☐
First Degree	☐
Teacher Diploma	☐

Other (specify) _____

C. Total numbers spent as an educator: _____

D. Total number of years spent as an educator in this school: _____

E. What is your understanding of the role of the principal in schools?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

F. What do you understand by distributed leadership

_____
_____
_____
_____

G. Indicate in the boxes below whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the statement

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
a. There is good communication between educators and managers at the school	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Educators and managers are given opportunity to contribute towards decisions about teaching and learning in the school	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Contributions made by educators towards teaching and learning in the school are always valued	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. There is generally a culture of trust and collaboration between educators and management in school	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Educators work together and help each other with teaching and learning in the school	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. There is effective monitoring of learner and educators work by the SMT in the school	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you

APPENDIX THREE

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE PRINCIPALS, DEPUTY PRINCIPALS AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

1. **Do you share responsibilities in the school?**

2. **How is this done?**

3. **Who assists you with the different responsibilities at school?**

4. **How do you decide on who shares the responsibilities?**

5. **What responsibilities are shared?**

6. **What, if any, challenges are faced regarding the distribution of responsibilities to others in school?**

7. **What are the challenges that you face with regard to the management of teaching and learning in the school? How have you dealt with these challenges**

APPENDIX FOUR

LETTER FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITSWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Division of Education Leadership and Policy Studies
Wits Schools of Education
Parktown
May 2010

THE PRINCIPAL

_____
Name of School

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for Participation in Research Study

My name is Daryl Govender, a Masters in Education part time student at the Wits School of Education (University of Witwatersrand). I am requesting your voluntary participation in a research study. My research topic is: The Role of the Principal in Leading and Managing Teaching and Learning: A Case Study of Distributive Leadership in Two Secondary Schools in Gauteng.

It would be appreciated if you, the two deputy principals, the Language, Mathematics and Life Orientation HODs and educators teaching these subjects could complete a questionnaire and allow me a follow up interview with individual participants. The duration of the interview would be approximately30 minutes. Dates and times will be arranged with willing participants.

Any information that you disclose will be strictly confidential and will be used purely for research purposes. Confidentiality will be ensured through the use of fictitious names. All data obtained will be destroyed after completion of the research. You have the right to withdraw at any time from the interview process, and to withdraw your permission to use the information obtained. For more information please contact me on the telephone numbers provided below.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

_____
Daryl R Govender
082 444 3681
011- 389 – 6148

APPENDIX FIVE

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITSWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Division of Education Leadership and Policy Studies
Wits Schools of Education
Parktown
May 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Invitation to participate in Research Study

My name is Daryl Govender, a Master of Education part time student at the Wits School of Education (University of Witwatersrand). I am requesting your voluntary participation in a research study. My research topic is: The Role of the Principal in Leading and Managing Teaching and Learning: A Case Study of Distributive Leadership in Two Secondary Schools in Gauteng.

Any information that you disclose will be strictly confidential and will be used purely for research purposes. You will be required to complete a questionnaire and be involved in an individual interview of approximately 30 minutes. Confidentiality will be ensured through the use of fictitious names. All data obtained will be destroyed after completion of the research. You have the right to withdraw at any time from the interview process, and to withdraw your permission to use the information obtained. For more information please contact me on the telephone numbers provided below.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

_____

Daryl R Govender
082 444 3681
011- 389 – 6148

APPENDIX SIX

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I, _____, agree to participate in the research study conducted by Daryl R Govender, a Research Masters part time student at the Wits School of Education (University of the Witwatersrand). I have read the information letter and understand its contents.
I hereby grant permission for the following *(Please tick relevant block)*:

Use of information from questionnaire for research purposes	
Use of information from interview for research purposes	
Publication of data in the research report	

SIGNATURE : _____

DATE : _____

Daryl R Govender
082 444 3681
011- 389 – 6148

APPENDIX SEVEN

ETHICS CLEARANCE

Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za • Website: www.wits.ac.za

STUDENT NUMBER: 9406255P
Protocol number: 2010ECE152**C**

30 August 2010

Mr. Daryl R. Govender
75 Tamarisk Street
BRACKENDOWNS
1447

Dear Mr. Govender

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

I have a pleasure in advising you that the Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate has agreed to approve your application for ethics clearance submitted for your proposal entitled:

The role of the principal in leading & managing teaching and learning: A case study of distributed leadership in two schools in Gauteng

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

Yours sincerely

M Mabeta

Matsie Mabeta
Wits School of Education

Cc Supervisor: Ms. C Faulkner (via email)