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De Witt, Karen

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MIDDLE MANAGEMENT IN TWO PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG

Karen de Witt

693876

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Supervisor: Prof. F. Maringe

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Masters of Education (Policies and Management) at the University of the Witwatersrand.

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Karen de Witt (Ms)

31 August 2015

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

ABSTRACT

CHAPTER ONE:

1. INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 Background of the study 1
1.2 Statement of the problem 2
1.3 Research aim 3
1.4 Research Questions 4
1.5 Definitions of key terms 5
1.5.1 Leadership 6
1.5.2 Instructional Leadership 7
1.5.3 Distributed Leadership 8
1.5.4 Middle managers 9
1.5.5 Heads of Department 10
1.6 Significance of study 12
1.7 Overview of the methodological approach 13
1.8 Structure of the research report 14
1.9 Summary 15

CHAPTER TWO:

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction 16
2.2 Conceptual analyses 18
2.2.1 School Effectiveness 19
2.2.2 School Improvement 20
2.2.3 Management 21
2.3 Theoretical Framework 21
2.4 Summary 27

CHAPTER THREE:

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction 29
3.2 Research design and instruments 30
3.2.1 Questionnaires 32
3.2.2 Focus Groups 34
3.2.3 Interviews 35

3.3 Data collection 36
3.4 Ethics 37
3.5 Limitations 39
3.6 Summary 40

CHAPTER FOUR:

4. RESULTS 41
4.1 Introduction 41
4.2.1 Profiles of sample schools 43
4.2.2 Daily tasks fulfilled by teachers with and without management roles 45
4.2.3 Tasks perceived as the top and least enjoyable by staff 56
4.2 Background information 58
4.3 Professional development and expertise 59
4.4 Focus group and interview data presentations 67
4.5 Summary 69

CHAPTER FIVE:

5. SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION
5.1 Introduction 70
5.2 Summary 70
5.3 Findings 71
5.3.1 Conceptual Ideas 71
5.3.2 Leadership 71
5.3.3 Middle management 72
5.3.4 School Effectiveness 72
5.3.5 Findings from empirical investigations 72
5.3.6 Focus Groups sessions 74
5.3.7 Semi Structures interviews 75
5.4 Recommendations 75
5.4.1 First recommendation 76
5.4.2 Second recommendation 76
5.4.3 Third recommendation 76
5.5 Reflective summary 77
5.6 Conclusion 77

REFERENCE LIST **79**

LIST OF FIGURES **81**

LIST OF TABLES 84

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Responses to focus group session: School A

Appendix B: Responses to focus group sessions: School B

Appendix C: Responses to semi-structured interview: School A

Appendix D: Responses to semi-structured interview: School B

Appendix E: Questionnaire template

Appendix F: Letter and consent templates

AN INVESTIGATION INTO STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MIDDLE MANAGEMENT IN TWO PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG

ABSTRACT

School leadership teams often consist of staff with a range of leadership and management skills or responsibilities. There are however, discrepancies regarding the role and purpose of these managers and leaders. The aim of this study was to focus on the perception of staff regarding the role and effectiveness of middle managers within their leadership structure of the school. Two public secondary schools were selected from different geographic locations in Gauteng. The reason for this selection was to see if staff perception regarding middle management changes when schools are dealing with different challenges and external factors such as finance, shortage of staff and the effect addition staff paid by the SGB had on the management team.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This research is based on the investigation of staff perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle management in two secondary public schools in Gauteng with different social economic status. The essence of this research is to compare perceptions of staff around the role and effectiveness of middle managers with the actual tasks middle managers have to fulfil in their roles. Comparisons will be drawn from data collected using mixed methods. These methods include questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews. In my own experience as a middle manager, working in England and South Africa, I experienced mixed perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle managers across my work experience in both countries. England offers several professional development programmes for aspiring middle managers and for middle managers who are preparing for senior management or headship positions. It is therefore important to include the availability of professional development programmes to staff in the research and other conceptual factors that can have an impact on middle management in school. The sample schools have been selected from different socio economic groups and geographical locations. Data

collected from the two sample schools will help me to draw a comparison between the conceptual factors and the impact the have on the role of middle managers in the two schools. Below is some information on what led investigate staff perception of middle management in secondary schools and will provide background information for this study

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Having worked as a middle manager in secondary school in England and currently in South Africa, I have encountered mixed experiences and reaction towards the perception of the role of middle managers in secondary schools. There have been some differences between schools' job descriptions for middle managers or the lack of the latter. I have furthermore experience difference on how teaching staff, including middle managers and senior management perceived their management role. In my work experience as a middle manager, I found the role of middle managers in secondary schools to fluctuate from merely fulfilling administrational task to taking part in whole school decision making processes. The latter included; taking part in choices surrounding the school's whole school issues such as the schools' mission, vision and goals leading to playing a major role in the effectiveness of the teaching and learning culture of schools. The following section gives the statement of the problem that formed part of the basis of my investigation.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As mentioned in the background information above, it was clear to me that schools do have different management teams and that the role of management is also different in schools. That led me to ask myself; who are seen as middle managers in a school system and how are their roles perceived by themselves and other members of staff. This brings me back to the key question for this report was: What role do middle managers play in the leadership and management structure of public secondary schools in Gauteng? The aim of the research was to get a better understanding of staff perceptions of the role of middle management and which contextual factors they believed had an influence on the schools' leadership structure. I wanted to see if

professional development or the lack of professional development had an impact on the schools' middle management team. It was important for this study to include two schools from different geographical locations; this enabled me to compare the contextual factors related to the two schools and whether they might influence the effectiveness of middle managers within the two sample schools.

Teaching as a whole in South Africa has faced and overcome several challenges for the past two decades. The rapid changes in new CAPS curriculum, a lack of funding, over populated classes, a lack of resources as well as untrained staff was merely a few factors that I came across in my research that South African schools needed to deal with daily. It was therefore important to get the opinion of staff during the focus group and interview sessions regarding the challenges they face as a school. This allowed me to draw some connections between the readiness of the schools' leadership structures to deal with some of the contextual factors and the effect if had on the middle management system of the schools. This led me to question: "Do South Africa's educational institutions have the infrastructure in place to support schools with these rapid changes and challenges?" Saying that; how do these changes influence middle management in schools and are managers sufficiently trained to deal with these changes and challenges? Continuous professional development opportunities for middle managers were not a standard procedure in most South African schools I have encountered. In developed countries such as England, the government had several opportunities in place for middle management development such as the "Leading from the middle programme". I therefore decided to investigate staff perception on the role of management in schools to get a better understanding of how middle management are utilised in South African schools. The following section provides information regarding the aim of my investigation.

1.3 RESEARCH AIM

As mentioned in the background information, I have encountered mixed job descriptions for middle management in the schools I have worked at. My aim was to get some clarity around what the role of middle management was in South African schools. The main aim for this research was to know what the difference is in staff perceptions of the role of middle management and how it compares to the actual role and tasks middle

managers undertake in the two sample secondary schools in Gauteng. To get feedback and participation from staff that might have to deal with different challenges, the sample schools were selected from different locations in Gauteng. The aim for the latter was to have two public secondary schools in Gauteng, who could be dealing with the different challenges and changes in the educational system. Furthermore, to have a look at the impact these challenges have on the management system of the two different schools. In this study the two sample schools are referred to as School A and School B to ensure their anonymity. In order to achieve the main aim, I compared staff perceptions within the same schools and I drew some comparisons between the two sample schools. From the information gathered using the questionnaires, it was clear to me that the two sample schools identify a range of challenges they faced of which some challenges where different in nature. It was therefore important to identify the conceptual factors that caused these challenges and to get some understanding on the effect they had on middle management in the two sample schools. As middle management in schools was a broad field and included several concepts and definitions, I had to select some key issues and concepts to use in my investigation to narrow my literature search. The identification and description of key issues and concepts that underpin management in schools, added some value to the outcome of the study regarding staff perception on the role of middle management. Issues such as the schools' locations, gender, policies and other contextual factors and the implications they had on the sample schools played an important role in the construction of the research questions asked during the focus group and interview sessions. The aim was that the selection of two public secondary schools from two different locations, one an inner city school and the other a township school, would provide me with different feedback and information regarding the middle managed systems in the schools and their challenges. For my data collection I used a selection of research questions. The following section provides a short layout of the questions used to conduct my research for this report.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key question I have based my investigation on was; "What role do middle managers play in the leadership and management structure of public secondary

schools in Gauteng?" To support this question and the data collection the following sub questions were used:

a) How do teaching staff perceive of the role of middle managers?
b) What support mechanisms are in place to motivate and guide teachers to develop their management skills?
c) Which factors withhold teachers to develop their leadership and management skills?
d) What contribution do middle managers make towards whole school decision making processes such as the writing and updating of school policies?
e) What role do middle managers have within the school culture?
f) How often do middle managers get support from higher authorities or mentorships?
g) How well are middle managers supported in fulfilling their role effectively?
h) What profile fits the majority of middle managers in secondary schools?
i) What value can middle management add to the leadership team to overcome barriers within their school?

To support the aims and objectives and the research questions for this investigation, I selected some definitions of key terms for the purpose of this study. Below are descriptions of some of the key terms that were used during the research process.

1.5 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

There is a vast bank of key terms related to leadership and management in the literature. For the purpose of this study I have used a selection of key terms that I consider to be central for conducting my research. Together with the research questions, the key terms represents the basis for the selection of the literature used to collect information for the rest of the study. Although there are several definitions from the literature which describe the key terms, I focused on the description from a selection of authors. Chapter Two of this report provides deeper insight into the key terms explored. In this part of the chapter, I provided a brief description of some of the key terms selected for this report. The terms include Leadership, Distributed Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Middle Management and Head of Department. Other key

terms that have not been outlined in Chapter One, but that had some significance to this investigation will be developed in Chapter Two. From the literature used for the research it seemed most of these terms are connected or have some relevance to each other. It is therefore important to define the term Leadership first, as the other terms have some connection to leadership.

1.5.1 Leadership

In schools we teach learners about great leaders of the past. Some of these leaders include Gandhi, Churchill, Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa and the late Nelson Mandela. To start me search for a definition for leadership, I asked myself; "What is leadership and what made these people become great leaders of our society? Is it possible that good leaders are born with all the qualities needed to be effective leaders? This was important for this study as many authors deals with professional development and training programmes to support people in leadership positions. Processes such as mentorship programmes, networking and professional learning communities were only a few of the support systems mentioned by some authors. Is leadership a position of authority, exercising power and leading others? Is leadership an individual task or is leadership exercised by a team?" As there is a vast bank of information and literature related to leadership, I narrowed my search by using some of the key terms mentioned in this chapter. Some authors deals with the influences of the leadership structure of a school and leadership which provides a vision and mission for the school community. Many authors' deals with leadership structures or the conceptualisation of leadership and management as well as the impact different structures have on teaching and learning in schools. Some authors deals with leadership theories and the practicality of putting theory into practice. It was important for this research to find a definition from the literature that could provide some clarity around the term Leadership.

For the purpose of this study and to narrow the literature search, I included mainly literature that focused on leadership structures and the role of leadership in schools. Without including Leadership as one of the key terms in my investigation, I would not have been able to define and understand the role of management in schools, as these two terms were often combined in the literature. As there are several definitions in the literature that defines leadership, I have focus on the following definitions:

Leadership can be understood as a process of influence based on clear values and beliefs, leading to a vision of the school (Bush, 2002). Leadership can take place inside as well as outside a school or formal organization and can take place or exercised on different levels (Christie, 2001). Cuban's definition for leadership a holistic and describe not only the characteristics involved in leadership but also the actions and ways of thinking. Cuban describes leadership as not merely a role of authority, but rather a process where one individual can have an influence on another or the ability to motivate a person in order to achieve a set visions or goals for a given organisation (Bush, 2003). Saying that, Fullan argues that leaders sometimes gets blinded by their own visions and can be misleading as role models and can manipulate the teachers and the school culture (Fullan 1992, p.19). Cuban further adds to his definition of leadership that one has the ability to be open-minded and to attempt new ideas; being able to take risks out of one's comfort zone (Bush, 2003). In my opinion, this definition of Cuban provides an all-inclusive or holistic explanation of what the meaning and qualities Leadership entitles. According to the literature, leadership is divided into different leadership styled. The two styles I will define in this chapter are Instructional and Distributed Leadership.

1.5.2 Instructional leadership

Several authors described Instructional leadership as a style based around communication and instruction. It was often referred to as a learner centred approach. According to Leithwood et al, instructional leadership can be seen as a method of leadership that targets the core of the learning institutions with the main focus on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the quality of instruction taking place inside and outside of the classroom (Leithwood et al, 1999). Some authors argue that there are three main activities that can influence Instruction Leadership; this includes modelling, monitoring and dialogue or conversations. Instructional Leadership is a top down approach, where leadership starts at the top with the principal, followed by the senior management team and then the teachers. If there were to be poor communication or the lack of communication it can affect the school directly or indirectly. The overall appearance taken from the literature is that Instructional leadership can lead to fragmentation, which in turn can cause the whole system or organisation to fall apart.

Some authors deal with the task of leadership to share the schools vision and mission and provide direction for the school community. Saying this; if the principal of a school models poor behaviour, lack of communication or poor leadership skills, it can weaken the leadership structure and cause the system to fail. For the purpose of this study it is important for know if there is any relationship between the leadership style and the role and effectiveness of the middle management teams from the two sample schools being used for my research. The assumptions one can make from the literature is that the moral purpose of Instructional Leadership is to promote effective teaching and learning and focus on the core aspects that will improve teaching and learning in the school. In conclusion, the key elements of Instructional Leadership that most authors addressed in their work were the importance of effective teaching programmes that focused on learning and achievement, the assessment strategies implemented, good practice and revision, collaborative teaching and learning activities and ongoing professional development for staff. The following section will deal with the second Leadership style included in this report; Distributed Leadership.

1.5.3 Distributed Leadership

In contrast to Instructional Leadership being described as a 'top down' structure, most authors describe Distributed Leadership as a team or group approach to leadership. With Instructional leadership, the principal would have very little or often no instruction time in the classroom. With Distributed Leadership, the assumptions are that there is a greater sense of collaboration or shared leadership providing more time for all stakeholders involved to focus on instruction in the classrooms. This model allows involvement from all levels of the school community when it comes to the schools' decision making processes. Distributed leadership is a term that has been used by several authors. According to Blasé, in the past, it was believed that the thoughts of two or more individuals put together will have a more successful outcome to solving a problem than the thoughts of one individual (1995). In Ghana, people believed sharing thoughts and ideas promoted more effective problem-solving (Blasé, 1995). Although distributed leadership is also referred to as shared leadership, the traditional hierarchy for leadership is still evident but the order that agendas are being approached with, might be different (Blasé, 1995). This implies that different individuals are given leadership responsibility within a school but on different levels. The different levels where Distributed Leadership takes place can start with the principal, deputy principals,

and heads of departments, other middle managers, the school governing body and the learners' representative council (Blasé, 1995). This distribution of leadership responsibilities has an advantage, as the process allows the opportunity to include a greater range of intelligence and different potentials that stakeholders can add. The latter makes distributed leadership a more fluid and dynamic system, rather than being fixed and innate. The literature further tells us that distributed leadership is an inclusive process, promoting self-belief and has many organisational configurations. Saying this, it does not mean that all stakeholders are leaders in this structure. In summary, distributed leadership is not proposed to be the task of a single stakeholder, but should be fluid and developing process rather than a phenomenon fixed in stone (Spillane, 2006, No. 742; Harris, 2005, No. 762). In the following section, the term middle managers will be defined. The literature on distributed leadership implied this leadership model includes stakeholder from all levels, although not all stakeholders leads. Can these stakeholders be seen as middle managers?

1.5.4 Middle managers

From the literature on distributed leadership, it was clear that the latter allowed stakeholders from all levels to take part in the structure. It is not a system where all formal leadership structures are made erased but rather a process where there is collaboration between the vertical and the lateral leadership structures. For the purpose of this study it is therefore important to define middle management and to see where the latter falls in the leadership structure of schools. Middle management is not a term often used in South African schools; however, the term middle management will be used in this report, as most of the literature used this term. Perhaps for this reason it is difficult to single out a definition for middle managers to describe the role of middle management. According to Gunter (2001) middle managers plays an important role within the educational system. Some authors argued that leadership is not possible without management. Cuban's definition on leadership continues to compare management and leadership, describing management to be more of a maintenance role. With maintenance, Cuban refers to maintaining the school vision efficiently as well as maintaining the standard of other organisational issues effectively (Bush, 2003).

Saying that, Kemp and Nathan (1989) has narrowed the description down to describing middle managers as the individuals that are not at the top of the leadership structure

but also have more responsibilities as just instruction in the classroom (Chetty, 2007). Some authors describe middle management as a group of individuals compared to leadership as an individual. The aim for this research is to have a greater understanding on what staff in South African schools perceives middle management to be. All of these definitions see middle managers as individuals with one or more role of responsibility that adds to the functioning of the school. For the purpose of this study, staff with management responsibilities such as subject heads, grade heads and heads of departments will be included in the sample. As some literature includes middle managers as part of the SMT team, a small percentage of SMT staff will also as well as staff without management responsibilities will be included in the sample. The reason for including the latter is to have a more holistic view on staff perception and effectiveness in school. This term will be elaborated on in Chapter Two and Chapter Five. The last key term I will define in this chapter is Head of Department.

1.5.5 Head of Department

The term Head of Department is used by most South African schools. It is a term that staffs are familiar with refers to the person overseeing more than one subject. This could be for example the HOD of languages which can monitor home language, first and second additional languages. Saying this; not all schools have the same job description for heads of departments. For the purpose of this study, it is important to determine if there are any correlations between the terms heads of departments and middle management. Several of the authors dealing with heads of departments focused on their role and responsibly. Some authors argued that HOD's should form the core of the middle management structure of schools' leadership teams. Fletcher and Bell defines heads of departments as stakeholders that undertake strategic leadership roles within a specific area to promote and develop a positive climate within the given subject area. Although the heads of departments have some involvement in the teaching and learning of the subject the are often reluctant to get involved in others' teaching and learning strategies. From the literature is appears that the key responsibility of heads of departments are often based around the arrangements for assessment for and assessment of learning, recording and reporting on learners' progress and setting clear targets and objectives for the subjects in the department. According to this study, there are several strengths and weaknesses related to the role of heads of departments. The study further divides heads of department into three main forms of organisation. The

first is seen as traditional the second faculty based and the third is curriculum led. This will be further explored in the literature review in Chapter Two. Fletcher and Bell also defines heads of department as a middle management approach of maintenance rather than the role of initiators. Saying this, most authors focused on barriers and challenges heads of departments have to face. Some of the main challenges are that HOD's become overwhelmed when they become part of the SMT team. Several authors mentioned the lack of or fluctuation in HOD's job descriptions. Overall, the role of an HOD's appears to be an ongoing changing process that can be overwhelmed and time-consuming.

To expand my literature review the following elements have been included in this investigation; however a broader explanation of these terms will be provide in Chapter Two.

The challenges or barriers South African schools and their leadership teams' encounter seem to be different depending on the geographical location and financial stability of the school. Schools have different contextual factors that can have a direct or indirect effect on the school. This includes the support systems in place, the influence of the governing body and the department of education.

The next element is the availability or lack of professional development training opportunities for aspiring managers and leaders or existing managers or leaders. This is important for a country such as South Africa, as there have been several changes and challenges in the educational system. Often schools have to deal with staff that is not sufficiently trained for their role of position they fulfil.

The last element is school culture. Several of the authors deal with the importance of leaderships' ability to create a strong and sustainable school culture. Implementing a vision and mission for the school where all stakeholders concerned know what the goals for the school are and how the school can work to meet this goal collaboratively. This aspect will be elaborated on in Chapter Two.

For the purpose of this report the following acronyms was used:

Term	Acronym
School Management Team	SMT
Representative Learner Council	RLC
Head of Department	HOD
Gauteng Department of Education	GDE
School Governing Body	SGB
School Improvement	SI
School Effectiveness	SE

Figure 1A: Table of acronyms

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Due to the small sample of data being used within this research study, no assumptions could be made on what the defined role for middle management was from the data collected. Information gather might give some indication of the perceived role of middle management and contextual factors that have a direct or indirect impact on the leadership structure in the sample schools used for this research. Additional tasks middle managers must fulfil as part of their roles add to the findings of this research. I have included a selection of literature in this study based on management and leadership. As mentioned at the start of this chapter, I have narrowed my search by using key terms and key questions. To support the literature I have used mixed methods to collect data, this included a qualitative and quantitative approach.

This study looked into staff with managerial positions at different levels in two secondary public schools in Gauteng. I have included what their expectations in their job description were and compared it to their actual tasks and responsibilities as middle managers. Saying this; it appears there are mixed reactions towards the perception of what middle managements' roles are in public secondary schools in South Africa should be.

Although the research sample was relatively small, I was able to draw some comparisons around perceptions within the same sample as well as different samples. I was also able to draw comparisons between the challenges the two schools had to face. It was interesting that both schools saw the lack of professional development

programmes as an influence on the effectiveness of the leadership and management structures of their schools. Bush pointed out that principals in South Africa often find themselves working in extreme challenging conditions dealing with poor sanitary facilities, lack of classrooms, untrained teaching staff, malnourishment, and lack of equipment, water supplies, electricity and illnesses (2006). Some writers referred to the changes in South Africa as globalisation. South Africa as a country has one of the biggest divisions between rich and poor communities in the world. For the purpose of this study and to investigate if schools in Gauteng are dealing with these issues, the two samples schools have been selected from different geographical locations and social economic status. The data collected supported my question regarding the latter and provided me with some indication of the support structures available to teachers, managers and leaders from the two sample schools. Below is a short description of the methodology used to for the data collection.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This section gives a short outline of the methodological approached used for this research report. I used a mixed method approach for this study by combining quantitative and qualitative research. These two terms will be elaborated on in Chapter Three. A selection of literature was used in this study to get greater clarity on middle management and to help identify where possible gaps in the literature and school support systems were. Two sample secondary schools in different geographical locations in Gauteng were used. Focus group sessions, interviews and questionnaires were used in the data collection process. A more in-depth approach to the methodology will be provided in Chapter Three. The first instrument used was the questionnaires.

Questionnaires for staff, middle managers and deputy principals were distributed to the two sample schools. This instrument was constructed by building on existing information on leadership and management gathered from the chosen literature used for this study. Teachers, middle managers, and deputy principals were asked to take part in this questionnaire. The information collected from the instrument provide me with some background information and helped me to determine the perceived role staff have of middle managers in the sample schools for this research report. The instrument

helped to determine the management style used at the school and how the leadership style affected the teaching and learning culture of the selected schools.

The second instrument used in collecting the data for this investigation was the setup of a focus group session at each of the two sample schools. Using the information from the questionnaires I was able to construct questions to use as guidance for the sessions. The groups consisted of between eight and ten staff members with different roles and responsibilities. By including staff from all levels of the schools management and leadership structure it enabled me to get more holistic view on staff perceptions.

The last instrument was a once of interview that took part between myself and a member of the SMT team. Using the information collected from both the questionnaires and the focus group session I was able to draw up the questions in advance. As part of the mixed method design, I found all three instruments to be useful as each of them supplied different information regarding the topic.

1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

This research report consists of five chapters. Chapter one gives an outline of the research report. This includes the back ground information, statement of the problem, followed by the research questions and aim. The latter is followed by definitions of key terms, the significance of the study and a short overview of the research. Chapter 1 introduce some of the key terms and definitions, including the significance of the study and a brief overview of the related literature and methodological approach, followed by a brief summary.

Chapter Two deals with the literature review and theories related to this study, describing the main aim and objectives. The chapter begins with a discussion based on the chosen and relevant literature to support the research questions for the study, followed by a summary of the selected author's studied for this report. Continuing with the conceptual analysis, exploring the key terms followed by the theoretical framework.

The methodological approach used is described in Chapter Three. A mixed method approach that includes qualitative research followed by the role the researcher plays. My own experience as a middle manager will be included in this chapter. This will be

followed by the research design, and explanation of the relevant definitions. Questionnaires, focus group sessions and interviews will be use for the data collection. Before concluding the chapter the data collection and research quality will be discussed, ending chapter with the ethical considerations.

Data capturing, presentation and analysis will be presented in Chapter Four. Tables and diagrams will be used to present the data collected from both the sample schools and used to draw a comparison. In this chapter the evidence of the collection and grouping will be provided. A description of the data collection will be followed by an analysis, explaining and exploring the reasons for selecting the key material for the research report.

Ending this report there will be a summary of the report in Chapter Five. This will be followed by any conclusions and recommendations that have been drawn from the study. Referenced and appendixes will follow Chapter 5.

1.9 SUMMARY

The main aim of this research was to understand what the overall perception of the staff is in secondary schools were regarding the role of middle managing. My understanding from the literature studied for this research report was that leadership cannot exist without management. The latter will be elaborated on in Chapter Three. Are all leaders and managers within the educational sector involved in the development of the schools' goals and visions or are they merely there to relief senior management teams from additional administration work? Is there a need for professional development to enhance leadership and management skills in South Africa? By drawing a comparison between the two sample secondary schools, I form some understanding of the contextual factors affecting the perception staff have around middle managers and the actual tasks they fulfil in their role. Although most literature addressed the importance of a strong leadership and management structure, it also point out that leadership should be second to teaching and learning. This leads me again to question what staff perceptions are around the role of middle management and are the middle management team valued and supported to fulfil their roles effectively. Chapter Two

provides the analysis and studies of literature from different authors who focused on leadership and management in schools.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the review of a selection of literature based on leadership and managements. There is a vast bank of literature available on leadership, and leadership theories. McMillan describes a literature review as a means to relate the theories and work of other researchers to support the problem statement of your own research. MacMillan further indicates that there are six key purposes for conducting a literature review; refining the problem statement, setting up a conceptual or theoretical framework, developing a meaning full contribution, identifying the limitations of the study and any contradictory findings to the literature (MacMillan, 2010). For this reason it is important that I structure my literature search around some of the key terms; including leadership, leadership theories such as distributed and instructional leadership and management. By making use of these key terms, I was able to narrow my search to a selection of authors' dealing with this subject matter. In turn the selection of literature that I included in my review will assist me in answering the key research questions.

Most of the literature available focused on educational systems and structures from other countries. There seems to be gap in the literature based on middle management in South African schools. Saying this; there are a few authors who used the South Africa education system and contextual factors related to South Africa in their studies such as Bush and Christie. From the literature studied for this report, it appeared that the term middle management is not often used in public schools. Teachers merely refer to themselves as staff with additional responsibilities.

When there were Model C schools in South Africa, teachers were merely grouped based on the subjects they taught or the grades they were responsible for and was headed by one person known as the head of department. In some schools today it still seems to be the case that there is one person heading the whole department. There are a substantial number of organisational, administrational and other related activities needed for these departments to function effectively and to increase the quality of teaching and learning. At most public secondary schools these tasks have remained the

responsibility of a few individuals who can be classified as the middle leaders or middle managers. This will include subject heads, grade heads and curriculum co-ordinators.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

This section provides an analysis and description of the key concepts used in this study. Although there are several definitions available from the literature, I focused on the description of a selection of the theories and definitions of the key concepts by some authors. Figure 2.1 presents the key concepts that I used in this study:

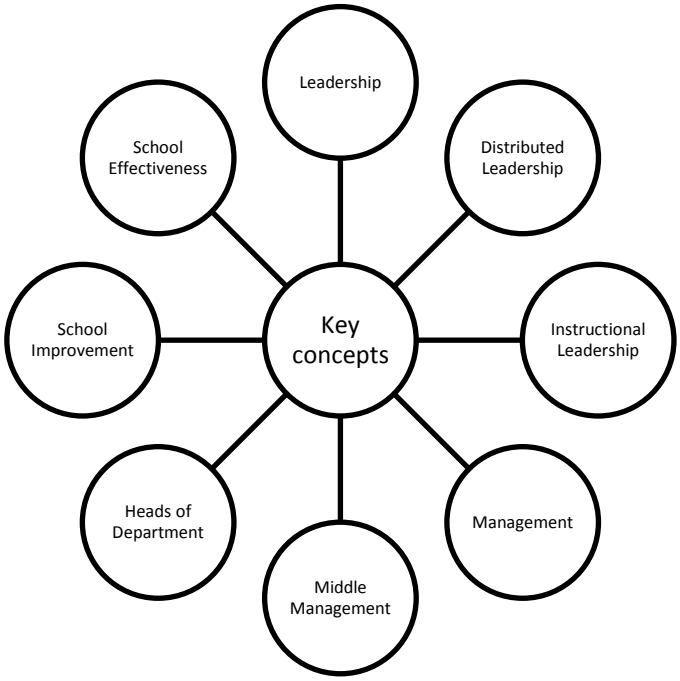


Figure 2.1 Key concepts

Chapter one provided a description of some of the key terms identified in Figure 2.1. The key terms defined were leadership, distributed leadership, instructional leadership, middle management and heads of departments. The following section will provide a description of the remaining the key terms in figure 2.1. To have better understanding around the concepts school improvement and school effectiveness in South Africa, one needs to have a closer look and understanding around Mackenzie's dimensions of effective schooling. The three dimensions can be categorised under leadership, efficacy and efficiency (Mackenzie, 1983).

The Leadership dimension plays the role to improve teaching and learning in a school and it is vital for the leaders to set clear visions and have a mission for their schools. Strong leadership is at the core of any effective school (Mackenzie, 1983). Goals must empower not only the staff but also the learners. For effective class management, Teachers must be empowered to take responsibility of their classes.

The efficacy dimension is related to the expectations for staff and learners within the classroom. If teachers set the expectations and standards of achievement at a high level, will the learners' attainment not by high too? (Makenzie, 1983) Often this can be reinforced by using a reward system. However, both learners and staff should work towards self-achievement and not only for rewards. Teachers must be assertive and schools or principals must provide the opportunity to staff to develop their practice by encouraging sharing of good practice and constructive feedback and good mentorship for IQMS.

The third dimension is efficiency. Every staff member and learner are guided on a daily bases by time and time management. Following timetables and structured lessons forms part of their daily routine. Learners' progresses are monitored and reports are issued to inform parents of their child's or ward's attainment.

2.2.1 School Effectiveness

School effectiveness focuses on the outcome or the results of the school and can be described as the process by which schools' achieve their goals. School effectiveness is further defined by Janson as a school that deals with the needs of the learners and is not depending on the socio economic climate. Janson further argues that school effectiveness is only possible when the whole school community is involved in meeting the schools' goals effectively (Janson, 2010) It is therefore important to set high expectations and value the child, teacher and parents involved in the community. A schools' effectiveness is measured by its academic achievement. High attainment can only be achieved if the school has a culture where staff and learners strive to achieve their highest attainment (Jansen, 1995). If the culture is not right the principal must change the culture to improve the social, cultural and academic outcome. Jansen stated five factors that attributes to effective schools. These include strong leadership, school climate, high expectations, monitoring performance and emphasizing basic skill instructions (Jansen, 1995). Sammons argues that school effectiveness is politically

inclined and when something goes wrong it is easy to blame the school for the outcome. Taylor on the other hand, argues that school effectiveness can be extremely problematic as it is up to the school to set goals and to be effective. Taylor is concerned on how do schools choose what their goals are and how do you measure effectiveness? (Taylor, 2008) If school effectiveness depends on the effectiveness of the leadership team, the schools leadership must adhere to three climates associated with school effectiveness. The three climates are to set high expectations to all parties involved in the school community, to monitor all systems in the school and to focus on the development of core or basic skills (Sammons, 1995). Saying this, it is evident from the literature that school culture, school history and effective leadership plays an important role in school effectiveness. It is for the latter that I have included school effectiveness as a key concept in this study. It is important to determine what the role of middle management is in school effectiveness.

The work of Lezotte (1991) describes seven correlated of effective schools. The correlates include, creating a safe and orderly environment where teaching and learning can take place. Setting high expectations to learners and staff and the presence of instructional leadership, managing the curriculum to ensure effective teaching and learning at all times. The school must have a clear and focus mission with set goals and must provide an opportunity to learn. This process must include the involvement of parents and the government and improve home school relationships.

2.2.2 School Improvement

As noted in the section before, school effectiveness is outcome based, for example, the effort and determination the parties of the school puts in will correlate with the school's results. In comparison to school effectiveness, school improvement focusses more on the school processes and dynamics. This approach is important when too many learners are failing in a school are there is not adequate teaching and learning happening at a school. This could be due to untrained teachers or a lack of leadership and management structures in the school. The application of the PESTLE model can be used to identify school improvement. PESTLE is the acronym for political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental rationale. Coleman argues that to improve the systems there is no need to focus on the results but rather on the quality of teaching and learning. He believes there is a strong correlation between school and

non-school factors and the outcome of student achievement. He further argues that schools cannot compensate for the ineffectiveness of the community or society (Coleman, 2002).

Pam Christie made some important discoveries in her research done on school improvement and school effectiveness (Christie, 2010). Christie divided leadership in South Africa into two Landscapes. 'Landscape of Theory' and the 'Landscape of New Education Policies in Post-apartheid South Africa.' The first was based on how South Africa borrowed ideas and theories from developed countries and often leads to uncertainty amongst leaders in the educational sector. After apartheid the government had to put new structures in place and new policies had to be written. The second landscape, the school had to write their vision in a policy document setting a clear vision. The vision was now shared with the community to improve the systems and outcome of the school (Christie, 2010). Some authors dealt with the importance of distributed leadership within school improvement and how this style of leadership can improve the schools' structures. As with school effectiveness, leadership and management are also important for school improvement.

2.2.3 Management

As noted in chapter one of the study, there are no set definition for the term middle management. To get a better understanding of the term middle management I have selected definitions from the literature based on management. Cole based his definition of management on a combination others'. Cole describes management as a process that will guide and assist an institution to meet their goals. This can be achieved by different processes including planning, organisation and taking care of resources. He also includes the importance of being able to motivate someone to achieve the set goals (Cole, 1995).

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

After 1995 (Post-Apartheid) equity became an important factor and leadership styles moved away from instructional-, top down hierarchical models to distributive or shared leadership structures. This part of the chapter will provide the framework of leadership

and what middle management entitles. It also provides a summary of a selection of articles used that provided some findings that were relevant to my research. The follow diagram (Figure 2.2) illustrates my understanding of a top down management and leadership approach. If appears from the literature that several schools adopted a similar system.

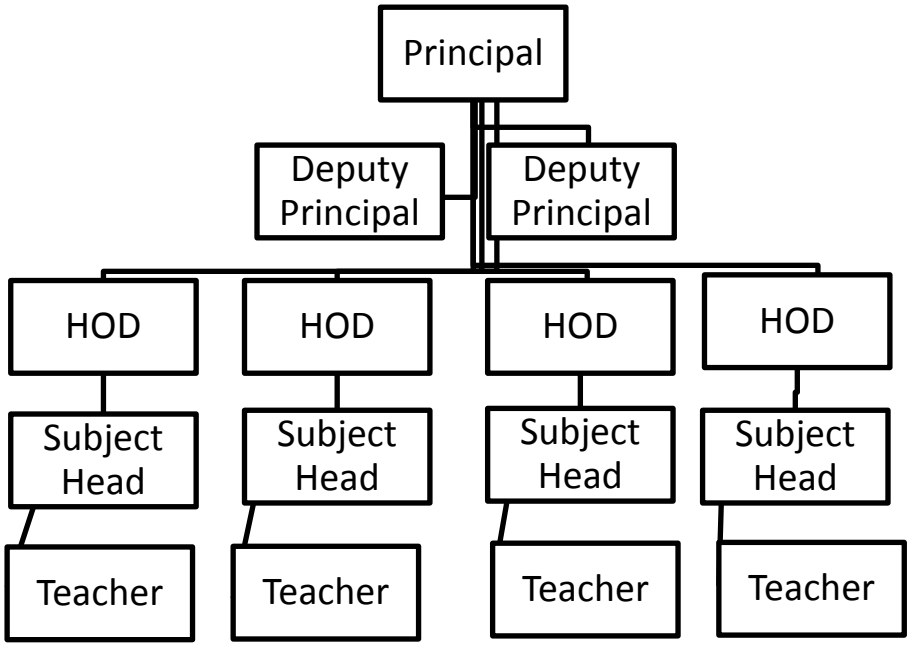


Figure 2.2 Hierarchical Organisational structure (Instructional Leadership)

Figure 2.2 represent a hierarchical leadership structure that is often referred to as a top-down approach or instructional leadership. Instructional leadership can be seen as a method of leadership that targets the core of the learning institutions with the main focus on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the quality of instruction taking place inside and outside of the classroom (Leithwood et al, 1999).

When a school make use of this approach, the principal forms the mean leader and is seen as the person with authority. Using this structure can add a lot of stress to the leadership structure and in particular the principal self. This structure requires the principal to where many different thinking hat, and requires the principal to lead the school in all aspects of the organisation. This can be a painstaking and time-consuming role as some of the elements include setting the mission and vision of the school up to

managing the curriculum and teaching and learning. To be able to perform these roles effectively, the principal must have sufficient training. This structure also required the principal to have good communication and listening skills that can add to creating empowerment and trust amongst the staff and must be accessible when staff need support.

Using this leadership structure solely in a public school in South Africa can be problematic and can cause fragmentation of the system and schools can become dysfunctional (Spillane). Often leaders in this position of authority can get blinded by their own vision and mission which can be misleading as a role model. These leaders manipulate the teachers and the school culture and can too lead to fragmentation of the organisation (Fullan 1992, p.19). When principals are appointed on the basis of a personal nature rather than relevant experience or due to their time they have been appointed in the school it can also have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning (Bush, 2006, p.363). Principals appointed in this manner might lack the necessary skills to lead and manage their teams. Successful leadership stands at the core of any effective school and will continually improve the teaching and learning at the school (Bush, 2006, p. 359).

Preparation for leadership to deal with instructional leadership is necessary due to the complexity of the role and the vast amount of skills needed (Bush, 2011). In South Africa there are not many training opportunities available to prepare principals for this role. The former South African Department of Education introduced a course in 2007, with the aim to support new Principals with these daunting challenges. The programme, Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE) was piloted from 2007-2009. Bush and Oduro noted there were no formal requirements for principals to be trained as managers throughout Africa (Bush, Kiggundu, Moorosi 2011, p 30). The aim of the ACE programme was to enhance leadership and management practice (Bush, Kiggundu, Moorosi, 2011, p 38).

Regardless of the few short comings in the ACE programme, an evaluation done showed that school who took part in the programme improved twice as fast as other schools (Bush 2011). It is with no doubt that sufficient training is important, not only for new principals, but also with those who have been in the position for some time. Leaders need to have evaluation strategies in place, using information on what went

well and how to improve certain areas and implement the necessary intervention strategies. Without the key skills gained in leadership training, principals might not be able to overcome these challenges.

In contrast to the top-down approach, schools often use distributed leadership. Figure 2.3 is a representation of my understanding of what a distributed leadership structure will look like.

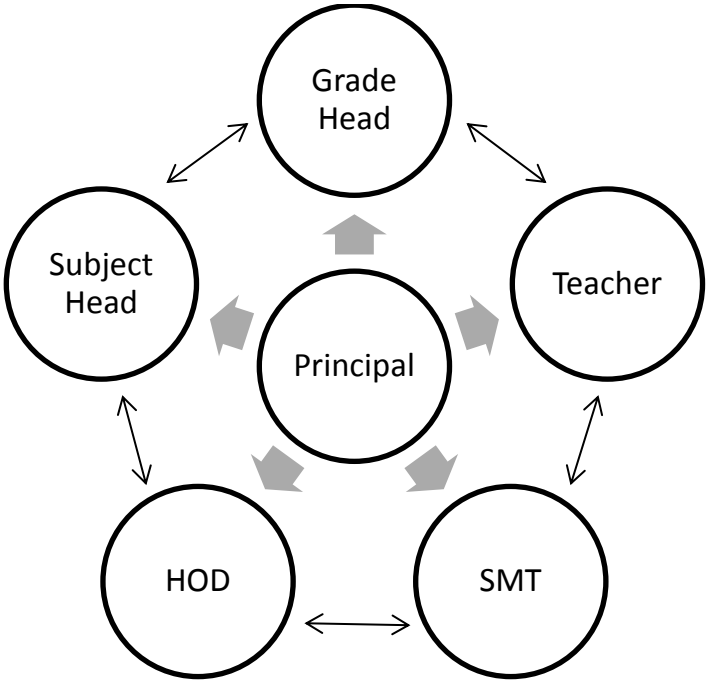


Figure 2.3 Distributed Leadership

As presented in Figure 2.3 distributed leadership can be seen as a structure were leadership can be seen on different levels of the organisation. Some of the key terms associated with distributed leadership are dispersed, collaborative, democratic and shared leadership (MacBeath et al., 2004). This model allows a networking system where collaborative learner and leading takes place and democratic decisions are made. It is a process where leadership is not dependent on one individual but includes the leadership qualities of different people (MacBeath, 2004). By using this leadership structure it allows the principal to focus on new areas where he or she can make an impact. Figure 2.4 indicates how the latter is possible. The disadvantage from using distributed leadership lies in the possibility of fragmentation of this leadership structure. This is possible when too many individuals are involved in the structure and the power of authority has been distributed to different levels, and can create a lack of accountability. Other challenges associated with distributed leadership is that it can be

time consuming, as all leader and managers that are part of the structure must have collaborative meetings to share ideas. Furthermore, it is not always possible to make democratic decisions as a group.

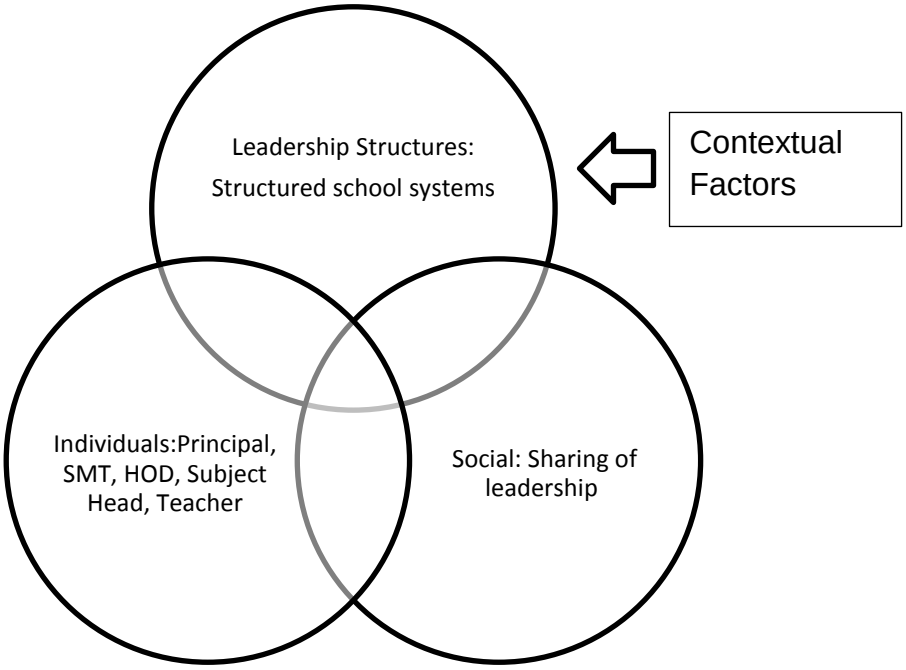


Figure: 2.4 Distribution of leadership (MacBeath et al., 2004)

Taking in consideration the two leadership structures discussed in the previous section, it appears that there is a role for middle management in both the structures. As described by Cole (1995) management is an activity that forms part of a greater structure of leadership and includes a range of tasks including planning, organisational matters, controlling of resources and the motivation of other members of staff. Cole used the acronym POMC to describe the activities related to management and sees it as a leader-centred approach (Cole, 1995). POMC refers to Planning, organising, motivating and controlling.

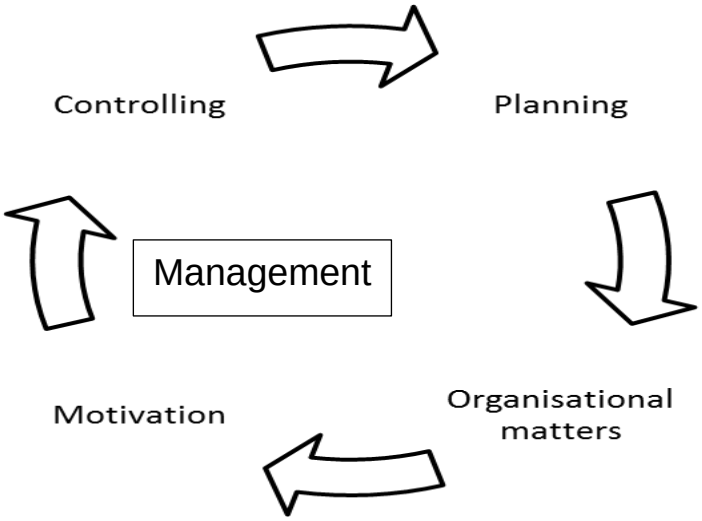


Figure 2.5 POMC approach for management activities (Cole, 1995)

The activities involved in managements and as indicated in Figure 2.5 range from planning, which is a process where choices must be made, keeping in mind the goals and objectives of the organisation to produce a desirable outcome. The planning process can be over a long or short period of time and often the manager must include other structures and systems in place, such as school policies when involved in planning. The next activity includes organisational matters. These activities can include the organisation of resources, curriculum and other teaching and learning activities. Communication often plays a vital role in the effectiveness of organisation. Perhaps one of the most important activities related to middle management is motivation. When management implements change, it is important to motivate others to ensure they have their commitment and trust to execute the tasks on hand. The last activity associated with management in the POMC framework is controlling. Control can be applied in the monitoring of teaching and learning standards, the control of performance such as line management (UK) or IQMS in South Africa, or ensuring that the correct procedures and actions were used where appropriate. From the literature, theory and models reviewed for this research, leadership and management are often used collaboratively.

The following section provides a brief overview of some of the literature I reviewed that focused on middle management and leadership styles and structures. The message being put forward by some of these writers are that an organisation needed to be flexible, lean, and responsive and have an effective management structure (Drucker, 1988).

The work of Bennett, Newton, Wise and Woods reviewed other studies based on the role of middle management. The information collected from this review was important to this study as the paper reports how middle managers and SMT member perceived the role of HOD's. The review on the work of Brown, Rutherford and Boule (2000) identified a number of key challenges HOD's were facing in their actual role which included the lack of time, non-specialists in the department, staff morale and the lack of professional development opportunities available (Bennet et al., 2003). I was interested to know if middle managers in South African Secondary schools had similar challenges and are there sufficient professional development opportunities for middle managers in South Africa. The review of Brown's study identified issues with schools using a top down approach and preferred the structure to be more horizontal.

The review on Adey's article: *Professional Development Priorities* (2000) identified the needs of Middle Managers in secondary Schools and the pressure they have in fulfilling their role. I found this information interesting, as there were internal and external pressures identified as problematic. Some of the key external issues identified were curriculum changes and Ofsted. Using this information from the review in my research I can compare the external pressures from Gauteng schools with theirs. South African schools do not have Ofsted inspections, rather DBE (Department of Basic Education) and schools in Gauteng have the GDE (Gauteng Department of Education) who conduct school inspections. The DBE has introduced a new curriculum (CAPS) that has been implemented to all grades by 2014.

This study was a review of literature based on distributed leadership. A quantitative research design was used due to the extensive literature reviewed. The focus was on literature published after 1987. Several of the key words used as part of the filtering process for their review, correlated with key words from my own research proposal. These include heads of department, middle management, subject leaders, et cetera (Bennett, Wise, Woods and Harvey, 2003).

2.4 SUMMARY

Schools in the twenty first century have become complex organisations and are facing pressure from not only the community, but also the government and its implementation of new policies and this ads pressure to leadership (Oduro, 2004). Literature based on

South African middle management itself is limited. There seems to be an uncertainty around the definition of middle management in public schools. Saying this, Leadership responsibilities are often distributed to middle managers to help improve the pressure overload on the Principal and other senior managers (Oduro, 2004). However, without sufficient training and guidance, any leadership structure can be ineffective.

England introduced the 'Leading from the middle' programme for middle managers or aspiring middle managers and the NPQH programme for aspiring principals. The literature proposed the importance of similar training programmes in South Africa. Research has showed that middle managers including heads of departments, can form a key area in improving the quality of a schools teaching and learning culture (Bush, 2003). For middle managers to form an effective part of a school's teaching and learning culture, they do need to overcome barriers such as time limitations, lack of working space and even the need to support underachieving teachers (Bush, 2003).

The information drawn from the literature reviewed in this chapter will be used together with the research methodology and data collection and analysis to get a better understanding around the role of middle management. The next chapter will discuss the methods applied in the research to collect information from the two sample schools. From the literature reviewed in this chapter, the perception of middle management might be influence by several contextual factors, change and challenges. Leadership and management are facing new challenges that will require different skills and qualities for their future roles to improve the teaching and learning in school (Christie, 2001).

In conclusion to this chapter, the work of Briggs (2003) supports the broad aim of this research, identifying the overall lack of role clarity in the role of middle managers. There are several writers that support her view of increasing the research done on this topic (Gleeson and Knights, 2008).

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a description of what research methodology is and what methods were applied to this study. The content for this chapter includes the research design, instrument design and the data collection process. The chapter will also explore the sample used in the field work to conduct my research. The term methodology is used to describe an overarching and underpinning philosophical justification for the methods and approaches used in the research.

Research is defined at a process of collecting, organising and interpreting data (MacMillan and Schumacher, 2010). The term Research Methodology refers to the different methods and approaches followed or applied for the investigation and collection of information and is often known as methods (MacMillan, 2010). The collection of information or data can be done using a range of approaches. For the purpose of this study I have made use of interviews, questionnaires and focus group approaches. The mixed methodology used enables the researcher to collect meaningful data by using a systematic approach (MacMillan, 2010). It is important when using the methodology to be aware of the characteristics associated with research. The first of these characteristics is for the researcher to be objective. The researcher should be open-minded when collecting or analysing the data. The next characteristic if for the researcher to be precise when using terminology to describe aspects related to the study. Precision is important, as this can eliminate any confusion based on the results of the investigation. Precision is followed by verification of data. Depending on the type of methodology used in the research, for example qualitative or quantitative, the verification process of the results will differ. The next research characteristic is parsimonious explanation. This allowed the researcher to explain the data by reducing the complexity of the research to a more understandable are simpler explanation. The last two research characteristics are empiricism and logical reasoning. The latter refers to the researcher's ability of reasoning, whether logical or sceptical (MacMillan, 2010). As noted above, there are different methods a researcher can use when conduction a study. The two key terms that are often used to describe the method of research is qualitative or quantitative. There is a distinct difference

between qualitative and quantitative research when it comes to the process of collecting and analysing data. Quantitative research involved the extraction of objective data were as Qualitative research methods are mainly focused on the process by which the researcher extracts data on naturally occurring phenomena and the data is mainly in word. By using the latter a researcher can make use of a selection of instruments or devices such as interview sessions or focus groups. The use of these instruments allows the researcher to have face to face contact with people involved in the sample and is able to observe the people in their natural surroundings. This allows the researcher to adapt the research instruments to suit each of samples. The following section provides information on the methods used in this study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTS

For the purpose of this study I have made use of qualitative and quantitative research design methods. As noted in the introduction of this chapter, the two methods provide the researcher with different modes of collecting data. When these two methods are combined, it is commonly refer to as a mixed method research (MacMillan, 2010). Several authors make use of a mixed method approach especially when working with small or diverse groups as this method proves wider selection of instruments to be used and allows for triangulation. When you have a small sample group, using quantitative research methods only, will limit the depth of the data collected. MacMillan (2010) pointed out the advantages and disadvantages for using a mixed method approach. The main advantage to using a mixed method approach is that this method provides a greater collection of a range of data and eliminates some of the limitations when using only one method. The disadvantages of using mixed methods are that the researcher must have knowledge of more approaches and instruments; this includes both qualitative and quantitative research methods and will require more time and resources. Saying this, it is the advantage of a mixed method approach that made me select it as the research method for this study. According to MacMillan (2010) there are three different mixed method research designs, sequential explanatory designs, sequential exploratory designs and concurrent triangulation designs. For the purpose of this study I have used exploratory designs as this enabled me to gather the quantitative data first by using the questionnaire. The following section deals with sampling and how I

included both quantitative and qualitative research methods to conduct my investigation.

As part of the quantitative method, a researcher is required to select a group of participants or people known as the sample. Probability sampling allows the researcher to select a small population from a larger group where the probability is known. This method is less time consuming and more affordable, as the researcher selects people who are known to add value to the study. Random sampling provides all individuals from the group with a chance of being part of the population. MacMillan (2010) refers to the elements or individuals selected within the sample group as the sample population. The advantage of using the random sampling techniques are that bias is avoided. The third mixed method is called a triangulation design. This design method allows the researcher to collect quantitative and qualitative data at the same time. After considering the advantages and disadvantages of the three techniques and the limitation of the timeframe for conducting this study, I made use of triangulation design to collect my data.

Triangulation design was relevant to my study, as I could use the strengths of the different approaches to get a more complete and valid outcome. I knew what the target group should be for me to collect data that could add value to my research. Both the schools in the sample were selected, as there were staff with and without management responsibilities employed at each of the schools. Saying this, the two schools were from different geographical locations, as this was important for my study to determine if the location of the school can cause management and leadership to face different challenges. The aim for choosing the two schools from these locations were to get a greater sense of understanding regarding contextual factors that can have an impact on schools' management and leadership structures. The one school is an inner city school and the other a township school.

Probability sampling was further applied as part of this study to investigate staff perception on the role of middle management within public schools in Gauteng. I did not select any two schools from different geographic locations, but I selected two public secondary schools in Gauteng. James et al., (2010) describes this technique, when applied in a mixed method approach as stratified purposive sampling. In this study I have stratified the sampling of the school and then divided the staff into three groups:

teaching staff without any management responsibilities, middle management and senior management. Quantitative research for this study was conducted by the distribution of questionnaires to staff at each of the sample schools. The information from the completed questionnaires were analysed and presented in tables and graphs. However, in contrast to probable sampling in quantitative research, qualitative sampling does not require generalisation of the larger population. With qualitative sampling the researcher has no contact with the whole population. Qualitative research was used during the focus group and interview sessions. Information gathered from the latter was presented in a written format. Data from both methods is presented in Chapter Four of this study. As noted above, I have used a range of research instruments for the collection of data. The following section will describe the research instruments that were used for the data collection, starting with the research questionnaire.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires and surveys are often used in quantitative research, as this allow the researcher to gather information from a large sample or population. For the purpose of this study, it was important to distribute the questionnaire for completion before conducting the focus group and interview sessions. The questionnaire provided me with the some of the schools' background information regarding their management and leadership structures and a sense of what the profile of the staff looks like at each of the schools. The questionnaire was used to establish the role, or perceived role of middle management in the two public secondary schools as well as the style of leadership that was implemented within the school. The population from each of the schools included teachers without management responsibility, middle managers, heads of departments and deputy principals. To allow sufficient time for staff to complete the questionnaire and for me to analyse the data, I distributed the questionnaire in the second school term. The questionnaire was hand delivered to each school, which was provided with envelopes and a sealed box for the return of the completed questionnaire. The latter was done to ensure confidentiality. Seventy percent of the teaching staff from each school was asked to complete the questionnaire. The completed questionnaires were collected two weeks after the distribution. The analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire was important for the formulation of the proposed questions to be used in the focus group and interview sessions. The data from the questionnaire provided me with background information and perceptions of staff from each of the two schools.

Adapting the questions based on the questionnaires data was important for this study, as the two schools were from different geographic locations and dealt with different challenges in their management and leadership structures.

It was important to consider the information I have extracted from the literature based on middle management when I drew up the questionnaire. The work of Bush (2003) and Spillane (2007) played a significant role in the construction of the questions. The questionnaire consisted out of nine parts, this ranged from tick box questions to questions requiring written feedback based on staffs' own perceptions and viewpoint. The first part of the questionnaire allowed me to gather background information regarding the profile of staff, this included the age, gender and race of teachers from each school. The current role of staff, experience and qualification sections on the questionnaire allowed me to have a greater picture of the staff profile for middle management in each school. Participants had to indicate in section two which tasks they fulfilled in their role and had to priorities the roles they considered to be important in being effective at their role in section three. Section four was they had to indicate the top three tasks they enjoy the most and the least. Section two to four part of the questionnaire gave me some insight on what the actual role of staff is and the tasks they consider being vital in their role. The firth section participants had to indicate their professional expertise and involvement in profession development programmes. This was important for this study as it indicated to me if staff might have received additional training for their roles at the schools. The last few sections, six to eight was mainly focusing on staff perceptions related to the key characteristics of a manager, the main tasks middle managers had to fulfil and the barriers managers encounter in their roles. This part of the questionnaire provided me with information to compare the actual tasks middle managers fulfil to the perceived tasks. The questionnaire was concluded with the opportunity for staff to provide any relevant information regarding middle management within their schools. I found this section interesting, as some participants were extremely honest regarding the lack of middle management and the factors that construed to this in their schools. The second research instrument I have included in this study was the use of a focus group. The following section deals with the practicality and functionality of focus group sessions and what impact the sessions had on my study. For each of the schools I held a once of focus group session of approximately an hour.

3.2.2 Focus Group

According to Wilkinson (2004) focus groups have been used for several years and allowed the researcher to include small groups of people to participate in the research process. In my own experience using focus groups I found that it allowed staff to voice their opinion and I was able to address elements that could not have been included in the questionnaire. I was able to have face to face contact with the participants. This was important to this study, as one gets a true sense of the emotion and personal feelings attached to the issues addressed during the session. One cannot project the same emotions and character in completing a questionnaire. The participants in the focus group sessions for this study displayed a sense appreciation in the opportunity to voice their opinions.

As noted in the previous section, I used the data collected from the questionnaires to formulate the questions for the focus group sessions. The following questions were used to guide the discussions for the focus group sessions:

a) What do staff understand from the term 'middle management'?
b) What are the two areas in the school which middle management contributes to the most?
c) What barriers might prevent middle management from performing their role effectively?
d) Are there sufficient training or guidance opportunities for aspiring middle managers to fulfil their roles effectively and what support structures are in place?
e) On what basis are staff appointed to management positions?

According to the work of Onwuegbuzie (2009) there is no set framework for conducting a focus group session. For the purpose of this study I have used a selection of staff with different roles at each school. Participants for the focus group sessions were selected based on the current role they fulfill at the school. It was clear from the feedback given in the questionnaire, that staff with and without management responsibilities have different perceptions regarding the role of middle management. The focus group population from each sample consisted of teaching staff with and without responsibilities as well as deputy principals. I purposefully did not include the schools'

principals in the population of the focus group sessions, as I wanted to eliminate participants feeling undermined or threatened by authority. The aim was to allow participants to speak freely and to voice their opinions. The advantages of using focus group sessions as part of my research instruments, was that I was able to interact with a small group of participants ranging from seven to nine staff members at each school. As noted in this section, questions were set up as guidance for the sessions, saying this, as participants elaborated on different elements, new issues were raised and discussed. It was however important not to lose focus of the key aims and objectives of the study. This was the one aspect related to focus group sessions that I experiences some challenges with, as some participants can get carried away and move off the topic. It is therefore important to guide the discussion back to the question. Another disadvantage to using focus group sessions is that the number of participants is limited. If there are too many participants, you will be unable to create a sense of belonging amongst the participant. Saying this, to avoid alienation during the focus group sessions, I made use of a voice recorder. This allowed me as a researcher to be fully involved in the process and not to have my attention on the transcription of the conversations or discussion. All participants signed consent to approve the recording of the focus group sessions. The data collected from these sessions is presented and analyzed in Chapter Four of this study. The work of Onwuegbuzie (2009) suggests another advantage in using a focus group session. Focus group sessions allow the researcher to observe not only the behavior of participants during the session, but also how participants react towards other members' conversations in the group. This is an element that is not part of a one to one interview session. The third and final research instrument used in this study is a once off semi-structured interview with an SMT member of each school.

3.2.3 Interviews

Using an informal conversation interview, allowed me to structure used the information collected from the focus group sessions and the questionnaires to formulate the questions. When in-depth interviews are held, the questions used in the interview must be directly related to the aim of the study James et al., (2010). Furthermore they categorise the questions into three sections: structures, semi structured and unstructured questions. The first of category allows the interviewee to choose an option and to elaborate on the answer. Whereas semi structured questions are open ended

but still specific. The interviewee provides a personal response. The last category; unstructured questions, allows the interviewer to ask broad questions.

For the purpose of this study one semi-structured interview of approximately ten minutes was held with one deputy principal from each school. As the questionnaires were completed prior to the interview session, I was able to structure some questions based on the data analysis of the questionnaires. The aim of the interview was to get an insight on what the perception of the SMT was on the role of middle management in the school and how the SMT works in conjunction with the middle management team of the school. The information collected from the two semi structured interview are presented in Chapter Four of this study.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

The field work for this study took place in the second school term. In determining the background information and teacher profile of the sample school, a questionnaire was drawn up based on challenges identifies in the literature. The research population and sample for this study was small and therefor provided some limitations to the depth of this study. School A was an inner city school were 40 questionnaires were distributes and School B a township school were twenty five questionnaires were distributed. The latter had a smaller research population as they had less staff at the school .The questionnaires were hand delivered to the two schools, provided with envelopes and a sealed box to return the completed questionnaires. There were no specifications to who may or may not participate in completing the questionnaires. As a result there were participants from all levels of the schools' teaching and leadership teams. The completed questionnaires were collected from both schools two weeks after the distributions. All participants signed the consent form attached to the questionnaire to take part in this survey. In my research the research population included teachers without and with management responsibilities as well as deputy principals. For the purpose of the study the data collected from the two sample schools where arranged into different sections, teacher without responsibilities and teachers with responsibilities within each school. This was important for the data analysis, as the information could be compared to the perception of teachers without management responsibilities to those in middle management or senior management.

The focus group sessions required each school to have eight to ten participants ranging from teachers without management positions to deputy principals. The groups were kept small to enable all participants to voice their opinions. The groups were informed on the focus of this study and the purpose of the session. The aim of the focus group was not to achieve consensus but rather to collect data. The timeframe for each of the focus group sessions was on hour and was held at the separate school.

The semi-structured interviews were a one of session of ten minutes with a deputy principle of each school. In doing so, the interview questions were structured around the data collected from the questionnaires based on the issues, changes and challenges middle management had to deal with in their role at the school. It was clear from this data that the two schools' management teams have experienced different challenges. Data gathered from these sessions was compared with the information supplied in the focus group sessions and the literature studied for this research. Despite asking similar questions in the interview, the opinion of the senior management member had a different outcome to the information collected from staff in the focus group sessions and questionnaires.

The sessions were voice recorded and transcribed after the sessions. Information gathered during the focus group sessions was then compared to the outcome of the questionnaires and the literature studied for this research. There were five main questions used as starting point for the sessions the evoke conversation amongst the group. All participants signed a consent form to give permission for their participation and the recording of the sessions. This was done prior to the start of the focus group.

3.4 ETHICS

The work of James et al., (2010) reinforces the importance of the ethical and legal considerations when dealing with people in educational research. They point out the use of certain research methods can cause harm or injury to participants. The further include psychological difficulties, where participants can experience discomfort, anxiety or even a loss or self-esteem. They therefore argue that it is the responsibility of the researcher to know what the ethical and legal principles are that should be addressed during the research process. The researcher should also be honest to all participants

regarding the aims and objectives of the study. To ensure participants were informed what the aim and subject matter of this research was, they received a letter providing a brief summary of the investigation. For the purpose of this study, prior clearance from the Ethics board was required before any fieldwork was conducted. As discussed by James et al., (2010) there are four key pillars involved in the ethics process when conduction research. This includes voluntary participation, informed consent, no harm or risk to participants and privacy. In the next few sections I will provide a brief discussion on each these pillars applied in this research.

Voluntary participation deals with the participants' right to take part in the study by their own free will and they may not be forced into participation. The term further implies that participants can at any moment withdraw from the research as they have participated voluntarily. To ensure participants are aware of their voluntary participation the researcher must allow participants to sign consent (MacMillan, 2010). Participants were made fully aware that they have the freedom of speech and the freedom to withdraw at any given time during the research process. They were assured that they will not be held accountable for data not being used due to their withdrawal.

The term informed consent refers to the informative process between the researcher and the participants regarding the aim and objectives of the study. In schools consent is required from the participants, the department of education and the principal of the school before conducting the fieldwork. When minors or involved in the research sample, consent from the parent of guardian will also be required (MacMillan, 2010). It is noted in the previous section that participants will not be harm or injured during the research process. It is important that the researcher consider the risk of participants being harmed, even when presenting and analysing the date. Often researchers need to use deception about the purpose of the study, to eliminate participants' invalidated result (MacMillan, 2010). Deception was not needed during my study, as the aim and objective did not affect participants' role or character. All participants signed a consent form stating the aim and objectives of the activity and the focus of this study. The participants were assured that they will not be exposed to any harm of physical or mental discomfort during any part of their participation.

Lastly, MacMillan, (2010) discussed three important steps to ensure that all participants' privacy is protected. This includes their profile, character and feedback or information

that they have provided during the research process. To protect a participant's privacy the following three steps must be included in the practice: anonymity, confidentiality and appropriate storing of data. To ensure anonymity, the researcher must not be able to identify the data with the participant. In this study anonymity was ensured with the completion of the questionnaire. Participants were also given an envelope to conceal the completed questionnaire before placing it in a sealed box. Participants have been kept anonymous to prevent any negative consequences. For this reason schools and participants are not named in this study and the samples are revered to as School A and School B. Anonymity was not possible during the focus group and interview sessions, as I had face to face contact with the participants. Confidentiality was assured to all participants and now names were used in the capturing or analysis of the data. Participants were assured that all data and information will be securely kept for a maximum of five years from the date of completion of this study and then fully discarded after the time has expired. During this research, no participants were advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

3.5 LIMITATIONS

Due to the small sample used for this research, it will not be possible to make assumptions on the information provided by the participants on what their perception on middle management in secondary schools are from the data collected. Saying this; it is likely for the data to give some insight into the variations of responses by middle managers and other members of the staff.

3.6 SUMMARY

In conclusion to this chapter, I have found the mixed method design to be a suitable method for this study as this method allowed me to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The questionnaires allowed me to gather data from more than fifty percent of the staff from each of the sample schools. The focus groups sessions were interactive and the participants voiced their options regarding the focus of the session. At times it was important to keep the conversation focused on what was asked or discussed, as some participants can easily get distracted from the main issue. The once of semi structure

interview provided me with the perception and opinion of an SMT member regarding middle management. All data collected during the focus group and interview session will be presented and analysed in the next chapter of this report, followed by conclusions drawn from the data and literature in Chapter Five. Chapter Four presents the presentation the data collected. The data will be presented to show comparisons between the two schools as well as comparisons between staff within the same school. The latter will focus on staff with and staff without management responsibilities.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data obtained from fieldwork conducted at two secondary public schools in Gauteng. The data was collected using mixed methods including questionnaires, focus group sessions and interviews. The main purpose of the research was to investigate how teaching staff perceive the role of middle management in secondary schools. This chapter will further provide evidence and groupings of the data collection followed by an analysis, explaining and exploring the reasons for selecting the key material. Descriptive statistics were used to indicate the perceptions of staff with or without management and leadership responsibilities. A comparison was also drawn between the data obtained from the two sample schools. Questions used for interviews and focus group sessions were an extension of the data collected from the questionnaires. Participants and interviewees are referred to in codes, to ensure anonymity. See Appendix A for background information.

This chapter begins with the profile and background information for each of the sample schools used in this study. In this report, the sample schools will be referred to as School A and School B. School A is an inner city school compared to School B, which is a township school. For the purpose of this study the two sample schools have been colour coded in the presentation of the data. School A's data is presented in green, dark green for participants without management responsibilities and light green for participants with management responsibilities. The data for School B is presented in dark blue for participants without management responsibilities and light blue for participants with management responsibilities. The second part of this chapter presents data indicating tasks staff fulfils in their role and the third part presents staff perceptions of the role and characteristics of middle management. The chapter concludes with a summary of additional information shared by the participants.

4.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The data presented in this section was taken from the completed questionnaires returned from the two sample schools. Forty questionnaires were distributed in School A, due to their large number of staff, compared to twenty five questionnaires distributed in School B.

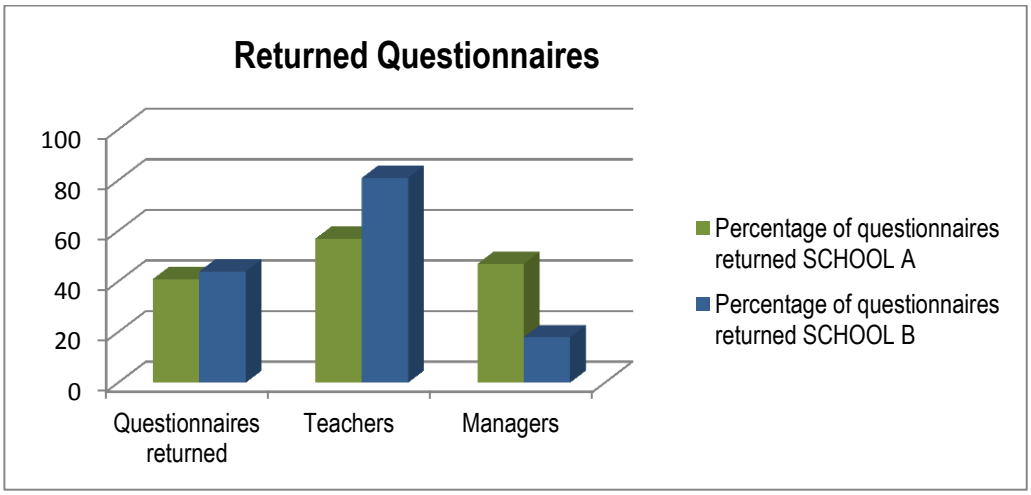


Figure 4.1 Percentage of questionnaires returned by sample schools

Figure 4.1 indicates the return of completed questionnaires by the two sample schools, from participants with and without management responsibilities. Below is a table which indicates the differences in the percentages based on Figure 4.1

	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B
Questionnaires returned	41%	44%
Teachers	57%	81%
Managers	47%	18%

Table 4A Percentage of questionnaires returned by sample schools

Figure 4.1/Table 4A indicates the overall questionnaires returned by each of the sample schools. School A returned twenty three (41%) of the 40 distributed questionnaires. Ten of the twenty three (47%) questionnaires were completed by staff with management or leadership responsibilities and thirteen (57%) questionnaires were completed by teaching staff without any additional responsibilities. School B returned eleven (44%) of the twenty five distributed questionnaires. Two (18%) of the questionnaires were completed by staff with management or leadership responsibilities and nine (81%) were completed by teaching staff without any additional responsibilities. School B had less

staff with management and leadership responsibilities and therefore the low number of completed questionnaires by managers returned. Information collected during interviews and focus group sessions, highlighted the lack of middle management in School B as a concern.

4.2.1 Profiles of sample schools

In this part of the questionnaire participants had to indicate background information regarding their age, gender and race and thereafter the role, experience and qualifications of the participants. The aim of these sections was to get a better understanding of the schools' staff profiles. The information collected is presented in the figures that follow. Each sample school's data is presented separately with a comparison drawn in Figures 4.6/11/12 and Table 4B.

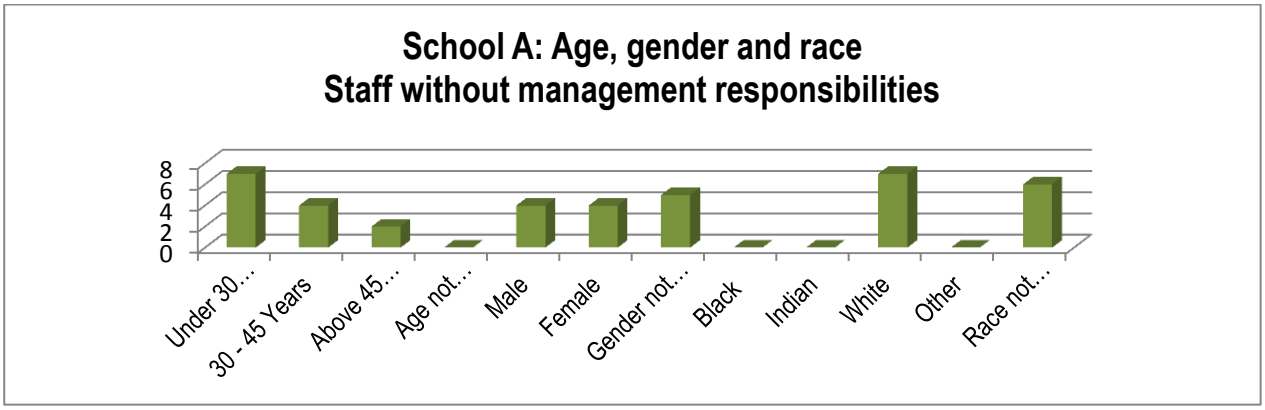


Figure 4.2 School A: Staff without management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.2 presents the data collected from School A from staff without management responsibilities. The data indicates the majority of participants from School A without management responsibilities were less than 30 years of age. There was an equal amount of participant indicating that they were male or female. Saying this, six of the participants did not disclose their gender. Seven of the participants were White and six did not disclose their race.

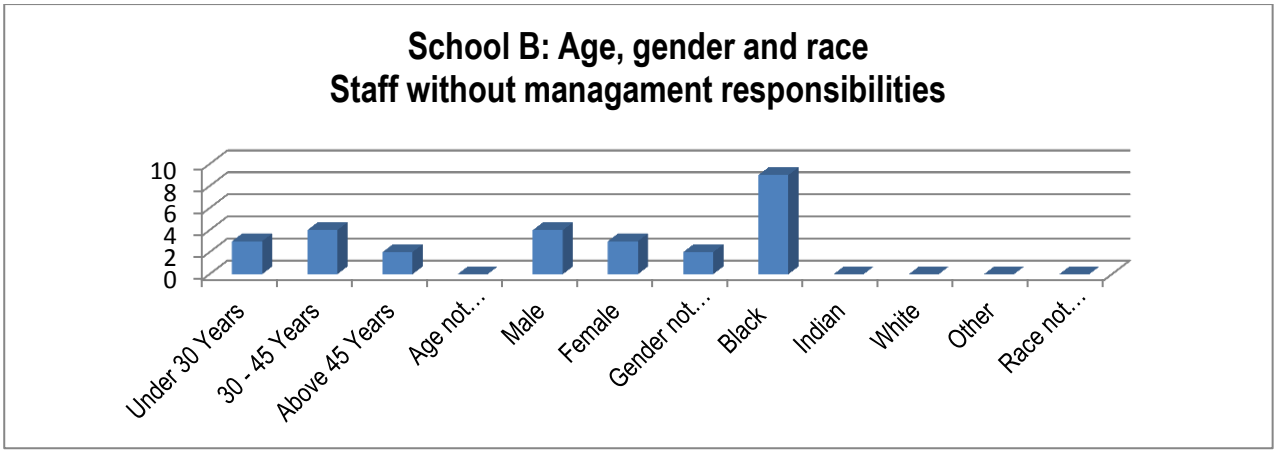


Figure 4.3 School B: Staff without management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.3 presents the data collected from School B from staff without management responsibilities. The data indicates that the majority of the participants were over the age of 30 years with six returned questionnaires. Only three of the participants were under 30 years of age. The data further indicates there were three female and 4 male participants. However, two participants did not disclose their gender. All of the participants were Black.

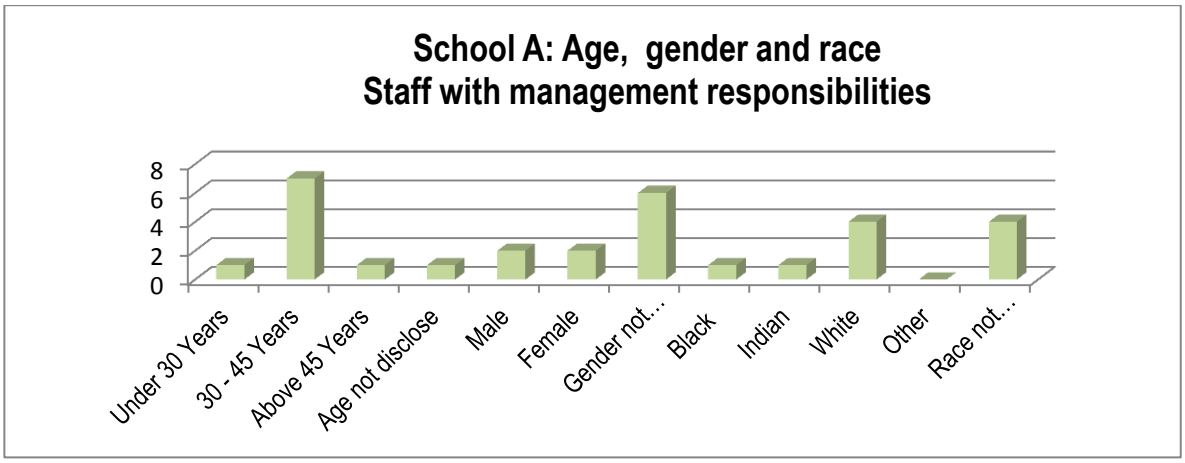


Figure 4.4 School A: Staff with management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.4 presents the data collected from School A from participants with management responsibilities. Eight of the ten participants were over the age of 30 years and one participant was younger than 30 years. One participant did not disclose their age. The data indicated two participants to be male and two participants to be female. Six participants did not disclose their age. The data indicates one participant was Black,

one participant was Indian and four participants were White. Saying this, there were four participants who did not disclose their race.

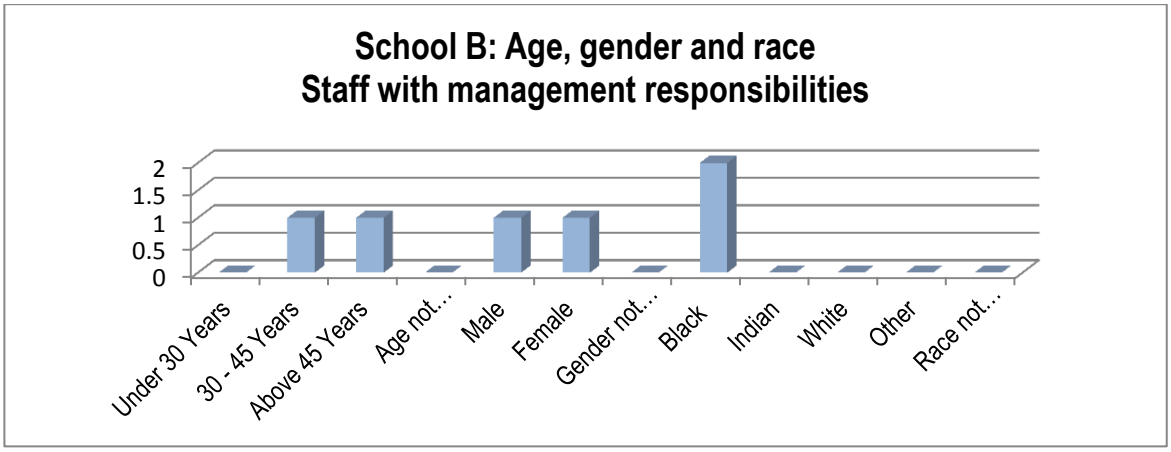


Figure 4.5 School B: Staff with management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.5 presents the data collected from School B from staff without management responsibilities. There were no participants under the age of 30 years who had management responsibilities. All participants were over 30 years of age. There was one male and one female participant and both of the participants were Black. The next table provides a summary of the presentation of the schools' profiles.

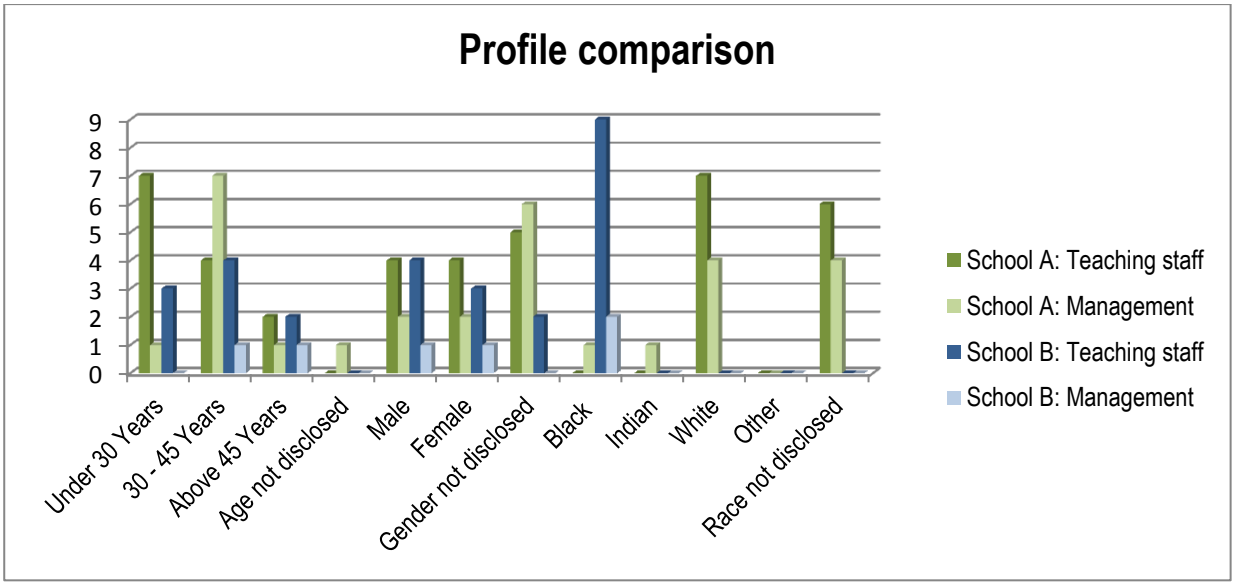


Figure 4.6 Profile comparison of School A and School B (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.6 depicts the data collected from both the schools, including staff with and without management responsibilities. There was a smaller number of staff participating

in the questionnaire of School B compared to School A, due to a smaller number of staff employed at School B. The data suggest that there were no staff with managerial positions under the age of 30 years in School B. Sample A and B had the same number of participants with the age of 30 – 45 years they also had the same amount of male participants in this category. There is a fluctuation in the number of participants who did not reveal their gender and race. The data further suggests that there were no Black participants without managerial positions in School A and there were no White participants in any of the categories in School B.

	School A: Teaching staff	School A: Management	School B: Teaching staff	School B: Management
Under 30 Years	7	1	3	0
30 - 45 Years	4	7	4	1
Above 45 Years	2	1	2	1
Age not disclosed	0	1	0	0
Male	4	2	4	1
Female	4	2	3	1
Gender not disclosed	5	6	2	0
Black	0	1	9	2
Indian	0	1	0	0
White	7	4	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Race not disclosed	6	4	0	0

Table 4B Profile comparison between School A and School B

Table 4B/Figure 4.6 depicts a summative presentation of Figures 4.2 – 4.5. In both samples the data suggest that there is a large number of staff under the age of 45. The data from School B suggests that there is a balance between male and female staff. All participants from School B were from the same race. School A did not disclose all age, race and gender information, and is therefore not possible to draw a conclusion on the ratio between age, race and gender. Although ten (43%) participants from School A did not disclose their race, the data suggests School A has a multi-racial staff.

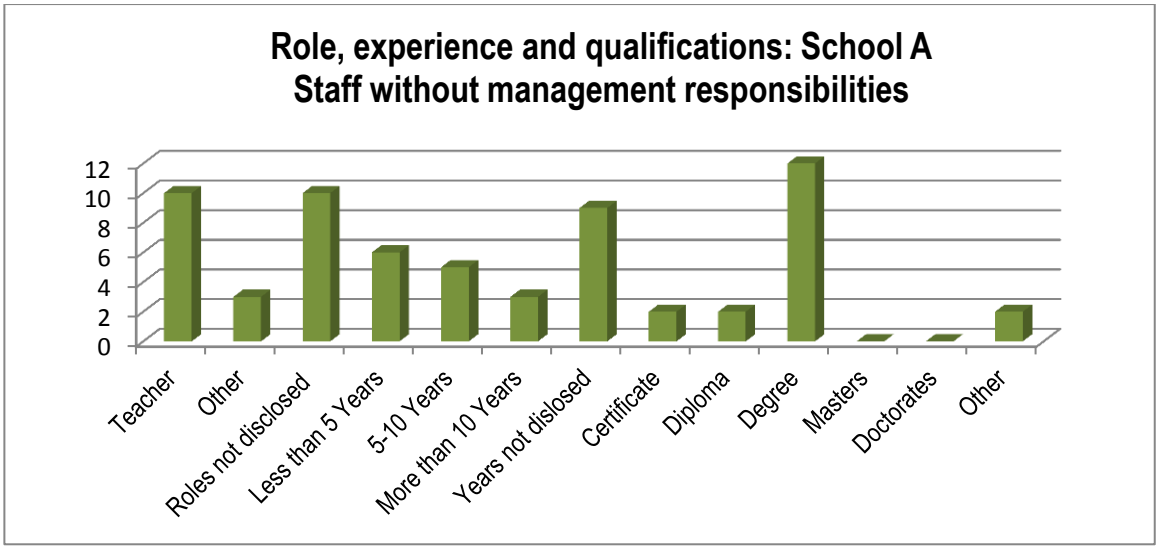


Figure 4.7 School A: Staff without management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.7 suggests that most participants without management responsibilities had less than 10 years of experience; however, nine of the participants did not disclose their years of experience. Twelve of the twenty three participants had a degree as their highest qualification.

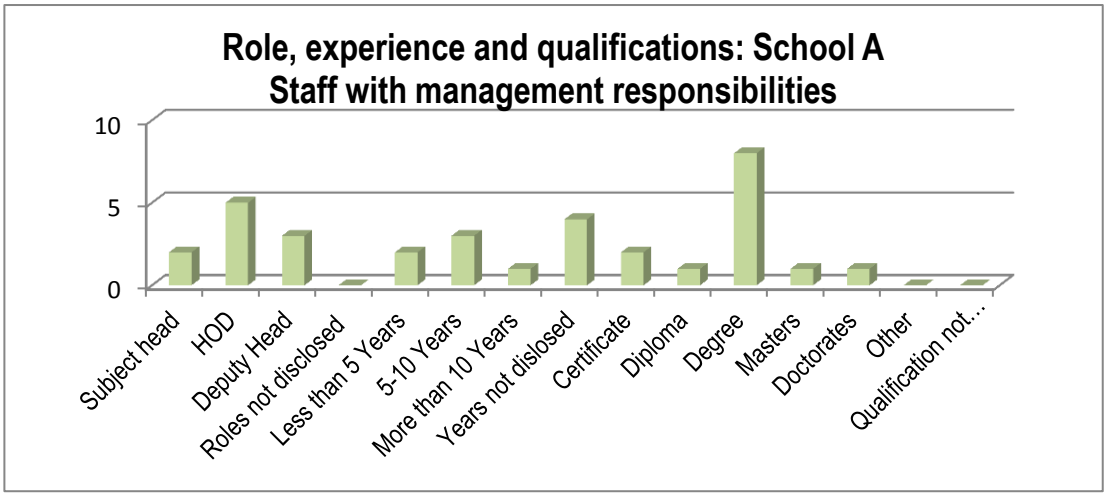


Figure 4.8 School A: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.8 suggest most of the participants with management responsibilities were HOD's and had less than 10 years of experience. Most of the participants had a degree as their highest qualification.

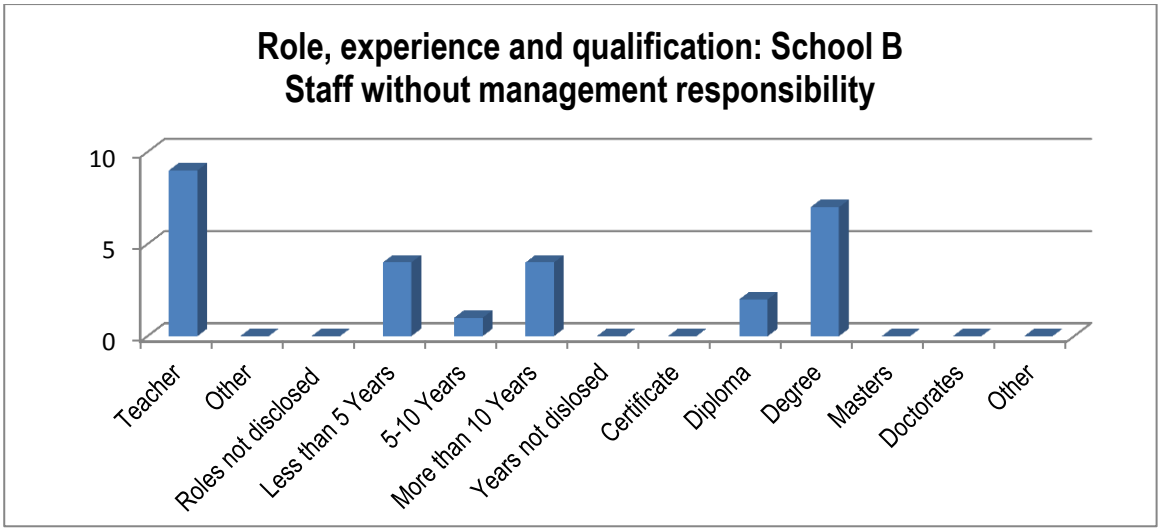


Figure 4.9 School B: Staff without management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.9 suggest a balance between staff with management responsibilities that have more than ten years of experience and those who have less than ten years of experience. The majority of the participants had a degree as their highest qualification.

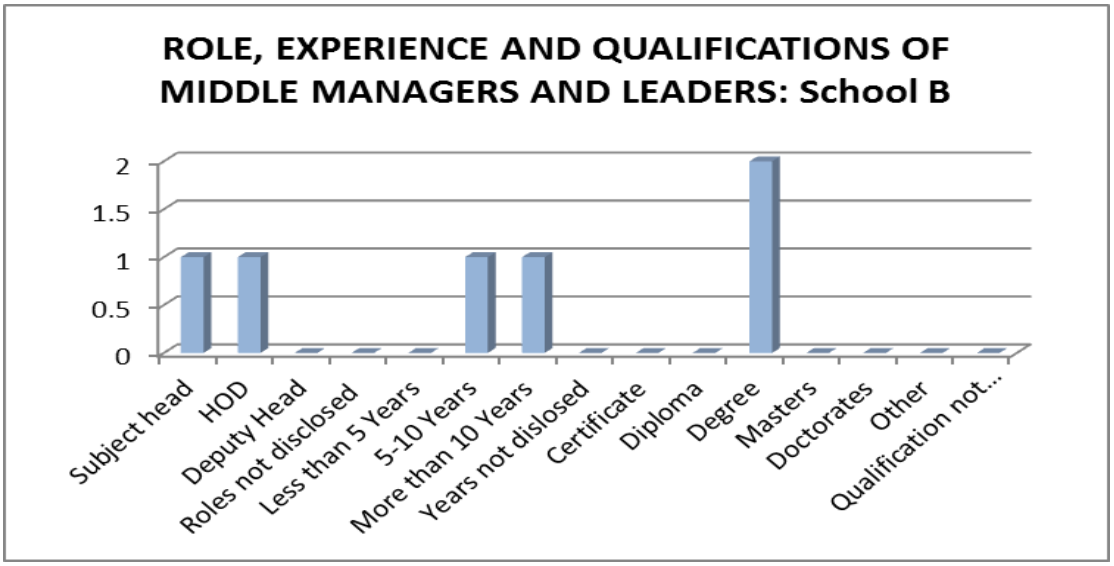


Figure 4.10 School B: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.10 suggest there is a balance between the numbers of staff with 5-10 years of experience compare to staff with more than ten years' experience.



Figure 4.11 Comparison: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.11 displays the roles and experience of staff with management responsibilities between sample A and sample B. The data suggests that school had participation from all levels of management, including subject heads, deputies and HOD's compare to sample B who only had participation from and HOD and subject head. The data also suggest that the participants' qualifications from sample A ranged from Certificates to Doctorates, compared to the participants from sample B who had no higher qualification than a degree.



Figure 4.12 Comparison: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figures 4.11/12 presents the data collected form the questionnaires and suggests all staff who participated in this study have a professional qualification. School A did not disclose all relevant information. However, the data collected further suggests the possibility of a decrease in the number of staff members without management responsibilities after ten years of teaching compared to School B which stays consistent for less than five years to ten years. The data suggest the majority of staff who participated in the questionnaire (School A: 57% and School B: 82%) were teaching staff without management responsibilities.

4.2.2 Daily tasks fulfilled by teachers with and without management responsibilities

This part of the questionnaire required participants to identify daily tasks they undertake as part of their role from a list of tasks provided. Participants had to indicate how often they had to fulfil these tasks. The aim of this section was to distinguish between the differences in tasks fulfil by teaching staff with and without management responsibilities. The data collected from the participants are presented in figures 4.13 – 16.

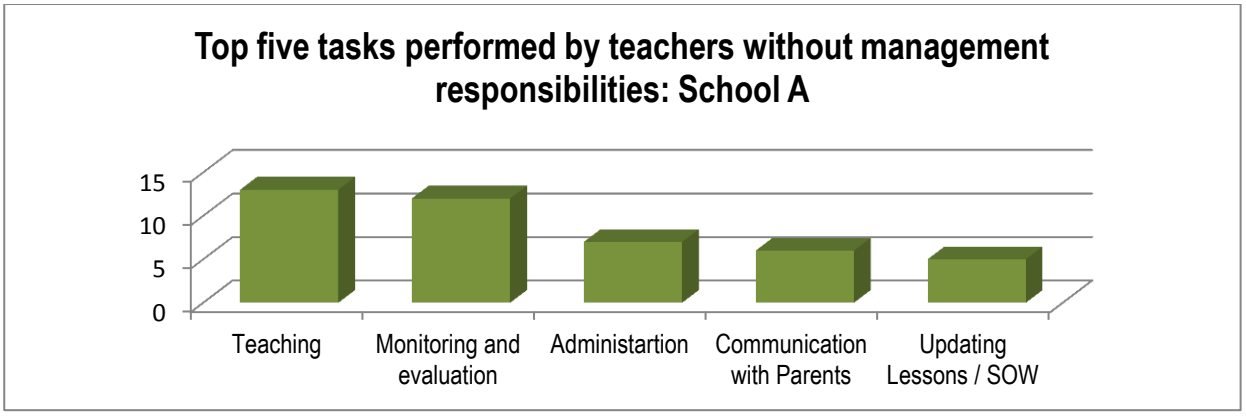


Figure 4.13 Top five tasks fulfilled by teachers without management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.13 suggests a range of task fulfilled by teachers without management responsibilities from sample A, of which the majority of staff consider teaching as the main activity and updating as the least performed task.

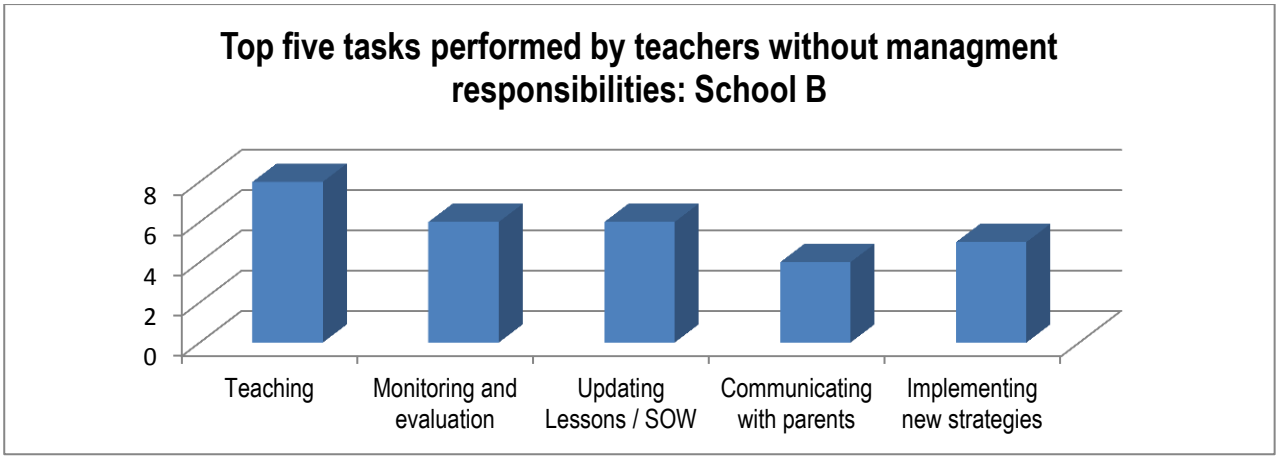


Figure 4.14 Top five tasks fulfilled by teachers without management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.14 suggest a range of task fulfilled by teachers without management responsibilities from sample B, of which the majority of staff consider teaching as the main activity and implementing new strategies as the least performed task.

Task	School A	School B
Teaching	100%	89%
Monitoring and evaluation	92%	67%
Updating lesson plans	56%	56%
Communication with parents	46%	44%

Table 4C: Percentage of participants indicating daily tasks

The data presented in Figures 4.13/14 and Table 4C suggests participants of both schools without management responsibilities placed teaching as the main task followed by monitoring and evaluation. Two other resemblances in the top five tasks of teachers were, updating lesson plans and communication with parents. Administrational tasks in School A and implementing new strategies in School B were retrospectively the fifth tasks.

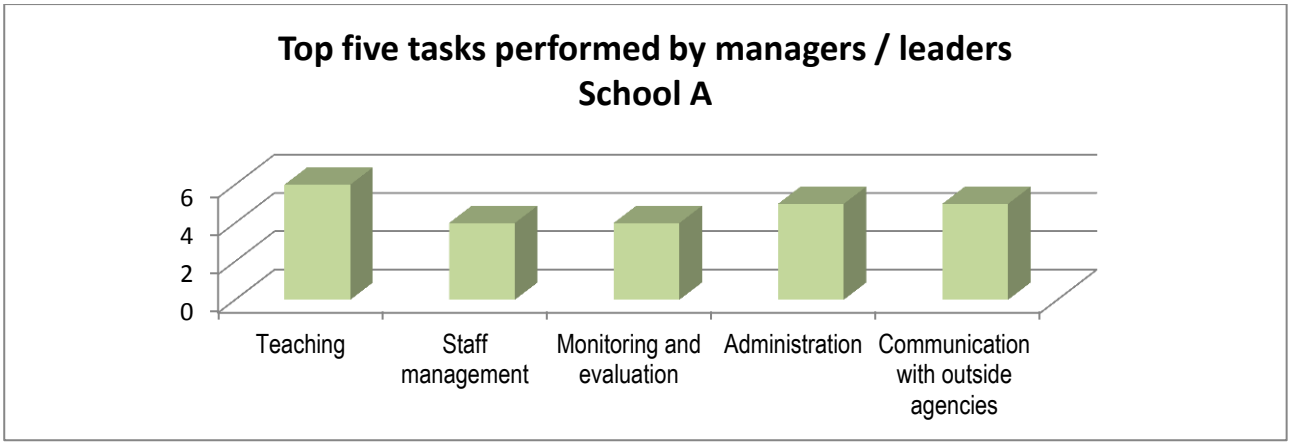


Figure 4.15 Top five tasks fulfilled by teachers with management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.15 suggest a range of task fulfilled by teachers with management responsibilities from sample A, of which the majority of staff considers teaching as the main activity and communication with outside agencies as the least performed task.

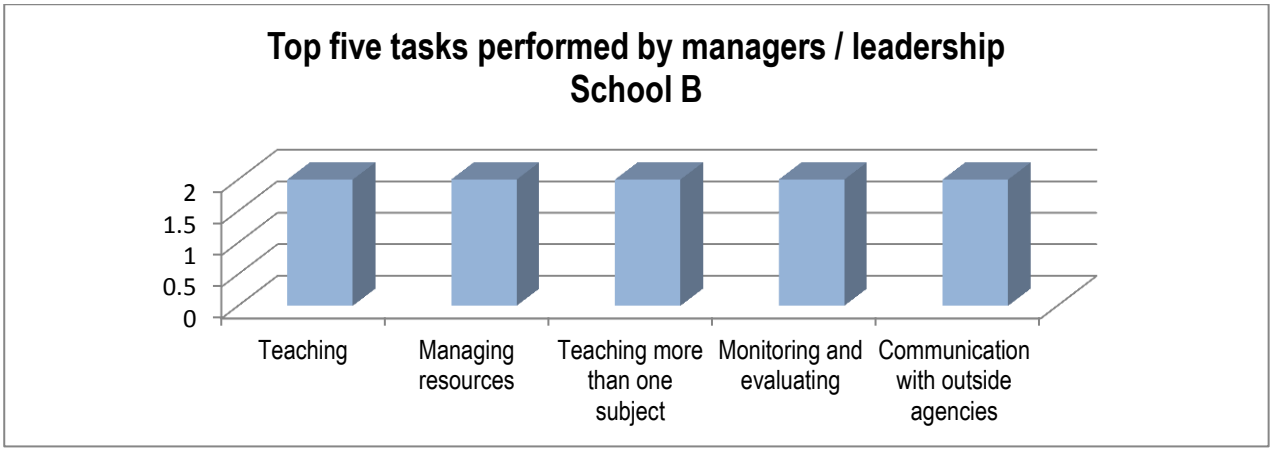


Figure 4.16 Top five tasks for teachers with management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.16 suggest a range of task fulfilled by teachers with management responsibilities from sample B, of which the majority of staff consider teaching as the main activity and communication with outside agencies as the least performed task.

Figure 4.15/16 suggests teachers with management responsibilities placed teaching as priority for their daily tasks with a 100% response from both sample schools. Teaching being the most important task according to staff with management responsibilities correlates with the responses of teachers without management responsibilities. Monitoring and evaluation and communications with outside agencies were indicated by

teachers with management responsibilities from both sample schools as part of their top five tasks. Management of resources in School B (100% of participants) compared to management of staff in School A (40%) can be an indication of the schools' recourses. This issue will be elaborated on based on the information from the interview and focus group sessions. School A receives funding from the SGB for more staff, well resourced, bigger departments, greater need for staff management. School B identified the lack of funding and resources, no additional staff due to lack of funds / resources.



Figure 4.17 Bottom five tasks performed by staff without management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.17 suggest the bottom five tasks performed by staff without management responsibilities from sample A from which the facilitation of professional development sessions are the highest.

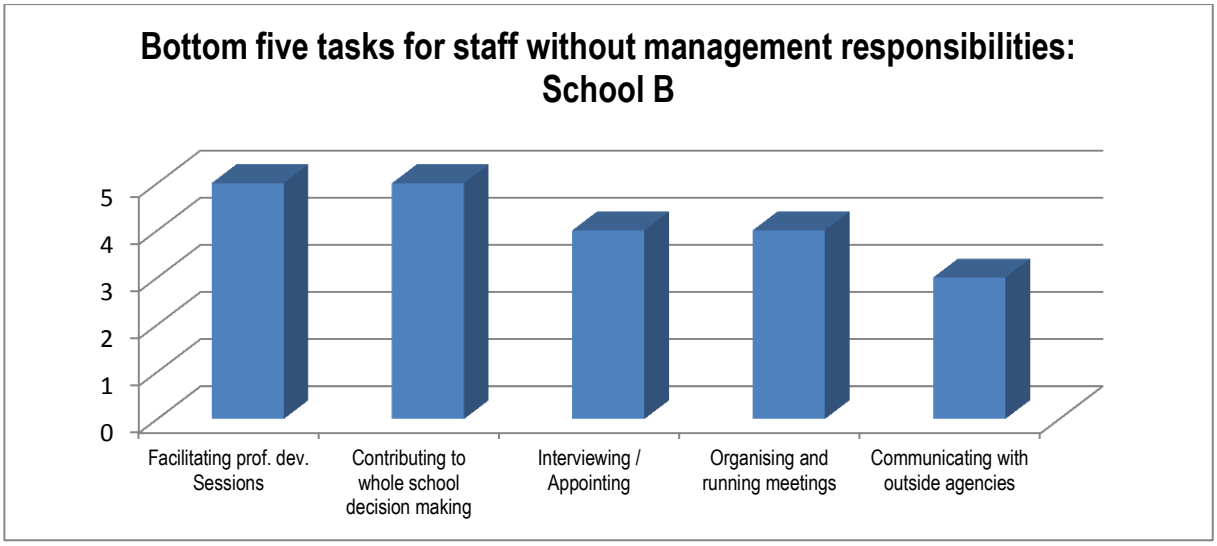


Figure 4.18 Bottom five tasks performed by staff without management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.18 suggest the bottom five tasks performed by staff without management responsibilities from sample B from which the facilitation of professional development sessions are the highest.

Tasks:	Interviewing and appointing staff	Facilitating Professional development	Communication with outside agencies
School A	62%	62%	54%
School B	44%	56%	33%

Table 4D: Bottom two correlating task performed by teachers without management responsibilities between School A and School B

The data presented in Figures 4.17/18 and Table 4D suggest there were three correlating tasks identified by staff without management responsibilities from both the sample schools that were listed as part of the three bottom tasks performed in their roles. The tasks included interviewing and appointing new staff, Facilitating professional developments and communicating with outside agencies.

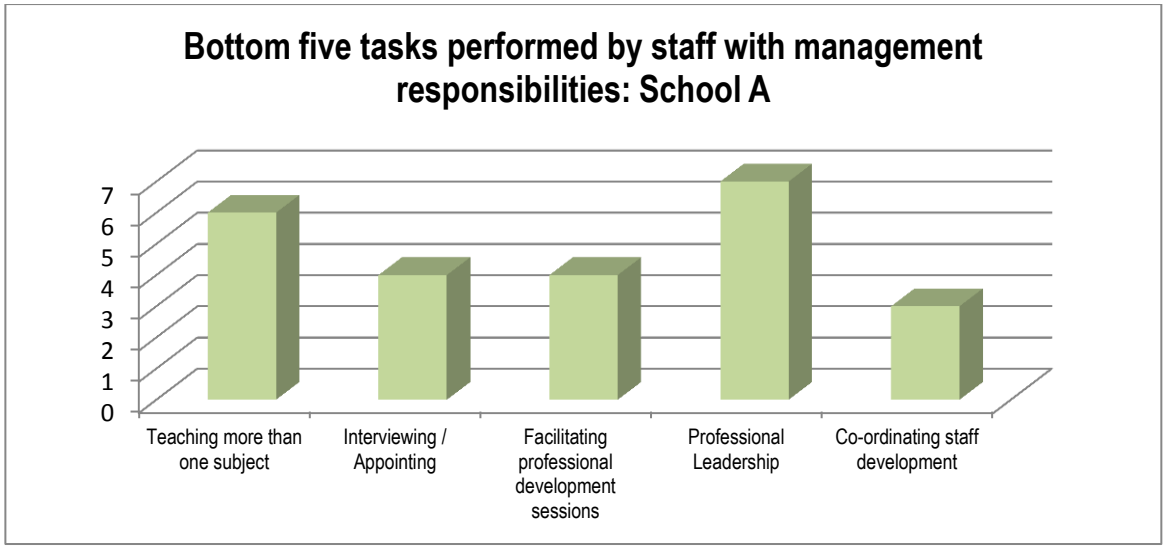


Figure 4.19 Bottom five tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.19 suggest the bottom five tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities from sample A from which the teaching more than one subject is the highest.

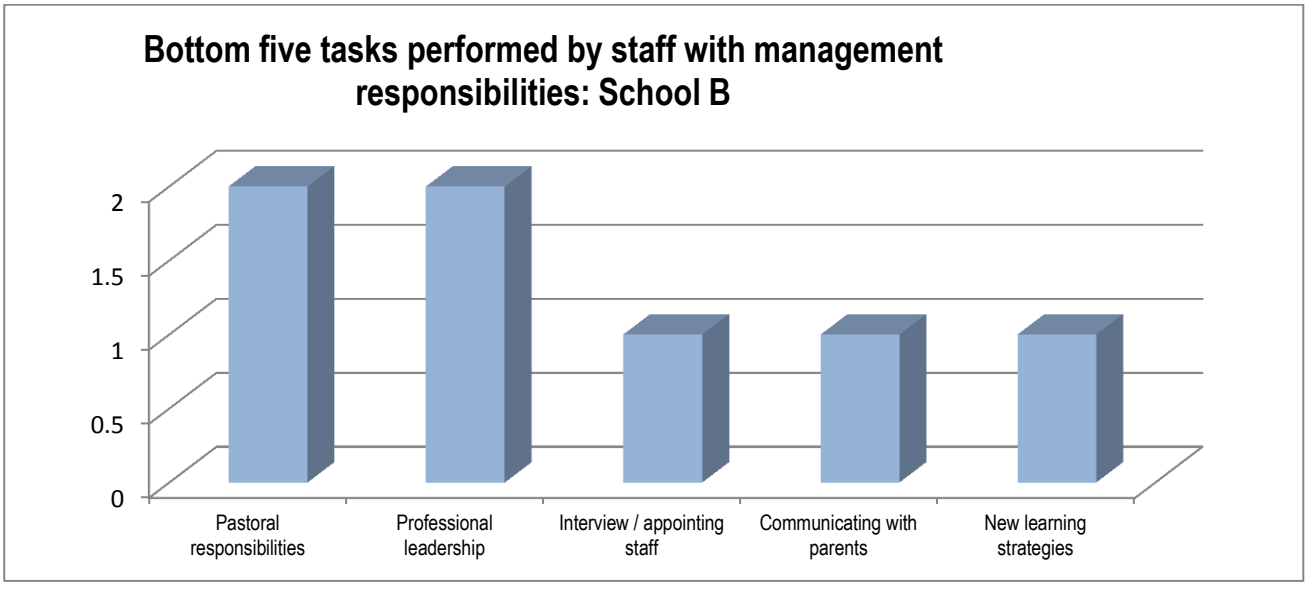


Figure 4.20 Bottom five tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.20 suggest the bottom five tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities from sample B from which the pastoral responsibilities are the highest.

Tasks:	Professional leadership	Interview / appointing new staff
School A	70%	40%
School B	100%	50%

Table 4E Bottom two correlating tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities between School A and School B

Figure 4.19/20 and Table 4E suggests a mixed response in tasks identified by staff with management's responsibilities from the sample schools to be perceived as the bottom five tasks in their role. The only two correlating task identified were Professional leadership and interviewing and appointing new staff. Both the sample schools indicated Professional leadership as the least performed tasks in their role with School A at 70% and School B at 100%. This was an interesting response, as participants of both samples did not perceive professional leadership as a necessity to perform their role effectively.

4.2.3 Tasks perceived as the most and least enjoyable tasks respectively by staff with and without management responsibilities

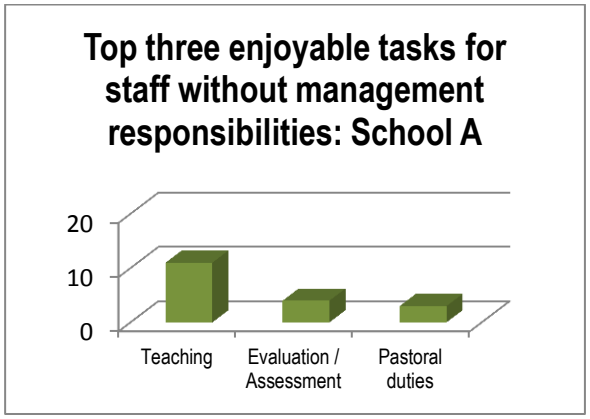


Figure 4.21

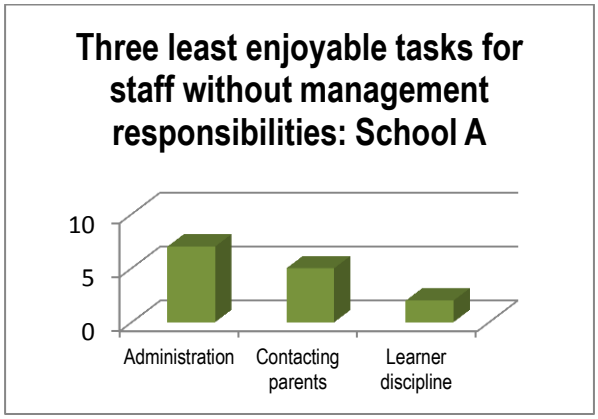


Figure 4.22

Figure 4.21 and 4.22 suggest the most enjoyable task and least enjoyable tasks perceived by staff from sample A without management responsibilities that managers have to perform in their role. The first is teaching and the latter is administration.

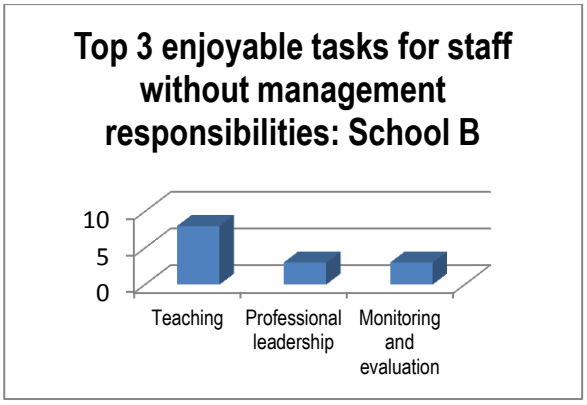


Figure 4.23

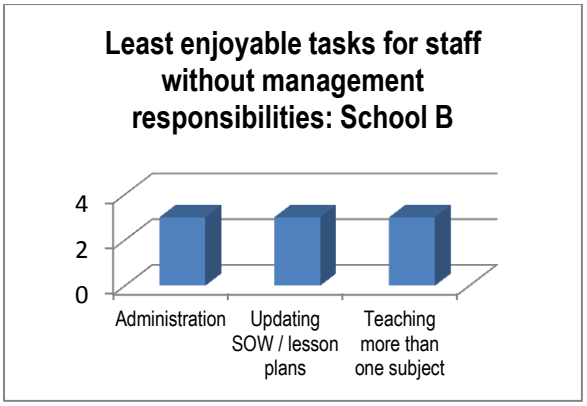


Figure 4.24

Figures 4.23 and 4.24 suggest the most enjoyable task and least enjoyable tasks perceived by staff from sample B without management responsibilities that managers have to perform in their role. The first is teaching and the latter administration, updating lessons and teaching more than one subject.

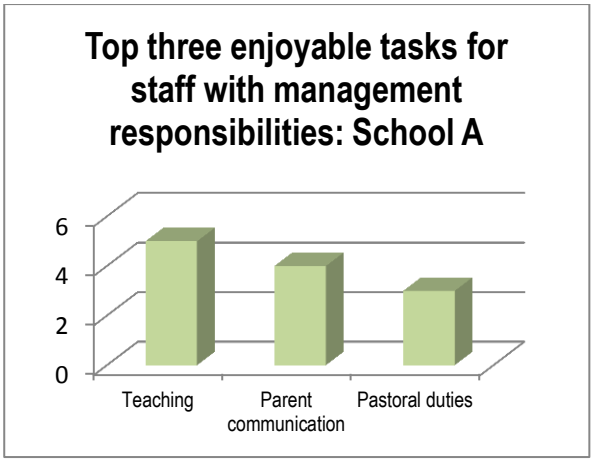


Figure 4.25

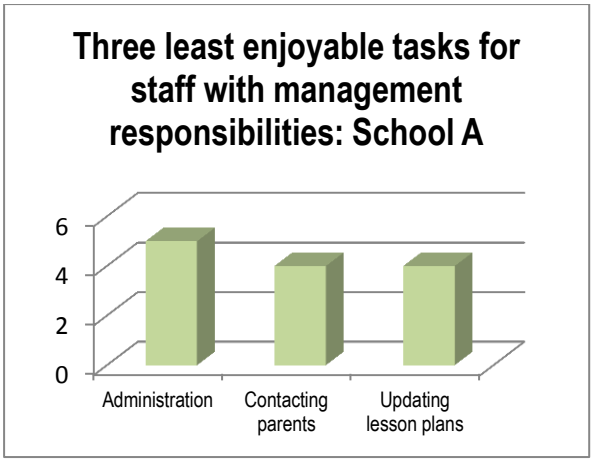


Figure 4.26

Figures 4.25 and 4.26 suggest the most enjoyable task and least enjoyable tasks perceived by staff from sample A with management responsibilities that managers have to perform in their role. The first is teaching and the latter administration.

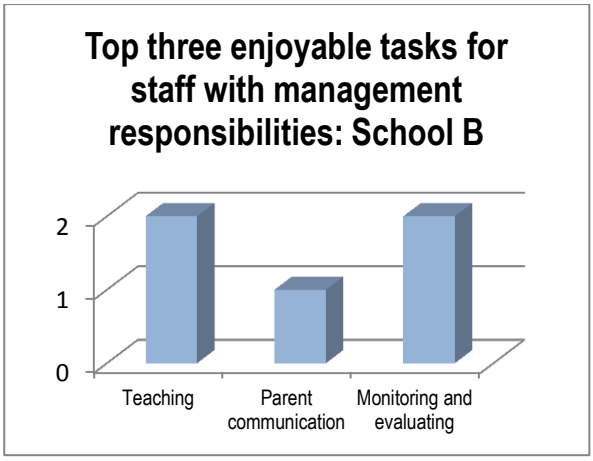


Figure 4.27

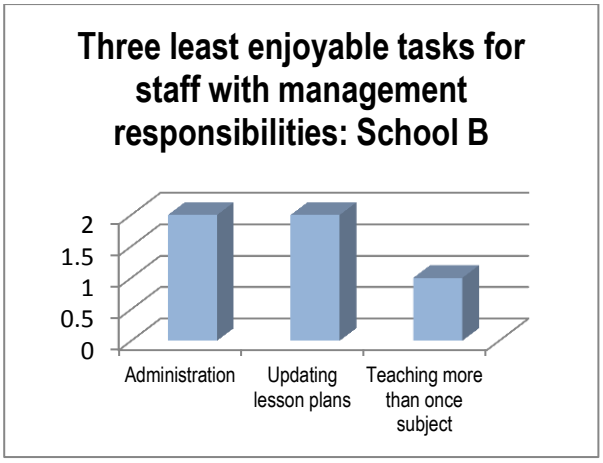


Figure 4.28

Figures 4.27 and 4.28 suggest the most enjoyable task and least enjoyable tasks perceived by staff from sample B with management responsibilities that managers have to perform in their role. The first is teaching and monitoring evaluating and the latter is updating lesson plans and administration.

	School A: Staff without management responsibilities	School B: Staff without management responsibilities	School A: Staff with management responsibilities	School B: Staff with management responsibilities
Teaching	85%	89%	50%	100%
Administration	54%	33%	50%	100%

Table 4F Top and least enjoyable task indicated by participants from both sample schools

The data presented in Figures 4.21 – 4.28 indicates the top and bottom three tasks perceived as the most and least enjoyable tasks of teachers with and without management responsibilities. As indicated in Table 4F, the data suggest teaching was perceived as the most enjoyable task and administration work as the least enjoyable task by both the sample schools. However, only 50% of staff with responsibilities from School A placed teaching as one of the three most enjoyable tasks compared to 100% of participants from School B. There was an interesting resemblance between the responses given by teachers with and without management responsibilities from School B. Administration, updating schemes of work / lesson plans and teaching more than one

subject was indicated as the least enjoyable tasks in both sections. The data from these responses were further explored in the focus group and interview sessions.

4.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPERTISE

The aim of this section was to get an understanding of the professional development opportunities available to staff, if there are support structures in place and their expertise. Participants had to indicate mostly, often, hardly ever or never true on the list provided. Data collected from this section was used to formulate questions for the focus group and interview sessions.

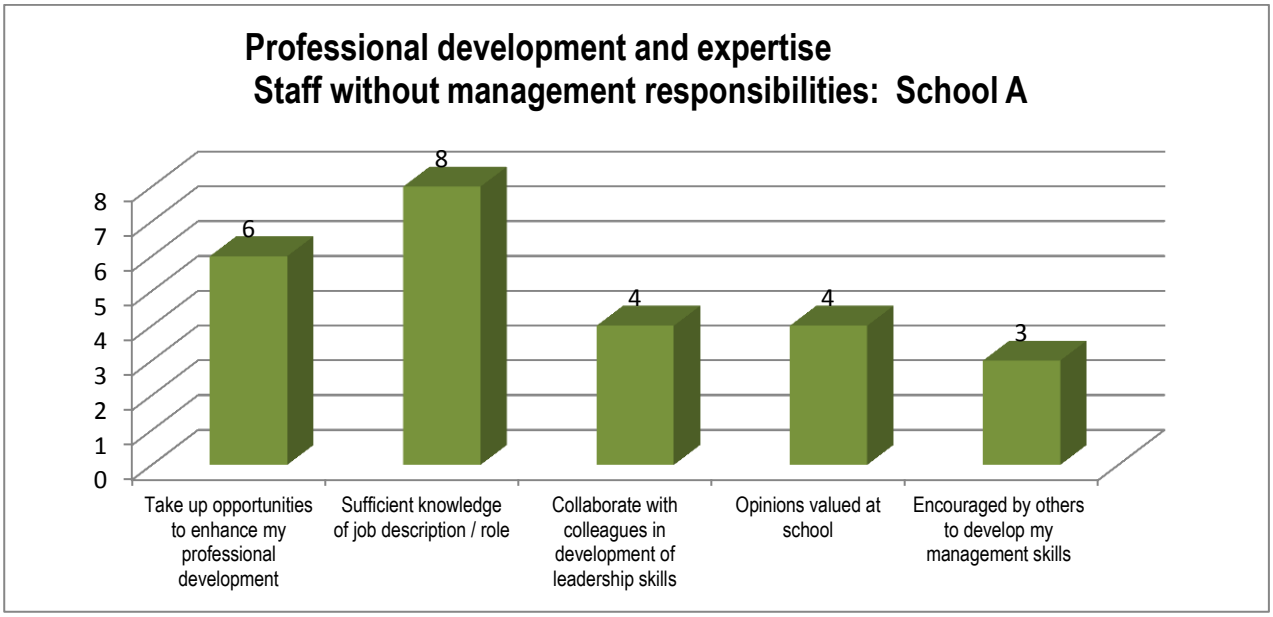


Figure 4.29 Professional development and expertise, staff without management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.29 suggest that staff from sample A without management responsibilities have sufficient knowledge of their professional expertise and job description but feel that they are not encouraged by other to develop their expertise.



Figure 4.30 Professional development and expertise, staff without management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.30 suggest that staff from sample B without management responsibilities have sufficient knowledge of their professional expertise and job description but do not collaborate with colleagues in development of their leadership skills or take up opportunities to develop their skills.

Teachers without management responsibilities	School A	School B
Take up professional development opportunities	46%	33%
Sufficient knowledge	62%	56%
Collaborate re: leadership skills	31%	33%
Encouraged by others	23%	33%

Table 4G Professional expertise and development: Teachers without management responsibility (Comparison)

Table 4G displays the expertise ranked by sample A and B and provided a comparison in percentages of staff without management responsibilities who listed these expertise.



Figure 4.31 Professional development and expertise, staff with management responsibilities: School A

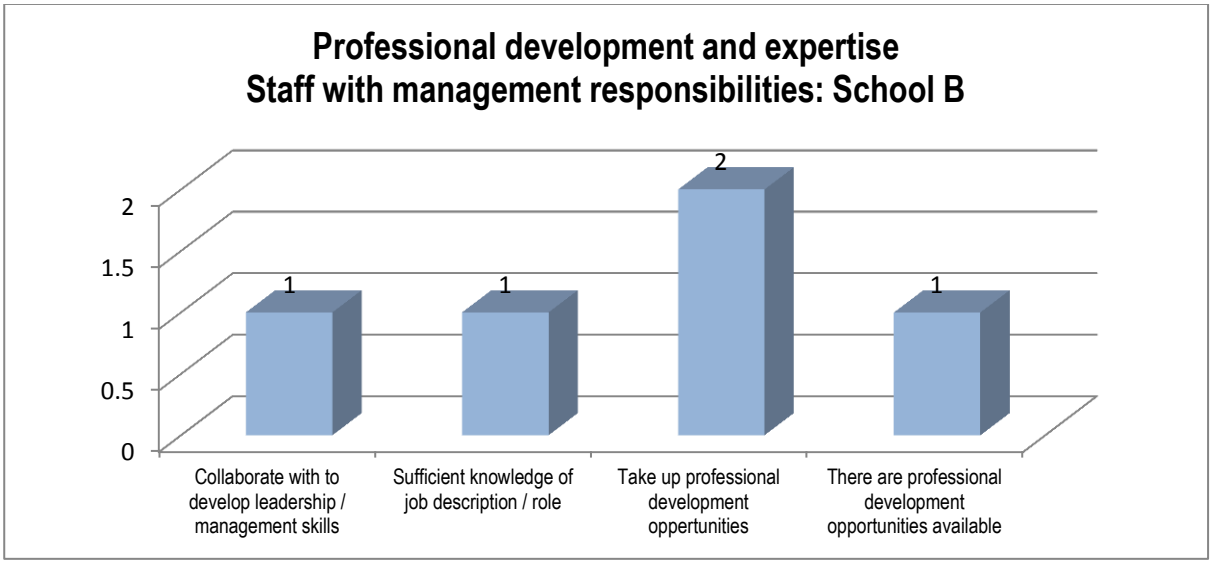


Figure 4.32 Professional development and expertise, staff with management responsibilities: School B

There is a strong resemblance between the responses provided by staff without management responsibilities from School A and School B. The data in Figures 4.29/30 and Table 4G suggests a large percentage of staff have sufficient knowledge of their job descriptions. The responses were respectively 62% from School A compared to, 56% from School B However, there were some interesting differences compared to Data presented in Figures 4.31/32 representing staff with management responsibilities.

80% of participants from School A indicated to have sufficient knowledge of their job compared to 50% from School B. It is alarming that participants from both sample schools indicated they are not often encouraged by other staff. Teachers employed by the GDE are eligible for a 1% annual increase if they comply with the performance standards set out in the IQMS. Two performance standards in IQMS address this issue of support and development of staff. Performance standard 6 refers to human relations and contribution to school development. The educator is expected to engage with all stakeholders in an appropriate interpersonal relationship and to contribute to the development of the school. Performance standard 9 focuses on personnel and is targeted at Post level 2 teachers. Staff is expected to manage and develop personnel in such a way that the vision and mission of the institution to manage and develop personnel in such a way that the vision and mission of the institutional are accomplished.

Only 33% of staff without management responsibilities from School B took up professional development opportunities, compared to 43% of staff in School A. This section was aimed at staff perception of the key characteristics that make for effective management skills. Participants were further required to identify three tasks they perceived to be of importance for middle managers to fulfil in their school. Data for this section is presented in Figures 4.33-36.

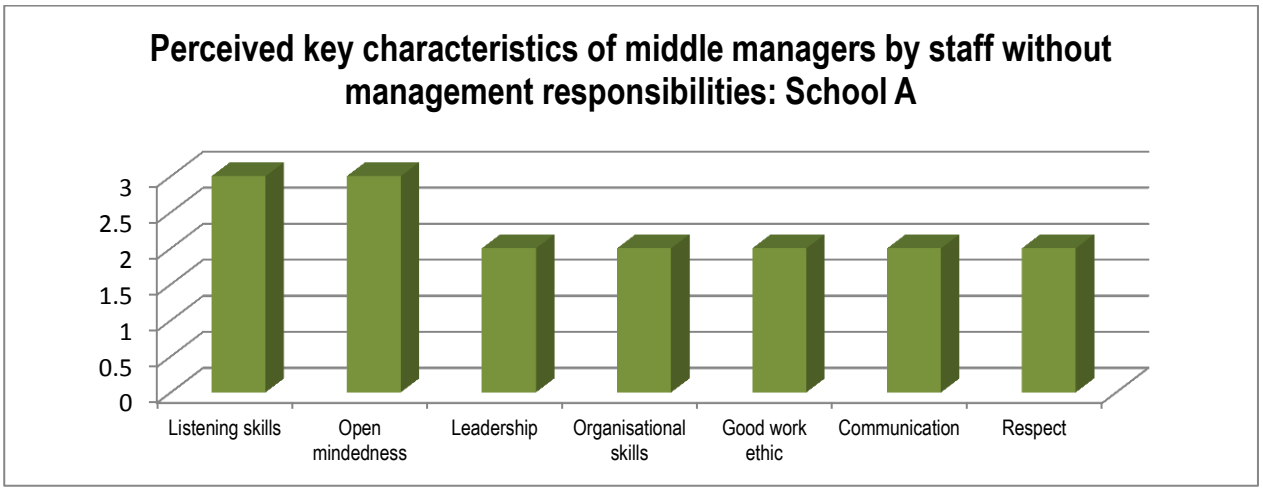


Figure 4.33 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff without management responsibilities: School A

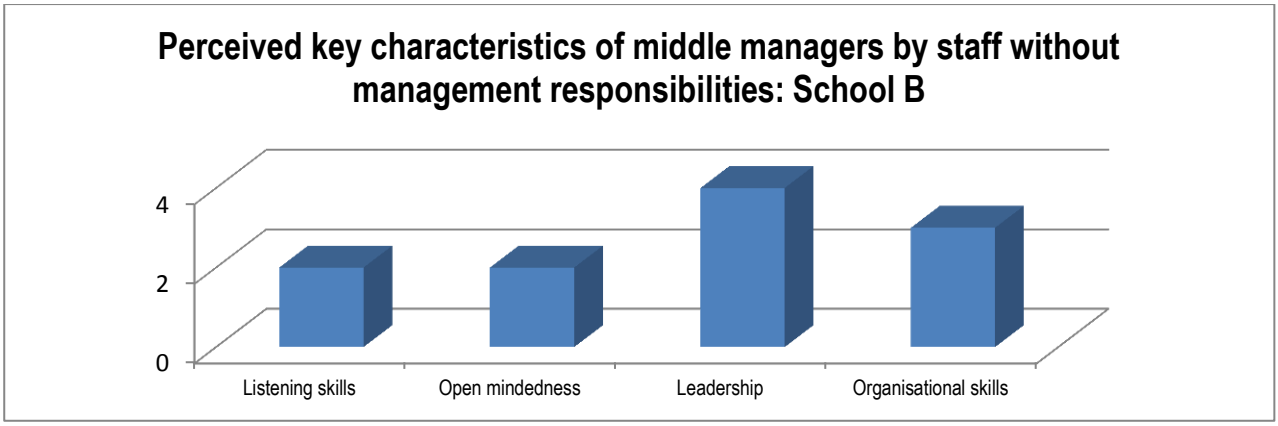


Figure 4.34 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff without management responsibilities: School B

Staff without management responsibilities	School A	School B
Open Mindedness	23%	22%
Organisational skills	15%	33%
Leadership skills	15%	44%
Listening skills	23%	22%

Table 4H Percentage of participants without management responsibilities: Perceived Characteristics for good management skills (Comparison)

Figures 4.33/34 suggest School A perceived a variety of characteristics needed to make for good managements skills. Good listening skills and open mindedness are rated as the most important skills needed for good managements followed by respect, good work ethic, and communication -, organisational – and leadership skills. Four of these skills correlate with the skills indicated as important in School B. Table 4D presents the percentage of staff responses for the correlating skills. Significantly, only 15% of participants from School A without management responsibilities indicated good leadership and organisational skills as two characteristics of an effective manager. Participants from School B indicated both these characteristics as important. The data show 44% from School B listed leadership skills and 33% listed organisational skills as main characteristics.

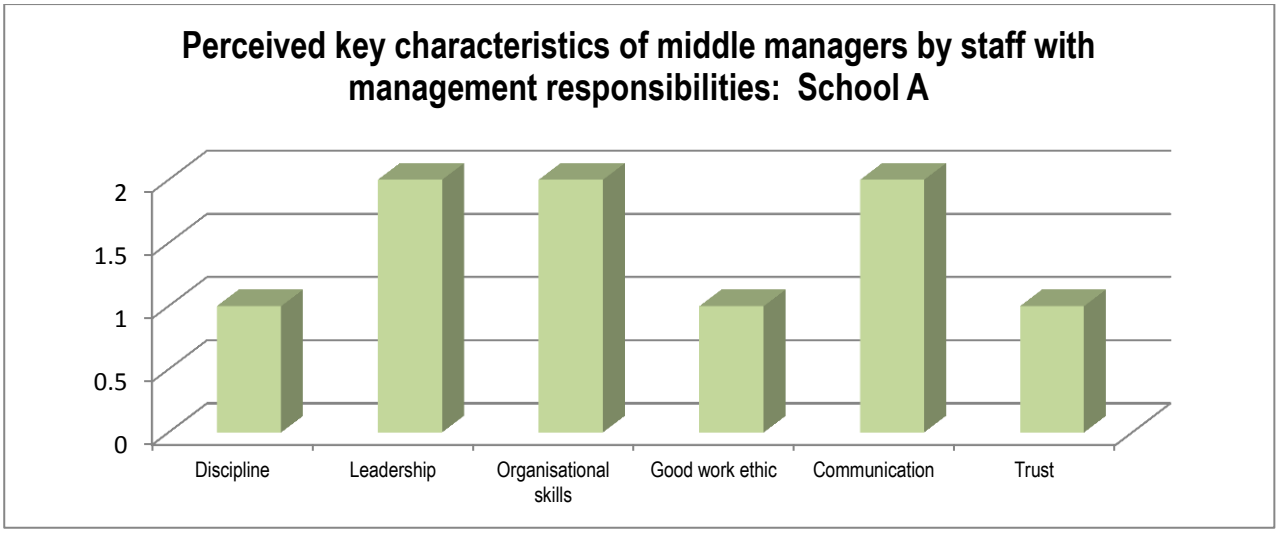


Figure 4.35 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff with management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.35 suggest most staff from sample A with management responsibilities perceived leadership, organisational skills and communication as the key characteristics of middle managers.

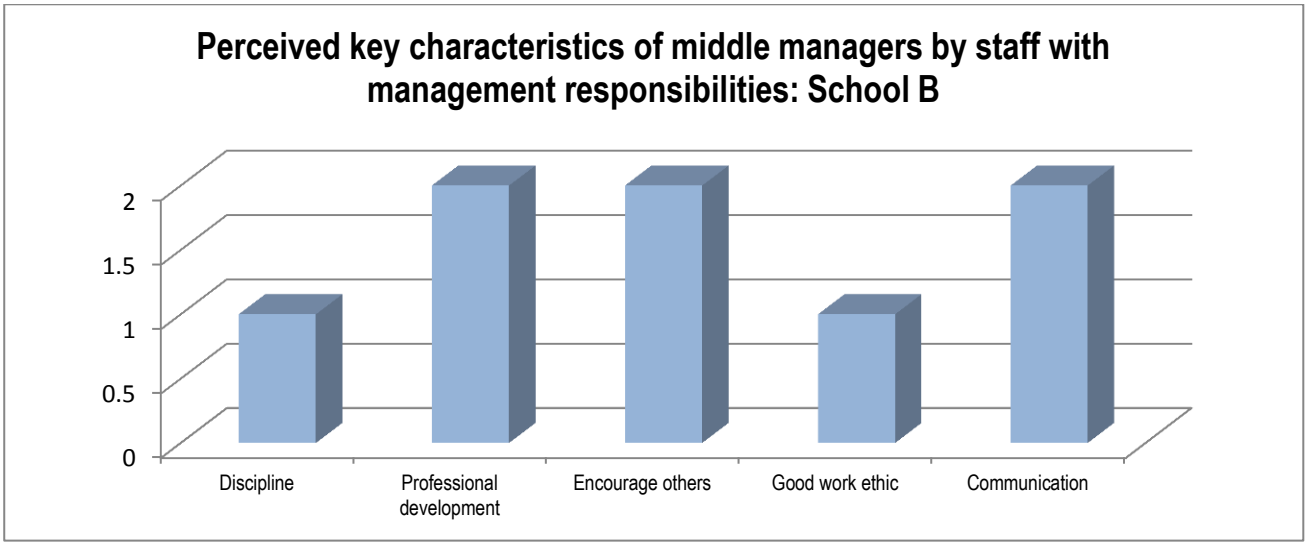


Figure 4.36 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff with management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.36 suggest staff from sample B with management responsibilities perceived professional development, communication and the encouragement of others to form the key characteristics of middle managers.

Significantly, organisational and leadership skills are also listed a key characteristic by staff with management responsibilities in School A. However, both the latter do not appear as key characteristics for staff with management responsibilities in School B. Professional development, encouraging others and good communication skills are top of the perceived characteristics. This would appear to indicate middle managers from the two sample schools deals with different situations and staff might perceived the need of different characteristics.

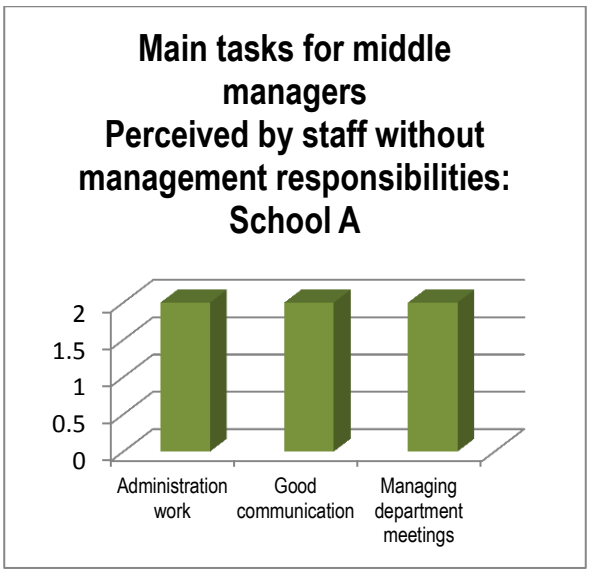


Figure 4.37

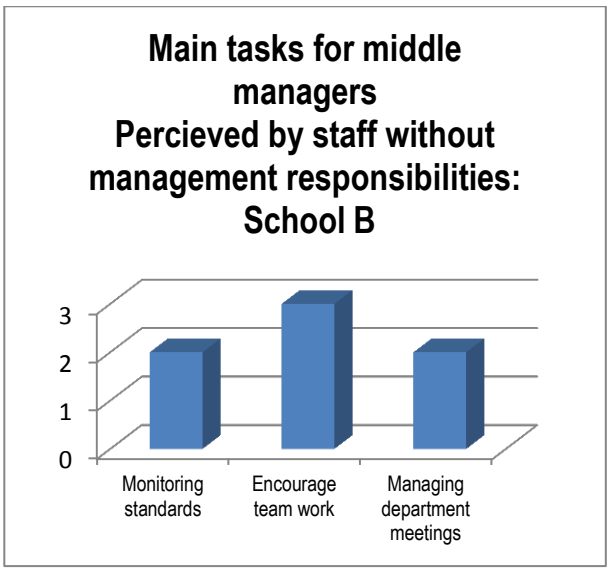


Figure 4.38

Figures 4.37 and 4.38 suggest respectively the perception of staff without management responsibilities from sample A and B. The first perceived the key characteristics to be administrational skills, good communication skills and managing the department. The latter monitoring, managing the department and encouragement of the team as key characteristics.

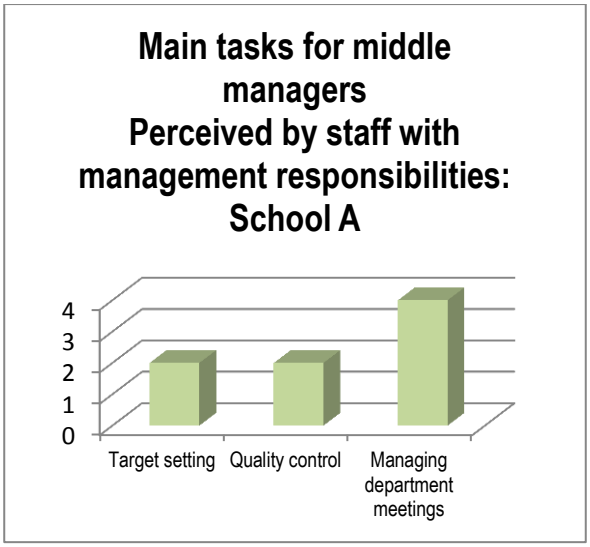


Figure 4.39

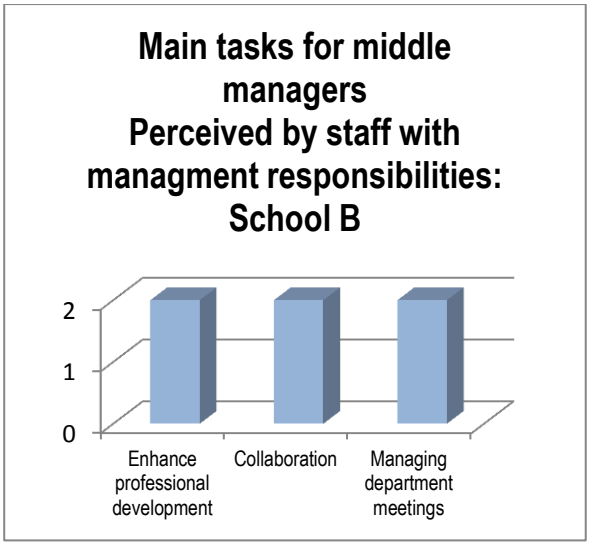


Figure 4.40

The only coherent task being perceived by all participants as a main task for middle managers is managing the department. All other tasks vary.

The aim of the last section of the questionnaire was to determine what staff perceived as barriers that can prevent middle managers from fulfilling their role. The response is presented in Figures 4.41 – 44.

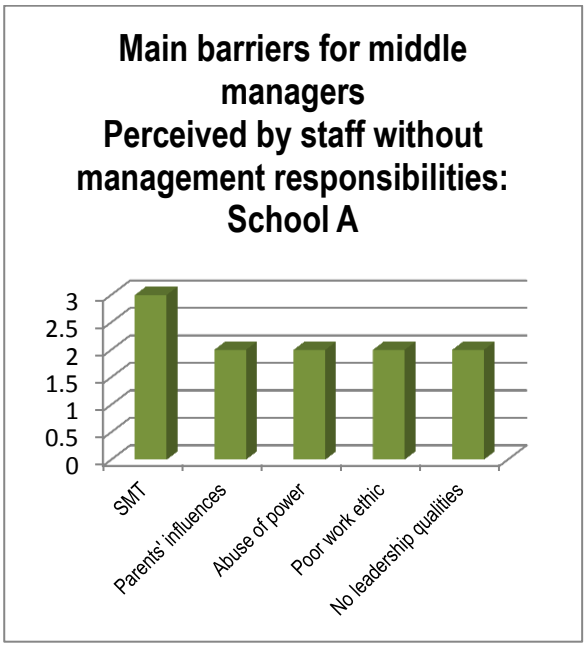


Figure 4.45

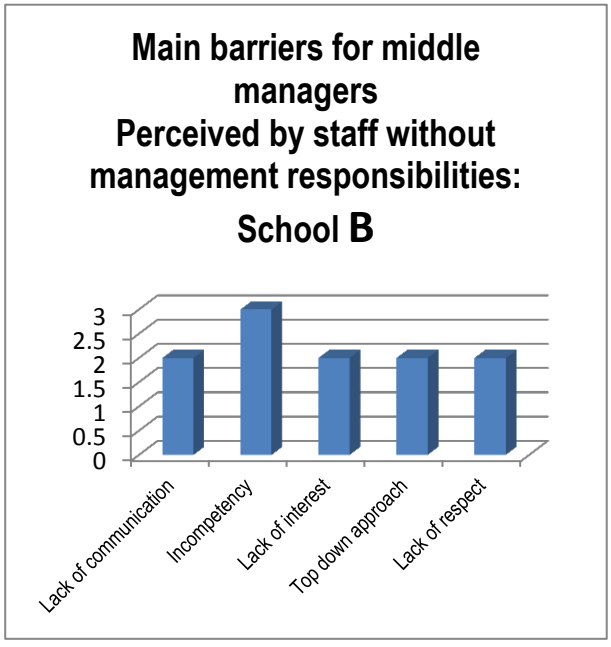


Figure 4.46

Figures 4.45 and 4.46 presents the main barriers perceived by staff without management responsibilities, sample A identifies SMT and sample B, incompetency.

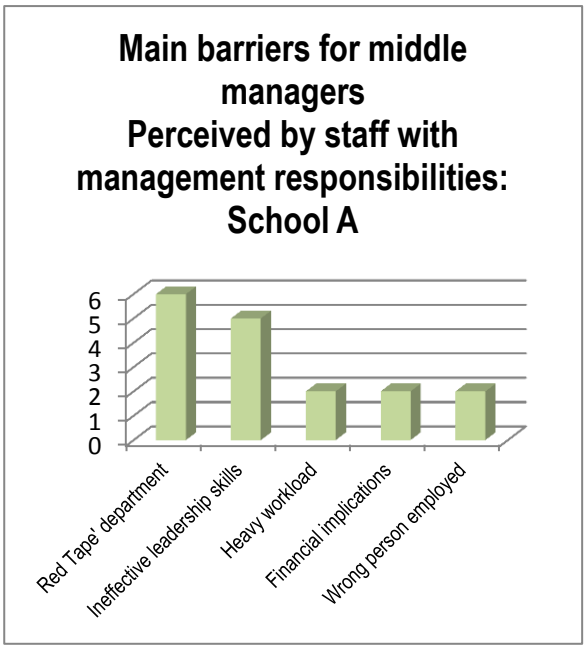


Figure 4.47

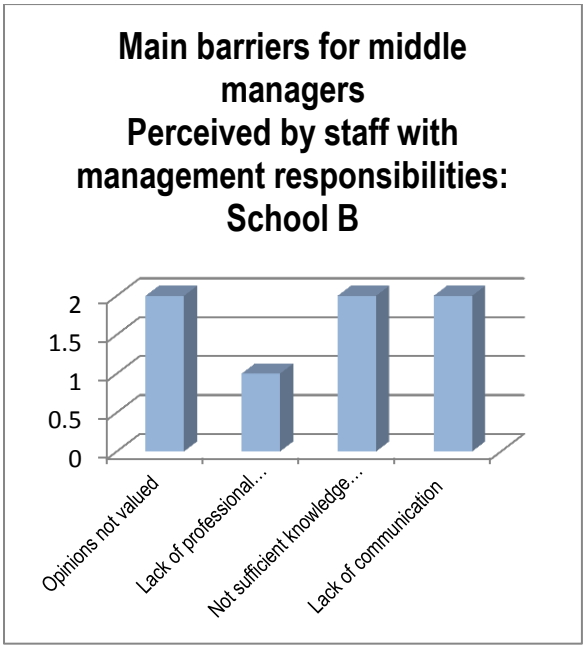


Figure 4.48

Figures 4.47 and 4.48 presents the main barriers perceived by staff with management responsibilities, sample A identified 'Red tape department' and sample B, opinions not valued, lack of knowledge and lack of communication.

The data presented in Figures 4.45 -48 suggest a wide spectrum of barriers. The barriers vary from misuse of power to lack of communication and respect. To conclude the questionnaire participants could indicate any other significance or relevant information regarding middle management at their schools. The abuse of power and lack of skills or knowledge for the role was mentioned be both sample schools.

4.4 FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEW DATA PRESENTATION

Focus group participants	School A	School B
Teacher	4	5
Teacher with management role	2	0
HOD	2	2
Deputy Principal	1	1

Table 4I: Focus group participants

Table 4I suggests that school B might have a lack of middle managers, as there were no participants with management responsibilities, other than the HOD's and Deputy Principal.

School A	Staff without management roles	Staff with management roles	SLT
Have knowledge of Job description	2	3	1
Limited knowledge of Job description	2	1	
No knowledge of Job description			

Table 4J Knowledge of Job descriptions: School A

Table 4J suggests that all participants from School A have some knowledge of what is expected of them in their role as teacher or manager.

School B	Staff without management roles	Staff with management roles	SLT
Have knowledge of Job description	1		
Limited knowledge of Job description	2	1	1
No knowledge of Job description	2	1	

Table 4K Knowledge of Job descriptions: School B

Table 4K suggests that not all participants from School B have knowledge of their job description. This is due to the absence of middle managers in school B.

	Do not know what role middle managers fulfil with their school	Are familiar with the role of middle managers in their school	Middle managers reduces the workload for SLT
School A	3	6	4
School B	5	3	2

Table 4L Staff perception on the role and effectiveness of middle management in their school

Table 4 L suggests that school A's participants are more familiar with the term middle management and perceive middle managers as an important part of the management structure. School A's participants valued middle managers and believed they can reduce the workload of the SLT. School B's participants however, revealed some uncertainty regarding the role of middle management in their school.

Interview	School A	School B
Role of middle managers in School	On all levels, from learners to staff	Only HOD's, no other middle managers

Regular meetings help between staff and SMT	There are subject and department meetings	HOD's ore overloaded with work and do not often have time to meet.
Support systems for SMT	Support from school and training sessions available	There should be more support offered from the DBE
Effectiveness of SMT	Reduces workload and add to the functioning of the school.	Lack of middle managers

Table 4M Summary of main interview questions

Table 4M correlates with the data in table 4L, indicating the lack of middle managers in school B. Due to the additional financial income of fee paying learners and fundraising events, School A's SGB can afford to employ additional staff. This allows the school to create middle management post for teachers. Due to the geographic location of school B, there are less fee paying learners, if any. The implication of this is that the HOD's of school B are experiencing great pressure and have a high workload. The HOD's are also fulfilling the role of subject heads in school B.

4.5 SUMMARY

Overall, a summary of data at two secondary public schools in Gauteng was presented in this chapter. The data was collected using mixed methods that included questionnaires, focus group sessions and interviews. Information gathered from the questionnaires was used to draw up questions for the latter. Throughout the data analysis, there were several similarities and differences regarding the responses from the two schools. From the data it appeared that several staff were not familiar with the term middle management and this made it difficult for them to project their view on the role and effectiveness of middle management in schools. The data collected from School A, correlates with the literature regarding the importance of distributed leadership, as the data revealed that staff with management responsibilities from this school experienced a reduced work load. Data and information collected during the research suggested the variables from each school have an influence on middle management for each school.

Due to the small sample of data being used within this research report, no assumptions can be made from the data collected. Information obtained may provide some indication of the perception of the role of middle managers in the sample schools used for this research.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the data obtained using a mixed method approach, this included the use of a questionnaire, focus group and interview sessions. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the findings collected from the literature and the data to determine what staff perception on the role of middle management is in the two sample schools.

5.2 SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine staff perception on the role of middle management in secondary public schools in Gauteng. To meet this main objective, it was fundamental to determine what the definition for middle management. By selecting key words related to leadership and management in school, I was able to narrow my literature search. Both the collection of the qualitative and quantitative date was limited to only two schools. The empirical research included participants from both schools with or without management or leadership responsibilities. The principals were excluded from the empirical research. The following sections provide a brief outline of what was presented in each chapter:

Chapter one provided an outline of this study, stating the research problem, some key terms used and the research questions. Chapter two provided a brief summary of the literature review which focused on leadership and management in schools. In this chapter it was discovered that leadership and management are often used collaboratively in leadership structures in schools. Furthermore, it was discovered that there were no single description to define the term middle management. Chapter three described the research methodology and research instruments used for this study. It provided a description of the sample and population selected for the fieldwork. The sample size was relatively small, as only two secondary public schools in Gauteng were used. The fourth chapter presented the data collected from the questionnaires and the empirical data collected from the interviews and focus group sessions. Having provided

a brief outline of the first four chapters, the following section will deal with the main findings from this study.

5.3 FINDINGS

The findings presented in this section will be divided in three sections, the literature review, questionnaires and the findings from the empirical data collected from the focus group and interview sessions based on the research questions. The data was presented in tables and graphs in chapter four of this study.

5.3.1 Conceptual ideas

Amongst other finding, some of the key findings revealed from the selected literature were based on different leadership styles used in today's schools, the role of middle management, school effectiveness and the contextual factors that influenced leadership and management structures in school.

5.3.2 Leadership

Findings from the literature indicated that there are several definitions to describe the term leadership. The findings also indicated that there are several different theories based on leadership and the importance of leadership in effective schools. These theories included two of the key theories used in the paper, distributed and instructional leadership (Bush, 2003). The findings from literature based on distributed leadership suggested that it is a process of delegation and included shared leadership (Leithwood et al., 2006). The findings for instructional leadership revealed it was a process by which success was determined by the students outcome or results. The literature also revealed how complex the field of leadership was and that the terms leadership, management and headship were often used in conjunction with each other (Christie, 2001). It was interesting how the findings from the literature enforced the importance of an effective leadership structure, this finding correlated with the findings of literature based on school effectiveness (Bush and Jackson, 2002).

5.3.3 Middle management

The findings from the literature suggest that must be a clear link between management and leadership for their role to be effective. The literature also provides some understanding regarding the difference between leadership and management. The finding is that management is a process by which certain standards and goals are maintained (Bush and Jackson, 2002). It was interesting how some of the findings from the literature identified the gaps in the training and professional development opportunities for aspiring middle managers or middle management. It is important to point out the findings from the literature that in South African schools middle management is seen as an important dimension in the schools' leadership structures, as they help to sustain effective teaching and learning within the school (Bush and Jackson, 2002).

5.3.4 School Effectiveness

The literature dealing with school effectiveness revealed the importance of effective leadership practices to ensure effective schools. The literature revealed the importance of effective leadership correlated such as collaborative goal-setting, continuous monitoring and effective use of resources to ensure effective schools (Lezotte, 1991). Findings from the literature revealed that there might be only a few, if any effective schools in South Africa (Christie, 2001). These finding provokes questioning the effectiveness of our leadership structures used in South Africa.

5.3.5 Findings from the empirical investigations

The findings from the empirical research were drawn from the qualitative data collected during the focus groups and interview sessions. This section presents the findings of the empirical investigations, using focus group and interview approaches. In both the sample schools there were a once off focus group session of approximately an hour and a once off interview of ten minutes. The transcriptions for the conversations are presented in Annexures C and D.

Participants from both the sample schools were asked to provide their background information. They were asked to indicate their race, age, gender, qualifications and their current role at the school. This provided me with a profile of the staff. Findings indicated that School A had more staff employed as School B as both schools returned between 41% and 44% of the questionnaires. School A returned twenty three questionnaires

and School B returned ten. It has been found that only a small percentage (18%) of teachers with leadership or management responsibilities from School B completed the questionnaire. These findings support the findings from the focus group sessions which will be discussed in next section, indicating there is a shortage of management and leadership staff in School B. The findings further indicated participants from School A were mainly white and all participants from School B were black, in both the schools the majority of the staff were under 45 years of age. There are no staff with management responsibilities with less than five years of experience in School A which is not the case in School B. It is interesting how the findings reveal a strong resemblance between the actual top tasks performed by all participants. Teaching was listed at the top task in both the schools, communicating with outside agencies were also listed as one of the five top tasks performed by teachers with management responsibilities. Interviewing and appointment of staff were identified by both the schools as one of the bottom five tasks performed in their role. Another interesting finding was the correlation between the most and least enjoyable tasks performed by all participants from both the schools. The first was teaching and the latter administrational duties. The findings regarding professional development and expertise contradicted with some of the findings of the focus group session. The findings of the questionnaire revealed most participants were well informed regarding their job description, saying this, the empirical evidence from the focus group session revealed that in some cases only the HOD and deputy principal have job descriptions.

There were significant differences from the findings based on the data related to staff perceptions on the role of middle management. The questionnaire required participants to list key characteristics that they perceived are needed in a middle manager. The findings revealed that participants from both schools without management responsibilities listed listening skills, organisational skills and open mindedness as key characteristics. The only correlating characteristic perceived by Staff with management responsivities were communication and good work ethic, this correlates with the findings from the literature regarding good leadership skills. The findings around the perceived role of middle management had very little common. Other than managing the departments, they all other perceived roles were different. This indicated that staff had no common perception on what the role of middle management entitles. This perception was further flagged as there were also no correlations between the perceived barriers

that middle managers had to deal with. The following section deals with the empirical data.

5.3.6 Focus group sessions

The responses to the questionnaires were necessary for me to structure the questions used for guiding the focus group sessions. Although the sample population were from different geographical locations, I was able to draw interesting findings based on comparisons and differences regarding middle management in both the schools. The findings drawn from the two sessions were that both schools had middle managers as part of their leadership structures. However, middle managers at School B were limited to HOD's and subject heads. School A had an extended list of staff with management responsibilities; this included for example curriculum and grade co-ordinators. There was a distinct difference in staff perception on the role of middle management between the two schools. The findings indicated middle managers in School B had a large number of staff to manage and their roles included an excessive amount of activities. This response supported the data collected in the questionnaires where staff with management responsibilities where asked to list their five top tasks they performed in their role. The findings were that there were a number of tasks they had to fulfil and none were rated higher than the other. The findings also revealed there are a number of tasks middle management deals with to ensure effective teaching and learning within the school. This finding correlates with the finding from the literature.

Another empirical finding was the lack of job descriptions for middle managers in both the schools. The findings indicated that it was mainly the HOD's and deputy principals that had job descriptions. This finding contradicts to the findings of the questionnaire which indicated that most staff are familiar with their job description. The findings further indicated that there were several contextual factors that staff perceived to affect the role of middle managers in both schools. There were strong correlations between the findings of the questionnaires revealing the perceived barriers middle managers needed to deal with and the findings of the focus group sessions where the data revealed they actual barriers from each school. However, as noted above, the findings revealed a strong difference in the perceived and actual challenges or barriers between the two schools. In conclusion to the findings revealed from the empirical data collected from the focus groups, it appears that the tasks and barriers related to middle management

perceived by School A is rather administrational or organisation compared to School B where the tasks and barriers are more people orientated. In both schools the findings revealed that there is a lack of training opportunities for aspiring middle managers or aspiring head teachers within the school or other institutions, including the GDE. Although there are some training opportunities from a selection of unions and the GDE, the sessions are too expensive or held at the wrong time. This finding correlates with the findings of the questionnaire, identifying a gap in professional development due to lack of time and finance being factors. The next section is also based on the empirical data collection using a once off semi structured interview with one SMT member of each school.

5.3.7 Semi structured interviews

The findings from the questionnaire and the focus group sessions revealed similarities and differences between the perception of the role of middle management and the actual role of middle management in secondary schools. It was important for this study to obtain the perception of an SMT member regarding the role of middle management as an SMT member would have either been at a middle management level or worked closely with middle management. The data from both schools revealed that middle managers are needed in schools, as they perform tasks that is especially linked to the improvement of teaching and learning, these tasks include curriculum managements, departmental management, maintaining moderation to ensure high standards and working closely with the SMT. An interesting finding was that in School A they had several middle managers who performed the same tasks as one middle manager in School B. The findings further revealed that middle managers in School A are often involved in whole school decision-making processes, where as in School B it would be mainly the HOD’s and deputy principals.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section deals with the recommendations made regarding the role of middle management in public secondary schools in Gauteng.

5.4.1 First recommendation

The analysis of quantitative and empirical data revealed several participants would favour additional responsibilities; however, the research data revealed there is a lack of professional development opportunities. Preparation for leadership is necessary due to the expansion of their roles and the increased complexity of school context (Bush, 2011). The data further revealed leadership and management are facing new challenges that will require different skills and qualities for their future roles to improve the teaching and learning in school (Christie, 2001). Most middle managers or aspiring middle managers had no or very little opportunities for training to support the demands and challenges of their role. It is therefore recommended that the schools, GDE and unions review the content, cost and timeframe of the training programmes for professional development, to provide effective training opportunities for middle managers. It is also recommended that the location of these sessions as well as a possibility of subsidies is reviewed. It is furthermore recommended that these parties' conceders the training needs suggested by middle management, to ensure their provisional development needs are being met.

5.4.2 Second recommendation

The second recommendation deals with schools in general. From the findings collected from the quantitative and qualitative research, it is recommended that schools provide middle managers with sufficient job descriptions to ensure that all middle managers are well informed regarding the expectations of their role. It is also recommended that schools set up a policy guiding the process of employing middle managers as the findings from the focus group sessions revealed that often staff are employed based on the number of years they have been at the school, rather than their experience of skills.

5.4.3 Third recommendation

From the findings drawn from the empirical data, it revealed that not all parties included in the school community know what the schools mission and visions are. It was further revealed that middle management were often not part of the process in setting or reviewing the mission and vision of the school. It is therefore recommended that schools' leadership included all stakeholders in the process of setting goals to meet the

vision. It is further recommended that the SMT empower middle management rather than just delegating administrational duties to them.

5.5 REFLECTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted over a short period of time and included a relatively small sample and population size. Given the small sample used in this study it provided limited data and I am not in a position to draw an understanding of the term middle managers, their role and their effectiveness in South African schools. The perception of the role of middle managers was different. School A had a lack of staff employed as middle managers, which caused HOD's and deputy principals to be overloaded with tasks, compared to school A which had several middle managers. The latter was possible due to funding available to employ additional staff members. In both schools staff identified that there is a need for middle management training programmes. I found it interesting that in both the schools staff identified that some middle managers lack professional skills to fulfil their role and they have been appointed purely on the time they have been employed at the school.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate what the perception of staff was on the role and effectiveness of middle managers in two secondary public schools in Gauteng. The chapter included an outline of each chapter providing some indication of the structure of this report. By using a mixed method approach I was able to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The empirical data included data collected from focus group and semi structured interview sessions. A small sample was used for this study and therefor it is not possible to make a holistic assumption regarding the perception of middle management in all secondary schools. Findings drawn from the data and recommendations were included in this chapter.

The presentation and analysis of the data presented in chapter four was used to draw comparisons between the two sample schools and between teachers within the same schools. The objectives for this study have been met, as the findings revealed the

perceptions of staff on the role of middle management in schools. As noted in the previous section, schools do need to draw up policies to ensure the effectiveness of middle management systems in schools. According to the literature, middle management can add to the effectiveness of a school and its teaching and learning culture when used sufficiently (Bush, 2002). This research has shown that there are mixed opinions on what the actual and perceived role and effectiveness of middle managers in the two sample schools are. In both the schools the majority of participants agreed that middle management is important, however, there are often barriers preventing them from being effective. Research has showed that middle managers including heads of departments can form a key area in improving the quality of a schools' teaching and learning culture (Bush, 2003).

For middle managers to form a key part of the schools structural system, staff must have knowledge of their roles and responsibilities. The fieldwork conducted revealed that some staff did not have sufficient knowledge of their roles and responsibilities and therefor might not have fulfil their role effectively. The fieldwork also indicated that due to financial strains, some school might not have middle managers, as most schools with these roles fund the staff from addition fees and fundraising. For middle managers to form an effective part of a school's teaching and learning culture, they do need to overcome barriers such as time limitations, lack of working space and even the need to support underachieving teachers (Bush, 2003). These barriers were flagged in the data collected, in particular in School B. The lack of finance prevents the school to employ more staff and leads to a work overload. This appeared to be burden to the HOD's of sample B. The role and support of middle managers in South African schools is essential, as some schools have more than 50 learners in a class. It can be of value to schools for this matter to be investigated by the DBE.

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1A Table of acronyms

Figure 2.1 Key concepts

Figure 2.2 Hierarchical Organisational structure (Instructional Leadership)

Figure 2.3 Distributed Leadership

Figure: 2.4 Distribution of leadership (MacBeath et al., 2004)

Figure 2.5 POMC approach for management activities (Cole, 1995)

Figure 4.1 Percentage of questionnaires returned by sample schools

Figure 4.2 School A: Staff without management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.3 School B: Staff without management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.4 School A: Staff with management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.5 School B: Staff with management responsibilities (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.6 Profile comparison of School A and School B (Age, gender and race)

Figure 4.7 School A: Staff without management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.8 School A: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.9 School B: Staff without management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.10 School B: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.11 Comparison: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.12 Comparison: Staff with management responsibilities (Role, experience and qualifications)

Figure 4.13 Top five tasks fulfilled by teachers without management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.14 Top five tasks fulfilled by teachers without management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.15 Top five tasks fulfilled by teachers with management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.16 Top five tasks for teachers with management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.17 Bottom five tasks performed by staff without management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.18 Bottom five tasks performed by staff without management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.19 Bottom five tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.20 Bottom five tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.21 Top three enjoyable tasks for staff without management roles: School A

Figure 4.22 Three least enjoyable tasks for staff without management roles: School A

Figure 4.23 Top three enjoyable tasks for staff without management roles: School B

Figure 4.24 Three least enjoyable tasks for staff without management roles: School B

Figure 4.25 Top three enjoyable tasks for staff with management roles: School A

Figure 4.26 Three least enjoyable tasks for staff with management roles: School A

Figure 4.27 Top three enjoyable tasks for staff with management roles: School B

Figure 4.28 Three least enjoyable tasks for staff with management roles: School B

Figure 4.29 Professional development and expertise, staff without management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.30 Professional development and expertise, staff without management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.31 Professional development and expertise, staff with management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.32 Professional development and expertise, staff with management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.33 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff without management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.34 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff without management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.35 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff with management responsibilities: School A

Figure 4.36 Perceived key characteristics of middle managers by staff with management responsibilities: School B

Figure 4.37 Main tasks for middle managers perceived by staff without management roles: School A

Figure 4.38 Main tasks for middle managers perceived by staff without management roles: School B

Figure 4.39 Main tasks for middle managers perceived by staff with management roles: School A

Figure 4.40 Main tasks for middle managers perceived by staff with management roles: School B

Figure 4.45 Main barriers for middle managers perceived by staff without management roles: School A

Figure 4.46 Main barriers for middle managers perceived by staff without management roles: School B

Figure 4.47 Main barriers for middle managers perceived by staff with management roles: School A

Figure 4.48 Main barriers for middle managers perceived by staff with management roles: School B

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4A Percentage of questionnaires returned by sample schools

Table 4B Profile comparison between School A and School B

Table 4C Percentage of participants indicating daily tasks

Table 4D Bottom two correlating task performed by teachers without management responsibilities between School A and School B

Table 4E Bottom two correlating tasks performed by staff with management responsibilities between School A and School B

Table 4F Most and least enjoyable task indicated by participants from both sample schools

Table 4G Professional expertise and development: Teachers without management responsibility (Comparison)

Table 4H Percentage of participants without management responsibilities: Perceived Characteristics for good management skills (Comparison)

Table 4I Focus group participants

Table 4J Knowledge of Job descriptions: School A

Table 4K Knowledge of Job descriptions: School B

Table 4L Staff perception on the role and effectiveness of middle management in their school

Table 4M Summary of main interview questions

APPENDIX A

Transcribed information:

School A: Inner City School

Participant	Role	Age	Gender
1	HOD	Over 45 years	Female
2	Deputy Principal	Over 45 years	Male
3	HOD	Over 30 years	Male
4	Newly Qualified Teacher	Between 30 and 45 years	Female
5	TIC Culture	Over 45 years	Male
6	Teacher	Under 30 years	Female
7	TIC staff development	Over 45 year	Female
8	Teacher	Under 30 years	Female
9	Ex HOD	Over 45 years	Female

School A

Participant	Questions and Reponses
Researcher	My research is based on the perception of staff on the role of middle management in schools. I have chosen your school as it is a well-functioning school and I am aware that middle management form part of your leadership structure.
1	Is it specifically related to middle management in education? Yes, specifically to education, where middle managers fit in to the schools' leadership structure and what type of roles they fulfil in your school. Also to know if and what type professional development opportunities available for staff.
Researcher	What do you see the profile of a middle manager to look like or who would you consider to be middle managers? Your perception of the profile of a middle manager might be influenced by your current role,

	or a previous institution that you worked at.
2	Not all participants in the group are middle managers; however, most participants have some kind of a responsibility, some are aspiring middle managers and other are part of the SMT team.
3	In School A the profile of a middle manager was traditionally seen as an HOD. In their own school middle management does not only include HOD's but other staff with responsibilities such as subject heads. The perception out in the community can be that middle management only includes HOD's.
2	Middle management also includes staff in charge of different activities like the head of sport and culture.
1	Also includes grade heads and house tutors.
Researcher	Is there anyone here that is not in a management position but do aspire to fulfil the role of a middle manager in the future?
4	Not in middle management position but definitely want to be in the role and gain the experience of middle management.
5	Started my teaching career very late in my life, specialised in the field of culture, but don't see himself as a middle manager.
Researcher	Based on your response, do you believe there should be a specific course of qualification for staff to complete or certain experience they must gain before one can become middle managers?
5	Experience it definitely needed and qualification can add to the effectiveness of a middle manager.
6	To be able to manage people you definite need experience, especially in a school as Sample A.
3	Unfortunately one cannot deny the fact that in the past several staff got promoted to a higher position such as an HOD, purely for the number of years that they have been at the school. This meant that some staff was not skilled to fulfil their job. There should be some kind of a developmental program in place that people should complete before being promoted to a higher position. You should be promoted because of your skills and not your age.
2	There are not enough opportunities at Sample A to assist staff for the

	preparation for management and leadership positions. There are conferences offered by unions such as NAPTOSA for leadership, and it should be the responsibility of the deputies and principal to encourage staff to attend these conferences. This will enable staff to get a feel for what the roles of leadership and management entitles. Also, I do not believe that as a school we do enough to prepare staff when they have to go for interviews for management or leadership positions. Staff often lacks the knowledge and skills needed for management and can cause them to fail the interview. I am aware there are neighbouring schools that have compulsory profession development sessions every fortnight. However, our school do not have those opportunities.
Researcher	Following the information and feedback you have provided, what type of professional development programs can be implemented by the GDE or the Unions to support staff or train them for management and leadership positions?
3	There are coursed available, however, it is a financial constrained for the school and the staff. The coursed that are worthwhile are very expensive. If there were a possibility of more unions or the government to subsidise some of the training it will be more feasible.
Researcher	What coursed is currently available to middle managers that do not have much financial implications and when these are coursed offered.
2	Some Unions do have courses, but they are not always target for aspiring middle managers. Perhaps the union should allow their members to suggest topics for the courses. They do provide you with a certificate when you complete the course. There are some subsidies available for attending these courses. The problem is the time constrained. Most staff are overworked, other than their teaching and learning responsibilities they have extracurricular and extra murals to take part in. Sample A is an active school, teachers do not leave for home at 2pm. They attend afterschool activities till late in the afternoon. Often they have school activities they have to attend over weekends. This is problematic as most of the courses are offered on

	weekdays between 2pm and 5pm or on Saturday mornings when sports activities are taking place.
3	We often consider the free courses to be inferior to HOD's or middle managers and not worth attending. I agree, that time and finance is both factors that prevent staff from attending professional development courses.
7	The school's budget for staff development is relatively small. This is a new budget that has been growing over the past five years. To allocate money to staff per professional development course is extremely difficult, as some courses are out of town and requires staff to stay over. This can have a great effect on the budget. I believe that in the business sector it is approximately 6% that are played out to staff in salaries should go to professional development. Schools cannot afford this, unless the GDE provides subsidies for professional development, there will be financial constraints. The other issue other than time and finance is the loss of teaching time. While staff is out on the course, their lessons must be substituted by other staff who might not be familiar with the lesson or subject content.
6	Unable to have attended any of the programmes or courses, as they seem to be at the time where there is a lot of constrains on teaching and learning. I do not have a choice to attend; I have to be at school.
8	Do attend Union courses; however, none of the courses were dealing with aspiring middle management or leadership. The courses that are available will require me to take more than a day of school, and that is just not possible due to the time constrain to complete the curriculum.
1	Several courses that are subject related, however, most of them also cost a lot of money.
2	Money is not the only constrained. Every school has a different set of policies and principals. I do not know if middle management in our school, that is a public school, is treated in a similar way as our neighbouring private schools. It is specific to a school. The only way you are going to penetrate to middle management is if you show the acumen for management. It is something that must grow on site. You

	cannot just adapt the system from an outside source. The personalities of middle managers also play a huge role in the development of the management system. We as a school grow our own middle management.
2	As a school we have tried over the past two years to implement a mentoring programme for middle managers. We hope that this programme will supply middle managers with personal advice. We did find that the mentees do not confine in the mentors for advice. It might be that mentees might think that mentors might be threatened to take their place.
3	I think the aspirations of being an effective manager is born out of professionalism as a teacher and as a person. You must be professional to make fit for a manager or leader. If you have been in a position for a number of years and showed that you have the potential to fulfil the role of management it is easier to be appointed. If you have not had the opportunities it makes it much more complicated for an individual to make it to a management position.
6	There are a lot of people in management that do not display the qualities needed for management; however, they are in the roles.
3	Yes, I agree, there are several people who got promoted in the past based on the number of years they have severed at the school.
6	Still do not know what got these people hired to fulfil the role in the first instance. It happens so often in schools that people are promoted because they have been befriended with SMT. There should be a set guideline for management and the promotion of management in schools. The GDE only recognises HOD's as part of the middle management system. All other middle managers are appointed by the SGB. That is why the GDE do not care about who or how people were appointed for those roles. This could also be the reason why the GDE do not fund middle management courses.
2	The GDE only recognise an X number of HOD's and Deputy Principals at schools. They only fund for this x number they recognise. Often because you did an activity at high school, you are expected to lead

	the activity at school, even though your skills might be limited. On the long run this can allow you to learn new skills. As a teacher you should know from day one that you will be accountable for a range of areas in the school or in you classroom.
3	Often middle management roles get to you by default because no one else can do it.
Researcher	How familiar are middle managers with their job descriptions.
3	Mostly only HOD's that have a job description.
1	Most middle managers just take over from others.
3	Other than the HOD there are no definite job descriptions for middle management.
8	No job description, was told to do thing how I want, no one will know the difference.
3	There is no hierarchy for middle management in the department. The focus is on HOD's. In private schools there is a deferent approach to middle management.
Researcher	As a school you have confirmed that you do have several middle managers. Do you thing this system is seen as a burden or an advantage in running the school?
3	In the past the principal could run the whole school, however, in today's society you do need substructures.
Researcher	What input do you have in whole school decision making processes and is there a reduction on the timetable.
3	Yes, we have an input but only for the subject you are involved in.
1	HOD's do have a reduce timetable but not necessarily middle management.
9	Even with reduce timetable, if an HOD position is offered to me again, I will not accept it due to the stress involved.
3	The stress of running a department is not only down to the administration and staff management, but dealing with behavioural issues from the learners. Middle management becomes a step between the parents and the learners and the principals.
Researcher	What make participant 3 resigning from her role as an HOD

9	The time constrain, being out of the classroom and unable to teach.
1	Pressure from being an HOD is enormous.
3	You do not get paid for the amount of stress you have to deal with. Where in the private sector is more than just a status issued, you do get paid for the role. There are not many teachers who want to become managers; teachers are in it to teach, not to manage.
6	Being a manager you have control about the quality of work produced. Will rather do things myself than asking others and have to redo it.
Researcher	What other support structures do you have in place?
1	We used to have a top down approach, and now we have started a bottom up mentoring system.
Researcher	Any other information you want to add related to middle management?
3	If you are unprofessional and in a management position you will have difficulties. You must be willing to be accountable and take responsibility when things go wrong. Self-motivation and professionalism is important to drive one into the role of middle management.
1	Schools should be run like a business. There should be training for middle management to succeed. There was the ACE programme a few years back; however, no programmes now that can improve middle management.

APPENDIX B

Transcribed information:

School B: Township School

Participant	Role	Age	Gender
1	HOD	Over 45 years	Female
2	HOD	Over 45 years	Male
3	Deputy Principal	Over 30 years	Male
4	Teacher	Over 30 years	Female
5	Teacher	Over 45 years	Male
6	Teacher	Under 45 years	Male
7	Teacher	Over 30 year	Male
8	Teacher	Under 30 years	Male

School B

Participant	Questions and Reponses
Researcher	My research is based on the perception of staff on the role of middle management in schools. I have chosen your school as it is a well-functioning school and I am aware that middle management form part of your leadership structure.
Researcher	What do you see the profile of a middle manager to look like or who would you consider to be middle managers? Your perception of the profile of a middle manager might be influenced by your current role, or a previous institution that you worked at.
1	Middle managers in our school are mainly the HOD's.
2	Yes, often the subject heads are also included in activities were they might be seen as middle managers.
5	We do not have a lot of middle managers at the school.
3	Teachers do sometimes the work of middle managers.
Researcher	Is there anyone here that is not in a management position but do

	aspire to fulfil the role of a middle manager in the future?
4	Yes, I would want to get a higher position but the posts are very limited.
6	Yes, but I also feel there is not enough opportunities.
8	I have been at the school for a number of years and there has not been a post suited for me.
Researcher	Based on your response, do you believe there should be a specific course of qualification for staff to complete or certain experience they must gain before one can become middle managers?
1	Yes, we as HOD's go for GDE training but there should be courses for teachers who want to fulfil a higher role.
2	Definitely, not all staff knows what is expected of them when they are appointed in a higher position.
Researcher	Following the information and feedback you have provided, what type of professional development programs can be implemented by the GDE or the Unions to support staff or train them for management and leadership positions?
5	Training that can focus on certain skills needed for specific roles.
6	Sessions on how to run a department effectively.
Researcher	What coursed is currently available to middle managers that do not have much financial implications and when these are coursed offered.
1	The GDE have sessions on CAPS but that is it. The other courses that are available are too expensive and we cannot afford to attend.
5	Yes, transport is also a problem as we need to travel far.
8	We have sometimes over 50 learners in a class, if the teacher is not here to take the class it can cause stress on the other teachers.
Researcher	How familiar are middle managers with their job descriptions.
2	For us the middle managers are mainly the HOD's and deputy principals and we know what our job descriptions are.
1	Sometime there are subject heads, but mostly the HOD's that do the work.
4	Teachers know what they should do, but we do not know if there are job descriptions for middle management.

Researcher	As a school you have confirmed that you do have a lack of middle managers. Do you thing this system is seen as a burden or an advantage in running the school?
1	No, but the school cannot afford to pay people to do the additional work. Some staff will not take on additional responsibilities without additional payment.
3	Staff who are middle managers must do all the work, it is not easy. We do need additional support.
Researcher	What input do middle managers have in whole school decision making processes and is there a reduction on the timetable.
2	It is mainly the HOD's and deputy principals that take part in school decision making issues.
6	It will be good for teachers to have the opportunity to take part.
Researcher	What other support structures do you have in place?
1	We meet often to discuss strategies.
Researcher	Any other information you want to add related to middle management?
4	Often the people who get promoted are because they know someone or have been here for a long time.
6	The GDE must provide more funds for training and for the employment of more middle managers.

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APPENDIX C

Semi-Structured Interview

School A

Researcher	In your opinion, what is the key role of middle management within this school?
Deputy Principal	Supporting the SMT team and guiding the departments or subject teachers in fulfilling their roles effectively.
Researcher	Does the SMT and middle management often meet to discuss issues concerning the whole school?
Deputy Principal	Perhaps not always as a team, however, middle management can report to SMT and they will take the issue further is needed.
Researcher	What type of support system does SMT offer middle management?
Deputy Principal	The main aim is for each middle management member to be linked with an SMT member for when support is needed. This can leave an SMT member with 4 – 6 middle managers to guide and support.
Researcher	In your opinion, is middle management an asset to the school or a burden?
Deputy Principal	Definitely an asset, as it reduces the workload of SMT. Depending on the ability and skills of the middle management, their support can have a major impact in the leadership structure. However, not all SMT might feel the same. If a middle manager is too proactive, the SMT member might feel intimidated by the person.

APPENDIX D

Semi-Structured Interview

School B

Researcher	In your opinion, what is the key role of middle management within this school?
Deputy Principal	Middle managers in our school mainly consist of HOD's. In some subjects there are subject heads that assists the HOD's however; most of the work is done by HOD's and deputy principals.
Researcher	Does the SMT and middle management often meet to discuss issues concerning the whole school?
Deputy Principal	Staff are overworked and most meetings are for the principal and deputies. We do not have a lot of meetings were the HOD's and subject heads are involved.
Researcher	What type of support system does SMT offer middle management?
Deputy Principal	Staff are always there for support if needed. However, there should be more affordable programmes for training. The training offered by some institutions is not only expensive but also at inconvenient times.
Researcher	In your opinion, is middle management an asset to the school or a burden?
Deputy Principal	At the moment we have a lack of middle managers in the school and that is more of a burden than having middle managers. The GDE should supply more funding to employ more middle managers; this will reduce the stress load of the HOD's and deputy principals.

APPENDIX E

A SURVEY OF STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MIDDLE MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG

Thank you for your participation, this questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

1. **Background information**

(Please tick one or more appropriate box)

Age			**Gender**		**Race**			
Under 30 years	30-45 years	Above 45 years	Female	Male	Black	Indian	White	Other

(Please tick one or more appropriate box)

Current role at the school				**Years of experience in current role**		
Teacher	Subject/ Grade Head	Head of Department	Deputy Head	Less than 5 years	5-10 years	More than 10 years

(Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your highest qualification)

Qualifications					
Certificate	**Diploma**	**Degree**	**Masters**	**Doctorates**	**Other**

2. **Please indicate the tasks that you fulfil in your role.**
   (Please indicate the top ten tasks by placing a tick in the appropriate boxes)

No.	**Role**	**Never**	**Often**	**Always**
1	Teaching			
2	Resource management			
3	Staff management			
4	Professional leadership			
5	Pastoral responsibilities			
6	Administration			
7	Communication			
8	Monitoring learners' achievement			
9	Evaluating learning programmes			
10	Co-ordinating staff development programmes			
11	Teaching specified learning area			
12	Developing and implementing learning plans			
13	Appointing and appraising members of staff			
14	Professional development for staff members			
15	Procedures and programmes			
16	Organising meetings			
17	Communicating with parents or community			
18	Contributing to school wide decision making			

3. **Using the list in question 2, identify the top three tasks needed to fulfil your role:**

4. **According to the list of tasks in questions 2, indicate the top three tasks that you enjoy the most in your role?**

5. **According to the list of tasks in question 2, indicate the top three tasks that you dislike the most.**

	6. Professional expertise and continuing professional development (Please tick the appropriate box)	Mostly true	Often true	Hardly ever true	Never true
6.1	I am confident in my knowledge of my current role				
6.2	I regularly take up opportunities to enhance my professional development.				
6.3	The school offers continuous professional development opportunities.				
6.4	I collaborate with colleagues in developing my professional development skills.				
6.5	My opinions are valued at school team meetings.				
6.6	I am encouraged by other members in the management team to develop my management / leadership skills.				

7. **In your opinion, identify three key characteristics that will make for good management skills.**

8. **In your view, what are the three main tasks of middle managers in your school?**

9. **List three of the main barriers preventing managers in your school from being effective in their role?**

10. **Please add any other relevant information regarding middle management at your school.**

Thank you for your time and feedback. All information will be confidential in all academic writing. PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE SEALED BOX IN THE STAFFROOM BY FRIDAY 15:30.

APPENDIX F

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

Dear

I am a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on “An investigation into staff perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle management in public secondary schools in Gauteng.”

My research involves focus group sessions, interviews and questionnaires. The focus group session will be a once off visit in June of no more than an hour and the interview will be in August. I was wondering whether you would mind to enable me to access my data by meeting a selection of your teaching staff, Subject Heads, Grade Heads or Heads of Departments for the focus group (8 – 10 people) and four staff members for the interviews.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

The names and identity of the research participants and the school will not be used in the academic writing. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be kept in a secure area that will provide maximum protection of the participants’ identity and will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

INFORMATION SHEET: TEACHERS

Dear

I am a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on “An investigation into staff perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle management in public secondary schools in Gauteng.”

My research involves focus group sessions and questionnaires. I was wondering whether you would mind to enable me to access my data by taking part in a focus group session, one afternoon for a maximum of an hour.

Your name and identity will not be included in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be kept in a secure area and destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project.

You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study.

Please let me know if you require any further information.
Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Teacher’s Consent Form: Questionnaire

Please complete and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to fill in a questionnaire for my voluntary research project called:

“An investigation into staff perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle management in public secondary schools in Gauteng.”

Permission for the use of a questionnaire

I, _____

Give/do not give (please delete as appropriate) my consent to fill in a questionnaire.

[ ] I know that I may withdraw from the study at any time and that I will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

[ ] I know that I can decline to answer a specific question.

[ ] I am aware that the researcher will keep all information confidential in all academic writing.

[ ] I am aware that my questionnaire will be destroyed between 3—5 years after completion of the project.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Contact person:

Teacher's Consent Form: Interview

Please complete and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be interviewed for my research project called: "An investigation into staff perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle management in public secondary schools in Gauteng."

Permission to be interviewed

I, _____

Give/do not give (please delete as appropriate) my consent to be interviewed.

[ ] I know that I don't have to answer all the questions and that I may withdraw from the study at any time and that I will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

[ ] I am aware that the researcher will keep all information confidential in all academic writing.

[ ] I am aware that my interview transcript will be destroyed within 3—5 years after completion of the project.

Teacher's Signature: _____

Contact person:

Teacher's Consent Form: Focus group session

Please complete and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to take part in a focus group session for my research project called: "An investigation into staff perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle management in public secondary schools in Gauteng."

Permission to take part in a focus group session

I, _____

Give/do not give (please delete as appropriate) my consent to take part in a focus group session

[ ] I know that I don't have to answer all the questions and that I may withdraw from the study at any time and that I will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

[ ] I am aware that the researcher will keep all information confidential in all academic writing.

[ ] I am aware that my interview transcript will be destroyed within 3—5 years after completion of the project.

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Contact person:

Teacher's Consent Form: Audiotaping

Please complete and return the reply slip below and indicate your willingness to have your interview audiotaped for my research project: "An investigation into staff perceptions of the role and effectiveness of middle management in public secondary schools in Gauteng."

Permission to be audiotaped

My name: _____

I give/do not give (please delete as appropriate) my consent to have the interview recorded.

[ ] I know that I may withdraw from the study at any time and will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

[ ] I know that I can stop the audiotaping of the interview at any time without repercussions.

[ ] I know that the tapes will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project and will be kept safe until then.

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Contact person: