Exploring Parents' Participation in School Governance with the Purpose of Developing Parents' Leadership: A Formative Intervention in a Namibian Combined Rural School

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Declaration

I, Hileni Nghiteeka, hereby declare that the writing in this thesis is my own words and that I acknowledged, according to the Rhodes University Referencing Guide, where I have drawn on the words or ideas of others. I also would like to declare that this thesis has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination at any other University.

…….. 6 December 2019

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Student signature Date

Abstract

In a post-independent Namibia, the *Education Act 16 of 2001* accorded democratic rights and equal opportunities to all education stakeholders, including parents, to be involved in educational decision-making in schools. This involvement advocated increasing the voice of the educational stakeholders at a grass roots level in an attempt to redress the past injustices of the apartheid education system. However, the studies carried out internationally, as well as in Africa and Namibia, reveal that the issue of democratic participation in school decisions is a restricted reality.

This study was conducted in Happy (pseudonym) combined school, a state rural school in the Oshikoto Region, Northern Namibia, aimed at exploring parents' participation in school governance. The study adopted an interventionist approach to develop parents' leadership in school. Framed by a distributed leadership perspective, the main purpose of the study was to seek parents' voices through participation for them to be catalysts for change in transforming parents' leadership in school. For its theoretical and analytical framing, the study adopted the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT).

The study findings revealed that parents' leadership as a concept was understood differently in the case study school and it was practiced within the boundaries of policies. Through the lens of distributed leadership, it was evident that distributed leadership was still in its infancy in the school, as only the characterisations of an authorised distributed leadership were evident in this school. The CHAT analysis revealed that parents' leadership was constrained due to a number of challenges, including language barriers, transport to and from meetings and a lack of support from other parents and some teachers. Study participants, through participation in a Change Laboratory workshop process, envisioned some models such as raising funds to serve as an incentive for parents' School Board members and for an information dissemination committee within the community to do educational campaigns in an effort to enhance parents' leadership in school.

To unleash distributed leadership in schools, the study offered some recommendations, including that parents' leadership should be included as part of the curriculum at higher institutions in order to sensitise educators to this critical aspect of leadership, prior to joining the profession. Another recommendation was for stakeholders to make use of the study's findings, when designing workshop materials and conducting workshops. Finally, the study recommended further

interventionist research to be conducted on the same research topic, preferably on a larger scale, in an effort to add to the body of knowledge in the field of leadership and management, particularly with regards to parental leadership.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the special pair of the ‘last borns’ my father, Paulus *shaNghiteeka nghelo* Nghiteeka and my Mother Emilia *mkwahepo nghelo* Abraham. Dear parents, today I stand taller in the academic world and among other scholars because of your effort. In a world where other parents’ eyes are dim to see the path to educational doors for their children, you were among the few to show us the path; where other parents wavered to provide, you stood out to provide the little you earned to us all. Who am I not to be grateful dear parents? “Tangi eenghelo da Mlifundja wa Nghede naNasheya sha Haufiku”. You shaped me to be who I am today, your love and most importantly the sense of humour are just a few of the characteristics that I can affectional describe you with. Long may you live, and may the Almighty keep you healthy and stronger for our children to watch you as you age gracefully and also for you to see how productive the beautiful seeds you sowed are. You are forever my source of inspiration as you remain the hero and heroine of my time that I have ever known.

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List of Acronyms

CHAT	-	CULTURAL HISTORICAL ACTIVITY THEORY
CLW	-	CHANGE LABORATORY WORKSHOP
HOD	-	HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
SMT	-	SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

CHAPTER ONE: CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

For far too long, parents' leadership has been absent from leadership literature, both in Namibia and globally. Similarly, parents have not been taken seriously in school leadership work. Thus, the focus of this study is to explore parents' participation in school governance with the purpose of developing parents' leadership through a formative intervention in Happy (pseudonym) combined school, a state rural school in the Oshikoto Region, Northern Namibia.

This introductory chapter orients the reader to the study in an attempt to put the reader into the picture with regard to parents' participation and parents' leadership at the school. This chapter provides a sense of the context and background to the study and discusses the rationale for the study. The reader is introduced to the research goal and research questions in this chapter and then is given a concise description of the research design and methodology undertaken in this study. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief outline of the study.

1.2 Background and Context of the Study

Although parents have been seen as equal partners in the education process since Namibian independence in 1990, parents' participation legitimately began with parental involvement in education, which was legislated in 2001 through the *Education Act No. 16 of 2001* (Namibia, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture [MEAC], 2001). Parental involvement in this study refers to opportunities created by legislation and policies to allow parents a space within the space of school leadership. In contrast, and as will be discussed in more detail in the second chapter of this thesis, parents' participation means "taking part in decision making" (Brown & Duku, 2008). The term parents' leadership, as it is used in this study, refers to a process where parents act with persuasion and influence in order to pursue the objectives of the school (Heystek, Nieman, Van Rooyen, Mosage, & Bibath, 2012). The *Education Act 16 of 2001* specifically requires every state school to establish a School Board to administer the affairs and promote the development of the

school and the learners of the school. Part V (18) (2) of the Education Act clearly states that parents should constitute the majority of School Board members.

Historically, in Namibia, the impetus for including parents in decision-making emanates from two drivers. First, it was a response following the introduction of a democratic system as established in Namibia after its independence in 1990. As the process of democratisation got underway, the government embarked upon the journey of building a new education system, by introducing the democratisation of education. Consequently, democracy in education was regarded as having a central role to play in transforming Namibian society. The policy document, *Towards Education for All,* stated that to teach democracy requires the education to be democratic which, in turn, enables the expansion of access, promotion of equity and a rise in quality (Namibia. Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture [MEAC], 1993). This was to redress the injustices of the past. As Angula and Lewis (1997) assert, in a pre-independent Namibia, the administration of schools had been bureaucratised by the South African apartheid government and the notion of parental involvement in schools was regarded as an outside interference in Namibia's schools. As a result, parents were not legitimately consulted about the education of their children. Thus, it was on this basis that, in a post-independent Namibia, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture promoted democracy in education through the formulation and enactment of new educational reforms and frameworks such as *Education for All* and *Education Act No 16 of 2001*.

Secondly, parents' participation resonates with the enhancement of democracy in education through the *Decentralisation, Development, and Democracy policy document (1997).* Namibia, like any other democratic country engages in decentralisation as a means to enhance and guarantee democratic participation by the majority of people at a grass roots level (Namibia. Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing, [MRLGH], 1998). In an effort to decentralise the educational systems, the question of parents' involvement and participation in schools came to the fore which is, in this case, regarded as democratisation as it aims to enhance parents' voices in schools. In Namibia, the concept of decentralisation is understood as a community-level representation, which, to an extent, minimises the role of intermediate levels of state bureaucracy by placing parents in charge of schools (Edward & Mbatia, 2013). Furthermore, the democratisation of education is understood in terms of equal involvement and participation by parents in the educational matters in their community schools (Angula & Lewis, 1997).

In line with Brown and Duku (2008), school governing bodies serve as a decentralisation mechanism for community participation. Similarly, Mncube (2007) asserts that "democracy is best learned in a democratic setting in which participation is encouraged, where freedom of expression prevails, and where there is the presence of justice and fairness" (p. 130). Thus, legislation that calls for parents' involvement anticipates that parents will operate democratically.

By contrast, Edward and Mbatia (2013) argue that, although the expectation of decentralisation is an overall quality of the democratic process as well as a transfer of the decision-making authority from higher to lower hierarchical units, it is unfortunate that those who possess power may employ the rhetoric of decentralisation to legitimise their power but are not often quick to relinquish it. The above claim seems to be true in the context of education decentralisation in Namibia because it appears that parents' participation in decision-making is still minimal, despite the legitimacy of their involvement as contained in the policy. Arguing from Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge and Ngcobo's (2012) point of view, parents' participation in South African schools is minimal because the state is constantly changing and limiting the power allocated to parents. In the context of Namibia, Angula and Lewis (1997) argue that, despite multi-faceted basic education reforms, 'top-down' decision-making has grown in schools and at the regional level. In a similar manner, a study carried out in Namibia by Shikongo (2019) reveals that, although the School Board is obliged to advise the director on school-related matters, the reverse is true; directors tend to give advice to School Board members instead. This demonstrates how the voice of School Board members is at stake.

In recent years, parents' participation and parents' involvement in school decision-making has become a dominant theme in schools, especially in the United States of America (USA) (Bauch and Goldring, 1998). In the Namibian context, this thinking is endorsed by the study conducted by Shikwambi (2014) who asserts that parents' involvement and participation in school governance has become a 'hot topic' worldwide, including in Namibia, and that there are currently great efforts to enhance it in schools. However, the main concern is whether parents' School Board members participate with a voice or not, due to the general observation that many parents in school governance perceived their roles as simply endorsing what others have already decided upon rather than participating democratically (Xaba, 2011). It appears that parents perceived themselves as such due to the fact that their participation in school matters is much guided by pre-defined policies

and centralised frameworks. Thus, I argue that unless we develop parents as leaders, this discriminatory and exclusionary practice is likely to continue in schools.

The issue of parents' participation in school governance as a "thorn in a flesh" is by no means unique to Third World countries. However, the current research landscape both internationally and regionally has shifted the attention from mere parents' involvement to parents' participation in decision-making processes. Ravn's (1998) findings from schools in Denmark reveal that teachers find it difficult to engage and involve parents in education decisions. As a result, only a few schools allow parents a voice in education decisions, not because of mistrust but as a result of old habits. Ravn further articulates a concern that, although School Boards are designed to be democratic, their functions and values are questioned as parents often work in a "grey zone", not participating fully as they are not clear of their duties and their roles.

Whilst Ravn is arguing from a First World country's perspective, his argument is not dissimilar to that of Mncube (2007) who argues from the Third World countries' perspectives. Mncube reveals that in South Africa, although parents are fully represented on the school governing body (a body similar to the School Board in Namibia), they do not participate fully; hence they only endorse what the principal and teachers decided upon. Mncube (2009) further maintains that in practice, parent governors are not all participating fully yet, since many of them lack the necessary skills to perform the duties assigned to them. Instead, in the context of his study, they relinquished their roles to teachers and the principal.

Similar evidence is also brought forth by Tshabalala (2013) who carried out a study in Zimbabwe. He asserts that the contribution of parents in governing bodies is limited and also that parents' participation in school decisions has been virtually non-existent. Such assertions are a clear indication that what is anticipated by legislation is not really what is being practiced.

In Namibia, the above views are equally true. Angula and Lewis (1997) state clearly that "today parents do not see their relationship with schools any differently than they did under apartheid" (p. 244). In other words, parents still do not consider their participation in schools as important. As such, their participation in school-wide decision-making is debatable. This is also evident from the findings of current studies conducted in Namibia. A study by Kayumbu (2017) reveals that parents'

voices are not heard and that they are not democratically participating in school decision-making processes; instead, parent-School Board members only sit in meetings as observers and get convinced by school principals and teachers of what the best decision is to take. Another study conducted in Namibia by Shikwambi (2014) also reveals that, although parents seem to know their roles on the School Board, they still seem unclear on how far their responsibilities and power stretch. And Shikongo's (2019) study findings reveal a similar sentiment; that parents' School Board members are not pro-active in the governing body of the school but rather more reactive towards the plans of the school management as they only take part or are involved in school-related activities once the school asked them to do so. Thus, this is a clear indication that parents' participation in decision-making is a problematic phenomenon that needs to be explored further. Working from this problematic viewpoint, my study takes a leadership focus, with the understanding that by developing the leadership of parents, they are likely to take agency and participate more fully in the practices of the School Board.

1.3 My position and Rationale for My Study

To put the reader into perspective, it is crucial that I gave a brief description of myself in the educational fraternity and that of a researcher in the region. Currently, I am a Senior Education Officer in the Oshikoto Education directorate, the region where the research was conducted. I have held this position for four years now, and for that reason, I was already familiar with some of the participants, especially teachers at the research site. This simply means I was partially an insider researcher. I based my line of thinking on Mercer (2007) who explains that an insider researcher is "someone whose biography (gender, race, class, sexual orientation and so on) gives her [sic] a lived familiarity with the group being researched" (p. 3).

Prior to holding this post, I had been a Head of Department for seven years, the post I held after 10 years in the teaching profession, as a teacher in the Omusati region. From September 2009 to March 2010, I acted as a school principal for a secondary school. This professional journey was one of the crucial factors that stimulated my interest in the leadership of parents in schools. Therefore, this study was undertaken to explore parents' participation in school governance with the purpose of developing parents' leadership and to understand and enhance parents' leadership opportunities in schools through a series of Change Laboratory Workshops.

My rationale for conducting this study is grounded in the academic context. It is a notable fact that there is a shortage of leadership literature in Africa (Hallinger, 2018), let alone literature on parents' leadership. The literature reveals that the recent prevalent school leadership studies in Africa and particularly in Namibia focused more on learner and teacher leadership rather than parents' leadership. This is evident from the concern raised by Singh, Mbokodi and Msila (2004) when they stated that a number of scholars in Africa only emphasise empowering learners and teachers but there has been less emphasis and focus on parents' empowerment. Empowerment, as used in this study, refers to the creation of conditions that enable a strong personal efficacy on the part of parents in carrying out their roles in schools (Bauch & Goldring, 1999) which can allow parents' participation and eventually lead to parents' leadership. This is a clear indication that parents' leadership seems to be under-researched in Africa generally, and Namibia in particular.

In addition, the Namibian studies I came across only focused on School Boards in general and not specifically on parents as a component of the School Board. For example, Sinalumbu (2013) explored the perceptions of school democratic governance whilst Kayumbu (2017) investigated the challenges of School Board members in supporting quality education. The only studies conducted in Namibia that I came across with a focus on parents on the School Board, were Shikwambi (2014) who investigated parental involvement in school governance and Shikongo (2019) who explored the influence of School Board leadership in the administration and performance of the school. Both studies adopted an interpretive orientation and sought to describe and explain the phenomenon of parental involvement in school governance. They did not seek to change the situation as my study did. In other words, my study was unique as it utilised Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a theoretical, methodological and analytical lens to examine how parents' leadership was not only practiced but also expanded in a school.

My rationale for conducting this study is further grounded in my professional experience. My background in the teaching profession during the years I was a teacher, then Head of Department and acting principal placed me in a better position where I was able to observe the shortfalls in the situation regarding parents' participation and parents' leadership in schools. There were times when I was elected as a teacher School Board member. Also, when I acted as a school principal I got involved in School Board matters in a principal's capacity. Through this direct involvement with the School Board, I realised that there was a clear mismatch between the policies and the

reality on the ground. Although the parental School Board members are mandated by the Act to ensure the proper administration of the finances by having a final say on budget and expenditures as well as to have a voice in the appointment of staff members at school, they did not actively participate in these important school decision-making processes. Many times, the parents felt "too small" to have a voice in these matters. They, therefore, relied largely on the principal and teacher School Board members and only signed documents given to them without questioning them. During the interview process, for example, their real voice was absent as they often left the entire decision-making process to the principal and teachers who they considered knowledgeable enough to make a decision. As such, their participation was questionable.

1.4 Research Goal and research questions

As a consequence of my interest in this topic, the main goal of this study was to explore parents' participation in school governance and to understand and enhance parents' leadership opportunities in schools through a series of Change Laboratory Workshops. To achieve this, the study answered the following questions:

1. How is the concept of parents' leadership understood in the school?
2. Is parental leadership practised by parents in school, and if so how?
3. What are the parents' perceptions regarding their leadership roles in school governance?
4. What are the conditions that enable and/or constrain parents' leadership in the school?
5. What can be done to enhance the development of parents' leadership at a school?
6. What can a Change Laboratory Workshop process contribute to the leadership development of parents?

To achieve the research goal, a qualitative design was adopted. What follows is a brief description of the research design and methodology.

1.5 Research Design and Methodology

The study was qualitatively designed in the form of a case study. Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding an individual's or group's behaviours (Creswell, 2014).

The study focused on understanding a single case of parents' leadership with the purpose of unpacking the underlying factors that constrain parents' leadership in an attempt to generate generative solutions. Based on this, a sample of 18 participants (seven parents' School Board members, four teacher School Board members including the principal and seven School Management Team (SMT) members (excluding the principal as already counted under teacher school board members) who interact with each other, especially during the decision-making) was selected from a site school. To obtain data, qualitative gathering tools (document analysis, questionnaires and interviews) were employed during phase one while in phase two, Change Laboratory Workshops were used, following a formative intervention approach. The generated data were analysed inductively as well as by abductive approaches through a conceptual framework, distributed leadership, and CHAT was used as an analytical tool.

CHAT was also used as a theoretical framework for the study, using it as a lens to understand parents' leadership practices in order to advocate for transformative agency in school.

Finally, as a researcher, I had to comply with ethical issues and ensure that trustworthiness is maintained throughout the research process. Maintaining reflectivity throughout the research process was considered important in order to minimise biases and reduce the positionality issue.

1.6 Thesis outline

This thesis is divided into six chapters.

Chapter One presents the background and context of the study. It then briefs the reader on the research goal and the research questions, introduces the research design and methodology before concluding with the thesis outline.

Chapter Two is an overview of the literature. It reviews the literature on parental involvement, parents' participation and parents' leadership. The chapter further reviews literature on leadership and management and distributed leadership. CHAT as a theory and analytical tool is then presented.

Chapter Three illustrates the research design and methodology used to conduct the study. Data generating tools employed to collect data during phases one and two are presented. It then walks

the reader through the two analytical approaches used, namely inductive and abductive. The chapter concludes after describing the ethical procedures followed.

Chapter Four presents the raw data collected from document analysis, questionnaires and interviews during phase one of the study and discusses the main findings, presented as themes as they emerged in relation to questions one to four.

Chapter Five presents data collected during phase two of the study and discusses data using the CHAT as an analytical tool. Expansive learning actions in relation to the Change Laboratory Workshops (CLWs) are discussed and the contradictions raised during the CLWs are presented and analysed.

Finally, **Chapter Six** opens up with the reflexivity on the research journey**.** Then**,** the key findings as presented in Chapters Four and Five are summarised. The chapter highlights the study's limitations and recommendations for good practice, before recommendations for future researches are made. Finally, the signifance of the study is also given, before the conclusion.

With the conclusion of the overview of the thesis structure, I now turn to Chapter Two, the review of the literature which informs the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As I was navigating through literature, it became evident that unlike teacher and learner leadership, the concept of parents' leadership has received little attention from scholars, thus the concept is narrowly defined. I, however, learned that related concepts such as parents' involvement and parents' participation in school decision-making have become dominant themes in current debates about school restructuring (Bauch & Goldring, 1998; Mncube, 2009). Like many concepts in the field of leadership and management, concepts related to parents' leadership and participation as aforementioned, seem to overlap and are interdependent. Thus, the focus of the chapter is to introduce the related concepts as their understanding of parents' leadership and parents' participation is critical.

The chapter, therefore, begins with probing the meaning of the concepts; parents' involvement, empowerment, participation, and parents' voice, while at the same time acknowledging their interdependency. Thereafter, the chapter explores parents' participation as theorised and practiced in schools before providing a conceptual understanding of parents' leadership. The concept of parents' leadership is then placed in a broader perspective of the main concepts of the field, leadership and management.

Leadership can be understood in multiple ways as there is no consensus on the definition, thus I provide an overview of the various definitions as theorised in literature so that I can give some insight into leadership practice. Furthermore, leadership and management are contested phenomena, which are conflated and used interchangeably, both in the literature and in practice. Considering the conflation in the usage of these terms, it is important that the distinction between the two concepts is drawn before acknowledging their interdependency.

The chapter then draws on traditional theories of leadership with the purpose of providing an insight into the paradigm shift from traditional leadership views to contemporary views of leadership and, in particular, distributed leadership.

To remind the reader, the purpose of this study is to explore parents' participation in the school governance with the intention of intervening in order to understand and enhance parents' leadership in a state, rural combined school in Northern Namibia. The interventionist aspect of this study involves a formative intervention, a concept drawn from the Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). It is therefore against this backdrop that I conclude the chapter by drawing in the theoretical framework of this study, CHAT.

The next section provides a conceptual understanding of the key concepts.

2.2 The conceptual understanding of parents' involvement, empowerment, participation and parents' voice

The concepts of parents' participation and parents' involvement are conflated in their daily usage and mostly used interchangeably. However, the two do not mean the same thing though they are interdependent. Though not intending to fix the meanings of these concepts, I find it useful to provide the basic meanings as theorised by various literature in order to clear the misconception around these notions.

There is no clear definition of the concept of parents' involvement. However, the involvement of parents is viewed as a partnership between parents and schools, especially in non-teaching activities ranging from simplistic tasks such as motivating children, being positive about school, or assisting children with their homework to more complicated and skill-demanding tasks such as assisting educators or the official management of the school (Heystek, 2003). As defined by Epstein (2001), parental involvement is an observable relationship between the school and parents which aims at school improvement. Likewise, Bower and Griffin (2011) assert that parents' involvement focuses more on involving parents in formal and informal activities, including activities in the school and at home. They further maintain that parents' involvement takes many forms such as volunteering at school, communicating with teachers and attending school events with the purpose of improving the school.

While defining parents' involvement in that way, the concept participation in this study is different, as informed by various authors. In general terms, participation derives its tenets from political perspectives. From a political point of view, Brown and Duku (2008) describe participation as a

process of "taking part in" and it refers to how groups or individuals are empowered and have control over their lives. In an education context, it means more or less the same. Parents' participation as defined by Bauch and Goldring (1998) is the involvement of parents in providing inputs or being consulted about school affairs or their children's progress without exercising influence. Countering such a definition is Lewis and Naidoo (2004) who assert that participation explicates into the right to influence decisions, which simply means that parents are granted a significant say in decision-making and are expected to make a meaningful influence in such decisions.

Influence is more limited to decision-making in which members have the capacity to shape decision-making, though it can be done through informal and non-authoritative means (Bauch & Goldring, 1998). Thus, in this study, I took the position alongside Lewis and Naidoo (2004) that parents' participation tends to be more on allowing the 'have nots' to hear and to have a voice in the decision-making. As with South African researchers Brown and Duku (2008), parents' participation in the governance occurred as a result of a shift from the authoritarianism of apartheid to a democratic state. In line with Mncube (2009), listening to parents, encouraging their participation and giving them more power and responsibility is part of greater democratisation at the school level. Thus, this view suggests that in an attempt to create opportunities for parents' participation in school, the government is attempting to foster democracy among all members of the school as an organisation, in order to include them equally in decision-making (Mncube, 2007). Even more, Mncube (2007) further argues that participation refers to a democratic setting in which freedom of expression prevails, and where there is a presence of justice and fairness. Active participation comes with the voice and it involves equity (Brown & Duku, 2008).

Having a voice, on the other hand, means being accorded an opportunity to "talk back" (Morrison, 2007). By this, Morrison asserts that what is important in leadership is finding a voice that engages in critical reflection in resistance to dominance, and this implies justice and fairness. On the same token, Bauch and Goldring (1998) argue that parents exercise voice as a way of exercising influence, particularly in articulating their critical opinions about schools in an attempt to bring change. These, of course, demonstrate that parents' voice is important to parents' leadership development as the end outcome is social change. To a question of why parents' voice in education is important, Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) suggest that it is essential that parents' voice is heard

in order to realise equal partnership in schools. Participation with a voice may challenge the status quo and raise issues of social inclusion and exclusion. Thus, Brown and Duku (2008) maintain that parents are now able to have a 'voice' in the decisions that directly or indirectly impact on them in the school communities and that, to them, this opportunity signals a new dawn of empowerment.

Empowerment is defined as parents' role in exercising influence within a school through decision-making which is accompanied by a legitimate source of power and authority (Bauch & Goldring, 1998). To exercise influence in school decision-making processes, parents' empowerment is the core. Thus, Bauch and Goldring (1998) further assert that parents' participation and empowerment are two possible ways in which parents can be involved in schools and influence the decision-making process.

If parents' involvement emerges through the enactment of the school governance, then what is school governance and what is a School Board?

2.3 Defining School Governance and School Board

The term school governance is a contested concept as there is difficulty in distinguishing between governance and management (Brown & Duku, 2008). However, for the purpose of this study, the concept of school governance refers to the institutional structure entrusted with the governing of the school (Mncube, 2009). Though most of its activities are linked to management, school governance is a feature of school leadership which came into being as a decentralisation mechanism for wider community participation (Brown & Duku, 2008). As suggested by Hallinger (2018), leadership in schools is an exercise of teachers, parents or even learners. Thus, in the Namibian context, the governance which is the feature of the school leadership is the responsibility of the School Board and the management of the school (SMT). It is through the School Board that learners, parents, and educators are democratically elected as required by the *Education Act 16 of 2001* and this made them recognised participants in education. Mncube (2009) suggests that "governance structures create an opportunity for all stakeholders to develop a sense of ownership of the school and thus take responsibility for what is happening at the school" (p. 85). In this regard, Mncube asserts that school governance is a feature of democratisation at the school level.

In the Namibian context, the School Board is similar to the South African School Governing Body (SGB), which is the school decision-making body. The School Board is an advisory and decision-making body that administers the affairs and promotes the development of a school (Namibia. Ministry of Basic Education, Sport, and Culture [MBESC], 2004). It represents the parents, teachers, and learners (ibid.). Every government school is mandated through the *Education Act no. 16 of 2001*, to establish a School Board which helps in administering the school and ensuring that the school is effective in its teaching and learning programs (UNICEF, 2016). As mentioned earlier in Chapter One, the majority of the School Board members are parents. This suggests that by policy, parents are incorporated in the decision-making of the schools and as such, the leadership of the school is distributed amongst them. As De Forsberg (2007) suggests, the central aim of reforming the schools is to enhance parents' participation in school governance. Thus, parents as members of the School Board, have an influence in quality education in terms of recommending and appointment of teachers, as well as by having inputs into school policies and budget through their participation (Heystek et al., 2012). By this, Mncube (2009) suggests that parents' participation fosters democracy, while Bhengu and Ncwane (2014) assert that a shift to school governance entails participation in decision-making at the local level which is likely to benefit the school community it serves.

2.4 The genesis and the drives for parental involvement

The involvement of parents manifested within the idea of school self-management. In the context of the United Kingdom, Bush (1999) asserts that educational reforms that emanated during the 1990s encouraged schools to decentralise their leadership in order to become more responsive to local needs. As such, schools migrated towards self-management which eventually increased the power of governors, principals, and senior staff to determine the specific purposes of their institutions and to deploy resources in pursuit of those aims (Bush, 1999).

During the years prior to and post-Namibian independence, a series of consultative tours were made by the South West Africa Peoples' Organisation (SWAPO) Minister of Education, in an effort to give voices to parents and community members in school policy decisions (Angula & Lewis, 1997). Subsequently, the framework and legislation such as the *Education Act 16 of 2001* and *Education for All,* that were enacted to encourage school self-autonomy, also provided an

opportunity for stakeholders such as learners, parents, and teachers to be involved in school governance. The main motive is to decentralise the decision-making so that decisions are made by those who best understand the needs of learners and the local community, and in this regard, parents are not an exception (South African Task Team Report, 1996). In essence, parental involvement aims for democratic participation. Mncube (2007) suggests that democracy in education is concerned with the theory of double democratisation which takes place at the societal and educational level. In the school context, democracy implies that, for a decision to be regarded as legitimate, all stakeholders should be equally included in the decision-making process. Ideally, School Board members should be integral partners with teachers in the decision-making process and this is the reason why a framework such as *Education for All* and the Education Act pressed for parents' right to a voice in educational decisions.

In addition, Tshabalala (2013) asserts that the current advocacy is focused on parent involvement which extends beyond school governance and incorporates a representation of parents in a variety of tasks in and outside the school, including decision-making. The extent to which parents' involvement is linked to decision-making suggests that the aim is to change the leadership of schools from bureaucratic patterns to more flexible roles (Bauch & Goldring, 1998). The flexible roles involve parents' participation in all school-related activities but work in partnership with teachers as well as partners within the community. This simply shows that parents are empowered not only to participate, but to have a voice that influences the decision-making of the school and in the community. Taking this stance, I, therefore, argue that parents' involvement should be accompanied by participation with influence if it is to serve its purpose.

2.5 Parents' participation as an issue of interest

While parents' involvement is embraced for creating an opportunity for participation, parents' participation necessitates the need for parents to take up their responsibility through the fulfilment of their basic responsibilities. Participation serves as a driving call for greater decentralisation as it aims to promote good governance and reduce the state influence in schools through the expansion of parental influence in the community schools (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004). It is therefore important that parents should actively participate and contribute meaningfully to educational decision-making processes.

Arguably, however, it is unfortunate that although statutorily parents are included as decision-makers in the structure of the School Board, literature reveals that as one does a "stocktaking" of implementation, it does not always seem to be the case. This is because having access to or creating opportunities for, does not necessarily mean participating, because, with the opportunity, they may still choose not to participate or may not be allowed to by the school authority. In line with Mncube (2009), it is possible for parents to have external inclusion while experiencing internal exclusion. By this Mncube refers to a situation where an opportunity for participation is created by legislation but parents' democratic participation is limited by other factors. This view is further endorsed by Bolıvar and Chrispeels (2011) who argue from the context of the USA that although policymakers advocated for parental advising and decision-making roles, little was achieved to address the complexities of power in hierarchical system because parents' authority was confined to approving or slightly modifying previously made administrative decisions. This demonstrates that state centrally framed policies are still directly or indirectly limiting parents' participation. Brown and Duku (2008) however argue from the South African perspective, that it is not only the state that limits parents' participation but school principals who also play a pivotal role to define who participates, how they participate and what decisions are open to participation. As such, parents' participation is likely to be used as a form of "window dressing" or "tokenism" (Mabovula, 2009), or "rubber stamp" (Fleisch, 2002).

The bone of contention is not about involving parents in decision-making but on allowing parents to participate with influence and a voice. The focus is more on finding out if parents are collaboratively working with teachers, and whether they are enabled to speak their minds democratically. As Shields (2009) suggests, democracy is not only about involving but it is about increasing "we", "us" while reducing "you". This means it is aiming for inclusivity, collaboration, and partnership. Likewise, Mncube (2007) also asserts that democracy includes the issue of freedom of expression and the right to participate in decision-making. Thus, to address the question by Mabasa and Themane (2012) on how a school can become a space in which equity, inclusion, and democracy is advanced, it is by allowing participation with influence and with a voice for all stakeholders.

2.6 Levels of parents' participation in school-related activities: A model of parents' leadership

To understand parents' participation in school, I adapted a model from Creese and Earley (1999), about the Effective Governing Body (Figure 2.1). The model provides indicators about the type and nature of parents' involvement in the School Board which are found in schools in relation to participation and to the challenge they offer to schools. This model forms part of the analytical tool for this study, employed as the first level of analysis.

The model offers a tool to describe the nature of the parents' School Board involvement described in terms of their participation and located in each of four quadrants. According to Creese and Earley (1999), there are four kinds of School Boards as determined by their participation and the level of challenges they offer. These are, *the abdicator* who offers neither participation in any activity nor challenge, *supporters' clubs* who highly participate and offer little challenge, *the adversaries*, who participate and challenge the staff at every opportunity and then *the partners* who work in partnership with the teachers.

In its first quadrant as summarised by Creese and Earley (1999), board members regard themselves as busy people and have no time to visit the school – they believe in the ability of teachers. Rarely do they give inputs or participate but prefer to stay away, leaving all to the teaching staff. This goes along with Bauch and Goldring (1998) who assert that, in a school setting, parents sometimes regard themselves with no place in decision-making, leaving teachers to make decisions in accordance with their expertise.

In contrast, Creese and Earley (1999) further assert that quadrant two type's School Board members participate often. They visit the school unexpectedly, being very critical and want to make all the decisions about the school. These Board members become critical of staff performance and prefer to make staff accountable. In spite of that, this type of School Board is not always welcomed by the staff members. They are not regarded as good parents as Auerbach (2012) asserts that "a good parent is regarded as one who takes the lead of the school, is involved but not too involved, and who supports but does not challenge" (p. 35).

School Board members in quadrant three perceive themselves as advisors and supporters of the school principal. They normally highly participate but spend time discussing the school environment. Parents School Board members in this quadrant are likely to act as a rubber stamp in an attempt to maintain the relationship with the teachers. Instead of acting with a critical eye, they would rather offer nodding gestures, only following the decisions by the teaching staff.

Finally, the board members in quadrant four perceive themselves as equal partners of teachers. These members participate often to share everything with teachers as there is mutual trust and respect. Their participation makes a significant impact on school. Quadrant four board members aim to work collaboratively with teachers, exchange ideas and participate, to genuinely bring change in schools and they are not passive receivers, not “rubber stamps” to teachers’ decisions and instructions (Mncube, 2009). The School Board in this quadrant is the one described by Bauch and Goldring (1998) that they do not only act with authority and influence but also with duties and responsibilities.

The types of School Boards are illustrated in the model, Figure 2.1.

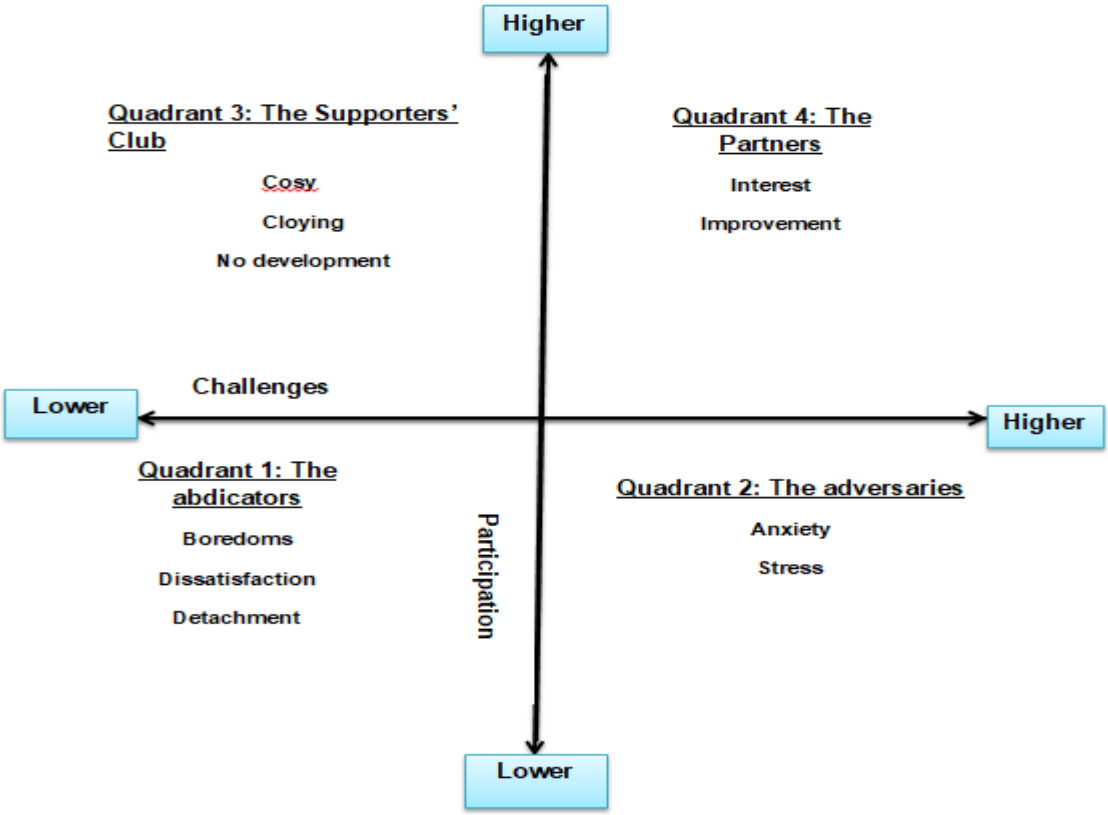


Figure 2.1a: A model of parents' leadership, expressed in relation to participation and challenges criteria (adapted from 'Effective Governing Body Exercise' model, Creese & Earley, 1999)

	Quadrant 1	Quadrant 2	Quadrant 3	Quadrant 4
Name	**The abdicators**	**The adversaries**	**The support club**	**The partners**
Key phrase	*We leave it to the professionals*	*We have to keep our head up to the mark*	*We're here to support the head*	*We share everything—good or bad!*
Indicators	❖ very busy people; ❖ they aren't able to get into school	❖ visit the school very often, sometimes without warning, ❖ keep a very close eye on all aspects of the work of school ❖ frequently very critical	❖ Delegated control to the principal who takes all the decisions. ❖ The parents see their role as offering advice *and support.*	❖ work in partnership with the head and staff ❖ There is mutual trust and respect

Figure 2.1b: Illustrates the indicators of four quadrants shown in Figure 2.1a

In relation to Figure 2.1a, Figure 2.1b, is a guiding tool to interpret the four quadrants, thus, Figure 2.1b presents the key phrases and the indicator(s) for each quadrant. These key phrases and indicators are illustrative at best to help us interpret the nature of the School Board based on their level of participation.

2.7 Understanding the Concept of Parents' Leadership

Central to this study is the concept of parents' leadership. There is little evidence from the literature that defines the concept of parents' leadership; hence, the narrowly available definition makes it difficult to legitimately place the concept within the leadership field. Nevertheless, the notion of parents' leadership emerges as a fundamental tenet from parents' involvement, participation, parents' voice and consequently parents' empowerment, the concepts that were extensively researched. Parents' leadership begins with parents' involvement provided by legislation which requires the establishment of the School Board, a decision-making body of the school. However, the involvement on its own would not guarantee leadership but should be accompanied by the participation and voice of parents. By this, Ravn (1998) stresses that, at the heart of parents' leadership, participation is central which focuses on carrying out the duties and leadership of the

school. Thus, it is through voice and participation that parents would feel empowered to be able to make meaningful contributions to the decisions affecting the school.

Although narrowly defined, parents' leadership involves influencing children towards their life goals with independent and healthy living (Trabue & Trabue, 2013). Trabue and Trabue further assert that the concept of parent leadership simply best describes those parents who work to help make their community schools become more responsive to and supportive of children. By defining it in this way, central to this definition is the term **influence,** that parent leaders are able to influence and inspire others to follow them. Like any other stakeholder, parent leaders, through their actions, show everyone what to follow and through such actions enable the followers to become leaders in their own right (Singh, 2013).

In defining parents' leadership for the purposes of this study, I draw on Muijs and Harris' (2007) definition of teacher leadership and adapt it accordingly. Parents' leadership, therefore, refers to parent leaders who lead within and beyond the school, influence others towards improved educational practices, and able to encourage others to change and to do things they would not do without the influence of the leader. I adopted this definition as I think it fits with the roles of parents in a school setting. Most importantly, parents' roles should expand into new arenas, working closely with teachers, learners and other parents for this influence to flourish and for leadership to emanate. Another definition I adapted for parents' leadership is from the definition of leadership by Heystek et al. (2012) when they define leadership as an act of persuasion and influence; thus I used this to define parents' leadership as a process where parents act with persuasion and influence in order to pursue and/or challenge the objectives of the school. This, of course, would be done collectively and not individually. I, therefore, argue that parents' leadership can be successfully achieved when parents and staff build a strong partnership and share responsibility, expertise, and leadership in any areas that affect the school and the communities. I base my argument on Muijs and Harris (2007), who argue that leadership in a school can be influenced by a number of interpersonal factors such as the relationship with other stakeholders.

Moreover, parents' leadership can be intensified through participation and collaboration. As pointed out by Singh (2013), leadership flows where there is recognition that individuals have an active role to play in the decision-making processes and are provided with maximum opportunities

to demonstrate their expertise. By so doing, it would give rise to the notion that parents also have a role to play in schools and do away with the traditional notion of a bureaucratic approach that suggests that those in positions of hierarchical power in schools should control them. Thus, it is vital that schools should create an environment where collaborative and shared leadership prospers allowing democratic participation to flourish. This idea is further supported by York-Barr and Duke (2004) who assert that participation leads to great ownership and commitment to the goal accomplishment, as each individual and/or a team is committed to the decision they made. With these, parents are likely to be committed to the decisions they share with other stakeholders.

Next, I discuss the factors that constrain parents' participation which eventually prevents the realisation of parents' leadership in school.

2.8 Factors Constraining Parents' Participation in School Governance

The issue of active parents' participation in school governance is questionable. This view is affirmed by Mncube (2009), who argues that even though participation was perceived as democratic, parents seemed reluctant to participate in school governance, thus becoming passive participants. Heystek (2011) and Tshabalala (2013) also air their concern that although parents are in the majority, there are specific factors preventing their active and positive participation in the democratic deliberation, and this limits their voice in the school decision-making. Thus, as emerging from literature, I now discuss four factors that constrain parents' participation.

2.8.1 Parental literacy levels

Literature reveals that low levels of literacy among parents jeopardise parents' active participation and contribution to discussions during meetings. Heystek (2011) states that many parents do not actively participate as they feel that they do not have the necessary literacy levels to read legislation, draft policies and manage budgets. Mncube (2009) concurs that parent participation depends on parents' educational levels: the better educated a parent is, the more he/she will participate in school affairs. However, low levels of literacy among parents may also be used by teachers as an excuse to exclude parents from the decisions on important issues. This view is affirmed by Ravn (1998), when arguing that teachers often withhold information that is imperative in decision-making from parents, and aim to be the only ones with the expertise to make certain

decisions affecting the school. As a result, parents' voice in schools is often non-existent because parents are not given a chance to play a full role, and in most cases, decisions that are supposed to be taken by the School Board are taken by the senior management team (Mncube, 2007).

Coupled with a low level of literacy among parents, is the language barrier. Mncube (2009) states that better-educated parents often insist on the use of the English language during the meetings. However, the use of English has negative effects especially for those who cannot express themselves fluently in English. Those who lack English-speaking proficiency find it difficult to express themselves during meetings, thus contribute nothing or less to decision-making.

2.8.2 Lack of training

Lack of training for school governing bodies is one of the inhibiting factors for the parents' participation. Mncube (2009) maintains that since school governing body members are not given training on what it is expected from them, they tend to be unsure of their responsibilities and as a result, they lack confidence. The same view is endorsed by Ravn (1998) who argues that "parent representatives on School Boards often work in a "grey zone," in which nothing is clearly defined or prepared for them" (p. 376). A study conducted in Namibia by Kayumbu (2017) revealed that parents do not understand their power and functions as they are not properly trained. It is therefore based on that reason that parents' participation is minimal and often they sit back and become passive listeners/participants**.**

2.8.3 Availability of time to attend meetings

It is noted that time is one of the constraints which hinders the active participation of parents in decision-making. Mncube (2007) argues that schools are struggling to get the full parent component in the School Board meetings, due to some parents finding the meeting times not suitable to their daily schedules. As a result, lack of attendance at meetings by parent governors reduces their role in decision making. Similarly, Kayumbu's (2017) study carried out in Namibia, pinpoints that some parent School Board members do not attend all the expected School Board meetings regularly and, as a result, they could not make an effective contribution as they missed some of the discussions.

2.8.4 Socio-economic identity

There are indications that parental participation in school governance is class-based. Cementing this view is Tshabalala (2013) who argues that parent participation has been virtually non-existent due to political turbulence and poor socio-economic conditions. On this basis, Brown and Duku (2008) state that parents from low social identity backgrounds tend to be less vocal than those from middle-class backgrounds. Instead of being upfront or vocal on decisions, they defer decisions to the elite few (privileged group) and teachers, with the understanding that the class position made those more expert than themselves. Brown and Duku (2008) further argue that one of the facts limiting parental participation in decision-making is the elitist identity, as marginalised parents have no power to challenge the existing pattern of participation and that they often do not participate in the discussions as they feel inferior. The above view is equally true to Mncube (2009) who asserts that many parents have a fear of challenging the status quo, thus they end up accepting things even if they do not agree with the decision taken.

Having discussed parents' leadership, it becomes clear that it should not be viewed in isolation but against a broader frame of leadership and management in the schooling context. Thus, next, I discuss the concepts of leadership and management within which parents' leadership is located.

2.9 Leadership and Management

2.9.1 Definitions of the concepts: Management and leadership

Despite the plentiful amount of literature on leadership, it is difficult to agree to what leadership is, as it has no single definition (Whitehead, 2009). Leadership has a comprehensive scope and its definitions are multifaceted. At the same time, the concepts leadership and management overlap and their usage varies at different times, in different countries and in different professional cultures (Coleman, 2005). For this reason, the two terms are used interchangeably in the context of schooling (Christie, 2010). For the purpose of my study, I try to tease out different definitions as given from different perspectives in order to clear the ambiguity surrounding the two concepts so it becomes clearer to the reader.

Christie (2010) conceptualises leadership in terms of relationship rather than qualities, therefore she defines it as a relationship of influence directed towards goals or outcomes which can be formal

or informal. In the same line, Perruci and McManus (2013) also define it as the process by which leaders and followers develop a relationship and work together towards a goal (or goals) within an environmental context shaped by cultural values and norms. Furthermore, Astin and Astin (2000) suggest that leadership is a process that is concerned with fostering change. In contrast, a contested term, "management is related to structures and processes by which organizations meet their goals and central purposes" (Christie, 2010, p. 696). Similarly, Astin and Astin (2000) stress that management is associated with preservation and maintenance, meaning that it is a process of ensuring that an organisation is efficiently and effectively run in order to preserve its functions rather than change it. Moreover, Coleman (2003) affirms that management is equated with processes and structures and that an individual can monitor and control organisational activities, make decisions and allocate resources without fulfilling the symbolic, normative, inspirational or educational functions of leadership. This is to say, one can be a leader without being a manager and can manage without leading.

Taking into account the two concepts as characterised above, I now turn into drawing the boundaries between them in order to familiarise the reader with how they are distinct before I show how they are interrelated.

2.9.2 Drawing the margins between leadership and management

To gain insight into the two concepts, requires that I present the distinction between them as presented by different scholars. Though there is a thin layer between the usage of the concepts, these terms are different. The main distinction is that while management is more likely to be tied to a formal position, leadership is not attached to any position (Whitehead, 2009; Christie, 2010).

Taking this stance, I tend to agree that all people are potential leaders as suggested by Astin and Astin (2000), as leadership cannot be equated with those with formal leadership positions. That is to say, leadership is not a fixed phenomenon but fluid and that it can be exercised at any position within an organisation. Hence, Foster (1998) asserts that it is communal, shared and transferred where the boundaries between leaders and followers fade. It is significant to note that leadership can be exercised throughout the organisation by different people at different levels. Defined by Christie (2010) as "the exercise of influence, leadership can take place outside of formal organizations as well as inside them, and it can be exercised at most levels in organizations and in

most activities" (p. 696). The idea underpinning this is that leadership is multi-directional, that it can be practiced from anywhere in both a vertical and horizontal direction, provided that a supportive environment is created. Significant for leadership is the idea that it is a collective or group process rather than an individual activity (Astin & Astin, 2000). The importance of creating an environment where leadership may prosper is also supported by Grant (2008) when she asserts that leadership must be understood as a "shared process which involves working with all stakeholders in a collegial and creative way to seek out the untapped leadership potential of people and develop this potential in a supportive environment for the betterment of the school" (p. 86).

In direct contrast, management is more concerned with position, roles, and functions. Christie (2010) argues that management is an organisational concept: it relates to structures and processes by which organisations meet their goals and central purpose. This implies that management is linked to the accountability of the functioning and the effectiveness of the organisation. Whilst leadership is associated with change, management is seen as maintenance of what already exists (Bush, 2007). Thus, unlike leadership that seeks to challenge the status quo in order to enable change and social inclusion in an organisation, management seeks to control and maintain the status quo of current organisational arrangements (Grant, 2014).

Moreover, Harris and Spillane (2008) associate management with planning, organising and controlling the organisational structures, policies and operations. Unlike leadership, which is said to be more strategic, that is to say, the leader has a purpose, beliefs, and commitment to what the school is and communicates it to others, management is more tactical (Coleman, 2003). This view is further clarified by Heystek et al. (2012) that a leader is inclined to more open discussion and is less restricted by policies but with management, one is more confined by rules, regulations and operate within the boundaries provided in a school situation. That is to say, managers are structurally bound and only perform what the policies require and they may take people to a new level because the rule requires it but without challenging these rules, and with no inspiration or motivation as leaders would do.

But does this mean management is not important in the school setting? To answer this, I now discuss how the two processes interrelate with each other in their everyday use.

2.9.3 Leadership and management as inseparable phenomena in the school setting

While acknowledging the view that leadership and management are two different phenomena, literature also reveals that the two are inseparable, and need to be integrated in the school setting. I contend that for a school to attain its objectives, the two should be carried concurrently in order to complement each other. My baseline for this argument is that solid management is necessary to support school leadership which in turn directs the school towards the development of its vision and mission. I align my argument to Bush (2011), who states that effective leadership and management are vital if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for students. In a practical and normative sense, leadership and management need to be given equal prominence in a school setting, as Christie (2010) asserts that for a school to be replete with good leadership it should be well managed and that principal should possess both leadership and management skills.

However, due to their overlapping nature, Grant (2014) argues that in policy and practice, the term management is used in preference of leadership; and perhaps if the distinction between the two is made, it is not explicit or probably could be a potential slippage in usage of the two terms. Even more, Coleman (2005) comments on this ambiguity that the two concepts are blurred together because it is often the same people who do both, leading and managing, thus it is difficult to decide which of their functions and actions would be labelled as leadership and which is management. However, Grant (2014) words it slightly differently as she contends that leadership and management cannot be conflated because leadership is infinite and not limited to formal authority like management. The central idea is that leadership and management are to be exercised sensibly with an understanding that leadership should not be reserved for the principal only, but should be devolved, shared, dispersed throughout the school, whilst management activities are also to be delegated with proper resources and accountability (Christie, 2010). The same view is expressed by Foster (1989), when he states that leadership and management are not interchangeable concepts though he does not deny that both are important in education. Therefore, I argue that leadership and management are not synonymous terms but both need to complement each other in the school setting. Like Grant (2012) I contend that both processes are needed for an organisation to prosper.

2.10 Traditional Views of Leadership

For some years leadership of the school has been theorised in terms of senior administrative posts. By this, Smyth (2004) maintains that from the traditional stance, leadership was taken for granted as a one-directional flow, from the leader to the led, that is from the principal to the school community without realising that anyone else in the school could be a leader and the principal a follower. This bureaucratic structure operated within the traditional views of leadership, which are the great man theory, trait approach, situational and contingency model approaches.

2.10.1 Great man theory

The belief of those who follow this theory is that leaders are born and not made. Drawing from Coleman (2005), leadership from this perspective is regarded as predestination and that a leader cannot be shaped whatsoever by effective leadership training. This idea implies that leadership is a built-in feature and not an external feature. This theory is more associated with the heroic leader, linked to a gender stereotype of a man, and thus it is known as the great man theory**.**

2.10.2 The trait theory

The trait theory holds the belief that a leader possesses certain qualities and attributes that may differentiate that particular individual from those who are not leaders. By this Coleman and Earley (2005) maintain that leaders may be identified based on a range of qualities that may define them as leaders, so this simply implies that leadership cannot be gained externally but it is something that people either have or do not have. The idea behind this approach is that there is a correlation between leadership behaviour and physical or personal qualities (Smyth, 2004). This simply implies that if one does not possess leadership qualities then that individual cannot be a leader. As such, these traditional leadership theories carry with them the hierarchical, positionality legacy, as people may believe that leaders are born.

2.10.3 Contextual, situational and contingency theories

These leadership approaches maintain that a leader's operation is determined by the situation and circumstances (Coleman & Earley, 2005). The idea held is that one leadership style might be a success in a favourable condition and less successful in an unfavourable condition. This approach views leadership in terms of function rather than in terms of traits (Smyth, 2004). Thus, in line

with this approach, if leadership is determined by the situation, Heystek et al. (2012) suggest that then a person may move between leadership and management depending on the situation.

2.10.4 Critiques of the traditional approach of leadership

Empirical evidence from research reveals that the traditional approaches to leadership discussed above are myths rather than facts. Smyth (2004) for example, indicates that leadership is not a matter of passive status or of mere possession of some combination of traits but that leadership is open to all (Lumby & Coleman, 2007). By this, Smyth further asserts that the qualities and skills required in a leader are determined by the situation. Similarly, it was found that contingency theory which requires leadership to be adjusted based on the context, offers little guidance on how one may adjust (Lumby & Coleman, 2007). As such, the situational approach was criticised for manipulating the employees of the organisations as the leader responds to the situation and the context. On that account, one of the contemporary approaches to leadership, distributed leadership became the leadership theory of choice for many, which serves as a lens through which school leaders can also be viewed.

2.11 Distributed Leadership

My point of destination from the understanding of leadership and management concepts as well as leadership theories, is to arrive at radical and creative thinking about leadership practices in schools. Moving beyond the idea of a positional leader or traditional views such as the great man and trait theory is just the tip of an iceberg. Leadership is more than just leaders and followers but it is about leadership-followership. It is about interaction rather than action. It is for this reason that this section views parents' leadership within the contemporary view of leadership, distributed leadership. First, I engage in the definitions before I discuss how parents' leadership fits in this envisaged leadership approach.

2.11.1 Defining distributed leadership

First, I want to indicate that like leadership, distributed leadership has no single definition. There seems to be competing and sometimes conflicting interpretations of the concept as the concept means different things to different people. It is often conflated with leadership descriptors such as shared, dispersed and collaborative and concepts such as democracy (Harris, 2008). However,

Harris (2004) argues that distributed leadership should not be viewed as a leadership practice or technique but rather a way of thinking about leadership; thus Spillane (2006) conceptualises distributed leadership as a kind of leadership that involves the many and not just the few.

In an attempt to define distributed leadership, Spillane (2005) contemplates that distributed leadership is not about leaders and their roles, function, routine and structures but it is viewed as a product of the interaction between leaders, followers, and situation. Implicit for this view is that leadership is constructed within interactions of people and it is a team focused rather than individual endeavour (Harris & Spillane, 2008). In this kind of leadership, leaders and followers are collaborating towards a group task accomplishment.

Another key idea is that the leadership role should not be restricted to people at the hierarchical and management position but should be a shared responsibility and be carried out by any member of an organization. This assertion resonates with Grant (2017) who argues that leadership cannot be equated with position or function or role but is rather a dynamic between individuals within an organization. The idea underpinning distributed leadership is that it does not give any privilege to any individual to have leadership roles than others as all have the potential to become leaders. Harris (2008) clarifies this view by stating that leadership does not only travel in a downwards direction but flows throughout the organizations, circulating up and down hierarchies. For that reason, Lumby (2013) argues that distributed leadership creates an opportunity for all members of an organization to assume leadership. The same idea is further articulated by Smyth (1989), who cites from the work of Foster (1986) that:

> Leadership can spring anywhere; it is not a quality that comes with an office or a person. Rather it derives from the context and idea of individuals who influence each other, thus the principal may at a time be a leader and at the other time a follower. (p. 191).

This evidence suggests that from a distributed perspective, every person at the entry-level can demonstrate leadership. And as Christie (2010) maintains, leadership should be at any level and built throughout the school, stretched and dispersed across people and function.

Moreover, Harris (2004) states that distributed leadership is not something "done" by an individual "to others", rather, it is a network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise. By that, leadership activities are stretched across the people and work collectively towards a common

goal. Similarly, Gronn (2002) theorises distributed leadership as fluid and emergent, rather than as a fixed, phenomenon. This means that leadership should be dispersed among the members of the school organization and that it should be stretched from anywhere, from bottom, centre and from top when possible.

Reflecting on this, distributed leadership is a counter view of traditional leadership that understands leadership in terms of position, status, and authority (Grant, 2006). However, this does not mean that structures within the organization are removed or redundant but only meant that leadership should be realised at all levels.

2.11.2 Features of distributed leadership

There are specific forms of distributed leadership that involve differing features and contexts, and some of these features overlap with other notions of leadership – collegiality, democratic, and so on, (Bennet, Wise, & Woods, 2003). However, Spillane (2008) suggests that some models such as shared leadership, team leadership, and democratic leadership should not be regarded as synonyms for distributed leadership as each of these is treated differently depending on the situation. I tend to agree with Spillane (2006) who asserts that though distributed leadership may allow shared leadership, distributed leadership means more than shared leadership as under distributed, the interaction among leaders, followers and the situation is very important.

From a distributed perspective, leadership is spread across multiple leaders who work separately but yet interdependently (Spillane, 2005). Leadership activity involves three essential elements, which are leaders, situation, and followers and it does not reside in any of the three alone (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). All of the three elements interact with leadership practice to take place. As suggested by Spillane (2006), distributed leadership takes its shape from the interaction of leaders and followers with their situation. Spillane further stresses that with distributed leadership, there is a leader plus other leaders at school. This notion emphasises the importance of other leaders apart from the formal leader in the system. The model below illustrates this interaction.

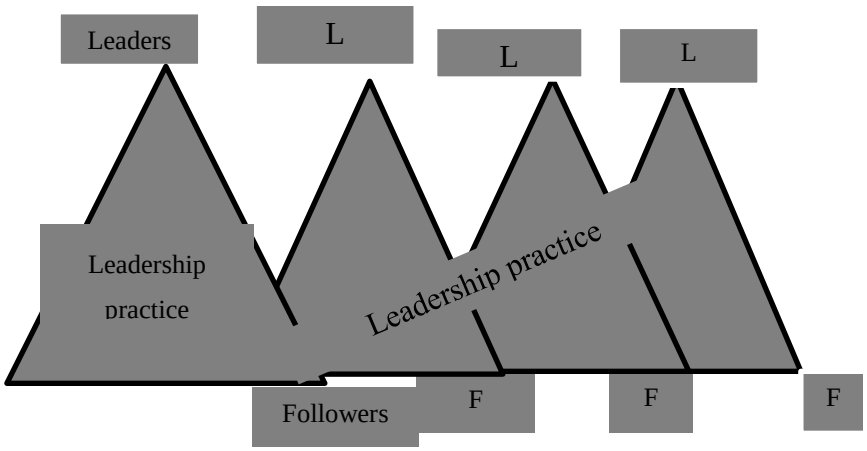


Figure 2.2: Leadership practice from a distributed perspective (adapted from Spillane, 2006, p. 3)

As illustrated by the model, leadership practice is constructed through the interaction of a leader with others who act in situations (Spillane, 2006).

2.11.3 Why distributed leadership is of interest to schools?

To the question of why distributed is of such interest to schools, literature reveals that schools need a new leadership approach if they are to improve their performance. Internationally, there is growing empirical evidence that there is a positive relationship between distributed leadership and school improvement and student learning.

Spillane (2005) suggests that distributed leadership is of interest due to its feature of multiple leaders. It acknowledges the work of individuals who contribute to leadership practice and this encourages all to participate in leadership. Gronn (2008) argues that distributed leadership lays the groundwork for democracy and helps to widen the span of employee and member participation which is the focus of this study. In a like manner, Grant (2017) asserts that distributed leadership bears a democratic distributed leadership type that encourages individuals to ask questions which challenges the status quo and raises issues of social inclusion and exclusion in schools. This, of course, enables a fluid and emerged leadership as the ultimate goal of leadership. According to

Williams (2011), distributed leadership is potentially unleashing leadership capacity for all school members as they are engaged in the interest of the school as an organisation.

Even more, the fact that distributed leadership is said to be an "emergent property" of a network of individuals extends the boundaries of leadership to involve a variety of expertise in the leadership roles. Harris (2004) confirms this by stating that distributed leadership is premised upon high levels of individuals' involvement and encompasses a wide variety of expertise, skills, and inputs which makes it a suitable leadership approach to schools. Its characteristics of collaboration, networking, and multi-agency working, gives it the potential to allow for the sharing of ideas and insight as it pulls in different experts in leadership practice.

Distributed leadership has a representational power, in that it represents the alternative approach to leadership (Harris & Spillane, 2008). That is to say, it is flexible enough to meet challenging challenges and new demands within the organisation. Williams (2011) maintains that distributed leadership is appreciated for its flexibility, making allowance for changing circumstances and emerging possibilities on which collaborative and interaction are encouraged. By this, stakeholders in schools may make use of this opportunity and have a voice to challenge the notion of positional and hierarchical leadership. However, despite these strengths, distributed leadership as a theory has some limitations that I discuss below.

2.11.4 Threats to the status quo of distributed leadership

While acknowledging that distributed leadership has become a preferred approach to leadership, it is also vital to consider its possible disadvantages and limitations. The first limitation is that there is a lack of clarity of what distributed leadership really is (Grant, 2017). Different terms and definitions are used interchangeably to refer to distributed leadership. As such, it is considered as a "catch" all term to describe any form of devolved, shared, participatory, or team leadership (Harris, 2008). The interchangeable use of the concepts has resulted in conceptual confusion and conceptual overlap (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Spillane (2005) further argues that some educators consider distributed leadership as a cure for all that affects the school. However, thinking about it in that way may not be right because distributed leadership, Spillane argues, is neither a blueprint for effective leadership nor a prescription for

how school leadership should be practiced but a tool for thinking about school leadership. The idea implies that distributed leadership is a tool that will not only be able to tell us who distributes what but how leadership is distributed and which patterns of distribution are the most influential and why (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Though a large body of normative work promotes distributed leadership as a 'good thing', there is no empirical evidence to show that lateral, less hierarchical staff structures are positively contributing to student performance (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

The idea that distributed leadership is fluid requires those in the formal position to relinquish their power to others. This may place those in leadership positions at a disadvantage, as they would no longer have direct control over certain activities (Harris, 2004). Harris further states that it is also difficult to decide on who to distribute responsibilities and authority to and how to distribute it. These decisions may take us back to top-down approaches as those in formal positions may still be the ones to ensure responsibilities are stretched over a number of individuals and ensure that tasks are accomplished through the interaction of multiple leaders, as distributed leadership is more silent on the issue of power relations (Harris, 2004).

Another critic is on the idea that leadership is emergent and fluid. Bennet et al. (2003) maintain that fluid leadership can only be enabled by trust and support; without support, the network of leaders may not be possible.

However, a solution to some of these challenges is offered by Grant (2017). She suggests that distributed leadership in schools can be framed within three possible types of distributed leadership, which are authorised distributed leadership, dispersed distributed leadership, and democratic distributed leadership. According to Grant (2017), authorised distributed leadership is where tasks are distributed from the principal to others in a hierarchical system but most importantly, it enables agency; by this, it means that individuals are able to encourage others to do what they could not have done without a leader. Dispersed leadership meanwhile, refers to a type of leadership that is not bound to the existing leadership structure. In this regard, formal structures may exist but people work together outside those vertical or hierarchical relations. Dispersed distributed leadership according to Grant is more bottom-up, more spontaneous, fluid and more

horizontal in working relations. Even more, democratic distributed leadership is a type of leadership that calls for school leaders (regardless of organisational position) to engage critically with the values, goals, and mission of the school and ask questions that challenge the status quo and raise issues of social inclusion and exclusion. With these three characteristics of distributed leadership, Grant suggests that in the context of South Africa, which is similar to Namibia, authorised distributed leadership can be a starting point, or else, distribution of leadership remains an ideal in schools. This, of course, leads to the ultimate goal, democratically distributed leadership.

Having looked at distributed leadership, its benefits and limitations, I now move on to a discussion of parents' leadership within the distributed leadership lens.

2.11.5 Parents' leadership from within a distributed leadership perspective

The relationship between parents' leadership and distributed leadership theory has not been explored, if it has, I did not come across such literature. However, by considering the features of these two concepts as conceptualised above, there seems to be a correlation between them.

Distributed leadership is premised on the idea of some form of collaboration and new form of external networking which shifts away from the assumption of the principal being the single leader of the school (Harris, 2004). The shift seems to respond to Harris and Spillane's (2008) question which asks; "How do we extend leadership distribution to parents, students, and the wider community" (p. 33). This question does not only advocate for democratic leadership but also for the extension of leadership activities to other members of the school, including parents. Parents' leadership calls for democracy which is one of the leadership practices that overlaps with Grant's (2017) category of democratic distributed leadership. Similarly, it also reinforces the current assumption about leadership, that it is a shared responsibility, as Hallinger (2018) suggests that in schools, leadership can be exercised by teachers, parents or even learners. Such assertions keep up with Harris (2004), who asserts that leadership is not restricted to an executive position and can be carried out by any member of the organisation.

Similarly, Brown and Duku (2008) argue that since leadership is associated with some element of shared, collaborative, or distributed leadership, then parents' leadership is one of the collaborative

forms of leadership. Collaboration is central to both parents' leadership and distributed leadership. As part of the school governance role, parents are expected to collaborate with other stakeholders in the realisation of school improvement and the allocation of resources (Brown & Duku, 2008). On the same token, Harris (2004) also asserts that collaboration is at the core of distribution theory as leadership emerges through interaction with other leaders. The same argument is equally true to Spillane (2005) who asserts that leadership practice can be spread across a web of leaders who work separately but yet independently. From this perspective, it is clear that parents' leadership can be viewed within the lens of distributed leadership.

Distributed leadership is premised on the idea of "involve the many and not the few" (Spillane, 2006, p. 4). Thus, the idea of moving beyond the principal as a single leader to include parents in the leadership activity is in keeping with distributed leadership. As Gronn (2002) suggests, leadership is not a function of what a school principal knows and does, but should be a joint interaction of the multiple leaders who take the leadership responsibility. It is therefore against this backdrop that parents are involved in order to tap from their expertise, skills and get their inputs regarding education.

Moreover, the parents' leadership concept is underpinned by distributed leadership as both are centered at enhancing participation in decision-making processes. Distributed leadership is concerned with the involvement of a wider community in decision-making (Gronn, 2002) and parents' leadership begins with the involvement of parents in decision-making, guided by the legislative framework. As stated earlier, involvement focuses more on involving parents in formal and informal activities (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Through involvement, they collaboratively participate in decision-making and other school-related activities with teachers. This terrain resonates well with the distribution perspective, which acknowledges that distributed leadership can be realised through formal and informal groups or activities (Gronn, 2002). On that account, the leadership role is shared, rotated and used sequentially as it is with distributed leadership theory (Harris, 2004). It is clear that the emphasis of parents' leadership is on collective action, empowerment and shared agency as reflected in distributed leadership theory. In this regard, Vennebo and Ottesen (2013) maintain that leadership is invested in and negotiated between people as they carry out their work and it emerges as aspects of activities. This implies that distributed

leadership is an outcome of relations in an organisation, and this brings us to the aspect of interaction between individuals and the environment.

If collective action and collaboration through interaction is central to parents' leadership and distributed theory, then it creates a conceptual link of these concepts with cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) which is also centred on the idea that humans act collectively, communicate in and via their actions (Foot, 2014). Drawing on CHAT, Vennebo and Ottesen (2013) argue that a distributed leadership perspective includes leaders, followers, and situations as a unit of analysis which incorporates the idea that leadership is a conjoint practice or activity. If it is so, distributed leadership cannot be disassociated from CHAT which also takes a notion of a collectively performed activity system as a unit of analysis. As such, Spillane (2004) contends that distributed leadership has proven to be useful in understanding human activity. The interaction experienced within the school team, carries the history of an activity and the use of the cultural-historical resource of the practice which are central to activity theory. It is therefore against this backdrop that this study is theoretically framed by Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) which emphasises that behaviour of actors in an activity system is embedded in a collectively, organised, artefact-mediated activity system. For now, I turn to the discussion of CHAT.

2.12 Cultural-Historical Activity Theory: The origins

Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) is a practiced based approach that seeks to analyse the activity system in which people are engaged to achieve a certain goal (Foot, 2014). The theory originates from the work of Russian social psychologist Lev Vygotsky in the 1920s. Vygotsky aimed at describing how the human mental process develops and is shaped through interactions with cultural, historical, and institutional settings. This implies that there is a relationship between an individual and the immediate environment. Through his theory, Vygotsky explains that the interaction of individuals with artefacts, tools, and social others in an environment is enabled by the mediated actions (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). Drawing from activity theory, Sannino, Daniels and Gutierrez (2009) assert that human life has its fundamental origins from partaking in human activities that are object-oriented. Object-oriented is defined by Yamagata-Lynch (2010) as the "mediational processes in which individuals and groups of individuals participate, driven by their

goals and motives, which may lead them to create or gain new artifacts or cultural tools intended to make the activity robust" (p. 3).

Over the years, the theory was extended further by post-Vygotsky scholars, like Alexander Romanovich Luria, Alexey Nikolayevich Leont'ev and Yrjö Engeström, who shifted the unit of analysis from an individual to an activity system (Engeström, 2001). Thus, the theory evolved through various generations; namely; the first generation, second and third generation, that I discuss below. However, for the purpose of this study, I employed the second generation of CHAT and I explain why the second generation is relevant to my study.

2.12.1 First generation of CHAT

The first generation of activity theory is developed from the work of Vygotsky, based on the idea that individual mental processes are shaped by the interaction with the artefact or tools and social others in an environment (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). By this, Vygotsky believed that a human act is not just a response to an environment but is mediated by a cultural component, thus an individual could not be understood without the cultural means. The triangle below illustrates Vygotsky's basic mediated action which represents the first generation of CHAT.

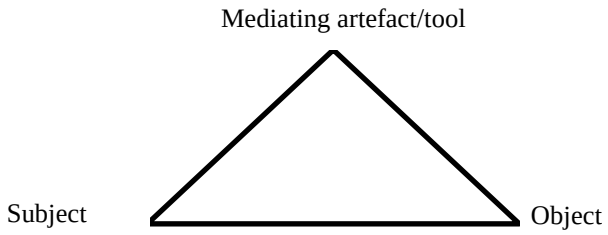


Figure 2.3: Vygotsky's basic mediated action triangle (from Yamagata-Lynch, 2010, p. 17)

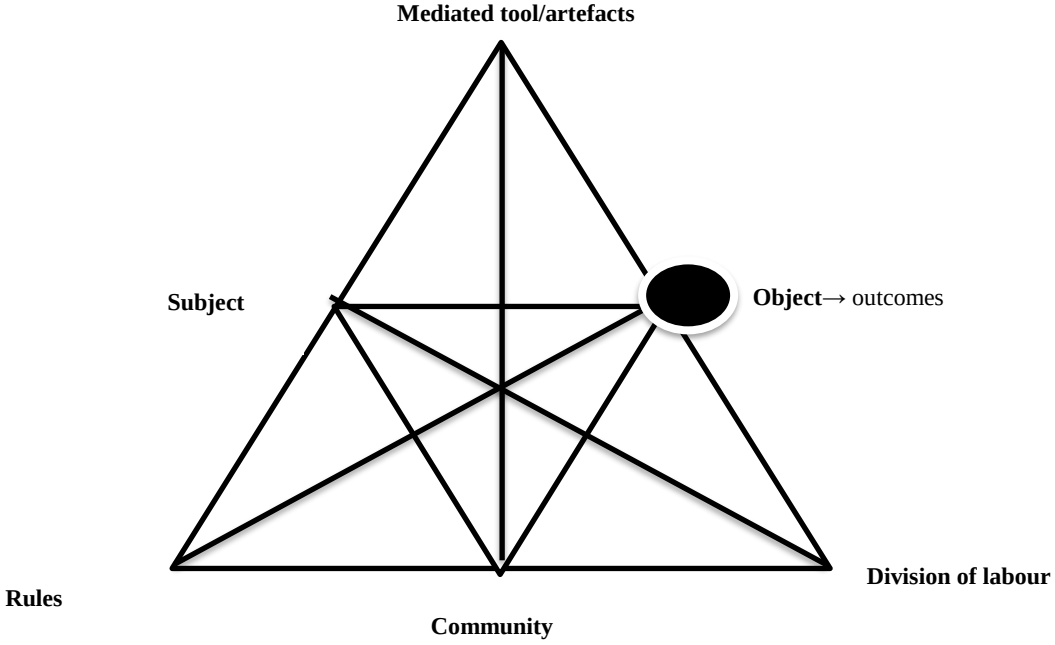
From the triangle**,** the subject represents an individual who interacts with the object, drawing on mediated artefacts through mediated action. Vygotsky used this triangle to explain that human mental development does not rely on stimulus-response association but is enabled by mediated action through the interaction with artefacts, tools, and social others in an environment and results in individuals finding new meanings in their world (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). However, Yamagata-Lynch further asserts that Vygotsky's theory was critiqued that it was too individually-

focused and did not sufficiently address the individual's influence on the social environment or cultural evolutions. It is on this basis that post-Vygotsky scholars extended it further to second generation as discussed below.

2.12.2 Second generation of CHAT

The second generation was developed by Vygotsky post-scholars, Luria and Leont'ev and built on Leont'ev's notion of activity system which emphasises the collectivist perspective and on action or intervention in order to develop practice (Ellis, Edward, & Smagorinsky, 2010).

Figure 2.4: The second generation CHAT model (adapted from Engeström, 2016, p. 45)



According to Ellis et al. (2010), Leont'ev broadens the subject-mediation-object triad of Vygotsky by introducing the human activity, on which three elements: rules, community, and division of labour were added to the unit of analysis. This expansion emphasises that the unity of analysis is distributed among multiple individuals and objects in an environment. The focal idea is that an activity is collectively performed rather than an individual action. As defined by Foot (2014), the term activity refers to what people do collectively rather than referring to a single unit. Foot further

explains the activity systems as multi-voiced, in which the activity is undertaken by actors with differing roles, positions, and perspectives. Similarly, Gretsche, Ramugond and Galvaan (2015) refer to an activity as "the doing of people, together, that is modified by history and culture, and situated in context" (p. 52).

It is also imperative to state that the second generation of CHAT also emphasises the importance of the internal contradictions as the driving force for change and development of the activity system, which implies that contradictions are vital in keeping an object moving, motivating future generating targets (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). Its dynamic aspect arises from the subject-object as it forms a dialectic unit, which is regarded as an engine of change (Roth, 2009). Thus, collective activity becomes more effective as there are emerging new objects that may be turned into a motive for learning.

As I stated earlier, this study was designed with one activity system which employed the second generation of CHAT. CHAT's second-generation allowed me to examine the interaction of various components of this activity system, parents' leadership. It is a suitable tool to define the historical and cultural influence of the leadership at the school because as per a CHAT perspective, all human activities are encultured (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). Therefore, I trace the history of parents' participation within the school governance by means of what tools are used and how they are employed and possibly how they constrain or enable the human activity within this activity system. From the model, the subjects are parents in the School Board who are working in relation to the SMT and other parents. These parents are object-oriented as they work towards achieving a better understanding of parents' leadership in school which is mediated by various mediated artefacts such as language, culture, etc. The second-generation analytical lens examines the second plane of sociocultural analysis, which is interpersonal. The interpersonal plane as explained by Yamagata-Lynch (2010) refers to a group of individuals who engage in collaborative initiatives. Thus, the subjects, in this case, are collaboratively working with other stakeholders such as SMT members and other parents to generate novel initiatives about parents' leadership.

For now, I explain how the second generation activity theory is relevant to my study.

2.12.3 The merits of using CHAT in this study.

As I became familiar with the second generation of CHAT, I realised the merit in using CHAT not only as a theoretical lens to examine parents' leadership as an activity system, but also to understand it within the distributed leadership construction. The second generation provides a conceptual lens for understanding how parents' leadership is practiced and enhanced culturally and historically at school. Understanding the cultural-historical aspect helps to understand how people make sense of the situation, which could be attained by identifying how cultural-historical aspects and various components of the system influence parents' leadership and participation in school (Foot, 2014). Even more, CHAT is a useful lens for enabling the understanding of the distributed leadership concepts like "the situation" through its consideration of tools, rules and the community, as well as by embracing the concept of division of labour which could be aligned to distributed leadership's concept of multiple leaders with different roles (Ho, 2015).

Drawing on Engeström, "activity systems analysis is a method to capture multi-mediational processes in human activity" (Yamagata- Lynch, 2010, p. 25). Thus, its principles of activity as highlighted by Engeström (2001) i.e. **unit of analysis, multi-voicedness, historicity, contradictions as a source of change and expansive learning**, provide the potential insight and understanding of the complexity of the parents' leadership processes in the school. Below I discuss the principles as summarised by Engeström (2001).

The first principle is that the prime unit of analysis is a collective, artefact-mediated and object-oriented activity system, as viewed in its network relations to other activity**.** It is on this basis that Foot (2014) suggests that the CHAT model of an activity system makes the analysis of a multitude of relations within an activity system possible, at a particular point in time as well as how it evolves over time. In the context of this study, the subject is the parents who are involved in the leadership practice of the School Board and are motivated to transform it into an outcome of understanding leadership practice better. The activity system helped me to analyse the system of the parents' leadership, not as a single unit but as complex phenomena which focuses on the system as a whole, analysing it in relation to multiple dimensions such as cultural and historical aspects as suggested by Foot (2014). Therefore, the analysis focused on the interaction of the parent School Board Members, teacher School Board Members, as well as the SMT members and this revealed the

opportunities for the parents, by questioning their relations with the whole community in order to be more responsive to their practices. By questioning, parents are able to take control of their situation, enabling them to be able to take ownership of the School Board decision-making.

The second principle is the multi-voicedness of the activity system (Engeström, 2001). In fact, the system is made up of multiple perspectives and interests from various actors within an activity system that forms the community of practice. This community facilitates learning as the participants learn from each other. As Vennebo and Ottesen (2012) suggest, different individual views, or perspectives, of those participating in collective activities may result in tensions or even conflicts among participants as their voices collide and merge. Such disturbances may be resolved through collective efforts. This enables parents, teachers and School Management Team (SMT) members to create potential opportunities to learn collectively, communicate in and via their actions. Their perspectives contribute to leadership emergence as the initiatives and preferences become privileged.

Engeström (2001) further lists historicity as the third principle of CHAT. In order to grasp an understanding of the activity system, an analysis needs to consider the historical trajectories in order to take into account the particular cultural-historical context within which the activity system forms and its evolution over time (Foot, 2014). Analysis of the parents' leadership in school is invaluable as it helps to understand the key actions that shape the system today and how it catalyses its future development. Thus, I found CHAT to be relevant as an analytical tool as it provided a framework to grasp a nuanced understanding of the parents' leadership system in the school by taking its historical perspective into consideration. The parent and teacher School Board members, and the SMT members were able to analyse the historical roots of the current practice which helped them to model the new solutions in order to transform it.

The fourth principle is the central role of contradictions as sources of change and development. Contradictions are a hallmark of CHAT because they are a source of change and development in the activity system (Nunezi, 2014). Contradictions are "historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems" (Engeström, 2001, p. 137). By this, Foot (2014) explains that contradictions are not weaknesses, not points of failure or deficits in the activity system, not obstacles to be overcome in order to achieve goal and not problems to be 'fixed'

quickly, but they are starting points of innovation that capacitate the development of an activity system. By taking this into consideration, the root causes of the challenges that constrain parents' leadership in schools were explored in order to shift this to a level of contradictions. As they attempt to deal with such emerging disturbances, it becomes their driving force to expand their object. As Engeström and Sannino (2010) assert, contradictions provoke actions when actors engage in object-oriented activity, thus become the driving forces of development which turns into a motive for change. It was on this basis that I found this principle worth taking into consideration as it enables the parents and SMT members to consider the emerged contradictions as a point of departure to transform their activity system. This is possible, as contradictions are seen as a source of development within an activity system which reveals opportunities for creative innovation, for new ways of structuring and enacting the activity (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). Although there are four levels of contradictions; primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary, I only focused on primary and secondary contradictions which develop on one activity system and which I found to be applicable to this study, as I only focused on one activity system. Primary contradictions rest within one element of an activity system, while secondary contradictions take place when two nodes of the activity system conflict with one another (Foot, 2014).

The fifth principle pronounces the possibility of expansive transformations in activity systems. Implicit in this principle is the view that, from the aggravated contradictions, some individual participants begin to question and deviate from the established norms (Engeström, 2001). In so doing, participants embark on a collective journey, through what is termed by Vygotsky as Zone of Proximal Development in which they generate solutions. The Zone of Proximal Development is referred to as an area between an activity system's present and foreseeable future, in which contradictions are expansively resolved (Foot, 2014). Roth and Lee (2009) give a definition of Zone of Proximal Development as the distance between the actions of an individual and the historically new forms of societal activity created in collaboration (p. 205). Collaborative and collective efforts in generating solutions modify and shift the participants' way of thinking, thus they began to work towards a new vision. Engeström (2016) suggests that "the idea of shifts implies the possibility of a radical expansion of the scope and impact of learning in an activity system" (p. 9).

Adding to that, expansive transformation is sustained by the principle of double stimulation. Double stimulation is a method and a principle of volition and agency (Sannino, Engeström, & Lemos, 2016). With the double stimulation principle, new interesting avenues for further research are triggered by two stimuli; first and second – of which the first stimulus paralyses the conflict of motives which triggers the interest of learning (Sannino, 2005) while the second stimulus helps the subject to control and transform the problematic situation. Through these, participants begin to learn expansively and may become an agency in transforming the action to activity (Engeström & Sannino, 2010), the expansive learning process I discuss later in this section.

Finally, I want to remind the reader that this study is an intervention form of study. Intervention, as defined by Engeström and Sannino (2010), is "a purposeful action by a human agent to create change" (p. 15). Intervention research aims at the possibility of going beyond what is apparent, digging deeper to surface the causes of tension and exploring the generative solutions. To attain this, there is a need to understand the historical-cultural aspects of the activity. Thus, this makes CHAT relevant to this study, as my purpose is to analyse the activity system of parents' leadership in its totality so that novel solutions can be constructed. This study worked towards transforming parents individually and collectively in their leadership activity through a formative intervention method, the Change Laboratory. During the Change Laboratory process, participants engaged in dialogue to examine their current practices and map out the future for the leadership in the school. This, of course, enhanced the learning of new skills and concepts, thus leading to what is termed as expansive learning and its core quality transformative agency in work settings (Sannino et al., 2016). However, for now, I turn to enlighten the reader about what a Change Laboratory is before I engage with expansive learning and its core quality, transformative agency.

2.13 Change Laboratory Workshops (CLWs) as formative interventions

Change Laboratory is a formative intervention method where the participants collaborate with the interventionist-researcher to develop new practices for an activity (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) further assert that CLW is a tool kit for envisioning, designing and experimenting with the new form of work. Change Laboratory is underpinned by the expansive learning cycle, which I explain later in this section. Drawing from this, I, as the researcher-interventionist worked in successive CLWs to work out the potential new ways in which parents'

leadership could be experimented in, in the school. The need for intervention arises from the existing disturbances and ruptures in the activity system, with the purpose of overcoming them. Thus, Change Laboratory and other formative interventions are driven by existing contradictions and historical possibilities in the activity (Ploettner & Tresseras, 2016). Based on this, the emerging contradictions and disturbances that are hindering the leadership of parents in the school served as a point of departure for participants to generate solutions to them. Taking in mind that contradictions are not problems to be quickly fixed, it required the participants to become the agents of change where they shared new tools, rules and reconsidered the division of labour, especially with the SMT members and teacher School Board members.

Moreover, agreeing with Engeström (2016), as the researcher-interventionist, I did not own, control or have the monopoly of the process, but the process should be locally controlled by the participants. Therefore, I only provoked and led the transformation process while the participants themselves collaborated to analyse and design a new model. By doing this, participants followed a set of three overlapping surfaces as articulated by Virkkunen and Newnham (2013), which support the CLW, represented as past, present, and future.

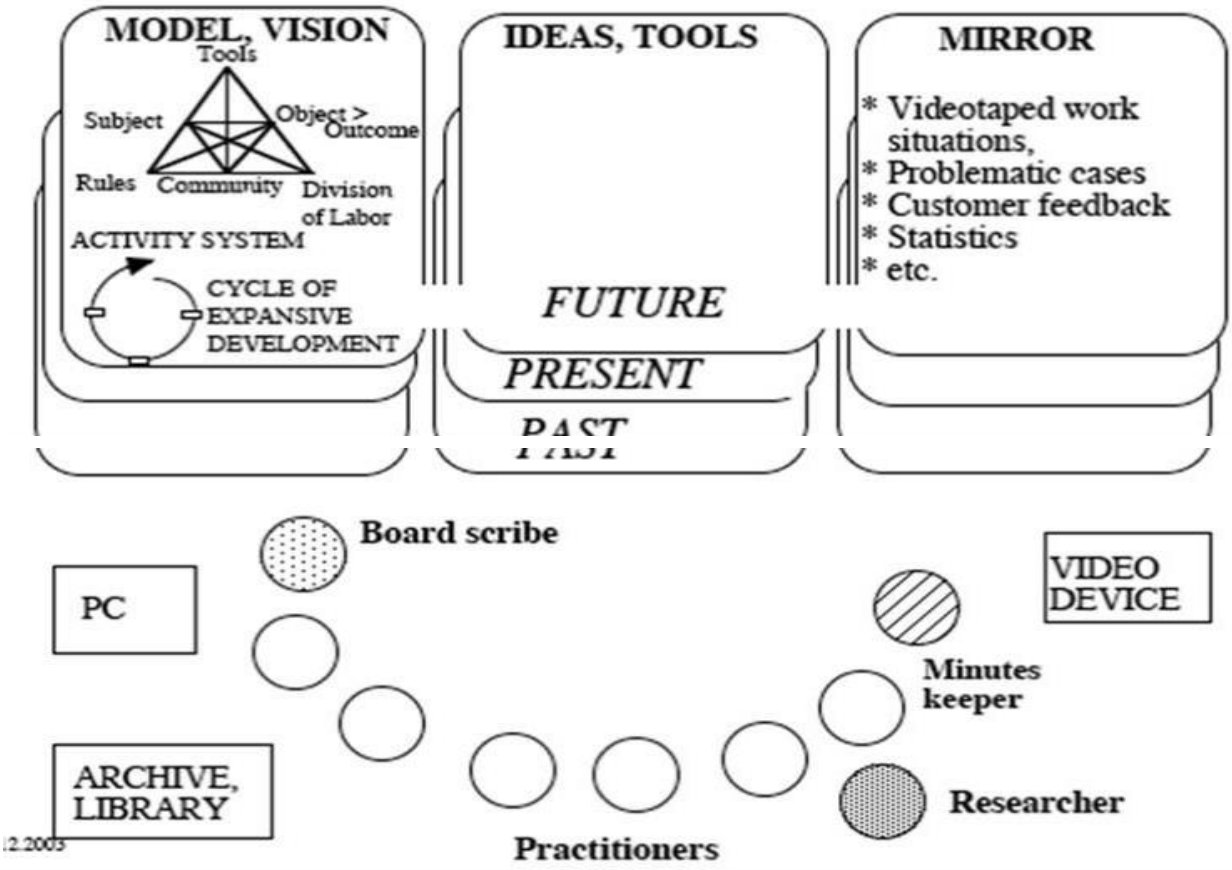


Figure 2.5: Layout of a Change Laboratoryspace (adapted from Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013, p. 16)

The 3x3 set of surfaces helps participants to share and jointly process their observations and ideas (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). Participants may reflect on their current practices about the activity; examine their experience, problem situation, and disturbances. As Penuel (2014) argues, the primary object of design is not to arrive at finality but rather to expand the agency of participants as they engage directly with contradictions. Through these reflections, the possibility of building a future form of activity is opened up. To elaborate, the process of Change Laboratory begins with the discussion of the participants' current practice which is represented in **Mirror/Present surface** before they reflect on the historical change of the activity in **Mirror/Past** surface. Afterward, participants discuss follow ups concerning participants' experiments with new concepts, with which they begin to build a future form of the activity in the **Mirror Future surface** (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). Most importantly, participants may become transformative

agents in terms of developing parents' leadership in school as Engeström (2016) argues that a key outcome to formative interventions is an agency. However, it is worth stating that CLW outcomes are not predetermined by the interventionist but designed by the participants as they work out the expansive solutions (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). I, therefore, for now, turn to expansive learning.

2.14 Expansive learning

As I explained above, actors within the activity system engage in collaborative efforts to identify contradictions and eventually seek novel solutions. In so doing, their actions are creating possible avenues for expansive learning. Sannino et al. (2016) define expansive learning as a creative type of learning in which learners join their forces to create something novel. The core idea in this theory is that learners learn something which is not yet there. Engeström (2016) states that expansive learning focuses on learning processes, in which the very subject of learning is transformed from an individual to a collective activity system. Applying this to my study, expansive learning theory became a framework for my study to direct the participants to expand their learning process. The contradictions found served as a catalyst to direct their efforts to conceptualise their understanding of parents' leadership. As they embarked on the learning process, new realities and new activities were generated, and these were not predetermined (Ploettner & Tresseras, 2016), as nobody really knew what needed to be learned (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). The theory of expansive learning implies that learning is ascending from abstract to concrete, and learning is achieved through specific epistemic or learning actions as depicted in Figure 2.6, which forms an expansive cycle. Expansive learning may lead to a new, expanded object of learning as learners go through these seven expansive learning actions (Sannino et al., 2016).

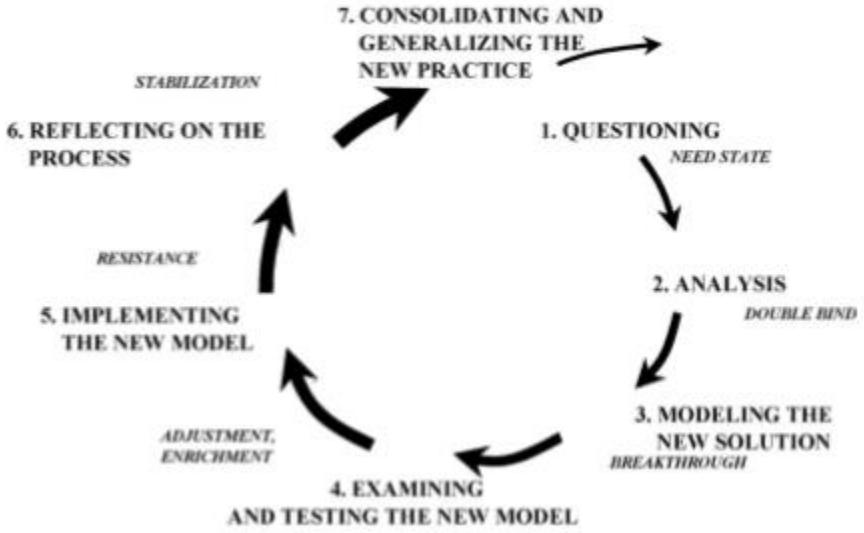


Figure 2.6: Ideal-typical cycle of expansive learning (from Engeström, 2016, p. 110)

In this study, the expansive learning actions are realised through the successive Change Laboratory Workshops. Though learning actions are in a cyclical form, learning may not be necessarily linear (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). However, here I present the learning actions as depicted in the model.

The first action involves criticising and rejecting some aspects of the accepted practice and existing wisdom, this action is called **questioning**. During this action, participants demonstrate the power of resisting the findings and question if they are genuine or not. The action is characterised by debates resulting from disagreement and misunderstanding and contradictory views as learners engage in the learning process (Sannino et al., 2016).

The second action is that of **analysis**. The analysis evokes the "why" in order to identify causes and explanatory principles by tracing its inner origin and evolution or by constructing the actual empirical analysis (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). This action involves the discovery process as participants embark on the analysis of the situation in an attempt to look back at their practices,

work out the constraints and the inner contradictions that in this study, hampered parents' participation.

The third action is that of **modeling**, participants model the newly found solutions in some publicly observable and transmittable medium**.** In this action, there is a possibility of generating the local initiated appropriate solutions (Sannino et al., 2006). These solutions can be short term, medium or long term. However, this depends on the solution generated. Sannino et al. (2006) suggest that three generative dimensions may be observed, that is local continuity which is created in the site of intervention, domain appropriation, created in other sites and cultural context within the given domain of activity and then finally, method appropriate which manifests when other interventions and research studies develop further methods of analysis. Appropriate to this study is local continuity which was created by the participants at the site school.

Examining the model represents the fourth action. Here, the model is run, experimented and operated in order to grasp its dynamic, potential and limitations. This action contextualises the generative solution to see what works and what does not. Participants may consider the possibilities and constraining factors that may prevent them from implementing their new models.

The fifth one is **implementing** the model through practical application, enrichment, and conceptual extension. Sixth and seventh are those of **reflecting** on and **evaluating** the process and **consolidating** its outcome into a new stable form of practice.

These learning actions are provoked by contradictions. When learners pursue learning actions, they construct new motives. As they further embark on expansive learning actions, expansive learning offers a new framework which then requires breaking away from the given frame and the initiative to transform it, which is transformative agency (Sannino et al., 2016).

2.15 Transformative agency

Drawing from expansive learning theory, Penuel (2014) argues that the primary object of design is not to arrive at finality but rather to expand the agency of participants as they engage directly with contradictions. Possibly, participants may become transformative agents in terms of developing parents' leadership in school, as Sannino et al. (2016) argue that transformative agency

is a core quality of expansive learning which manifests when the learners encounter with and examine the disturbances, conflicts, and contradictions in the collective activity (Haapasaari, Engeström, & Kerosuo, 2014). As I mentioned earlier, Virkkunen (2006) defines transformative agency as "breaking away from the given frame of action and taking the initiative to transform it" (p. 49). It requires learners (in this case parents) to break away from their normal practices so that they take new initiatives to transform the situation. Parents and SMT members may become agencies of leadership as they explicate and envision the new possibilities about the leadership practice. To become an agency, they seek the possibilities collectively rather than the individually.

Haapasaari et al. (2014) maintain that transformative agency can be realised through agentive transformative expressions that evolve from resistance and criticism towards consequential change actions. Six agentive transformative actions as summarised by Engeström and Sannino (2014, p. 125) and Haapasaari et al. (2014, p. 39) are defined in the CHAT literature. These six types of transformative agency expressions are *resistance, criticism, explicating new possibilities, envisioning new patterns or models for the activity, committing to take actions and then take consequential actions* to change the activity system. These actions evolve over time, moving from rudimentary expressions of resistance toward envisioning, committing, and taking consequential change actions. By so doing, participants engage in a learning process as they move from individual initiatives to more collective forms of transformative agency (Haapasaari et al., 2014). In the context of this study, both parents and SMT members collectively engaged in an open dialogue to express their needs, concerns, as well as suggest potential solutions to their problems. As they engaged in this dialogical interaction, the transformative agency through the aforementioned transformative expression was manifested.

2.16 Shortcomings of CHAT

Not everyone interested in activity theory accepts Engeström's theory of an activity system. Engeström's model "is criticized that it includes the term "community' and "system" but its purpose does not support a general and abstracted account of organizations" (Blackler, 2009, p. 29). In addition, Blackler further contends that Engeström emphasises that it is an individual who experiences the dilemmas, contradictions and performance shortcomings but yet the solution can only be developed collectively. This view suggests that the analysis should be extended to

cultural roots of practices and those organisations and subsections should be treated as activity systems in their own right, however, practices in organisations need to be located within their broader context.

Its principle of expansive learning is criticised for the idea that learning is mediated by specific tools and signs. Engeström (2016) argues that computerisation and digitalisation determines the nature and possibilities of human activity and takes the cultural mediated tools out of proportion. Engeström further states that digital media ignores what media are used for, what ends and objects they serve and consequently, ignores the internal contradictions of objects. Criticising this view further is Engeström and Sannino (2010), who argue that despite that computerisation may offer new possibilities for the implementation of suggested solutions, it can also be used as an excuse to avoid or postpone such changes in collaboration and division of labour.

Moreover, expansive learning is also criticised because it does not engage with the concept of power. Engeström and Sannino (2010) assert that it can be possible that expansive learning may be static if practitioners begin to question but eventually start to keep quiet. To them, expansive learning might come to halt as there are barriers to continuity which can make expansive learning impossible. Based on this account, power can be viewed as an instrument and an outcome in the pursuit of an object and not as a root cause of the event.

2.17 Conclusion

This chapter began by defining the concepts of parents' involvement, parents' participation, and empowerment before the exploration of the parents' leadership concept. To locate parents' leadership within the leadership field, the chapter reviewed literature about leadership and management, starting with the definitions, then moved to draw the line between the two concepts. It was then after this, that the chapter went on by drawing from the concept that frames the study, distributed leadership. A discussion on distributed leadership was made, looking at how critiques shifted the focus from hierarchal leadership theories to a network of leaders. Thus, the chapter discussed how distributed leadership emerged, its definitions, features and then why it is a necessity to schools. Despite it being regarded as a leadership approach choice to many, it has also some shortcomings which formed part of the discussion in the chapter. Finally, the theory underpinning this study, CHAT was discussed. Its origin was presented as drawn from various

literatures. The chapter concluded after presenting CHAT's generations, its relevancy to this study and thereafter discussed its shortcomings.

The next chapter will focus on the methodology used.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the research design and methodology in order to give the reader a layout and the plans used in the study. Methodology as defined by O'Leary (2004), is a framework associated with a particular set of paradigmatic assumptions that can be used to conduct research, while a research design is a sequence detailed plan of the study to be followed in the research. Thus, to begin with, the chapter presents the research goal and questions that guided the study and thereafter, discusses the research approach that framed the study. A discussion of the research site and participants is provided before I present the sampling matters. Furthermore, the chapter briefly deliberates about the techniques employed in generating the data and then briefly moves on to reflect how trustworthiness, as well as ethical issues, were taken into consideration, before concluding with the challenges faced during the data gathering process.

3.2 Research Goal and Research Questions

Before I start with the overall plan of the chapter, I would like to remind the reader about my research goal and research questions. The main goal of this study is to explore parents' participation in the school governance and to understand and enhance parents' leadership opportunities in a school through a series of Change Laboratory Workshops. To achieve this, the study was guided by the following questions:

1. How is the concept of parents' leadership understood in the school?
2. Is parents' leadership practised by parents in the school, and if so how?
3. What are the parents' perceptions regarding their leadership roles in school governance?
4. What are the conditions that enable and/or constrain parents' leadership in the school?
5. What can be done to enhance the development of parents' leadership at the school?
6. What can a Change Laboratory Workshop process contribute to the leadership development of parents?

With this focus in mind, I now turn my attention to the research design and orientation of the study.

3.3 Research Design and Orientation

This study was designed in two phases, a contextual profiling phase and an intervention phase. Phase one was a description, largely interpretive in which I sought to get an understanding of parents' leadership; phase two was to go beyond phase one to an intervention. Phase two was more critical in nature and in terms of this study; my purpose was to go beyond uncovering the interpretation of the concept of parents' leadership and parents' participation through intervention.

This study was qualitatively designed while taking as the phenomenon of study the case of parents' leadership. Qualitative research is an approach which explores the attitudes, behaviours, and experience of the individuals or groups in an attempt to get an in-depth understanding of their world view about the phenomena under study (Dawson, 2009). The study is said to be qualitative because it enabled me to examine the views and perspectives of the participants about their understanding of the concepts parents' participation and parents' leadership. I adopted this approach because it enabled access to participants' life-world to discover their lived-experiences. The key interest for qualitative researchers as noted by Merriam (2009) is that it has its roots in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences. As such, I specifically focused on parent School Board members, teacher School Board members, and School Management Team (SMT) members, to examine their understanding of parents' leadership in order to get an insight into how leadership is practised among parents at the school. The aforesaid view is aligned to Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest and Namey (2011) who stress that qualitative research is effective in obtaining specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours, and social contexts of particular populations. In principle, this approach's ontology contends that knowledge is constructed and that there is no single truth as reality is interpreted by those involved in it (Robson & McCartan, 2011). As per this view, getting access to participants' reality enabled me to have multiple perspectives that in return helped me as a researcher to acquire understanding which was the central purpose of the first phase of the study. Thus, the study was bounded on one case – parents' leadership – in an attempt to understand the opinions and behaviours of the parents regarding parents' leadership.

As per the definition given by Flyvbjerg (2006), a case study is a detailed investigation of a single case or phenomena. My focus attention was to explore the complexity of the case study – parents' leadership – so that I could gain a holistic understanding of it in its entirety. The purpose of case studies is to dig deeper and analyse a situation. For me to get a deeper understanding of this single case, the study focused on unpacking the possible underlying factors that enabled and/or constrained parents' leadership in the school. In this study, I sought to understand the interactions, the experiences and the practices of the individuals which were fundamental to understanding the parents' leadership practices.

As a researcher-interventionist, I offered the participants an opportunity to engage in the critical learning process in order to generate solutions to current practices. It was through an intervention that the study began to challenge and critique in order to gain an understanding and break away from the current practices. Similarly, the study also aimed to bring change with the purpose of transforming and empowering parents. Taking this stance, my line of argument goes along with Kumar (2014), who suggests that a case study provides an in-depth understanding of a case, and the interactional dynamics within a unit of study, with the intention of generating generative solutions. Thus, based on this background, the nature of the study suggested that I take a critical stance, yet generative in nature.

A critical approach is the idea that research has an ethical obligation, such as helping to emancipate or liberate those who find themselves in situations that are immoral, unfair or unethical (Tracy, 2013). In respect of its ontology-epistemological position, I adopted a critical approach during the second phase of my study as I anticipated that the critical approach has transformative power. Highlighted by Bertram and Christiansen (2016), the critical approach seeks to change the situation, emancipate the disempowered, redress inequality and promote individual freedom within a democratic society. Similarly, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2010) point out that the purpose of the critical approach is to realise equality and democracy for all members of society which is the central focus that this study advocated for. Drawing from the given importance of a critical approach, the study sought to emancipate the parents to carry out their leadership role and for them to participate more fully in school decision-making.

Moreover, significant to this study is its generative potential as it fosters the generative reasoning among the participants that may initiate a generative solution to resolve the accumulative contradictions in the activity system as emphasised by Sannino et al. (2016). To remind the reader, contradictions have been defined by Engeström (2011) as "historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems" (p. 609). As a researcher-interventionist, I played a role in provoking and supporting the learning process that enabled participants to take learning into their own hands. In this case, a formative intervention tool called Change Laboratory was employed. This was done by bringing parents together in order to design something new.

Conclusively, a critical approach is in keeping with Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as both have a transformative agenda that seek to emancipate and bring about change.

My attention now turns to a discussion of the research site, sampling and research participants.

3.4 Research Site, Sampling and Research Participants

3.4.1 Research Site

The study was conducted at a rural, state combined school in Oshikoto region, Northern Namibia. The school offers grades 1-10 whereas grade 10 was only introduced since the beginning of this year (2019) with the implementation of the revised curriculum. This means that the school has four phases: Lower primary phase (Grade 1-3), Senior Primary phase (Grade 4-7), Junior Secondary (Grade 8-9) and Secondary phase (Grade 10). The secondary phase is expected to be extended further to Grade 11 next year (2020). At the time of the study, the school had a population of 628 learners and 30 teachers, including the principal. There were 13 members of the School Board, seven of whom were parents, two learners, and four teachers, including the principal. The composition of the parent School Board members was predominantly constituted of females as five parents were females and only two were males. The chairperson of the Board was a female. The School Management Team (SMT) consisted of eight members: three Heads of Department, the Principal and four co-opted members.

I chose the school for various reasons. The first reason was that the school is close-by to my workplace. This made it more convenient for me to travel regularly and to ensure that I reached the school after lessons, especially when I wanted to meet teachers and collect my data without

disrupting the normal schedules of the school. In addition, it afforded me an opportunity to gather my data without incurring the high traveling costs to and from the research site. Based on this choice, the school was conveniently sampled. To sample conveniently is to choose a sample that is easy for the researcher to reach (Bertram & Christiansen, 2016). The second reason is that the school is not too "rural" and still not too "urban" as it is located just outside the boundary of the town and yet it is not one of the furthest in the region. Considering the geographical location of the site, it helped to have a variety of parents in terms of socio-economic backgrounds and literacy levels.

A third reason was also that the principal of the school showed an interest and willingness to support me when I first introduced my study. Thus, this became another motivating factor for me to choose the school. As stated by Flick, von Kardorff and Steinke (2004), gatekeepers are the most important role players in qualitative studies; in this regard, the principal played an important role in enabling me as a researcher to easily meet parent School Board members, teacher School Board members and School Management Team (SMT) members in order for me to introduce my study.

A fourth and final reason was the fact that the school is a non-boarding school which makes it ideal because unlike the boarding schools that accommodate learners from distant places, the majority of parent School Board members were from the nearby area and were able to visit the school without incurring high transport costs, thus, making it easier for me to have access to parents.

3.4.2 Sampling of participants

A sampling plan is a design for how the source of data is chosen (Tracy, 2013). Since it is not possible to study the whole population, a smaller and more manageable number of the population should be chosen to represent the whole population under study (Dawson, 2009). Depending on the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under investigation, the researcher decides upon the size and sampling matters to be used (Cohen et al., 2010).

This research employed non-probability, purposive sampling in selecting the participants. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2012) define purposive sampling as "the process of selecting a sample that is

believed to be representative of a given population" (p. 141). Similarly, Cohen et al. (2010) state that non-probability selectivity is delivered by targeting a particular group with full knowledge or an experience of the case under study. Using my own judgment and the said definition, I hand-picked the parent School Board members as my main participants as I believed that they would be knowledgeable about the phenomena under study as they are part of the School Board as per the *Education Act 16 of 2001*. They were in a good position to provide in-depth information on how parents' leadership is understood and practised at school.

I chose a total number of 18 participants for my study. Since the study's focus was on the parents' leadership, my primary participants were seven parents from the School Board whom I considered to provide valuable data as their point of view is based on their experience. These seven participants were interviewed. As I stated earlier in Chapter Two, I employed the second generation of CHAT, which allowed me to examine the interaction of various components of the activity system. In line with the CHAT's principle of *multivoicedness* I decided to include the four Teachers' School Board members including the principal as well as seven additional SMT members, constituted as the community of significant others. The community of significant others, according to Yamagata-Lynch (2010), is a component of people who share an interest in, and are involved with, the subject (who are in this case parent School Board members) in order to achieve an intended object. I deliberately included all these in order to identify multiple voices and viewpoints within the activity system regarding the parents' leadership and participation.

The SMT members were chosen by virtue of their profession and the fact that they are also involved in the decision-making of the school. Being part of the SMT, made the SMT members ideal participants as they are accountable in making sure that leadership development takes place at school. Similarly, teacher School Board members are also suitable participants as they directly engage with parent School Board members in the decision-making during the School Board meetings, as well as in other school activities. Thus, they were considered suitable participants to have a better understanding of how parents' leadership is practised and developed at school.

3.5 Data Generation Process and Data Generating Tools

During phase one of the data gathering process, different generating tools were employed to ensure rich data was collected. The tools were given to different participants in order to get multiple

viewpoints about parents' leadership. Employing different data tools enhances trustworthiness as it taps a different perspective on the case study. Trustworthiness was enhanced in such a way that I crystallised the data that has emerged from different tools and participants in order to get a deeper understanding of the phenomena. Crystallisation, as noted by Maree (2014), is a strategy which enables us to see multiple realities as they emerge from various data gathering techniques and point of views.

Phase 1: Contextual profiling

The primary goal of phase one was to explore the understanding of the participants about the parents' leadership in order to get an insight into the past and present practice of parents' leadership at the school. Virkkunen (2012) refers to this phase as the "phase of analyzing from the surface level to the underlining basic contradictions" (p. 186). This phase lasted for about four weeks. It began in May 2019 when the school re-opened for term two. Document analysis and questionnaires were administered in May and the beginning of June 2019. The interviews began in June and concluded in July before I commenced with phase two. Phase one focused on addressing the first four questions:

1. How is the concept of parents' leadership understood in the school?
2. Is parents' leadership practiced by parents in the school, and if so how?
3. What are the parents' perceptions regarding their leadership roles in school governance?
4. What are the conditions that enable and/or constrain parents' leadership in the school?

Phase 2: Formative intervention

The purpose of this phase was to go beyond the information given in phase one in order to generate novel solutions to the problems that emerged during phase one of the study. During phase two I used Change Laboratory Workshops as a method for data generating and two data gathering tools, observation and questionnaire.

To remind the reader, this section focused on addressing the last two questions of the study:

5. What can be done to enhance the development of parents' leadership at the school?

6. How can a Change Laboratory Workshop process contribute to the leadership development of parents?

The first question for this phase (question 5) was addressed by the CLWs and observation while the second question for this phase (question 6) was addressed by the questionnaire.

Here I discuss the phase one gathering process and the tools employed.

3.5.1 Document analysis

The first data gathering method I administered was document analysis. Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as a systematic way of reviewing or evaluating documents, which could be either printed or electronic materials. This tool was relevant to use in my study because it afforded me an opportunity to get the background about the roles and functions of the parents in the School Board and compare it with the current status of the parents' leadership at the case study school. I analysed the regulation made under the *Education Act No. 16 of 2001* and the UNICEF School Board Manual to establish the opportunities and/or constraints within the policies. The document analysis schedule (see Appendix A) was used as a guide. With the permission of the school principal and School Board chairperson, I obtained the agenda for the School Board meetings, minutes of the previous School Board meetings to be able to trace parents' voices and to contextualise data which I collected by means of other methods such as an interview and questionnaire. With document analysis, Bowen (2009) stresses that it is used to examine information collected through other methods, as the researcher verify findings across a set of data to reduce potential bias that can exist in a single study.

I also felt it was important to gain access to school rules so that I found out if there was any provision for the parents' voices made in the disciplinary issues for the learners. In addition, I also obtained the school calendar of activity on which the activities schedules such as meetings and other activities for the School Board members were made. The school Financial Policy was also obtained as a term of reference for parents' voices on financial matters. By so doing, document analysis had the potential of revealing the historicity of the leadership within the School Board activity system. Document analysis was a suitable tool as Gay et al. (2012) argue that these sources of data can be used to gain valuable historical insights, identify potential trends, and explain how

things got to be the way they are. Thus, it was useful in providing the real picture of the parents' leadership and helped me to understand the historical roots of parents' leadership at the school, as well as conditions that affected the phenomenon under study.

Despite the document analysis relevancy, I also acknowledged its limitations as pinpointed by Creswell (2012), that sometimes documents may be incomplete, inauthentic, or inaccurate, for example in the case of the School Board meeting minutes, one may not claim its accuracy as members do not review the minutes afterward.

3.5.2 Administered questionnaire

To verify the findings from the document analysis, I administered questionnaires (see Appendix B). According to Bertram and Christiansen (2016), a questionnaire is a list of questions that the respondents have to answer. It is further described by Kothari (2009) as a set of forms with questions printed or typed in a definite order of which the respondents have to answer on their own. I made use of questionnaires that contained a combination of closed and open-ended questions focusing on the understanding of participants about parents' leadership and digging further to get an insight into the current leadership practice at the school. This allowed me to compare and expand the information gathered from the documents with the questionnaires in order to draw the conclusion on the understanding of the concept.

The advantage of open-ended questions is that "it puts the responsibility for, and ownership of, the data much more firmly into respondents' hands" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 475). Cohen et al. (2018) further state that open-ended questions might contain the 'gems' of information that otherwise might not be caught by closed-ended questions. The benefits of using both closed and open-ended questions are further pointed out by Bertram and Christiansen (2016), that these questions may help in gaining insight into how people live thus enabling me to get insight into how leadership is practiced at the school. In the same line, Creswell (2012) also suggests that open-ended responses allow a researcher to explore reasons for the closed-ended questions and identify any comments people might have that are beyond the responses of the closed-ended questions.

Before I administered the questionnaires, I was also aware that my questions might have some weaknesses. I therefore based my decision on the argument of Kothari (2009) who suggests that it

is advisable to conduct a pilot study which is a replica and rehearsal of the main study, meant to test and refine questions and survey techniques before the main study. I administered this in order to bring to light any weaknesses in terms of questions, as well as the wording of questions. To do this, I gave my questionnaires to two teachers and a principal at one of the nearby combined schools in the region with a similar environment to the case study school, in order to refine one or more aspects in the questionnaires before the final version. After the pilot study, I adjusted the questions accordingly as per the suggestions from the pilot participants. Most of the adjustments were mainly on the wording of the questions.

Though I found questionnaires suitable for the study I was also aware of the shortcomings, especially on using open-ended questions. Open-ended responses are not easy to analyse as respondents give too much information on which certain answers are too long and others too short. This information might be detached from the context and the setting in which people work and interact (Creswell, 2012).

3.5.2.1 Administration of questionnaires

On the 20th of May 2019, I visited the site school in order to introduce myself as a researcher, as well as to introduce my study and its purpose. On this first day, I made an appointment with the school principal in order to meet the teacher School Board members and the SMT members. The main purpose of meeting the participants was to introduce my study and to let the participants sign the consent letters (see Appendix C). Since I informed the principal that the meeting was supposed to not be too long, I was informed to go to school on Thursday, the 23rd of May 2019 at 10 am and use the 40 minutes for break time in order to meet the participants. On the 23rd of May, I found a well-arranged classroom in which I met seven of the secondary participants including the principal. The other four could not attend as one of them was on leave and three were busy preparing the African Day event activities. During this meeting, I also made an appointment to meet the participants in order to give them questionnaires. The date agreed was on Tuesday, the 28th of May. On the 28th of May, I went back to school and distributed the questionnaires; however, I was only able to collect them on Monday, 3rd June as participants could not complete them within three days.

Questionnaires were given to four teacher School Board members including the school principal and seven SMT members, which totalled 11 participants. All participants received the questionnaires as per my expectation as a researcher. Giving questionnaires with sufficient time (four days) to complete was done to avoid putting too much strain on the respondents, and to allow participants ample time to study and understand the questionnaires so that they could give well thought out answers as suggested by Kothari (2009) and Cohen et al. (2018) respectively. As teachers interact with parents on a day-to-day basis, they were in a good position to shed more light on how well the parents carry out their leadership roles in the school. The SMT members, in particular, stood a good chance to provide me with an insight into who normally takes decisions on the school-related activities, whether it is the School Board or the SMT.

During the process I also encountered the following shortcomings, one, not all the expected participants turned up for the first meeting where the introduction to the study was made. Only seven participants turned up for these introductory meetings. However, all of my (11) questionnaires were completed and returned despite some answers being too brief. Nevertheless, the questionnaire process helped me to obtain useful data which further assisted me in adjusting my interview questions and probe further as I was able to pick up the gaps from the provided responses. For now, I turn to discuss the interview process.

3.5.3 Interviews

Interview (see Appendix D) data collection involves "presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and replies in terms of oral-verbal responses" (Kothari, 2004, p. 97). The benefits of an interview which prompted me as a researcher to employ this tool was based on the argument singled out by Stake (2010) who states that the purpose of the interview is to enable the researcher to obtain unique information or interpretation based on participants' experiences, views and perceptions, as well as finding out about "a thing" that the researchers are unable to observe by themselves. Obtaining the experience of the participants who are involved in leadership would help me to get an insight into how their understandings influence their behaviours towards parents' leadership and participation. Thus, based on the nature of my study, the qualitative interview was considered appropriate since it is used when the researcher wants to gain in-depth knowledge from the participants about the phenomena under study (De Marrais & Lapan, 2004).

To probe further in an attempt to seek clarification from the participants, it was advantageous to employ semi-structured interviews in order to obtain rich data. Through probes or follow up questions, I was able to have a better picture of the parents' experience about parents' leadership. Bertram and Christiansen (2016) clearly state that interviews are essential in a critical study as it may raise awareness among the participants about the situation and will enable them to imagine a different situation. I, therefore, aligned my purpose to this argument so that I could create awareness among parents about parents' leadership and participation in order to create change.

To ensure the authenticity of the questions, I first gave the interview questions to my colleague who is an English and Oshiwambo teacher in order to ensure that the translation into the vernacular was properly done and that it did not change the intended meaning of the questions.

3.5.3.1 Administration of interviews

I administered a one-on-one semi-structured interview with all seven parent School Board members. However, the first meeting day I was only able to get access to four School Board parents as three of the parents did not turn up for the introductory meetings, thus could not sign the consent letters on that particular day. The reason for them to be absent was narrated by the principal. However, the principal gave me their mobile numbers to contact them and he promised to let them know that there would be a researcher who wanted to contact them.

The next day I contacted each one telephonically, first to ask if the principal had informed them about me as a researcher. All three indicated that they already expected a call from me. I then made an appointment to meet each of them at a time and place that was convenient in order to introduce myself, the purpose of the study and also to give them the consent letters. The next day, I met them individually at their convenient time and places. At my meeting with all these participants, a thorough introduction was made, all the ethical matters where explained including their right to withdraw any time they wished, as well as that the confidentiality issue would be upheld by the researcher. They all signed the consent letters (see Appendix E).

A week later I made the appointments with parents in order to agree upon the venue and the interview time. I took a week to complete the process. We could, however, not meet at school as the audio quality might be affected by the teachers' teaching echo, as well as by learners' voices

especially during break times. For this reason, the principal advised me to conduct interviews from the circuit office, which was only a few meters from the school; thus I made an arrangement for the venue with the circuit officials.

The first day I interviewed three participants; two participants during the second day and the other two on a different day. I met the first five parents at the circuit office but the other two were interviewed at their convenient places, which were their workplace and home respectively. However, I acknowledged the fact that parents were not full-time employees of the school. They had different commitments to attend to, and thus I was ready and prepared to meet them all at their convenient places and times. For this reason, I had to adjust to each participant's schedule, time and circumstances in order to ensure the interviews were carried out.

The interview was more appropriate to parents than questionnaires, especially with those who were unable to read and write in English. Thus, with six parents, the interview was conducted in the vernacular, Oshiwambo. However, there was one parent who was comfortable with English; therefore she agreed that it should be done in English.

Prior to the interview conversations, I shared a short introduction in which I made a self-disclosure in order to create a rapport with the participants. At the same time, I requested them to grant me permission to record the conversation. With the permission of the participants, I recorded the interview conversation with an audio-recorder and the cell phone. I deliberately used both devices so that if one failed, the other one was a backup.

After each interview, I immediately transcribed my data. Since the interviews were conducted in the vernacular, Oshiwambo, I gave the transcribed data from the six parents who were interviewed in the vernacular to a bilingual colleague (who translated the questions), to translate the data into English. Upon receiving the translated version, I tried to employ a "back translation" with few questions so that I could check how closely the English version was with the original, as Merriam (2009) suggests. This is to ensure that authenticity was maintained. To get a picture of the data gathering process, Figure 3.1 summaries the data gathering process during phase one.

Table 3.1: Summarising the data gathering process during phase 1

Phase/stage	**Tool**	**Data generated from**	**Question addressed**
Phase 1/stage 1	Piloting of questionnaires and interview questions	Teachers, principal, and parents for a neighbouring school	*To determine the suitability, quality, and validity of the questions in both interviews and questionnaires which enabled the adjustments*
Stage 2	Document analysis	Education Act, Agenda for School Board meetings, Minutes for School Board meetings, School financial policy, School rules, Calendar of activity	"*Is parents' leadership practiced by parents in school, and if so, how?*
	Questionnaire	Teacher School Board members, School Management Team (SMT)	*How is the concept of parents' leadership understood in the school?* *What are the conditions that enable/and constrain parents' leadership in school?* *What can be done to enhance the development of parents' leadership in school?*
	Analysing the questionnaire		*To detect the gap in order to adjust the interview questions*
	Interview	Parent School Board members	*How is parents' leadership understood by parents?* *What are the parents' perceptions regarding*

			their leadership roles in school governance?
Stage 3	Transcribing of interviews		*To detect the gap for follow up questions as well as to determine the necessity for an intervention*
Stage 4	Analysed data generated from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews		*To surface the emerging contradictions*

After completing phase 1, I moved on with the data analysis process in order to cross over to phase 2.

3.5.4 Change Laboratory Workshops

After completing phase 1 on which data was gathered through qualitative methods, I analysed the data to surface the challenges faced by parents on their leadership roles. The emerged challenges served as stimuli that provoked the need for the second phase. I embarked upon the second phase, which was six weeks long, aimed at taking intervention through Change Laboratory Workshops. To remind the reader, intervention is defined by Engeström (2011) as "purposeful action by a human agent to create change" (p. 606). By embracing an interventionist approach, I aimed at expansive learning for participants and its core quality transformative agency (Sannino et al., 2016). Thus, as a researcher interventionist, I collaboratively worked with the participants in four successive Change Laboratory Workshops. Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) define Change Laboratory as a method of formative intervention on which practitioners and the researcher-interventionist collaborate with the purpose of developing work activities. To elaborate, Change Laboratory Workshops are also data-gathering methods that I employed to address research

question five: *What can be done to enhance parents' leadership development in the school?* The essence of these workshops was to bring up a new form of learning which may capacitate enhancement of the current practice of the parents' leadership in school.

At the heart of CHAT, which is a theoretical framework underpinning the study, there is an idea that humans act collectively; they learn by doing and communicate in and via their actions (Foot, 2014). Significantly, these Change Laboratory Workshops are purposefully designed for participants to collaborate and learn from each other in order to expand their understanding and become the agency of change for their activity which is in this context, parents' leadership. The participants analysed and possibly expanded their knowledge by constructing a novel concept of parents' participation. Crucial in this process is that participants began step-by-step to learn expansively through expansive learning actions.

The final part of the Change Laboratory Workshops served as a space for me to evaluate the success of the CLWs which I conducted through a questionnaire. By this, I wanted the answers to my second question for this phase: *What can a Change Laboratory Workshop process contribute to the leadership development of parents?*

Below is the structure and design of the Change Laboratory Workshops undertaken.

3.5.5 The structure and the design of the Change Laboratory Workshops

I conducted four successive Change Laboratory Workshops. Two were conducted in July 2019, at the end of the second term while two Change Laboratory Workshops were conducted in September 2019 at the beginning of the third term. The starting time was 14h00 after normal school hours and lasted no longer than two hours. These CLWs were designed for both parent School Board members who were primary participants for this study, as well as for teacher School Board members and SMT members including the principal, who were the secondary participants in the study. However, though the expected participants were 18, the number of participants fluctuated between five and 11 in different CLWs, and this was due to some commitments that participants had to attend to. The venues of the CLWs alternated between the circuit office hall and a classroom in the site school which was determined by the circumstance of the day.

Table 3.2 with a short summary of the Change Laboratory Workshops as undertaken in the study.

Table 3.2: Short summary of Change Laboratory Workshops

Date &CLW #	**Participants**	**Purpose**
24/07/2019:CLW1	Primary and secondary participants	• Work out the ground rules • Plan for the next CLWs • Mirror the data as exposed from phase 1 (First stimulus) • Question the current practice
25/07/2019: CLW2	Primary and secondary participants	• To introduce the second stimulus (activity theory model and expansive learning cycle model • Analyse the challenges and surface contradictions
06/09/2019: CLW3	Primary and secondary participants	• To model new solutions
13/09/2019: CLW4	1st session (25 minutes) primary participants only Then primary and secondary participants	• Work out what matters most to them • Examining the new model

Next, I briefly discuss each Change Laboratory Workshop.

3.5.5.1 The first Change Laboratory Workshop (CLW1)

The first Change Laboratory Workshop was conducted on the 24th July 2019 and it started after normal school hours from 14h00. It was designed for all participants: parent School Board

members, SMT members and teacher School Board members including the principal. The selection of participants for the Change Laboratory Workshop was based on the work of Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) who state that participants should be those who are dealing with the same object in their daily work and are involved in the common outcome despite the differences in their occupations and their hierarchical position. Based on that reason, all participants (primary and secondary) had to be part of this CLW despite their differences. The important point I considered was that all were involved in the decision-making of the school. Thus, the session was attended by three primary participants (parents) and four secondary participants (teacher School Board members and SMT members including the principal).

Here the work was roughly divided into two sub-tasks. First, this session was meant as an introductory and preparatory session for the subsequent Change Laboratory Workshops. I regarded the preliminary planning important as it enabled flexibility, in case the participants wanted any change to be made on the plan. It was also vital that participants were well-informed so that they could decide on the participating processes on these sessions. Thus, the schedules for the next Change Laboratory Workshops were set up.

Moreover, the session further served as a platform to come up with the ground rules that guided all the sessions. At this stage, as the researcher-interventionist, I collaborated with the participants to come up with some guiding rules during the discussions. Importantly for this, it was decided that all participants should respect each other's views. During the discussion, I facilitated the session based on the idea of Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) who suggest that the early tasks of the CLW should be facilitated, pre-planned and proposed by the researcher-interventionist and then later, the participants may increasingly take the initiative in the tasks that need to be carried out. In addition, I also facilitated the session in order to respect the participants' decisions that I should facilitate, as they stated they would be more comfortable to discuss issues while seated.

Secondly, the other task during this session was for me to 'mirror' the challenges that emerged from the data as generated during phase 1, the contextual profiling. I used a PowerPoint presentation as a mediating tool to mirror the data. Drawing from Engeström, Sannino, and Virkkunen (2014), the challenges served as the first stimulus in the principle of double stimulation as participants were able to break out from the conflicting situation in order to change their

circumstance of the situation, which may lead to new outcomes that cannot be anticipated by me as an interventionist (Sannino et al., 2016). Sannino (2015) defines double stimulation as a principle of volition and agency which underlies formative intervention. Thus, double stimulation serves as a key for expansive learning, the process that began in this CLW.

Significantly, participants in this session discussed, questioned, and debated about the emerged challenges, the actions that led to expansive learning. Expansive learning is a learning in which the learners in this case parents are involved in constructing and implementing new, wider and more complex initiatives for their activity, and it includes collective learning actions (Engeström & Sannino, 2016). On account of that, the session was dominated mainly by the first expansive learning action, which is questioning. As participants engaged in discussion, I video recorded the discussion with the cell phone and with a laptop webcam device.

3.5.5.2 The second Change Laboratory Workshop (CLW2)

This session was conducted on the 25th July 2019 and it lasted for one hour thirty minutes. The same seven participants who attended the first session were all present for this session. The focal point for CLW2 was to introduce the second stimuli to the participants and to work out the root causes of the challenges as presented in the previous session.

In harnessing the understanding of the participants on the process and on the activity system, I introduced the thinking tools, i.e. the CHAT triangle, and the expansive learning cycle model which served as second stimuli to the participants. The two representational devices helped to facilitate the analysis of the current practice, the historicity of contradictions, current disturbances and work out possible solutions to the challenges faced. Confirming this assertion are Engeström et al. (2014) who assert that, through the double stimulation process, the subject, in this context parent School Board members, are able to transform a meaningless situation into a meaningful one. Thus, it was on this basis that I used the two models to aid participants in evoking their voices for the emergence of a fruitful conflict of motives. According to Engeström et al. (2014), conflict of motives is an impulse or desire to follow a certain action in pursuing a certain object. Thus, in this context, conflict of motives plays a role in the construction of new solutions to the challenges faced by parents' leadership development in the school. It was therefore against this that I

explained CHAT language and clarified how the activity system works with reference to parents as the subject in relation to various elements on the activity system. This was to enable participants to do a thorough analysis, go beyond what is apparent and create something novel for their activity system.

Engeström (2001) argues that "actions of questioning and analysis are aimed at finding and defining problems and contradictions behind them" (p. 152). Thus, the session was a platform from which participants began to surface the underlying factors that evolved as accumulated tensions. As the session progressed, I took field notes for the discussions and all the happenings throughout the session. The notes were also backed up by a video, recorded with a laptop webcam device. After a lengthy discussion that was characterised by debate and questioning, they uncovered four contradictions which they regarded as the root causes of the aforementioned challenges. These of course served as a point of departure for participants to become the transformative agency for their activity system as stated by Engeström and Sannino (2010), that contradictions are the driving force of transformation.

3.5.5.2.1 The administration of the video

Since I engaged in facilitating the sessions during this phase, with the permission of the participants, I was assisted by the circuit official to take a video and photographs for the presentation with a cell phone to consolidate the evidence. I also recorded the conversation with a laptop which I stationed on the desk and only turned it to face the participants when they were busy speaking. Video recording had an advantage as it enabled me to comment on all of the non-verbal communication that was taking place in addition to the spoken words. After the session, I immediately transcribed the video and then gave the transcribed version to a bilingual colleague to translate into English.

3.5.5.3 Change Laboratory Workshop three (CLW3): Focusing on modeling action

The CLW3 was conducted on the 6th September 2019, after normal school hours as from 14:00. It was attended by eight participants (5 parent School Board members and three from the SMT, teacher School Board and an HOD). This session was designed for modelling purposes. According to Engeström (2016), modelling means "constructing an explicit, simplified model of the new idea

that explains and offers a solution to the problematic situation" (p. 47). Thus, in this session, collectively, participants began the modelling process to work out solutions to the challenges stated. Participants discussed solutions in pairs and each pair suggested the possible solutions to four contradictions surfaced in the previous session. While the participants were leading the discussions, as the researcher-interventionist, I was notating the possible solutions as suggested by participants on the chalkboard and at the same time taking notes of the discussion in my journal. However, the modelling action was not finalised in this CLW due to time constraints. Though participants came up with clustered ideas from their pairs that they considered as possible solutions, the stage of deciding which mattered most from the list was not reached. Besides, they needed to consider which solutions were doable, of which a model would be created. Thus, modelling action had progressed to CLW4.

3.5.5.4 The Change Laboratory Workshop 4(CLW4)

The last Change Laboratory Workshop (CLW4) was held on the 13th September 2019. The session was designed to finalise the modelling process and to examine the model afterward, thus it was divided into two half sessions. The first 25 minutes were meant for and attended by primary participants (parent School Board members) only. The first half was held in a circuit hall and then moved to a classroom in the school for the second half of the session. The SMT members and teacher School Board members joined the session later. I purposefully excluded the secondary participants from the first half of this CLW to allow parents to decide what mattered most to them. The motive behind this was to avoid power differentiations between parents and teachers. This view was informed by Dawson (2009), who stresses that "if someone is in a position of power they should not be included in the group as it may stop others airing their opinions" (p. 86). As such, it was ideal to allow parents to discuss without any influence from the teachers. Similarly, I also believed that parents were in a better position to decide themselves on what mattered to them as it was them who were directly involved in parents' leadership, rather than someone else deciding what was best for them.

During this stage, I displayed the contradictions and associated challenges on a PowerPoint presentation again in order to remind them about the discussions of CLW2 and CLW3. Before they started with the discussion, I requested each parent to write down at least four challenges that

they considered to be more problematic on a piece of paper so that they may come up with "what matters most" from the emerged challenges. The papers were placed in a small suggestion box. Thereafter, one of the parents led the session by picking up the written papers from the suggestion box, reading the challenges suggested on the pieces of papers while I notated the items on a flipchart. I counted how many times each challenge was listed in order to prioritise the findings. Though a number of challenges were listed, two of them emerged as priorities, as these were mentioned by all five participants. The discussion to defend why three challenges were considered more problematic begun afterward.

However, after this act of deciding what mattered most to parents, six secondary participants (SMT members, HODs, and teacher School Board members) joined the last half of this CLW in order to examine the generative solutions jointly. This idea was in line with Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) who suggest that all participants need to discuss their proposals, creating the new model and planning the implementation of the new model jointly. Therefore, upon joining, I briefed them about the two challenges that parents considered as more problematic in their leadership role and which they wanted to be the areas of priority.

Figure 3.1: Secondary participants who joined CLW4 to examine the model solutions (participants required no anonymity)

During the second half of the CLW4, I displayed the solutions as captured during CLW3 for them to be able to work out the relevance and the workability of the solutions for the three problematic areas prioritised by the parents. By this, participants discussed the possibilities and implications of the two challenges identified by parents that mattered most. As a result of this discussion, out of seven suggested solutions, they discussed and decided on two solutions they considered to be workable and relevant.

Finally in this CLW, I gave the short questionnaires to the participants in order to evaluate the usefulness of the Change Laboratory Workshops. The purpose of the questionnaire was to answer my second question for this phase (which aimed to address my research question six): *What can a Change Laboratory Workshop process contribute to the leadership development of parents?* A questionnaire in vernacular, Oshiwambo (see Appendix F) was given to parent School Board members while the one in English (see Appendix G**)** was given to SMT members and teacher School Board members.

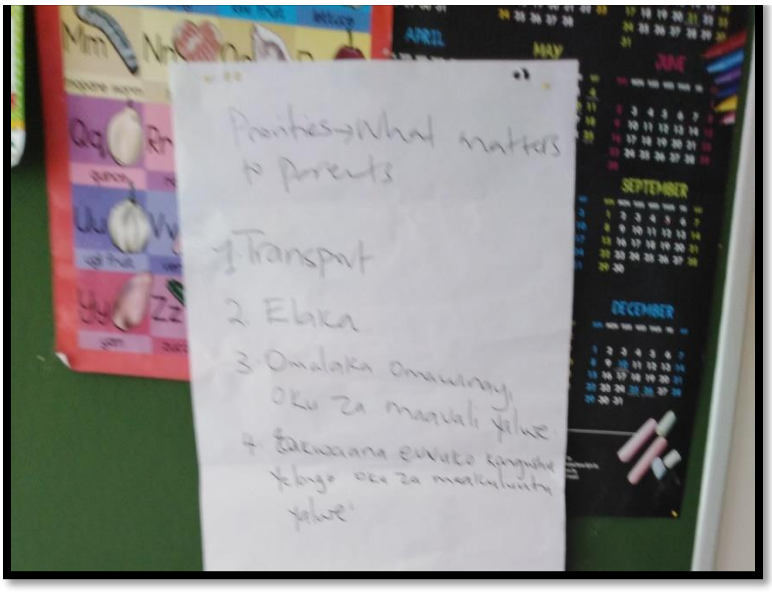


Figure 3.2: A list of emergent priority challenges (displayed in the vernacular, Oshiwambo)

3.6 Observation as a Data-Gathering Tool during Phase 2

During the Change Laboratory Workshops, I used observation as a data-gathering tool. Observation, as defined by Creswell (2012), is the process of gathering first-hand information by

observing people and places at a research site. This tool was appropriate as it offered me an opportunity to gather first-hand and live data from the participants. It also enabled me to get a feel of the happenings in a Change Laboratory Workshop room which may yield more valid or authentic data, than data that could have been reported by a secondary source as noted by Cohen et al. (2018). During this phase, I took the role of a participant-observer throughout the sessions as I was also engaged in facilitating the sessions while taking field notes of what was happening.

To conclude, the first CLW started on the 24th July 2019 and the fourth which was the final ended on the 13th September 2019. This implied that expansive learning took approximately three months. As such, the scale of expansive learning was fit to be a local transformation of the concept of the activity.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process that involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data in short, in order to make sense of it (Cohen et al., 2018). It simply refers to a process of funnelling the data from the wider to a narrow stage so that meaning is deduced. Before the analysis process, some preparations and organisation of the data were needed. Thus, here below I discuss my first approach to the data.

3.7.1 Preparing and organising the data

Before I started with level one data analysis, it was essential to organise the data so that it became easier as the analysis process began. I filed the questionnaires in one big file in order to access it easily. The documents collected were also filed in the same file in case a cross-reference with the questionnaires was necessary during the analysis. Hard copies for the transcribed interview in both the vernacular and in English were stored in this file as well, while the soft copies were stored in a folder where the audio for these transcripts was stored. A backup folder for the audio and transcription was created on Google drive and on a memory stick to avoid the loss of data. My field notes were in the reflection journal, a hardcover book. Finally, on this stage, I prepared the colour sticky papers, highlighters and flip charts needed during the analysis process.

In this study, the analysis process encompasses a number of levels with various methods. I adopted two approaches to reduce the data in order to allow it to have meaning. The approaches were inductive and abductive. Below I discuss how each approach was employed.

3.7.2 Data analysis by the inductive approach

Since this study is qualitative, an inductive approach was undertaken to analyse the data. I aligned my decision on Cohen et al. (2018) who argue that "the process of qualitative data analysis is typically inductive" (p. 645) in which the researcher " reads, re-reads, reflects on, infers from and interprets the raw data and derives themes, concepts, theories, explanations and understandings" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 645). The purpose of deriving themes and theories is to reduce the complex data into fewer and manageable data in order to ensure that a mass of words are classified into fewer categories in order to make it meaningful. Thus, I organised and sorted data collected through document analysis, questionnaires and interviews into codes or categories. Coding as explained by Rule and John (2011), is a process of choosing labels which highlight different themes within the data. As codes were extracted, I worked out the categories, without attaching any predefined concepts. This type of label is termed as open coding (Danermark, Ekström & Karlsson, 2002). In the photograph below, I am busy with the coding process during the data analysis.

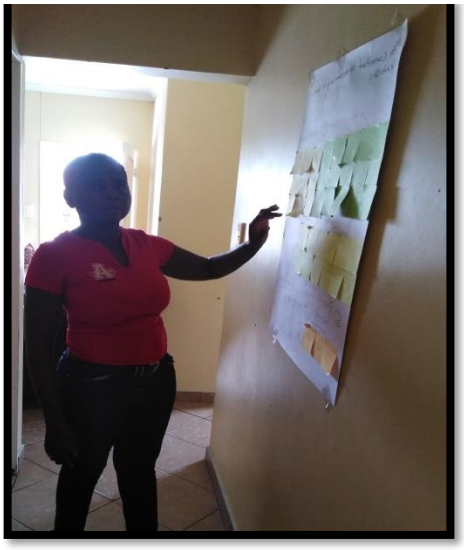


Figure 3.3: The researcher busy with the coding process during data analysis

First, I studied the documents, questionnaires and interview transcripts. To link the data to codes, I highlighted while I was reading, made comments and notes on the data associated with certain codes. I then later took sticky notes of different colours and wrote similar ideas on the same colour sticky notes. Assigning codes in this way was advantageous as it helped me in clarifying the similarities and dissimilarities, as well as concepts. Thus, the themes emerged based on the research questions when these sets of data were organised into patterns. I then used a flipchart on which I wrote different themes based on research questions and then stuck these sticky notes with similar ideas on a particular theme which later emerged into categories. This worked well and made the analysis easier.

Moreover, I made use of the parents' leadership model (Figure 2.1a and b) I adopted as I stated in Chapter Two, to analyse the nature and the variations of parents' participation in school. Based on the level of participation, parents' leadership was placed then on a specific quadrant that defined that particular participation level and nature.

3.7.3 Abductive approach

During the abductive approach, I made a link between the data and the theories which underpinned the study. The purpose was to move from the concrete description to a more abstract level. Theorising the data is one step on the second level of analysis, in which the analysis moves from the empirical data and makes reference to the theory or moves from observables to un-observables (Danermark et al., 2002). Thus, in this level of analysis, I made use of the distributed leadership theory in order to interpret the data for parents' leadership in the school.

In addition, I also made use of the second generation of CHAT as an analytical lens in analysing the data. In order to understand parents' leadership, practice, and perception I needed to investigate the cultural-historical practice of this particular activity in the school. The important aspects of the activity system are its elements, thus analysing the interaction between these elements helped to enhance the understanding of the complexity of the activity system, as the interactions may be aggravated into contradictions which in turn have effects on the development of parents' leadership at the school. CHAT worked as a promising approach in an attempt to enhance parents' leadership in the school, as the participants sought to resolve the contradictions and tension within the activity system, parents' leadership.

Having elaborated on how the analysis was administered, I now turn to the issue of trustworthiness.

3.8. Trustworthiness

Birthed from the traditions of validity and reliability, is the issue of trustworthiness. In qualitative research, Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014) suggests that it is ideal to refer to trustworthiness rather than to validity and reliability since there are no numbers in qualitative research and again it is not likely that if the same study is repeated, it will produce the same results. Here, trustworthiness was an issue of importance during my study and the following applied to strengthen it.

Firstly, to enhance the authenticity of the data collected, I relied on crystallisation. Crystallisation is a strategy that sees objects in multiple realities, rather than seeing them as fixed, rigid objects (Maree, 2014). This concept takes into consideration that people have different perspectives, different understandings, and they interpret reality differently. By taking this view in mind, I acknowledged different viewpoints and understanding of the participants about the phenomena under study. I, therefore, recognised, interpreted and analysed each viewpoint as such which in return enabled me to see the emerging patterns. As I used the emerged patterns to describe the findings from the crystallised data, it added to the trustworthiness.

Secondly, I took cognisance of the issue of translation. Since my interviews were conducted in the vernacular, Oshiwambo, I based my decision on Merriam's (2009) suggestion on strategies to be employed when the interview was carried in another language other than English, that "a transcript can be prepared in the language used and then translated verbatim into English; data analysis is then done in English" (p. 270). This is exactly what I did, as after an interview, I transcribed it in the language used and then gave the transcription to a colleague at work to translate into English. To enhance the trustworthiness of the translated data, I made use of a "back translation" strategy, which meant that after the English translation by a colleague, I tried to translate a few answers back into the vernacular in order to check the reliability of the translation made.

Lastly, I made use of respondent validation or member checking. Respondent validation is a way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do, and their perspective on what is going on, as well as identifying the biases and misunderstanding of what is observed (Maxwell, 2008). After the transcription of the interview data, I gave the

transcribed data to the respondents for them to check whether their responses were correctly transcribed and that it reflected their true point of view.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethics refers to a set of the principle of conducts that are considered correct of which someone should live in accordance with (Kumar, 2011). There are various conducts that are considered unethical. In light of the above, research should be ethically conducted to avoid discomfort, anxiety, harassment, invasion of privacy, or demeaning or dehumanising matters to the participants. To avoid unethical behaviours during my study, the following was taken into consideration.

3.9.1 Respect and dignity

I obtained an Ethical clearance certificate (see Appendix H) from the Higher Degrees and Ethics Committee of Rhodes University prior to the data collection process, which served as permission for me to carry out the study. Cohen et al. (2010) state that researchers have to demonstrate that they are worthy, as researchers and human beings, in order to be accorded the facilities needed in carrying out their research. Hence, I wrote a letter to the Regional Director of Oshikoto Education Directorate (see Appendix I) and the principal (see Appendix J) of the research school in order to seek approval and consent to conduct my study at the site. In these letters, I clearly stated the aims and possible benefits of my study to the participants and the school. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) assert that research participants should be told the nature of the study and should also be given a choice to participate or not.

I conducted a meeting with the participants to explain the issue of voluntary participation and that they may withdraw at any time if they feel so. I also assured them that the information which they provide is strictly confidential. Kumar (2011) notes that it is unethical to collect information without the knowledge of the participants. Thus, participants were issued with informed consent letters which they signed before the study commenced. Furthermore, participants were also informed that their names and school name would be concealed by using pseudonyms. I respected individuals' rights and dignity, the school authority and everyone within the school community,

as Leedy and Ormrod (2005) suggest that participants' rights and privacy need to be respected at all times.

3.9.2 Transparency and honesty

To be transparent and honest, I explained the purpose of my study for participants to understand it, in order to make an informed decision. To keep up with Cohen et al. (2010), I gave an assurance to the participants that their participation is on a voluntary basis and that it is free and is from personal choice. Similarly, I aligned with Bertram and Christiansen's (2016) view that a clear explanation of what the study expects from the participants should be done so that they can make an informed choice. It was therefore important that participants sign the informed consent letters before taking part in the study. Bearing in mind that parents might not be able to speak English, I designed their consent letter in the vernacular, Oshiwambo.

Participants were also informed well in advance about the data gathering tools to be administered with each group. At any stage of data collection and analysis, transcribed data was given to them in order to do member checking, for them to ensure that the data was truly reflecting the responses they gave and that it was never exaggerated to suit me as a researcher.

3.9.3 Accountability and responsibility

I disclosed my identity as a researcher to participants prior to the research process in order for them to feel free in participating and providing information. Since my main participants were parents, I respected the fact that not all of them may understand English; I, therefore, interviewed those who could not speak, understand and/or were not comfortable with English, in the vernacular language, Oshiwambo and interviewed one of them who understood and preferred English, in English. Participants were allowed to select their own pseudonyms which were then used in coding their transcribed data which they could use to identify themselves with during the member checking. To uphold their confidentiality, I used codes instead of participants' names during the data analysis. After the interview, Oshiwambo data was translated into English by my colleague who is an expert in these two languages, to ensure meanings were not changed. The translator signed a declaration to agree not to reveal the data to anyone (see Appendix K). During the Change Laboratory Workshop, permission to take photographs and videos was first sought from the

participants, and permission was granted by the participants that their faces need not be covered (no anonymity was required regarding their faces) in the photographs.

3.9.4 Self-reflexivity and researcher positionality

Being an Education Officer in the region where my research was conducted defined me partly as an insider researcher as I stated in Chapter One. Thus, I was mindful of the issue of positionality, and tried to minimise it throughout the study process so that it may have less influence on the results of my study. To do this, I tried to place myself on the participants' level by informing them that my position in this regard was mainly as a researcher who would rely heavily on the participants for the data they were providing. Positionality, as noted by Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012), comes in with the demographic characteristics and personal background of the researcher which has the potential to block access to the research situation. I anticipated how my position as Senior Education Officer in the region could possibly intimidate teachers and parents and create power differentiation between me as a researcher and the participants during the research process, thus I first had to establish a good rapport and trust with them in the following ways: first, I met all the participants to introduce myself as a researcher for them to begin to know who they were working with; second, as a researcher, I began to create a hassle-free atmosphere by having informal conversations about life-related matters before and after every meeting with the participants.; third, I aligned myself to Merriam's (2009) view, who suggests that a researcher should allow all voices to be heard, to such an extent that there is reciprocity in the research relationship. Thus, I allowed them to have power over decision-making especially during the planning of the CLW schedules and for them to lead the discussions during the CLWs. This was also done to ensure that participants were not pressured into participation but to do it from their own free will.

Finally, working with adults had been at the back of my mind; thus I was sensitive about the issues of language and the level of education of the parents which could possibly hamper their interacting freely with me. In this regard, I decided to speak Oshiwambo only, the language which they were comfortable with. In a similar vein, teachers were also requested to interact with parents in the language that parents understood, for them not to have any feelings of inferiority. This was done to reduce the power differentiation between teachers and parents.

I was well informed by Maxwell (2008) who suggests that the relationship between the researcher and the participants has an unavoidable influence on the context and the results of the study. Thus, I should acknowledge that for me to avoid this relation to negatively impact on my study results, I maintained self- reflexivity throughout the research process as I had been aware of my own subjectivity. "Reflexivity" refers to a researcher's active consideration of and engagement with the ways in which ones 'own sense-making and the particular circumstances that might have affected it are taken care of at all phases as it may be impacted on the research endeavour (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). Based on this, I tried by all costs to sidestep the influence of my beliefs, point of view and opinions and I took the data as provided to me by the participants. I kept my reflective journal with me at all times on which I noted the discussions, remarks made and comments by the participants so that I remembered the discussions made previously.

3.10 Challenges faced during the data gathering process

While carrying out the research I faced various challenges that could have impacted my study. I found it worthwhile to state these challenges as Maree (2014) acknowledges that every study experiences shortcomings and that it is important to state them upfront in order for the reader to understand why one reaches such a conclusion. Therefore, below I discuss the challenges faced.

First, though my initial intention was to conduct research at a combined school which is only a few kilometres from my workplace, this did not materialise because the participants did not show an interest in the study. I followed all the procedural steps, such as visiting the school for familiarisation, getting permission from the gatekeeper, taking the consent letters to participants and I explained the confidentiality issue. However, the number of participants who attended my introductory meetings was far less than needed. I visited the school for some days in order to create rapport with the teachers, but yet the questionnaires returned were only three. Three parents were met, but only two parents had a chance to be interviewed as the third one indicated that he would be away for two months on job-related matters. Furthermore, despite that I humbly requested various documents to be used as data gathering tools, and made follow-ups to get them, I was unsuccessful to obtain even one. Making a judgment based on the total number of participants available for the study and on the difficulty I experienced to obtain documents, I realised that I

might not get the rich data I wanted. I, therefore, decided to inform the principal that the total number of participants was too little, thus I needed to look for a second site.

Secondly, at my second site, it was also not easy to get all the participants together at one convenient time and venue, especially the parents who were not full-time employees of the school. For that matter, I adjusted my schedule to meet them at their convenient time and venue.

3.11 Conclusion

To conclude, the chapter presented an overview of the methodology and design adopted, and briefly elaborated on the tools employed in an attempt to address the research questions as stated earlier in the Chapter. The last part of the chapter encompassed the ethical issues guiding the research process before it concluded with the challenges faced during the data gathering process.

In the next chapter, I present and discuss the data as gathered from document analysis, questionnaires, and interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: PHASE ONE: CONTEXTUAL PROFILING

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three presented an overview of the research methodology adopted for this study, and also highlighted the data gathering tools used. The current chapter is a detailed presentation and discussion of the gathered data which in the process manifested as findings. The logic in presenting the data does not aim at exposing the culture of the school nor to criticise the school leadership, policies, and administration but to help to gain insight into how parents' leadership is understood and practiced in the school with the purpose of developing and enhancing it.

The data to answer the first four questions of the study which were addressed in phase one were gathered through qualitative research tools of document analysis, questionnaires, and interviews. Throughout the process, I took cognisance of confidentiality and anonymity as emphasised in the ethical guidelines. Thus, for the purpose of this study, I used codes to represent the sources of data employed in the study. Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 illustrate the codes used for easy referencing. Table 4.1 illustrates the codes used to represent the aforesaid documents, while Table 4. 2 illustrates codes to represent participants.

Table 4.1: Document and data gathering tools' codes

Document	Code
Education Act 16 of 2006	D1
UNICEF School Board manual	D2
Internal school finance policy	D3
Learners' code of conduct	D4
Agendas for the School Board meetings	D5

Minutes for the School Board meetings	D6 a-D6b
Calendar of activities for the school	D7
Questionnaire	Q
Interview	I
Video	V
Observation during CLW	CLW1O-CLW4O

Table 4.2: Participant codes

Participant	Code
Principal	P
3 HODs	HOD1-HOD3
4 SMT	SMT1-SMT4
3 teacher School Board members	TSB1- TSB3
7 parents	P1-P7

The presentation and the discussion of the findings are drawn from the emerging data when inductive inferences were applied. The inductive process enabled me to code and categorise the data, which eventually led to the emergence of themes. Thus, it was against this backdrop that data were discussed around five themes: (1) Conceptual understanding of parents' leadership, (2) How parents' leadership was practiced by parents (3) The perception of parents around their role in school governance, (4) Factors enabling parents' leadership, (5) Factors constraining parents' leadership. Furthermore, the model of parents' leadership (Figure 2.1a and b) was also adopted

and used as an analytical tool through which parents' participation in the school was viewed. Thus, to begin with, below I discuss the first four questions that framed the first five themes:

Part 1

1. How is the concept of parents' leadership understood in the school?
2. Is parents' leadership practiced by parents in the school, and if so how?
3. What are the parents' perceptions regarding their leadership roles in school governance?
4. What are the conditions that enable and/or constrain parents' leadership in the school?

Having introduced the chapter, I now start discussing the first theme: conceptual understanding of parents' leadership as addressed by questionnaires (Q) and interview (I) tools.

4.2 The Conceptual Understanding of Parents' Leadership

Generally, a wide range of definitions was given by the participants about the concept of parents' leadership. However, it is worth noting that the attempts made to define the concept were not peculiar as they are in line with the leadership literature. Drawing on different leadership definitions is not a surprise as it is confirmed by Whitehead (2009) that leadership has no single definition.

It was on the basis of their responses that I managed to come up with different categories. The following emerged as categories related to the understanding of the concept: (a) ability to influence towards goal accomplishment, (b) Parents' leadership as managerial and formal positional leadership, (c) involvement in decision-making, (d) Parents' leadership serves as a bridge between the school and the community. The following section presents these understandings.

4.2.1 Ability to influence towards goals accomplishment

Leadership is understood as the ability to influence others towards goal accomplishment. This view was captured from parent School Board members, teacher School Board members and Heads of Department. This understanding clearly emerged from one of the participant's responses who articulated her understanding of the concept: "*Parents have a big role in school as they influence learners and help the school to deliver the knowledge and skills and technique that means by the*

curriculum" (TSB1, Q). Even more, one HOD defined it as, "*Parents' leadership in school is when parents are taking part/action to accomplish the goals of the school*" (HOD2, Q). Another parent School Board member asserted that, *"A parent leader is a God-fearing someone, confident, helpful and determined to help others to achieve their goals*" (P2, I). This understanding can be equated to the trait theory. From the trait theory perspective, leadership is defined by focusing on the individual's qualities that they possess. In this case, participants articulated some qualities such as, *"ability to influence"* (TSB1, Q) and "*ability to encourage our children to pursue their education"* (P4, I), the inspirational functions that parent leaders possess which enable others to work towards their vision as Coleman and Earley (2005) theorise it. Again, P7, P5, P4, HOD2, and TSB1 understood parents' leadership in terms of taking a lead, thus, they described it as parents "*leading our school*" (P5, I), and " *leading our children*" (P4, I). Another parent conceptualised it as "*Parents leadership means parents who support the school to deliver education in full*" (TSB1, Q). Though defining it in terms of qualities, TSB1's definition slightly resonates with the definition of parents' leadership by Trabue and Trabue (2013), who assert that it as a way of influencing children towards their life goals with independent and healthy living.

4.2.1.1 Parents' leadership as a managerial and formal position

Here, parents' leadership is closely linked to management while narrowly viewed in terms of leadership. This evidence was found across the stakeholder groups. The school principal stated in the questionnaire that: "*Parents' leadership is "the involvement of parents in planning, organising, controlling and leading the school activities on a continuous basis for the success of the school"* (P, Q). Typical terms of management such as planning, organising, managing, and monitoring featured in the definitions given. Another participant stated through the questionnaire that parents' leadership in school is to, *"ensure the existence and the functionality of a school* (P7, I), while one HOD stated that: "*Parents' leadership is about monitoring of school activities"* (HOD3, Q). The evidence above implied that parents' leadership is, though not exclusively, limited to managerial effectiveness of which the central purpose is the maintenance or preservation of the status quo rather than change (Astin & Astin, 2000). This view is further endorsed by Coleman (2003) who argues that with management, an individual can monitor and control organisational activities without fulfilling functions of leadership.

Moreover, the definitions given showed a conflation between leadership and management. The conflation was evident from responses such as, *"taking part in the management"* (P6, I) and *"ensure the functionality of a school"* (P7, I). These participants linked leadership to the preservation of an organisational function (Astin & Astin, 2000). This is a clear indication that participants understood parents' leadership in terms of accountability of the functioning and the effectiveness of the organisation, thus parents were seen as individuals that ensured that the school is efficiently and effectively run and not necessarily aiming at any change.

However, this conflation is not a surprise, because the two terms are seen as two sides of the same coin. Meaning, the two are closely related as it is often the same person who does both leading and managing. Coleman and Earley (2005) suggest that, by observing, it is difficult to decide which function and action could be leadership and which is management.

In a similar vein, some participants conceptualised leadership in terms of formal positions. One of the parent School Board members conceptualised it as: *"I think is whereby parents taking part in the management of the school whereby the parents have been selected or have been voted, to be the School Board so that when there is anything that is happening at school, parents should take part"* (P6, I). Suggesting that " *there are those leaders who are selected*" equates leadership to structure or position. Another parent added that parents' leadership "*refers to those elected parents who work to monitor how children go to school and how teaching and learning takes place at school*" (P1, I). This understanding is influenced by the structures and by the tasks performed by parents at school. Here, I argue along with Bush (2007), who asserts that if the focus of a leader is on function, tasks, and behaviours, then it ought to be a managerial kind of leadership. Management is structurally bound, thus, the reference to those elected parents was a clear indication that the participants were equating leadership to structures and positions.

4.2.1.2 Involving parents in decision-making

Parents' involvement in decision-making is understood as part of parents' leadership. This idea was captured from participants such as an HOD, a teacher School Board member and a parent. One of the HODs stated in the questionnaire that parents' leadership means: *"Parents to be involved in decision-making of the school as well as in day to day school activities*" (HOD1, Q).

Another participant expressed that: "*It is all about acknowledging the involvement of parents in the decision-making process of the school in collective leadership"* (TSB2, Q). The findings suggest that parents' leadership is perceived largely as decision-making. In a like manner, parent School Board members had the same understanding as well. By this, one parent suggested that "*They (parents) must be part and parcel for the meeting to be held to make the decisions so that not only the teachers make the decisions but parents must take part also"* (P6, I). These responses demonstrated that parents were expected to participate in the decision-making process of the school and the understanding was on the same line with legislations' objectives such as the *Education Act 16 of 2001*, as it was enacted to decentralise decision-making and self-managing of schools through parents' leadership. The same view keeps up with Brown and Duku (2008) who argue that school governing bodies serve as a decentralisation mechanism for community participation.

However, the standing question is whether this involvement in decision-making suggests participation with influence. In essence, participation on its own does not necessarily mean leadership. As suggested by Bauch and Goldring (1998), parents' participation can sometimes refer to the involvement of parents in providing inputs without exercising influence, and it is unlike empowerment which comes with influence through decision-making. Thus, this conceptualisation of parents' leadership may not suggest leadership. By the same token, decision-making too is not leadership, as Coleman (2003) suggests that an individual can make decisions without fulfilling the symbolic, normative, inspirational or educated function of leadership.

Interesting was the idea of collective leadership as appeared in one of the parents' responses: "*Not only teachers but parents must take part also*" (P6, I), which was similar to the response of one teacher School Board member who also stated that: *"Parents should be involved in a decision-making process of the school for collective leadership"* (TSB2, Q). It was evident from these responses that leadership did not reside only in the principal or the school management team but was understood as a shared responsibility by teachers, SMT members and parents, as Heystek et al. (2012) assert. The school of thought is that leadership responsibility should not be centralised in one person in a school nor be restricted to the school hierarchical structures but exercised by multiple individuals, at any level, outside or inside the school (Christie, 2010). Thus, it is interesting to learn that participants' understanding of leadership is in line with distributed

leadership notions which assume that leadership should flow throughout the organisation, circulating up and down hierarchies (Harris, 2003).

4.2.1.3 Parents' leadership as a bridge between the school and the community

Parents' leadership was also conceptualised as a bridge between the school and the community. Participants stated that parent School Board members were representatives of other parents to the school and also represented the school in the community. Representation was stressed by one SMT member who asserted that parents "*give reports to the school community about the school progress"* (SMT3, Q). Similarly, an HOD presented the same sentiment by stating that, "*the role of the parents in the School Board is to represent the parents and to motivate the public to support the development of the school"* (HOD2, Q). These assertions are affirmed by Creese and Earley (1999) who argue that parents serve as a bridge between the school and the community and should be a two-way conduit for communication. This view demonstrated that parents are coordinators between the school and the community, delegated either by the school or by the community to get the message across.

Participants further conceptualised parents' leadership on the basis of power representation. Two parent School Board members, HOD2 and one teacher School Board member brought forth the issue of representation. One parent remarked the definition in the vernacular by stating that: "*Onda hogololwa kaavali ooyakwetu, ndi kale omeho goskola pomudhingoloko"* secondly, *"Ondi li onga omupopili ko gwaavali yopomudhingoloko"* (P1, I). In a direct translation (literary translation), this means *"I am chosen by other parents to be the eyes of the community school"* and secondly, *"I am the voice or a spokesperson for other parents in the community"* (P1, I). Similarly, another parent also put it from the same perspective by stating that, *"Leadership at school refers to the School Board, a representative body which comprises of parents (elected by other parents), teachers and learners"* (P2, I). One of the parent School Board members conceptualised parents' leadership as, *"parents that serve as a voice of others in school leadership, and provide them with feedback from School Board meetings"* (P3, I). That is to say, the School Board parents perceived themselves to be the voice of the community or simply the representatives of other parents in all school-related matters. To be a voice, Morrison (2007) refers to a situation of engaging in critical reflection, in resistance to dominance and affirmation of the liberation struggle. In this regard,

parent School Board members represented others to avoid the dominance of the teaching staff in the decision-making process of the school. That undoubtedly suggests that the communities are now able to have a 'voice' in the decisions through school governance that directly or indirectly impact on them (Brown & Duku, 2008).

To conclude this sub-theme, it was clear that the concept of parents' leadership was conceptualised differently by the different study participants, with a clear line of management coming out broadly while narrowly bringing out the leadership approach, which to me was not a surprise. For now, I turn to how parents' leadership was practiced in the case study school.

4.3 The Practices of Parents' Leadership

The following sub-section presents the data gathered to address the second question: *Is parents' leadership practiced by parents and, if so, how?* To get a sense of how it is currently practiced, my focal point was to establish their roles in school as Board members. The data revealed that parent School Board members have a wide range of roles. The prevalent roles which emerged from the respondents' answers through questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis are as follow, (1) Monitoring and support of teaching and learning, (2) School finance management and creation of potential income-generating projects (3) Promote school welfare, (4) Promote welfare, general conduct and progress of the learners, (5) Parents as advisory body for the school, (6) Parents as co-facilitators of some school-related activities with the teaching staff, and finally (7) Recommend staff appointments. Drawing from these responses, it was evident that the roles and functions raised were as basic functions set in the *Education Act 16 of 2001*. Next, I discuss each role separately.

4.3.1 Monitoring and support for teaching and learning

There was a general consensus among the participants that parents' leadership in school was to ensure that the monitoring and support system for teachers and learners was in place. The principal in his response indicated that *"Parents are responsible to monitor the smooth running/ administration of the school"* (P, Q) and one SMT member believed that their role was *"to monitor and assist the teaching staff"* (TSB1, Q). Their roles were inextricably linked to their responsibilities as outlined in the policies. The School Board Manual for Namibian schools clearly states that "since the School Board is accountable to the community for constantly monitoring the

school's overall performance; it has both rights and responsibilities in order to carry out its mandate" (Namibia. MEAC, 2016, p. 5). While monitoring of teaching staff was portrayed dominantly, another participant emphasised: "*monitoring of learners' progress"* (TSB2, Q). One of the HODs echoed monitoring in terms of implementation, asserting that, *"they are supervising and monitoring the implementations of suggested goals"* (HOD3, Q).

Implicit from the data is the idea of confining parents' roles to the basic responsibilities as in policies. Working within the confinement of rules, regulations, and boundaries as provided in a school situation is a signpost of the management approach as described by Heystek et al. (2012). Monitoring in this regard aims at organising and controlling organisational structure, policies and operation. Here, parents are trying to undertake day to day control over teaching staff in order to hold them accountable (Bauch & Goldring, 1998).

In the same token, parents' understandings of their role seem not to be different from what and how teachers perceived them. Two parent School Board members acknowledged their role in terms of monitoring, for example by stating that parents' role was, *"to monitor the teachers, and learners in the process of teaching and learning"* (P2, I). In response to what their roles are and how they practice leadership as Board members, another parent School Board member had this to say:

> *We pay surprise visits to the school in order to check if teachers are at the school and doing what is expected of them. We used to go there and see if those certain teachers are there attending their periods or they are just roaming around.* (P6, I)

The visits articulated coincided with what is stated in the work of the School Board guidelines; that all School Board members should visit the school regularly and any time (Namibia. MBESC, 2004). Accordingly, parents' monitoring and controlling demonstrated their intention of keeping a close eye on all aspects of the school as stated by Creese and Earley (1999).

4.3.2 School finance management and the creation of potential income-generating projects

Finance management is one of the parents' roles in school. These findings were extracted from questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. Participants (HOD3, SMT3, SMT4, P6) revealed that parents administer, control and organise the school finance. One participant indicated in the questionnaire that, "*parents do control budget"* (HOD3, Q). In addition, another SMT

member stated in the questionnaire that one of the parents' roles, *"is to endorse and review the annual budget and approve it"* (SMT3, Q) which is similar to what another SMT member asserted that *"they approve all material expenditure outside the budget"* (SMT4, Q).

In like manner, one of the parent School Board members had this to say during the interview regarding the utilisation of funds:

> *If there is something going to be bought for the school, it is not only the principal who needs to go and take the money to buy even the balls, anything for the school, even book, chalk or printers, but also the treasurer for the School Board needs to be there; those years maybe the money for the school, funds were misused, but nowadays, there is no more misusing of the funds because, the funds are being controlled.* (P6, I)

Furthermore, when I reviewed the documents during the document analysis, the issue of budget control was reflected in the School Internal Finance Policy (SIFP). The internal policy (D3) revealed that both teachers and parents are involved in drawing up the budget through the school finance committee.

The evidence above demonstrated that parents are operating within the framework of the *Education Act 16 of 2001* which proves their roles to be more about managerial tasks. Part V (25) (14) of the Act states that a School Board must prepare an annual estimation of income and expenditure as well as appoint an auditor for the school. They are controlling, monitoring and planning the income and the expenditure of the school. The tasks mentioned here are within managerial structures. This assertion is confirmed by Hallinger (2018) and Coleman (2003), who argue that budget and financial management of the school are typically managerial tasks.

However, the roles associated with these parents are not extraordinary to this school. The same roles were revealed by studies conducted in Namibia by Kayumbu (2016) and Shikongo (2019) who revealed that the School Board chairperson is always consulted for any budgetary-related matters, and then informs all other School Board members via the School Board secretary. The consultation is made to seek parents' consent on school financial matters especially for items outside the budget as revealed in this study.

Additionally to the roles above, during the interview, two of the parent School Board members indicated that they (parents on the School Board) encourage fellow parents to make monetary

contributions towards school developments. One of the parent School Board members stated that *"We also involve ourselves in fund-raising activities in order to supplement the school funds"* (P3, I). The same view was supported through document analysis. The School Board minutes (D6b) (of 19 April 2019) revealed that during the School Board meeting, both teachers and parents supported monetary contributions from parents towards security guard wages and this idea was suggested by one of the parents in the meeting. It appeared that parents in this school take a lead in raising funds, mobilising other parents to raise funds, as well as to make monetary contributions when the need arises.

These roles tally with the study findings by Mncube (2009), that parents in school governance partake in fundraising and school maintaining activities. Evidence from three interviewed participants (P7, P2, P3) confirmed this assertion. One of the parent School Board members stated that, "*recently, we had also established a school garden, which we plan to make a prolific project for the school*" (P2, I). Another asserted that, "*many of the developments we made were made possible by the money raised through fundraisings, in which we (parent Board and non-Board members) were actively involved in terms of selling and donating some selling items"* (P7, I). In essence, this view coincided with the School Board roles as described in the *Education Act 16 of 2001*. The Act clearly spells out that the main purpose of the School Board is to create income-generating initiatives and to ensure maintenance and up-keep of the school, (Namibia. MBESC, 2004). The view that maintenance was a priority is evident from one of the parent School Board members' responses that, *"we have also brought some infrastructural developments at the school"* (P2, I).

However, it is worth noting that the developmental and up-keeping role is not extraordinary to the Namibian situation. Brown and Duku (2004) also confirm that, in many local-community contexts, parents tend to be involved in fundraising and social events, rather than involved in the curriculum, policy, or administration. They further argue that in the context of South Africa which in my view similar to Namibia, the Act does not really mandate School Boards to take a leadership and management role in terms of teaching and learning, but rather specifies financial management, fundraising and staff appointments as their main roles.

Positive evidence emerged from the discussion during the meeting of the 19th April 2019, that parents and the teaching staff have a prevailing free and open exchange of ideas. Collaborative effort, mutual trust and sharing of ideas were notable aspects from these findings which showed a balance of participation in the decision-making between teachers and parents. Collaborative effort was also evident in the minutes of the 19th February 2019 which revealed that parent School Board members were the initiators for the idea of giving a token of appreciation to a parent who donated a piece of land to the school for a garden and this idea was supported by the teaching staff as well (D6a, p. 3). The minutes of the 19th April 2019 further revealed open discussion when parent School Board members proposed that parents should contribute N$3 per month for every learner to cater for security wages as usual (D6b, p. 2). This kind of participation further revealed that parents did not engage in a 'rubber stamp' role when it came to decision-making regarding the finances of the school.

Conversely, despite the parents' roles being framed within management and control aspects, the authenticity of the participation in this regard was still questionable. My questioning it resulted from one of the participants' responses when I asked whether the Education Grant had supplemented the construction of the classroom they mentioned during the interview. The participant articulated that: "*No, we were informed that construction and renovation of buildings is not part and parcel of the fund, that is why we raised funds"* (P2, I). This indicated that the Education Grant from the government comes with limiting conditions regarding expenditure. Although the School Board was established with the purpose of increasing local participation and shrinking the central influence, the opposite seems to be the reality because parents still do not have an upper hand in decision-making regarding the use of money. This resonates with Coleman and Earley (2005) who maintain that many educational decisions are still at the Ministry level despite the reforms. Without an upper hand, it shows a different picture, in that the intention of the School Board is simply not to give parents a voice, but to serve as a mechanism that may contain parental discontent and blindfold them to think they are equally considered. Such participation, in fact, represents tokenism (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004).

4.3.3 Promoting school welfare

Parents are perceived as the promoters of school welfare. This perception tallies with the roles stipulated in UNICEF manual (2016) that the School Board promotes school welfare by ensuring that the school has a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning. This view of welfare promotion is extensively evident in all three data sets. Promotion of welfare could be identified in participants' responses as they stated aspects such as problem-solving, conveying plans through meetings and parents being the voice for other parents. The above-stated roles such as *problem-solving* to promote school welfare, requires leadership skills. Thus, perceiving parents' roles in that way is perfectly consistent with Gronn's (2000) view that the notion of leadership is something that is acknowledged for the purposes of successful problem-solving.

One teacher School Board member indicated that parents' role is "*to bring forth the concern of other parents to the school management*" (TSB1, Q). Another SMT member stated that their responsibility was "*to enhance the community interest in supporting the school as well as giving reports to the school community members about school progress*" (SMT3, Q). Even more, one HOD stated that "*parents' role is to motivate the public to support the development of the school*" (HOD2, Q). This is an indication that parents were more concerned with engaging the stakeholders to support the school. In line with Grant (2008), leadership is a shared process, which involves working with all stakeholders in a collegial and creative way, thus this can be described as taking a leadership role. By the same token, parent School Board members are meant to engage the wider community in school, and the school in the wider community (Brown & Duku, 2004), in order to create a sense of ownership among the community members (Mncube, 2009). This demonstrated that parents are not working solely in isolation. By enhancing community interest, it illustrated that parents were aiming at interacting with and engaging in different perspectives of stakeholders, in an attempt to create a supportive environment where all work for the betterment of the school. To clarify, parents on the School Board concentrated more on engaging expertise wherever it existed within and outside the organisation rather than seeking it through formal positions (Harris, 2004). The idea resonates with Bennet et al. (2003) who suggest that distributed leadership is regarded as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals. Thus, findings revealed that leadership was done collectively rather than individually, practiced through formal and informal activities (Harris, 2008).

Moreover, the evidence highlighted that parents attend to grievances of other stakeholders. This was evident when one parent School Board member remarked in the interview that, *"we would always share our grievances and views any time we held meetings with the school principal*" (P2, I). Another parent asserted:

> *Let me say we have got even a challenge on something or with any learner, we used to call the principal, the life skills teacher, and any, even two from the school management and us from the School Board. We used to solve problems by calling the community, then we gather, we talk and then we advise them until they understand.* (P6, I)

The above view was still an indication that parents were concerned with the wellness of the school community at large as they worked to create a platform where all stakeholders would be listened to. Sharing grievances meant creating a positive platform between the principal's office and parents, which brings out open communication, consultation, collaboration, cooperation, partnership, mutual trust and participation of all affected parties of the school community, and these are elements of leadership (Morrison, 2007). Consequently, it also brings out the idea of open dialogue, the right to a voice, community inclusion and responsible participation towards a common goal. It indeed implies that parents are extending their partnership with the wider community and diversifying their representation to include a variety of tasks inside and outside the school (Tshabalala, 2013). This was evident in one of the teacher School Board member's response, who asserted that their role was *"to ensure that the decisions made by the school are in the best interest of all stakeholders and that the voice of parents is heard"* (TSB3, Q).

4.3.4 Promoting welfare, general conduct, and progress of the learners

One of the parents' roles highlighted from the findings was to promote learners' welfare, general conduct, and progress of learners, which are regarded as a shared responsibility with teachers. In a questionnaire, an SMT member asserted that parents do "*assist with the setting up/formulation of codes of conduct"* (SMT3, Q). One parent School Board member stated some basic roles of the parent School Board members:

> *We also deal with the discipline of the learners, and this is the main role in the Board. We usually try to make sure that learners go to school punctually. We deal with some needs such as ensuring learners would not go with empty stomachs. We ensure the preparation of a soft porridge at school is taking place.* (P4, I)

Likewise, as I reviewed the learners' codes of conduct during document analysis, it was also evident that maintaining discipline was a core role for the parents in the school. An extract in the code of conduct spelt out that parents should work in collaboration with the teaching staff in maintaining discipline. For this, the document reads: "parents should take an active role in assisting the school by working co-operatively with the school management to promote the discipline of learners" (D4, p. 2). The same document further affirms that "parents are equally responsible for the promotion of good spirit and discipline" (ibid.). The promotion of discipline among learners is within the mandate of the School Board. The policy outlines that the School Board chairperson who is a parent should call a meeting for all School Board members for disciplinary hearings and recommendations in case of learners or teachers' disciplinary problems (Namibia. MBESC, 2004). Interestingly, it also demonstrates that disciplining learners is solely not for teachers but it is regarded as a shared responsibility which implies that distributed leadership is taking place.

4.3.5 Parents as an advisory body for the school

The evidence captured suggested that parents' participation was high in terms of support and offering advice to the principal and other parents. Participants such as the principal, one SMT member, and three parent School Board members revealed this issue. The principal, for example, stated that: "*One of the parents' roles in the School Board is to provide advice to the principal and other parents on school-related matters"* (P, Q). One teacher School Board member stated that: *"Parents have a big role of advising the school management to make correct decisions"* (TSB1, Q). A parent Board member also asserted that: "*We usually address cases through the school principal and advise him to do classroom observations with the suspected teacher"* (P3, I). Another parent added that: "*Let me say we send learners a certain contribution and parents are not responding positively; we call the community, we gather, talk and then we advise them until they understand"* (P6, I). Another parent further stated that, *"we advise the school on any development or any change that is taking place at school such as learners' school uniform*" (P2, I). Though not exclusively, providing advice to the principal and the school management team was seen as a crucial role of the parent School Board members. This was not surprising because as per its definition in the School Board manual, the School Board is an advisory and governing body at the school level (UNICEF, 2016). Thus, providing advice is aligned to its duties and responsibilities as outlined in the policy.

4.3.6 Parents as co-facilitators of some school-related activities with the teaching staff

Parents act as co-facilitators to teachers in meetings and other school-related activities. Some participants indicated that parents co-facilitate activities such as the chairmanship of the parents' meetings, School Board meetings as well as for the school prize award ceremony. One parent cited that *"many meetings would be chaired by either the School Board Chairperson or the school principal*" (P2, I). Another parent who was a School Board chairperson remarked that *"It is only the school principal and I. We rotate the chairmanship in both parents and School Board meetings"* (P3, I).

Adding to that, as I reviewed the minutes, the chairmanship of the meetings by the chairperson's evidence was picked up twice, first from the meeting agenda and secondly from the 19th February 2019 minutes. However, it was clear that the chairmanship is rotational because the minutes of 15th April 2019 revealed that the principal too, takes up the chairmanship exactly as stated in the interview. The rotation of the chairmanship indicates that at times, parents share responsibilities with the teaching staff. However, it appears that chairing of meetings was hierarchical as the minutes indicated that only the principal and the School Board chairperson took the chairmanship role. Other ordinary members seemed to leave this responsibility to those at the top hierarchy of the school or of the School Board structure. Apart from meeting chairmanship, parents also facilitated the prize award ceremony. On this, one parent stated that: *"Let me talk about the prize-giving ceremony which we usually have at the school every year, the ceremony is always made possible by us parents, we sit as a Board to facilitate its logistics and determine how much or what each household should contribute towards the event"* (P5, I). A member of the SMT indicated: "*To empower parents, we include them especially the School Board chairperson in the facilitation of the award ceremony every year, either as chairperson or as a presenter for the learners' awards"* (SMT3, Q). These views also revealed that parents co-facilitated events with teachers in the school.

4.3.7 Recommendation of staff appointments

Another parents' role that emerged from the data was to recommend staff appointments. This evidence was revealed during the interviews, as well as in the questionnaire. During the interview, one parent stated: *"The most roles for the parents is like when there is a recruitment for new*

teachers at the school" (P6, I), while another parent indicated that, *"we sit in the interviews for teachers (many times*)" (P2, I). Adding to that, another participant stated: *"Parents' role is to assist the principal selection when a vacancy arises or occurs"* (SMT3, Q). The above views correlate with the School Board mandates as prescribed in the policies and frameworks, as there is a clear expectation in documents that quality education can be attained through the involvement of parents in the recruitment of staff. The guideline for the School Board in Namibia outlines that "it is the responsibility of the SB to verify that recruitment, transfer and promotion of staff members are carried out in a transparent and fair manner by observing the stipulated procedures" (Namibia. MEAC, 2016, p. 7). The fundamental purpose is for parents to have their most direct impact on teaching and learning. Similarly, the view is equally true to Heystek et al. (2012) who contend that parents' influence in quality education may be attained through recommendation and appointment of educators.

Indeed, most of the roles as stated here are aligned to their basic responsibilities as outlined in the *Education Act 16 of 2001*. For now, I look at their perceptions regarding the carrying out of the stated roles.

4.4 Parents' perceptions: Interest to work voluntarily, pride and satisfaction within their roles as School Board members

To answer my research question three, participants were asked to describe their perceptions regarding their School Board roles. This data set was extracted from the interviews, as I believed that parents may describe their own perceptions better than being described by others. Therefore, from the question's results, only one broad category was generated from the assembled data. The category identified was: Interest to work voluntarily, pride and satisfaction within their roles.

Interest served as an in-built mechanism that influenced parent participation in school governance. The evidence was clearly captured from four parents' School Board members (P5, P2, P4, P6). Most participants were determined to execute their duties willingly, for example, one parent stated that, "*With or without any support from either the school or government we will not give up"* (P5, I). Another parent remarked that: "*We just voluntarily do everything by virtue of being parents to the children at this school and we also take cognisance of the challenges the teachers who sacrifice to educate our children here are facing"* (P4, I).

In addition, another parent indicated that: "*I am God chosen to serve in the Board, I have to execute my entrusted duties to the best of my abilities*" (P2, I). Even more, another parent asserted: "*Nevertheless, the children belong to us parents, not to someone else, we would thus tirelessly serve the school for the benefit of our children*" (P6, I). It is interesting that most parents had taken ownership of the school, thus, they were willing to volunteer with no incentive attached. These views coincide with Bower and Griffin (2011) that parents' involvement takes different forms such as volunteering at school, attending school events and communicating with teachers. Thus, it was evident from the data that parents positively felt that they could execute their roles through voluntarism (P6, P5). The school could therefore become a space where these parents would be empowered through voluntarism and activities which may consequently enhance their participation.

Furthermore, parents showed their pride and satisfaction within their work. Four of the parents (P1, P7, P2, P5) revealed such a view during the interview. One of them indicated that, "*I feel greatly honoured to be part of the School Board"* (P2, I). Another one stated:

> *To me, it is important, not only when they serve in School Boards, but at any level where they are leading others. Parents would be proud of themselves when they are in leadership positions. So leadership is important to everyone in the society.* (P5, I)

The same parent further stated: *"Teachers do not dominate us parents"* (P5, I). Adding to that, another parent's response also revealed some degree of satisfaction when she stated: "*The principal is there and the School Board is there, now things are just hand in hand, I can see there are a lot of changes. I have the right to talk with a certain ill-mannered teacher just straight forward to her or him"* (P6, I).

It appeared that parents have become confident in facing the teaching staff. Parents exercised their influence through using their voice towards teachers. It was also evident that parents were satisfied with the open communication created by the school. One parent stated: *"We are free to visit the school any time*" (P7, I). Naturally, this view suggested that parents were content, especially with the handling of issues at school by the principal. In support of this, one parent stated: "*The principal always does what we advise him to do and gives us feedback"* (P3, I). These findings reflected that parents were pleased to offer advice to the principal.

4.5 Conditions that enable and/or constrain parents' leadership in the school

I split my research question four: *What are the conditions that enable and/or constrain parents' leadership in the school?* into two parts. The first part addresses the enabling factors and the second part addresses the constraints. Two categories: Training of Board members and supportive programmatic structures emerged as enablers. Meanwhile, policy related hindrances and lack of support and the negative perception from other stakeholders, emerged as two categories that served as constraints. Thus, below I present the enabling factors first before I present the constraining factors.

4.5.1 Conditions that enable parents' leadership in school

4.5.1.1 Training of Board members

One way to develop parents' leadership in the case study school was through training. Though on a limited scale, participants indicated that training was offered (on two occasions with some parents) to capacitate them in order to exercise their leadership roles with ease. It was stressed by the principal and by all seven interviewed parents that training was of great assistance to parents. In this regard, one parent indicated that, "*We were trained at Knowledge (pseudonym) Secondary School, we were there for the whole week, and it helps us a lot. We were not aware of those things. As from there when we attend that course, we know*" (P4, I). This assertion was further supported by one parent who stated:

> *Training helps us a lot because like, let me just say, I am a treasurer, and then I was not knowing where and how to handle that money for the school or what is my work, what should I do, how, I was not aware, I was just there, just randomly in air.* (P6, I)

This evidence demonstrated that training of Board members serves as capacity building for parents in executing their roles.

Consequently, in extrapolating these findings, it seemed that parents felt that, after the training, there was a paradigm shift in their leadership exercise, as well as in their relationship with the teaching staff. This was evident as some of the parent School Board members emphasised that after the training, they began, "*holding their meetings without the teaching staff"* (P4, I), and "*also visiting the school by surprise"* (P6, I) as indicated earlier in this chapter. It appeared that parents

were now developing critical attitudes towards the teachers, watching every step of their way. One parent revealed their criticality by stating: "*In some cases, especially when we pay a surprise visit to the school, we find some teachers just busy with phones during lessons"* (P3, I). This demonstrated that parents began to challenge schooling practices after they became aware of their roles. One parent acknowledged how they became a threat to teachers when she responded to a question on how teachers react when parents exercise their leadership role: *"They react positively because some of them really feel that we may report them to the authority. Some may start questioning how and who made us aware of our roles as they sometimes feel threatened by our supervision"* (P3, I). Likewise, another parent also stated: "*The Board meetings, workshops and or training we got enabled us to put our leadership and, indeed, the school in the right direction as far as development is concerned"* (P7, I). Additionally, one more participant also indicated that, *"the training was beneficial to us, thus we are able to do our duties with ease now"* (P4, I). These findings demonstrated that parents felt more confident about their roles and expectations than before. To them, the training was an eye-opener, to such an extent that they felt that they formed a visible front in their School Board roles, thus they could hold meetings and monitor teaching and learning independently without the support of the SMT.

4.5.1.2 Supportive programmatic structures

The school created conditions for parents' leadership to flourish. There was a general perception among the participants that programmatic structures were put in place to support their leadership roles. It was revealed that the circuit office in collaboration with the school, engaged parents in various platforms advocated for providing opportunities to parents to engage and share in meaningful discussions facing their schools. One of the parent School Board members expressed her viewpoint that, "*at the moment, all the School Board Chairpersons in the circuit convene meetings every term in order to discuss and share ideas on how to run schools effectively"* (P6, I). Another participant revealed how important the meetings were to them that, "*we also share how the learners and teachers from each school performed in the examination. This is because we take ownership of the results; we do not regard them as for learners"* (P3, I). Such efforts seem to have contributed to the improvement of parents' leadership as they developed a sense of ownership of their schools and for the performance of the school.

It also appeared that the school and the circuit office's aim was for parents to have more influence in the school and the community. As such, parents' viewpoints are considered vital. In this regard, one parent indicated that, "*we usually receive the agenda in order to add anything we would like to be discussed"* (P2, I). In conjunction with this view, another parent stated: *"We always get from the school principal, freedom to visit the school anytime, and carry out our leadership roles"* (P7, I). Likewise, another parent stated: *"Whatever is happening at the school, e.g., School Board or parent meetings, the school notifies us well in advance"* (P5, I). Parents seemed to appreciate the environment under which they operated, and thus were determined to help direct the school. The findings also suggested that team spirit, open communication, and flexibility were granted to parents in order to develop a collaborative relationship with the teaching staff.

The latter discussed roles and the enabling factors gave us a broad perspective of the parents' participation in the school activities. Next, I placed the parents' participation in the parents' leadership model (see Figure 4.1) to determine the type of School Board this school had.

4.5.2 Analysing parents' participation using the parents' leadership model as an analytical tool

The findings revealed that parents have a wide range of roles in the school leadership. However, findings portray variations in the nature of parents' School Board participation in various school activities. It became evident from the findings that parents became partners to teachers in some activities while in others, they left teachers to dominate. When I made the analysis of their roles and the nature of participation, I positioned these on the leadership model (see Figure 4.1) that I adopted from the effective governing body (Creese & Earley, 1999) as an analytical tool, on which their participation in decision-making, monitoring of teaching and learning, finance management and fundraising activities appeared to vary. Thus, using the model, participation fell in different quadrants based on particular activities. This was due to the fact that parents' perspectives on different roles differed. Figure 4.1 is replicated for ease of reading.

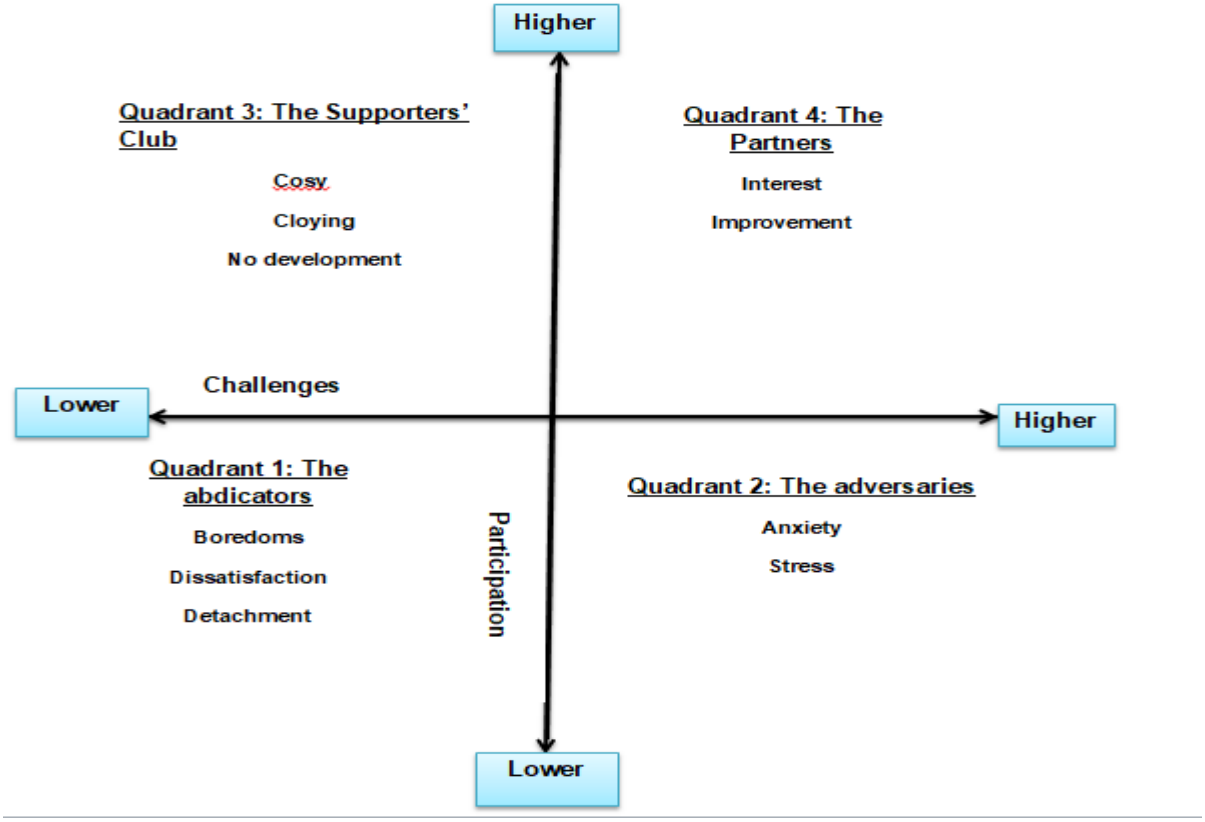


Figure 4.1: A model of parents' leadership exercise, expressed in relation to participation and challenges criteria (adapted from the 'Effective Governing Body Exercise' model, Creese and Earley, 1999)

4.5.2.1 Partnership in school finance: The partners (quadrant 4)

Parents perceived themselves as **partners** with teachers in the decision-making role of school finances. It emerged clearly from the findings that, at the school level, parents highly participate in the decisions regarding the utilisation of school funds. This view was evident when one parent indicated that, "*if there is something going to be bought for the school, it is not only the principal who needs to go and take the money to buy even the balls, anything for the school, even book, chalk or printers, but also the treasurer for the School Board needs to be there"* (P6, I). Similarly, another parent stated: *"We also involve ourselves in fund-raising activities in order to supplement the school funds"* (P3, I). This demonstrated that parent School Board members provided support

to teaching staff in the school projects that were organised to raise funds. This was also evidenced in the minutes from the 19th April 2019, when the school principal thanked the parent School Board members for the contributions made towards fundraising activities and further requested them to continue supporting the school in its initiations and programmes (D6b, p. 2). This type of partnership is captured in Quadrant 4 of the model, whereby, parents vow to participate and support the teaching staff in aspects of the school. In this regard, work was also distributed to all in the school, not only to teachers or to the management.

4.5.2.2 Abdicators in some co-facilitating roles and in teachers' appointments (Quadrant 1)

Another emerging view from some parents revealed that some of them did not consider themselves equal partners to teachers in some aspects of the school, but rather **abdicated** their role. The findings revealed that despite the presence of parents in leadership roles, for example, the Chairperson of the School Board, there were still parents who felt that teachers were better in some respect due to their literacy levels. This evidence was clear from one of the parent's responses regarding the chairing of meetings who asserted:

> *Considering our (parents) educational background and limited exposure to formal meetings, parents from deep in the village are not good at presiding over meetings, you see. Thus, teachers usually dominate the chairmanship in these meetings. Teachers are better than parents in terms of presiding over a meeting.* (P5, I)

Another parent added: *"We leave the issue of teacher appointments in the hands of the management because they are better at determining who qualifies or who is not, us we just endorse"* (P3, I). Adding to that, another parent asserted that, "*the outcomes of the interview would then be forwarded to the circuit office and finally to the regional office and it will then decide which candidate should be appointed, that mandate does not lie with us"* (P4, I).

These viewpoints demonstrated that parents did not really regard themselves as equal to teachers in some activities, due to their low literacy levels. This view is supported by Heystek (2011) and Mncube (2009) who argue that literacy levels may become a constraining factor for parents to participate fully in school affairs. The issue of low literacy levels seems to constrain parents' leadership despite the effort that was made by the Namibian government to expand adult literacy training in an effort to help parents gain the confidence to participate in their children's education

(Angula & Lewis, 1997). In a way, parents might relinquish their roles to teachers with the understanding that teachers are far better equipped to do so. In keeping with Creese and Earley (1999), parents are likely to think that teachers are professionals and have a good head so they leave it all to them. By the same token, Brown and Duku (2004) also affirm that "many parents in African schools often defer decisions to teachers because of the teachers' class positions/identity, rather than being up-front and vocal" (p. 436). In addition, the findings further reflected that despite the School Board being mandated by the Education Act, it still does not have the final say on the appointment of staff. In this case, they might as well act as the proverbial "rubber stamp", following what the teachers have decided upon. Thus, in this regard, parent School Board members may be described more as abdicators, leaving these aspects to teachers as they believe that they are more professional than they are.

4.5.2.3 Adversaries in monitoring of teaching and learning (quadrant 2)

The newfound confidence from the training turned parent School Board members into an **adversarial role**. This evidence was evidently captured from some parents' responses. For example, one parent cited that, "*the training was beneficial to us, thus we are able to do our duties with ease now"* (P4, I). Another parent added that, *"after training, we started to pay surprise visits to the school in order to check if teachers are at the school and doing what is expected of them"* (P6, I). Another one stated: *"Some (teachers) may start questioning how and who made us aware of our roles as they sometimes feel threatened by our supervision"* (P3, I). The findings indicated that after the training of School Board members, there was a paradigm shift in the participation of parents in some aspects such as monitoring of teachers. They asserted that they felt more confident after they became aware of their role to the extent that they could face, challenge and police the teaching staff. These findings resonate well with the model's quadrant 2 which illustrates another type of School Board where parents visit the school very often, sometimes without warning, and keep a very close eye on all aspects of the school's work (Creese & Earley, 1999). This model captures the surprise visits by parents as a way of participating critically in school affairs. Conversely, as parent Board members' level of participation changed, tension developed between some teachers and the parents. The findings here further imply that parents sought to fully participate and involve themselves in curricular matters, the domain that teachers tend to allow no-

one to intrude into (Bauch & Goldring, 1998). Apart from their active participation, they also challenged teachers if they felt that teachers were not carrying out their roles as expected.

Having discussed the level of parents' participation in the case study school, I now move on to discuss the constraining factors.

4.5.3 Conditions that constrain parents' leadership in school

The study findings revealed that there were several mechanisms that constrained parents' leadership in the school. The following mechanisms were identified as constraints to parents' leadership in the school:

- Transport problems to and from meetings;
- No incentives for parents;
- Bullying from other parents/criticism from other parents;
- Low parent support;
- Language barrier during interviews;
- Language barrier in interpreting school/educational policies;
- Lack of parental understanding about the value of education/staying at alcohol outlets with children;
- Lack of parental involvement by some parents.

After analysing the data, I placed the above challenges into two main categories. These were policy-related hindrances and lack of support and the negative perception of other stakeholders. I now discuss each of these separately.

4.5.3.1 Policy related hindrances

To start with, the challenges raised by participants as constraints to parents' leadership emanated from the national policies and legislation. Lack of incentives/wages for parents and the use of English as an official language in the directives and usage during the staff members' interviews were identified as constraining mechanisms.

In the first place, most participants across the groups highlighted the lack of transport fares and lack of incentives as hampering factors in the smoothness of parents' leadership. On this, one parent School Board member stated: "*We still need some sorts of incentives, even N$50/month. Such an incentive would enable us to reach even the communities that lie at the furthermost of the school vicinity"* (P4, I). Even more, when asked the challenges experienced by parent School Board members, another parent expressed how hard it was, especially for unemployed parents; thus she stated that, *"distance and money problems, some parents are from far, and always we need to meet in a month or twice a month, to come and attend a meeting at that school, and those parents are from far, the distance and money problems as some may not be working"* (P6, I).

The above viewpoints indicated that parents found it hard to perform their duties and responsibilities due to lack of transport money, especially to and from meetings. In a like manner, some parents indicated their wish to reach every learner who drops out but fail to do so due to lack of transport money, as some areas are far away. While transport money was predominantly raised, a number of participants expressed their concern that parents are not motivated as they are not given any incentives. Despite that, the regulations made under the Education Act, made a provision for parents to be paid for the expenses incurred in the performance of their functions, but the regulation is not always adhered to because the provision made is too open, meaning it does not compel the school to compensate for parents' expenses incurred. This showed that there was a clash between policies and the community. In addition, the payment was not always possible especially when the school has not received enough funds. This assertion was supported by the principal when he stated: "*One problem is financial constraint as sometimes the school might not have sufficient funds"* (P, Q). Therefore, parents found it difficult to execute their functions as expected.

Secondly, another challenge raised was the language barrier. English as an official language is used both in directives and during formal interviews for posts at the case study school. Participants testified that parents found it difficult to understand and follow during interviews with applicants for staff posts. As such, the issue of language limited their inputs during the discussion, in a way concealing their voice as discussed earlier. By this, participants (SMT1, SMT4, HOD1) indicated that *most* School Board members cannot speak English and during teaching post interviews, they found it difficult to follow the proceedings. For example, it was stated that, "*most School Board*

members cannot speak English and during teaching post interviews, they find it difficult to understand the candidates" (HOD1, Q). However, the degree of the parents' role in this regard is worrisome. I align my argument to some of the participants' responses, for example, one parent who stated that, "*normally, they tell us in advance, what each interview question is all about, and this helps us to follow the proceedings as we have some basic reading skills*" (P2, I). This viewpoint showed that educational levels have an influence on the roles of parent School Board members, which directly or indirectly limits the voice of parents during the recommendation of staff. Their participation during the interviews are hindered by basic literacy skills as they are unable to understand all the proceedings during the interview. This view was confirmed by one teacher School Board member by stating that, *"they face a challenge of language because most of the directives are made in English, interviews are conducted in English and the majority of parents do not understand English"* (TSB3, Q). Similarly, two HODs also stated how language barriers negatively affect parents in carrying out their roles. One HOD remarked that the "*School Board role is to appoint new staff members at school but School Boards do not understand English during interview panels, so, this is a challenge to them which affects them negatively in carrying out their duties"* (HOD2, Q).

A parent School Board member asserted that "*we usually attend interviews for teachers, though language (English) is a challenge to us, we just sit in the interview and listen*" (P3, I). These findings showed that although parents were involved they still experienced internal exclusion. By internal exclusion, Mncube (2007) refers to the inclusion of parents in the decision-making while they are still excluded by the interaction privileges due to some issues such as the language barrier.

The same findings were equally true to the findings of the study by Shikongo (2019), which revealed that although parents were expected to give their inputs during the interview process, they could not because it was not possible to translate during the interview process. In support of the language barrier, Mncube (2009) confirms that parents' active participation in school-related activities is at stake as they cannot read legislation, draft policies and manage budgets. It not only limits their understanding of issues, but it is also used by teachers as an excuse to exclude them and withhold crucial information during the decision-making process (Ravn, 1998). On this, Shikongo's (2019) study also revealed that despite translation that might be done, sometimes translated information may not give the same message as the original.

4.5.3.2 Negative perceptions from other stakeholders

There was a general feeling among the participants that parents' leadership is hindered by a lack of support from other parents and from some teaching staff. Participants such as the principal, two teacher School Board members, HODs and three of the parent School Board members revealed the negativity that parents face from the general school community. For instance, one HOD stated:

> *Other parents feel that they are teaming up with the staff members to demand what is difficult to others and they (parent School Board members) may feel that the School Board members may give the report to the school to what is happening in the community.* (HOD3, Q)

Likewise, another SMT member asserted that "*Sometimes if they (parent School Board members) tell the parents to do something, they start to argue and begin to dislike them"* (SMT3, Q).

The findings above are not peculiar to this school as studies conducted in Namibia revealed similar findings. A study by Kayumbu (2017) revealed that parent School Board members often faced challenges, like fear, isolation, and rejection by other stakeholders, while Shikongo (2019) revealed that other parents do not give support to parent School Board members in terms of attending meetings where important issues of concern are raised. Shikongo further articulates that other parents do not support parent School Board members in terms of voluntary contributions when the need arises. As a result, parent School Board members face the negativity and bullying from the community.

On a similar note, another SMT member asserted that, "*parents face bullying from the community members that are not in need of them*" (SMT3, Q). In line with this view, a parent School Board member testified that, *"(parents) usually put blame on us (the Board members) when things are not moving as expected"* (P2, I). It is evident that parent School Board members often found it difficult to convey the school messages across to other parents. This discourages them to plan further for school developmental projects, as well as failing in already initiated projects. One parent (P4) also pointed out that lack of support emerges because some parents are not happy when some Board members are re-elected while some have no general understanding on the value of education due to their literacy level:

> *Some parents, however, are not happy with the way we do things to help their children to do the right things and some might question themselves as to why always me to be re-elected to the Board than other parents, those sorts of things, you know.* (P4, I)

As a result, they do not attend meetings when invited and they do not contribute to the resolutions taken.

Another parent raised a concern that some teaching staff did not offer them support on their duty-related activities. She particularly referred to the negativity they faced especially when they monitored teaching and learning. In this regard, one of the parents stated: "*What we have noted is that, some took it seriously and made some efforts, but some did not, however, take it as a serious matter. It is hard to change the characters of some people, you know"* (P1, I). That is to say, teachers do not always take parents' roles seriously and they seem to feel threatened. This assertion resonates well with Bauch and Goldring (1998) who argue that teachers often tend to view parents as clients or consumers of education, rather than as partners. To teachers, parents seem to cross the boundaries of their work and encroach into teachers' 'roles' territory or into their expert domain (Creese & Earley, 1999). Thus, at times, teachers do not welcome parents' participation in school activities.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented and discussed the data gathered during phase one of this study. Findings were discussed around the themes that emerged from the analysis of data in relation to the first four research questions. An adopted leadership model (see Figure 4.1) was also used as an analytical tool to determine the nature of the School Board in relation to their participation in the school activities.

Having discussed the findings as inductively analysed, in the next chapter, I seek to analyse the development of parents' leadership using CHAT as an analytical tool. Hence, I next present phase two findings of the data gathering process in relation to the final two research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: PHASE TWO: THE FORMATIVE INTERVENTION

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented and discussed the findings from phase one. This chapter discusses the findings relating to phase two and the final two research questions. Before I tackled the analysis of the data, I began with the mirroring process for the challenges faced by parents on their leadership activity as exposed in Chapter Four, by means of a qualitative tools data set. To arrive at an understanding of the parents' leadership activity in the school, a deeper and more thorough study was required. This was done through highlighting the contradictions that were regarded as the hampering blocks to activity in the system. Contradictions, as described by Foot (2014), are misfits within and between elements that manifest themselves as problems, however, they serve as the starting point that opens up new ideas towards an activity.

Thus, central in this chapter are Change Laboratory Workshops, organised around expansive learning actions, drawing on the challenges as presented in Chapter Four and raising the contradictions as manifesting between and within elements. To remind the reader, the following are challenges as presented in Chapter Four that constrain parents' leadership:

- Transport problems;
- No incentives;
- Bullying from other parents/criticism from other parents;
- Minimal parent support;
- Language barrier during interviews;
- Language barrier in interpreting school/ educational policies;
- Lack of parental understanding about the value of education/staying at alcohol outlets with children; and
- Lack of parental involvement by some parents.

Next, I discuss the process of mirror data, the first stimulus in relation to the first Change Laboratory Workshop (CLW1).

5.2 CLW1 focused on learning action one: Questioning

On the 24th July 2019, seven participants and I met for the first Change Laboratory Workshop (CLW1), held at the circuit office. Significant to this CLW, was for me to mirror the data gathered during phase one. An agenda for the items and a PowerPoint presentation were used as mediating tools in this CLW. Thus, the agenda guided the participants on the activities of the day. The mirroring of challenges was mediated by the PowerPoint presentation as illustrated in Figure 5.1.

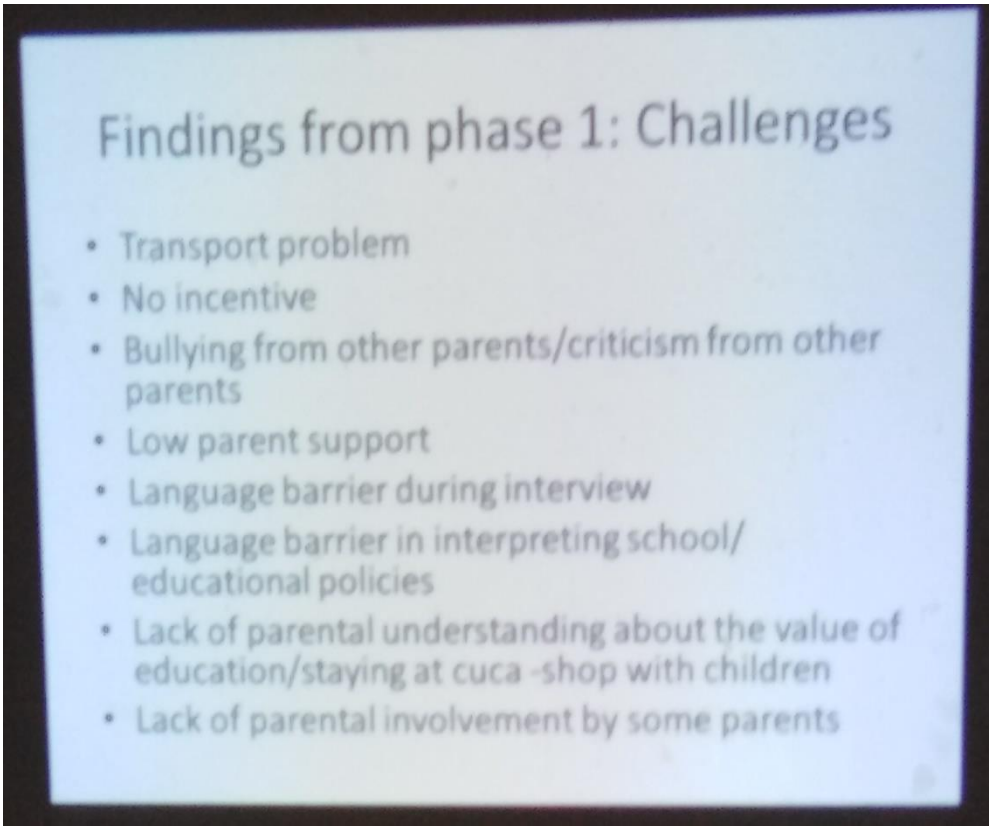


Figure 5.1: PowerPoint Presentation displays the challenges as inductively analysed from phase 1

As I mentioned in Chapter Two a Change Laboratory has two principles, double stimulation and the principle of ascending from abstract to concrete (Foot, 2014). The principle of double

stimulation had taken its course in this study. Double stimulation manifested first in this study as I mirrored the challenges that constrained parents' leadership. The 'mirror findings' served as a first stimulus for the participants, as it triggered their thoughts to discuss and question the current situation, in order to break away from their usual practice and for them to become transformative agencies. Their discussion is illustrated in the excerpt from a video recording Figure 5.1 and the first action of expansive learning was noticed. This action began immediately after I mirrored the challenges (see Figure 5.1). From the beginning of the session, participants were hesitant to speak, it seemed as if no-one wanted to say something first. I then began to enquire if they agreed or not with all the challenges that emerged from phase one (see part of video recording ing Table 5.1). After a few minutes of looking at each other in silence, they began to debate. Debate in this regard symbolised that the process of expansive learning was taking its course. The following table illustrates their discussion as captured (as raw data) in the video during the CLW1.

Table 5.1: Part of video recording 1: 15:49

Researcher: Do you think the mirror data reflects the real situation regarding parents' leadership?
HOD1: Yes it is a true reflection of the current situation.
P5: "I would like to contribute, but at the same time questioning the point that says we face criticism from other parents. I know that when an idea is initiated, it is not implemented immediately, it takes time to implement such an idea. So, I think many parents accept the ideas initiated, they do not really reject the initiated ideas. I think they support ideas from School Board members."
Researcher: Are you saying that there is no bullying or criticism from other parents?
TSB1: *"No, criticisms are there, other parents feel that parents' School Board members are not truly their representatives but rather, they follow the views by teachers.*
P4: *I do not agree with the challenge of low involvement by parents. They do take part. They usually attend meetings. I had observed that the meeting is always well attended.*
P7: I have no objection to that point; parents in this community are hurdled by alcohol outlets/shebeens. Many do not visit the school from the time their children are in grade 1 up to the time they leave school after grade 10. All in all, the problem is poor attendance of meetings due to the time they spent at the alcohol outlets.
TSB2: I think so too.
Researcher: For now, we need to analyse these challenges deeper and see if we can find the root causes as well as solutions to them.
HOD1: Yes, let us do that.

It was evident from the Video (V) that participants had different perspectives regarding the mirrored challenges. The video exemplified the conflict of resistance to transformation as some participants demonstrated satisfaction with the current practices. As suggested by Sannino et al. (2009), CLW1 was characterised by the powers of questioning, contradicting and debating whether the emerged challenges were genuine. This was because some participants felt that they were not convinced enough, especially with the problem area about the criticism from the community. Another point of argument was about the lack of parental involvement in the education of their children. There were some of the participants who felt that, "*parents do take part"* (P4, V), while some felt that, even though most parents take part, there are still *"a number of parents who spend most of their time at alcohol outlets"* (P7, V). The discussion symbolised how participants were learning expansively through the open discussion and by giving evidence as examples of the challenges faced. Importantly, the negative talk was only from a few participants, for example when one of the parents stated: "*I know that when an idea is initiated, it is not implemented immediately, it takes time to implement such an idea. So, I think many parents accept the ideas initiated, they do not really reject the initiated ideas. I think they support ideas from School Board members"* (P5, V); but, the majority agreed with the challenges as exposed, as one participant asserted: "*I have no objection with that point; parents in this community are hurdled by alcohol outlets/shebeens*" (P7, V). After this, participants were triggered to discuss the challenges further. The next section discusses the analysis of these challenges

5.2.1 Change Laboratory Workshop two (CLW2) focused on learning action two: Analysis

Change Laboratory Workshop two (CLW2) was held on the 25th July 2019, attended by three primary and four secondary participants. To support expansive learning, I presented the CHAT and expansive learning cycle models (see Figure 5.2) as second stimuli on a flipchart. The two models helped to facilitate the analysis of the current practice, the historicity of contradictions, current disturbances and work out possible initiatives for the future in relation to leadership practices in the school. It was therefore vital that participants examined the interactions of various elements such as the SMT members, teacher School Board members and other parents in the community, as presented on the CHAT model.

Similarly, the expansive learning cycle as an analytical method directed the participants with their learning. Though not all, some learning actions were achieved. The figure below displays the two models used as second stimuli during the CLW2.

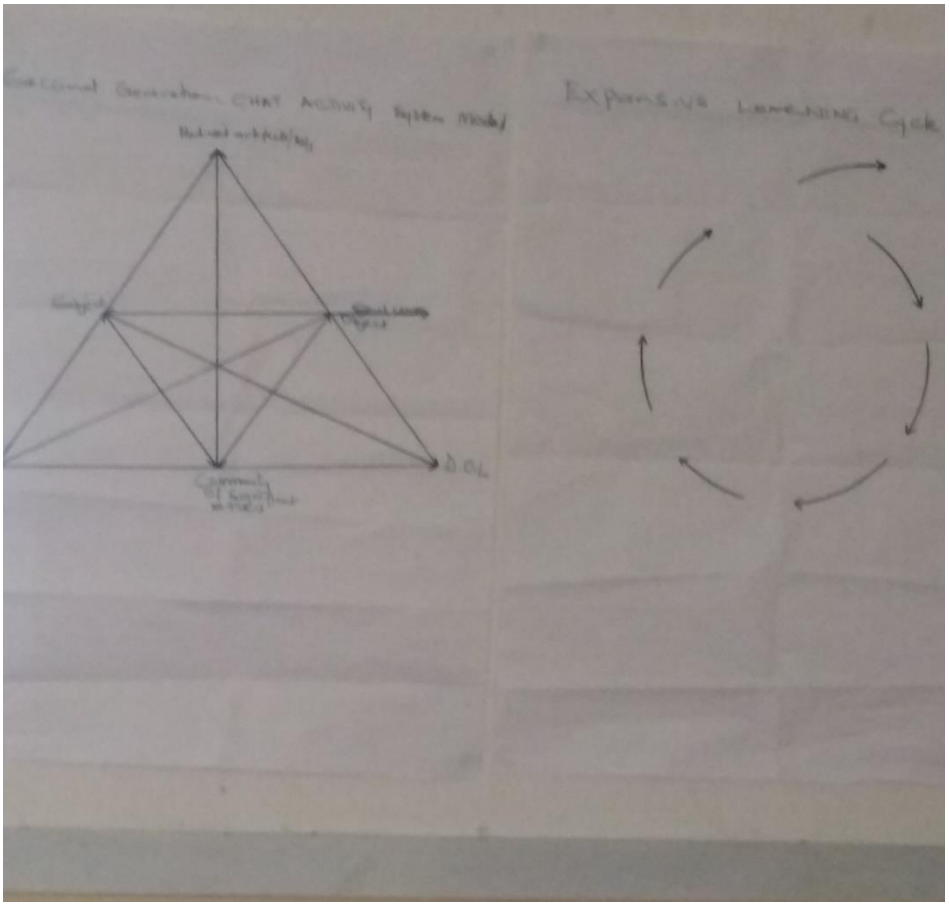


Figure 5.2: Activity and expansive learning cycle models: Second stimuli

I invited the participants to analyse the root causes of the challenges mirrored during CLW1. As a team, participants discussed collectively, while one of the HODs was giving speakers a chance. I took field notes but also video recorded the discussion with a laptop, as well as all the happenings during the session.

Figure 5.3 is an excerpt capturing the discussion by means of observation and backed up by a video record, as participants surfaced the contradictions.

Researcher: *For now, let us look at the root causes of the above challenges, and the root causes are what we term contradictions. To remind you, some of these challenges are doable but there might be those that are not doable.*

SMT2: *Do you mean we are now looking at all those challenges?*

Researcher: Yes, all of those

TSB2: *I think some of the challenges can be combined; they might have roots from the same source.*

Researcher: No problem

TSB1: *I think Transport problem and lack of incentives can be combined as Challenge 1*

Researcher: OK

TSB1: I want to start with that challenge, I think the main cause is a distance because some *parents stay a distance from school. Thus incentive comes in to say, if they were given something, maybe they could have come with easy as they could make use of the money given to them.*

Researcher: Ok, another one again?

HOD1: I think those challenges rooted in government policies. Education Act only gave a provision for small refreshments for parents during their meetings and interviews but there is no provision for giving them money.

P7: *I think policies are to blame. The Act gave a provision that parents may become School Board members at any school as long as their children are schooling there, now some schools are distant especially the boarding schools.*

TSB2: *Yes I think it is policy too, thus if there was the provision of an incentive in the Act, then they could do their duties willingly because they knew that they would be rewarded for that. So the problem is policy-related.*

Figure 5.3: Discussion extract

This section was for rigorous analysis to surface the root causes, i.e. the systemic contradictions, of the aforementioned challenges. However, as appears in the excerpt above, some challenges were seen as interrelated, thus participants combined those that they consider to be of the same nature or likely to have the same causes. It is therefore against this backdrop that out of eight (8) mirrored challenges, only four contradictions were surfaced. Following is the table which illustrates the summary of contradictions surfaced from the challenges.

Table 5.2: Summary of the contradictions surfaced

Contradictions	Zone of tension	Associated problem or constraint challenge
1. Policy hindrances contradiction	***Subject and rules***	• Transport problem • Lack of incentives
2. Socio-economic and cultural contradiction	***Community of significant others and subject***	• Bullying from other parents/ criticism from other parents • Low parents' support
3. Evolution in policies	***Rules, subject, and mediated artefacts***	• Language barrier in interview • Language barrier to interpret directives
4. Cultural influence	***Community of significant others and subject***	• Lack of understanding about the value of education and lack of involvement • Low parental involvement

5.2.1.1 Surfacing contradictions of challenge 1: Transport and lack of incentive for parents

During the CLW2 session, participants discussed and analysed the problem situation about transport and lack of incentives for parents. Participants particularly examined the historicity and the current situation of such problems. By looking at such a challenge from a historical perspective, they identified the current disturbance, such as parents' will to reach out to the community in order to encourage all learners to go to school on time, versus their inability to reach their homes due to the transport fare. They also discussed the issue of volunteering versus lack of incentives.

At first glance, some participants viewed it as a lack of support from the regional office. To question how the regional office could have supported them, some participants indicated that the

issue of transport problems and lack of incentive for parents is rooted in government policies. One Head of Department, for example, stated: *"The Education Act only gave a provision for small refreshments for parents during their meetings and interviews but there is no provision to give them cash"* (HOD1, CLW2O). Similarly, one parent School Board member supported the idea by stating: "*I think policies are to blame, the Act gave a provision that parents may become School Board members at any school as long as their children are schooling there, now some schools are distant especially the boarding schools"* (P7, CLW2O). Viewing it from these perspectives, it was evident that participants were learning collaboratively to surface the root causes of such a problem. They associated these problems with the government policy which implied that the contradictions surfaced were not natural forces but policy produced. Participants clarified that policy has directly or indirectly limited the possibilities of giving monetary assistance to parents. In this regard, the policy became a constraint as it did not open up the opportunity for parents to be given transport money. Thus, it was obvious that there was a tension between ***rules*** and the ***subject***, which manifested as a secondary contradiction as was embedded between two elements (rules and subject) of the activity system.

5.2.1.2 Surfacing contradictions to challenge 2: Bullying from other parents and low parents' support

Participants further continued to trace and uncover the origin of the problem area, bullying from other parents and low parents' support. This analysis showed a progressive expansive learning as participants examined the situation by looking in detail into the negativity that other parents have of parent School Board members. To inquire about the source of such challenges, participants had a lengthy discussion about the root causes of this problem area.

The team discussed and gave different views about the source of such a problem. For example, some participants understood it from both a cultural and socio-economic point of view. One of the SMT members, for example, stated: *"I think it is culture, other parents normally consider the convener of an idea; i.e. they can value ideas from parent A who is working and undermine the idea from Parent B who does not work"* (SMT1, CLW2O). In the same vein, the teacher School Bboard member concurred with SMT1 by stating: *"Some parents have a feeling that the elected parents are only those with incomes, and their understanding is that they usually team up with*

teachers because they also have some income" (TSB2, CLW2O). The result of this analysis explained that a deeper understanding of this challenge was needed. The excerpt below showed how the developed disturbances within the community members contributed to the low support of parents. These disturbances manifested into contradictions that were hindering parents' leadership in the school.

> *I think this is due to the fact that mostly the children we have in this school are not staying with their biological parents but only with guardians who are elders because their young biological parents have flocked to towns in search of jobs. This has had negative impacts because such aged people could not reach the school whenever there is a need or could not convince a child in any matter, thus I think this could be a socio-economic contradiction.* (TSB1, CLW2O)

This excerpt revealed that the problem was more than what was apparent and it was deep-seated in a cultural and social context. As such, the excerpt directly linked the problem situation to culture and socio-economic aspects. Such understanding depicted the tension manifested between the nodes of the ***community of significant others*** and ***the subject***, parent School Board members. Thus, it is the secondary contradiction.

5.2.1.3 Surfacing of contradiction for challenge 3: Language barrier to interpret the directives and language barrier during the interviews

The posing of inquiry of language as a challenge was made. Participants collectively examined the historical source of such a problem. A history of language use in Namibia was examined and it later came to light that historically, Namibia emerged from the apartheid and colonial past. One participant stated: "*By then, the use of English in schools was minimal as Afrikaans was regarded as a medium of instruction"* (HOD1, CLW2O). It was obvious that the current generation of the parents who were School Board members were a result of the apartheid schooling system, in which English was not emphasised. After independence, the requirement of the current government designed English as a second language. As such, parents were finding it hard to cope with it during the interview and to interpret the directives because they were not educated in English. This challenge does not only pose a danger to parents to be able to communicate with other stakeholders but also hampers their ability to make informed decisions during the decision-making process. At one point HOD1 stated: "*The policy limits parents' voice as it made English an official language,*

unlike in other countries like in South Africa which has more than one official language, here they have no choice to switch to another language" (HOD1, CLW2O).

Participants understood the language barrier in terms of a policy limitation. Through this historical analysis, they opened up layers within three dimensions, ***the subject, rules,*** and *the* ***mediated artefacts.*** They revealed that the emerged tension was between ***rules*** and ***the subject***; however, the tension proceeded to interconnect the ***subject*** and ***the mediated artefacts***. Language being ***the artefact*** that facilitates the communication between ***the subject*** and the ***rules,*** manifested into secondary contradictions covering all three elements.

5.2.1.4 Surfacing of contradictions for challenge 4: Lack of understanding about the value of education as well as lack of parental involvement

The origin and evolution of a lack of understanding about the value of education was sought. It was not easy for participants to arrive at the root cause of such a challenge. A lengthy debate accompanied the learning process in this regard. Participants took the scope of expansive learning through redefining the origin of such a problem. Some participants understood it from a low level of education point of view, for example, one teacher School Board member stated: *"Some parents feel that they are uneducated, so intentionally or unintentionally, they are retaining the trend to continue as such"* (TSB2, CLW2O). Finally, this problem was directly linked to culture. One participant indicated: "*Today's parents do not take education seriously*" (SMT1, CLW2O) and another one stated that parents are forever making reference to themselves that they are uneducated but yet are able to raise their children, feed them and clothe them. Another teacher School Board member concretised this view by presenting her own experience with her father whom she quoted saying: "*Education does not bring any advantage, so none (of his children) are going to school today, we are all going to cultivate in the field, and some are going to look after my livestock"* (TSB1, CLW2O). This story illuminated the pure cultural influence of how parents prefer traditional survival based on land cultivation and rearing animals as being more advantageous over education. Participants went on to criticise parents with such understanding; as they do not keep up with the development processes, their understanding becomes disturbed in the process. Thus, opening up the layers and expanding their learning, helped participants to grasp that lack of

understanding about educational value can be central to other problems, such as lack of parental involvement and low parental support, meaning the three are interdependent.

Conclusively, cultural influences were regarded as a contradiction for this challenge, which was embedded between ***the community of significant*** **others** (non-School Board parents) and ***the subject*** (School Board parents). It emerged as a secondary contradiction in which other parents' understanding had an influence over the activity as they were hindering the leadership of parent School Board members.

The CLW2 ended with the analysis action on which contradictions were surfaced. Next, I discuss CLW3 which was characterised by modelling, learning action three of expansive learning.

5.3 Change Laboratory three: Learning action 3: Modeling

As Engeström and Sannino (2010) suggest, the process of expansive learning should be understood as the construction and resolution of the contradictions found in the activity system**.** In this light, it was necessary for the participants to generate solutions to the emerged contradictions described above. The Change Laboratory Workshop held on the 06/09/2019 was purposefully designed for modelling solutions, and this learning action carried over to CLW4.

It is worth noting that this modelling stage was divided into two stages. The first stage took place during the CLW3 session and it was attended by eight participants (five primary and three secondary), though one participant left before the session ended. It was designed to work out the possible solutions to all contradictions that emerged. The second stage of modelling took place during the first session of CLW4, on the 13/09/19. This session (second stage of modelling) was meant for primary participants only. The motive was for primary participants to work out what mattered to them most. Importantly, I requested primary participants to come 25 minutes earlier before the teachers in order to decide what mattered to them most without the teachers being present. By so doing, I believed it would create a friendly environment that minimised power relations between parents and teachers, so that they could decide themselves without the influence of the teachers.

At the beginning of the CLW3, as the researcher-interventionist, I began the session by asking participants if they could still recall the contradictions and the associated challenges discussed in the previous session. After the narration of some contradictions and their challenges by three participants, I then presented all the contradictions and their associated problems as discussed in the previous session in order to refresh their minds. I also asked the participants to work in pairs and discuss what could the possible solutions to the contradictions be and the associated challenges found. The guiding question was displayed on the PowerPoint presentation which was: *What do you think can be the possible solutions to the emerged contradictions?* The main purpose of addressing this question was an attempt to address my research question 5 which was: *What can be done to enhance parents' leadership development in the school?* Figure 5.4 shows participants discussing the resolutions.

Figure 5.4: Shows participants (in pairs) busy discussing solutions during the CLW3

Participants tried to find solutions for associated challenges which they believed would address contradictions in some way.

Table 5.3 illustrates the discussed solutions per pair.

Table 5.3: Presenting the clustering of solutions as found during CLW2

Contradiction & associated challenge	**Pair number**	**Suggested solution**
Contradiction 1: Policy hindrances (transport problem and lack of incentive	First pair	✓ Only nearby parents in a range of 5km from school should be elected to serve in the SB
	Second pair	✓ The school to establish a policy to request at least N$1 per child/per month to cover parents transport to and from meetings
	Third pair	✓ The school to charge N$3 per child per term to give to parents as an incentive
Contradiction 2 and 4: Socio-economic and cultural influence contradiction: (lack of understanding about the value of education)	First pair	✓ To form information dissemination committee
	Second pair	✓ The school to work out a termly programme for parents to view their children's school work and there should be strategies to compel all parents to adhere to it

	Third pair	✓ The circuit to organise parents' meetings every year in order to discuss, enlighten and sensitise parents about the value of education and the demands by the development process.
Contradiction 3: Evolution in policies: (Language barrier in interview and the language barrier to interpret directives	First pair	✓ To use the recording device during the interview in order for parents to listen to candidate later via an interpreter
	Second pair	✓ To conduct an interview in the vernacular where possible
	Third pair	✓ None

The deep discussion enabled participants to see clearly that some of the contradictions and problems were interrelated, thus, could not be resolved individually. I, the researcher advised participants to work out from clustered ideas as produced by the three pairs into a workable idea. Based on the nature of the second and fourth contradictions, participants concluded that the two are two sides of the same coin, meaning all are based on lack of understanding about the value of education and they are revolving around cultural influence, thus a combination of two into one solution should be sought. I then advised participants to discuss each solution thoroughly so that they may get sense and the relevance of the one best possible solution for each contradiction.

From the clustered ideas as seen in Table 5.4, some of the ideas from the discussion are captured hereunder. For contradiction one, a HOD stated that: *"The first suggestion of electing parents within 5km range is impossible especially that the school has extended its curriculum up to the senior phase, as from next year we are likely to have learners from far in the senior grades"*

(HOD1, CLW3O). Another parent supported the idea by stating that, *"I think you are right, let us think about the little contribution from learners"* (P4, CLW3O). The SMT member added that: *"I think N$ 1 contribution is less, we need to keep up with inflation, thus, I endorse N$3 per learner per term"* (SMT1, CLWO3). After a lengthy discussion, participants arrived at the final conclusion that the school should come up with an internal policy to request each child to contribute N$3 per term or N$9 per year which would be given to parent School Board members to cater for transport and to serve as an incentive. However, one of the parent School Board members enquired: *"But how would you convince the parents in the community to pay?"* (P3, CLW3O). Another one added that: *" I have a fear that this would sound more like conflict of interest, the idea of incentive is supposed to be initiated by non-School Board parents not us*" (P1, CLW3O). At this, an HOD asserted that: "*Payment is a good idea, but we need to be cautious not to contravene with the Education Act, and we should also be mindful that some parents are well acquainted with the policy, thus I suggest we present this to parents first"* (HOD1, CLW3O). They indicated that all parents' blessings of the idea should be sought first.

The workable and relevant solution for contradictions two and four was to establish an information dissemination committee. An SMT member objected to some of the suggested solutions as asserted: *"We always had a programme to call parents for book viewings but not all turned up, I think all we need is a committee*" (SMT2, CLW3O). One of the parent School Board members enquired: "*Those who suggested the committee, how would it operate?*" (P4, CLW3O). An HOD responded that: "*We though*t *of the committee to be constituted of influential people in the community, such as two teachers like Mr X who previously schooled at this school, a nurse from the community and headman*" (HOD2, CLW3O). Another SMT member added: "*For the community to respect law we also need in addition to a headman, at least a police officer, and the constituency councillor*" (SMT1, CLW3O). One of the parents enquired: "*Can we not decide on the members now"* (P4, CLW3O). An HOD responded by stating: "*We need time to do this, for today is late, we also need to think how the committee will work"* (HOD1, CLW3O). It was then decided that the committee's modus operandi would be discussed once the committee came into existence; however, the current understanding is for the committee to do educational campaigns in the community.

For contradiction three, the use of a recording device during the interview of the staff members was considered to be the relevant solution. But, this one parent board member stated: *"Only if the interviews are recorded and someone interprets to us immediately before the recommendations are made, then we can claim we are part and parcel of the interview process"* (P7, CLW3O). Another parent added: *"I think the panel members may also be able to note the answers and then give us a brief summary of the answers from the candidates"* (P2, CLW3O). Participants anticipated that parents may catch up with the interview conversation easily, if the interview process was recorded either by a device or by a pen and retrieved afterwards, while someone was interpreting for them or giving a short summary of the respondents' answers.

5.4 CLW4: Learning actions three and four (modelling and examining) the new model and the emergence of transformative agency

The purpose of the research is to model the future activity system which can enhance leadership in the school. For the model to be implemented, evaluation and examining has to be done to ascertain its relevance and workability. The action of examining the model was carried out in CLW4, held on the 13/09/2019 with primary and secondary participants. However, the first half of this CLW was for parents to prioritise what mattered most to them.

I then asked them to re-look at the contradictions and associated challenges and then suggest at least three of the associated challenges from the four contradictions they considered to be most problematic. With this process, I asked each to write at least three considered problematic areas on a piece of paper before they started discussing it collectively and placed it in a small suggestion box. It emerged from the findings that two broad areas were identified as a matter of urgency by parents of which the solutions should be sought.

Figure 5.5: Participants discussing what matters most during the CLW4

The summary of the priority is displayed in the table below.

Table 5.4: Showing the results of the challenges considered as priorities

Contradiction and associated challenge	Socio-economic and cultural influence (lack of understanding about education value)	Policy hindrance (Lack of incentive)	Evolution in policies (language barrier)
Number of participants	**5**	**4**	**3**

From the table, lack of understanding about the value of education which emerged from socio-economic and cultural influence as a contradiction was noted by five participants, lack of incentive which is associated with policy hindrances by four and language barrier as emerged from policy evolution by three participants. The rest of the challenges were noted by two, one or no participants. This demonstrated that the first two of the three (socio-economic and cultural influence and policy hindrances) contradictions were regarded as more problematic in hampering the leadership of parents in school. As such, parents humbly requested that the two identified

contradictions should be the area of priorities. After this exercise, secondary participants joined the session so that both primary and secondary participants examined the new model. I first had to present to teachers the broad areas that were listed by parents as priorities. Thereafter, in order to remind the participants of the modeling they made on 06/09/2019 during the CLW3, I prepared a short video clip that highlighted the suggested solutions on that particular day. After this stimulus, I reminded them to discuss the solutions, work out the relevance and see if all are doable or not.

The secondary participants (teacher School Board members and SMT members) were also in agreement with the identified priorities by parent School Board members. Thus, all participants discussed the possibilities and implications related to the development of the two listed priority ideas. The discussion had brought forth the transformation process. Although all expansive learning actions were not achieved, the expressions of transformative agency made during the discussion as participants tried to solve contradictions, as well as at the time of examining the resolutions manifested themselves. As defined by Virkkunen (2006), transformative agency refers to "breaking away from the given frame of action and taking the initiative to transform it" (p. 49). Such actions were noticed, for example when participants discussed the issue of envisioning the payment of N$3 per term by each learner to cater for parents' incentives; one teacher School Board member stated that: "*lack of incentive is the main obstacle on parents' work"* (TSB1, CLW4O,). This expression revealed an agentive action as participants were **criticising** the current situation and demonstrated that there was a need to change the status quo. One HOD responded by saying: "*It is a good idea but before it is implemented; it has to be approved by the mass parents"* (HOD1, CLW4O). This view **explicated** new possibilities because participants did not want their model to fail. Thus, they were thinking of getting the approval of the parents first. However, one parent **resisted** the proposed suggestion by questioning: "*Will it not be seen as conflict of interest, that it is us the School Board and management that proposed the payment"* (P7, CLW4O). Though resistance was noticed, participants later compromised that the suggestion would be forwarded to the parents' meeting for approval. The principal and the School Board chairperson were tasked to make it part of the agenda items to be discussed for the next parents' meeting which would be held at the end of the term. This, of course, demonstrates that participants were learning expansively and that learning had evolved from basic expressions of **criticising, explicating, resistance** toward **envisioning** and **committing** to the new actions.

For the second contradiction, the following expression was captured during the discussion "*I think the suggested committee can do educational campaigns in the community"* (P1, CLW4O). Adding to that, one SMT member stated that: "*I concur with the suggestion, however, the committee needs influential people for it to function"* (SMT2, CLW4O). In this discussion, the agentive actions were still obvious as participants were explicating the new possibilities. After a lengthy discussion, participants later agreed to give the idea a try.

After the completion of this learning action, participants discussed the possibility of implementation of the new model. Their implementation was decided based on two of the challenges listed as priorities by parents and which they also found to be doable as they discussed above. The models were: ***an information dissemination committee to be established*** and ***the payment of N$3 per learner per term.*** However, the establishment of the committee would be discussed further in the School Board meetings, then thereafter, all the envisaged members would be contacted and be informed collectively. The targeted date for the implementation was January 2020. The second suggestion was to be discussed in the next parents' meeting. Pending on the decision from the mass meeting of parents, if agreed, the resolutions would be implemented in 2020.

Although Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) argue that Change Laboratory interventions are designed for participants to eventually complete the expansive learning cycle, I should acknowledge that this was not possible for my study due to the time constraints of my Master's degree. Participants were only able to complete the four expansive learning actions which were *questioning, analysing, modelling and examining the new model*. It is worth mentioning that the actions appeared in a sequence as presented on the expansive learning action model, though the questioning action appeared more frequently almost throughout the whole process. The order of actions looked like this, questioning > analysis > modelling > questioning > examining.

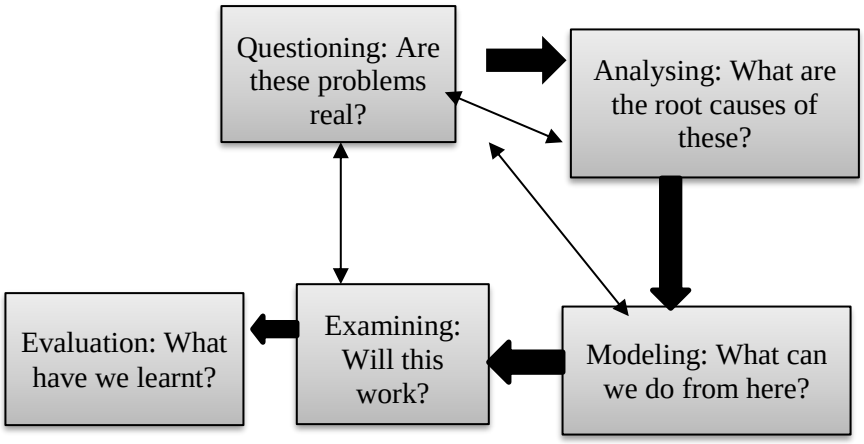


Figure 5.6: Illustrates the steps taken by participants during the CLWs

5.5 The potential contribution of Change Laboratory Workshops to the leadership development of parents

Following the Change Laboratory Workshops, it was important for me as a researcher-interventionist to establish the usefulness of the Change Laboratory Workshops to the leadership development of parents. The motive behind this was to evaluate whether my research question six: *What can a Change Laboratory Workshop process contribute to leadership development of parents?* was addressed or not. As such, I designed a short questionnaire (Appendix F for teachers, and G for parents respectively) which I gave to participants to answer in the last CLW.

On answering the questionnaires, participants showed their satisfaction with the CLWs conducted despite the implementation stage not being reached. Apart from the data I obtained from questionnaires, I also captured the informal talks of the participants which indicated that the CLWs were of importance to them. From the participants' responses, the following emerged as categories; analysis of challenges; leadership skills enhanced; and motivated, confident and supportive. Next, I discuss each category.

5.5.1 Analysis of challenges

There was a general consensus from the participants that the CHAT analytical model helped them to learn how to analyse challenges. Participants (SMT1, SMT2, TSB1) indicated that workshops

were helpful. One of the SMT members stated that: *"I learned how to analyse challenges and think about the deep-seated causes and think how to tackle them*" (SMT1, Q). In addition, another one also indicated that: "*CLWs gave me an insight on how to analyse educational challenges that are generated within the set-up"* (SMT2, Q). She further continued to state that: "*This has enhanced my insight into identifying challenges and understanding where they are coming from*" (SMT2, Q). A teacher School Board member stated that: *"I will apply the same skills learned here to start analysing challenges hindering teaching and learning and think of the way forward"* (TSB1, Q). These responses suggested that participants felt empowered to analyse the situation in which they found themselves. In essence, leadership requires an individual to work with aspects of their situation. Distributed leadership, in particular, necessitates understanding how aspects of the situation enables or constraints a certain practice (Spillane, 2006), thus, this could be attained through analysis. However, it also appeared that the issue of positionality played a role here. None of the participants commented negatively on the process, which implies that participants might only give a positive reflection to please me as a researcher, in my capacity as an official from the regional office.

5.5.2 Leadership skills enhanced

Participants, mostly the parents, felt that their leadership skills were enhanced through the CLWs conducted. This was evidently clear in the responses of parent School Board members. For example, one parent asserted that: " *I learned that we should not be parents who are leaving all the decisions to teachers but should participate fully and act as partners of teachers in the decisions affecting the learners and school in general*" (P7, Q). Another one also indicated that: "*I learned how to govern and lead our fellow parents and what is interesting is learning how to be in School Board as parents" (*P2, Q). Considering the perspectives of the participants as captured above, it is evident that leadership development was enhanced and transformative agency was beginning to emerge. Transformative agency, understood as a breaking away from a given frame of action and taking of initiatives to transform it, was observable from views such as: "we *should not be parents who are leaving all the decisions to teachers but should participate fully" or "act as partners to teachers*" (P5, Q). This showed that they were breaking away from their usual perspective of thinking that teachers knew a lot more than they did and they were now working towards partnership relations. The above view also implies that there was a change in the

perspective of participants about their role and as Astin and Astin (2000) suggest, leadership is a process where there is a movement from wherever to some future place or condition that is different.

5.5.3 Motivated, confident and supportive

Participants indicated that they feel motivated, gained confidence and were ready to be supportive of all the school community members. Such views were captured from responses of participants such as P7, P2, and P5. One of the parent School Board members indicated how her confidence was boosted, by stating that*, "my confidence is now boosted and I will work even harder than before*" (P7, Q). In addition, a teacher School Board member also shared the same sentiment when he stated that: *"I am going to encourage parents to be supportive and help other parents not to bully others based on their lifestyle*" (TSB1, Q). The above views indicated that participants vowed to be agents of change and were willing to work collaboratively towards a common goal. This idea is in keeping with Astin and Astin (2000) who argue that leadership is about collaborative efforts that require every member of the group to make a significant contribution to the overall effort. Not only that, Whitehead (2009) also asserts that leaders are important figures who initiate vision, integrate values, facilitate change, distribute and share power. In this regard both teachers and parents were committed to moving towards a common goal, thus all aimed at sharing leadership.

5.6 Conclusion

The chapter presented the findings of phase two of the data gathering process. The constraints that emerged from phase one (Chapter Four) became the stimulus that enabled phase two to take place. During phase two, the CHAT lens afforded me an opportunity to conduct an in-depth analysis of the possible contradictions which hampered leadership practice at the case study school. Meanwhile, expansive learning took place which eventually led to the possible transformative agency, as participants suggested challenging some of the problems stated. The chapter concluded with the evaluation of the usefulness of the Change Laboratory Workshops to the participants.

The next chapter presents a summary of the findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter marks the 'end of the journey' to this research process. This chapter is a crystallisation of the key findings uncovered in the study, as well as a reflective approach to the research process.

The first part of the chapter highlights my reflexivity in the study journey. A summary of key findings, limitations experienced, recommendations for good practice and recommendations for future researchers then follow. Findings here are presented in relation to themes as outlined in Chapters Four and Five which are structured around my research questions.

6.2 The Reflexivity on My Research Journey

This research journey was quite a demanding process, yet insightful as the destination is worth reaching and offers a rewarding experience.

My research interest in parents' leadership has been my dream for some years, since the inception of the current School Board as regulated by the *Education Act 16 of 2001.* The motivation to conduct the research in this important niche area had been increasing in me day by day as I worked closely with parents on the School Board over a number of years. From this professional experience, I noticed how parents mostly worked to "rubber stamp" the decisions of the professional staff and consequently had no real voice in decision-making. There were times when their participation was determined by the wishes of the teaching staff.

Being offered the opportunity by Rhodes University to engage with the topic of parent leadership for my Master's degree, was just a marvellous experience as this has opened the doors to make my dream come true. As I recall, the first days of deciding my research title, I had been in a conflict of motives, the first was whether to embark on my topic of interest and the second conflict was the fear of the unknown, especially considering the limited availability of literature both internationally and on the African continent about parents' leadership. I finally followed my

passion, took the risk to explore this topic with minimal literature. However, here I am today with my envisioned topic and the research complete!

I should state that the study process was not as easy as one imagines although it was enjoyable. I integrated work-related activities, family-related events and study in my tight schedule every day of the week. It was not easy to have such small pockets of time to read and write, but I tried to write at least one page of something a day. Nevertheless, "Pomodoro" hours were just the tip of iceberg.

The journey groomed me personally, academically and professionally. Using CHAT's analytical possibilities shaped my mindset to view different situations with an analytical eye, so that I could analyse issues and situations before I acted upon them. This could be in the family, in the community or at work. It was worth knowing that each activity is encultured, thus I learnt that to understand the situation better, it is important to probe the cultural-historical situation of the particular activity.

The research journey instilled in me a reading culture too. I vow that "Pomodoro" hours to be part of my daily routine. Reading for pleasure or reading for academic purposes keeps me responsive to this changing world, both academically and socially.

6.3 Summary of research key findings

6.3.1 The Conceptual Understanding of Parents' Leadership

To interrogate the conceptual understanding of parents' leadership, the study asked: "*What do you understand by the concept of parents' leadership?"* The findings of this study suggested that different participants had different understandings about the concept of parents' leadership. Predominantly, the concept was understood from the traditional leadership point of view, which equated it to trait theory as well as to a hierarchical position. Some participants conflated leadership with management. Instead of defining the concept in terms of a social relationship as suggested by Christie (2010), participants defined the concept in terms of qualities. In this case, I take a stance that a more useful definition of parents' leadership might constitute terms like *influence, inspire* and *persuasion* which are more or less in line with the definition by Trabue and Trabue (2013). Thus I argue that the concept of parents' leadership emerging out of this study, can be defined *as*

"a construction of an influential and inspiring relationship by parents for others to work in helping their community schools to become more responsive and supportive of learners in order to achieve their objectives.

6.3.2 Parents' roles in school governance

In responding to the second question which was: "*Is parents' leadership practiced by parents, if so, how?"* Participants' responses suggested that parents' leadership is practiced through a range of roles. The understandings of parents' School Board roles are a manifestation of the policies and on the other hand, the nature of the school function and the perception of the stakeholders towards the School Board members. Most importantly, the roles of the parents' School Board members included policy interpretation, the appointment of teachers and finance administration which are in managerial tasks. My argument is in line with Heystek et al. (2012) who argue that the management approach works within the confines of rules and regulation as provided in a school situation. This was by no means a surprise that the roles given were more managerial roles than leadership roles because practice can be influenced by the understanding of the concept as summarised in Section 6.3.1. Policies come with hierarchical structures as the implementation is pre-determined in the policy and the implementers would be limited with no freedom to work beyond the policy boundaries. With this understanding, the question is, do the parents have a voice to challenge the status quo; are they able to raise the issue of exclusion and inclusion as stated by Mncube (2007)? Taking this into account, one may conclude from the findings that parents' participation and voice in decision-making regarding their responsibilities in these issues is still elusive.

Through the lens of distributed leadership, findings revealed that the school community had exhibited an authorised distributed leadership characterisation. I assert so, basing my argument on the findings that parents are just complying with the policy documents which indicated that their participation in school decision-making processes was limited whilst the 'important' decisions are the privilege of, and restricted to, the school principal and teachers. As Grant (2017) asserts, in authorised distributed leadership, there are teams, informal workgroups and committees operating within the hierarchical structure and they accept their delegated leadership roles as they consider it legitimate. So, the findings revealed the two committees (finance and disciplinary) in which

parents and teachers' work collaboratively, are in line with policy and were seen as a delegated matter. These practices suppressed the leadership potential of parents. However, the bone of contention is, do parents have the autonomy in the school decision-making process through these committees or were they only there to window dress? In order to unleash parents' leadership in schools, democratic distributed leadership needs to be practiced in schools which "talks to issues of inclusion and exclusion, challenges issues of power and privilege and works for social change and social justice in the practice of leadership in schools" (Grant, 2017, p. 470).

The findings further suggested a slightly different level of parents' School Board members' participation in school fundraising activities. It was revealed that parents participated more fully in the fundraising activities of the school. Ideas, decisions, and work related to fundraising activities were shared amongst teachers and parents. Relating these findings to the parents' leadership model (Figure 4.1), a partnership relation is defined by the collaboration and sharing of responsibilities. However, taking my position as an Education Officer in the region in mind, it is still a question whether participants were honest in their responses or whether they were giving the answers to please me in my capacity as an official from the regional office.

6.3.3 Parents' perceptions regarding their leadership roles in school governance

In response to research question three which was: *What are the parents' perceptions regarding their leadership roles in school governance*? two pertinent issues were revealed in the findings. First, parents' School Board members had positive perceptions about their participation in decision-making and carrying out their roles in the school. The findings indicated a sense of pride and a sense of school ownership amongst the parents' School Board members. As such, they closely monitored the teachers' work and performance in school. Secondly, parents' board members' overconfidence made some teachers uncomfortable with their participation as teachers felt that parents were encroaching on their expertise "territory" as Creese and Earley (1999) suggest. In return, teachers felt threatened which sometimes led to tension with parents.

6.3.4 Conditions that enabled and constrained parents' leadership in school

In relation to the fourth research question: *What are the conditions that enable and/or constrain parents' leadership in the school?,* study findings indicated that there were various conditions that

enabled parents' leadership in school. For example, findings indicated that parents' School Board members were provided with a one-week training session. For them, the training led to the acquisition of new confidence in their roles. Indeed, the newfound confidence supported their participation in two ways; first, it helped them to participate in school activities individually and secondly, to participate collectively. The findings also indicated that parents' leadership in school was promoted by the open door policy at the school, collaborative relations with teachers and by programmatic structures such as meetings for all School Board chairpersons in the circuit.

In spite of the aforesaid matters, factors that hindered parents' leadership in school were also highlighted in the findings. National policies and legislation guidelines regarding transport money for parents to and from meetings as well the endorsement of the language policy (English) emanated as major constraining factors for parents in their leadership practices. Furthermore, the finding also revealed that there were instances of hierarchical leadership applied in school which emanated from the inferior feelings by parents due to their low level of literacy. As such, parent School Board members tended to defer some decisions to the teaching staff or they only acted as the proverbial rubber stampers for teachers' decisions. The parents' leadership model (Figure 4.1) describes such School Board members as abdicators, leaving important issues to teachers.

Having highlighted the understanding of parents' leadership, next, I discuss the intervention process on which research questions five and six were based.

6.3.5 Change Laboratory Workshops: Formative intervention

In an attempt to address research question five: *What can be done to enhance the development of parents' leadership at school?* participants and I collaboratively worked in four successive Change Laboratory Workshops. During the CLWs, participants uncovered the underlying accumulated tensions and disturbances which were hindering parents' leadership in the school. To remind the reader, prior to the surfacing of contradictions, these challenges were identified:

- Transport problems;
- No incentives;
- Bullying from other parents/criticism from other parents;
- Minimal parental support;

- Language barrier during interviews;
- Language barrier in interpreting school/ educational policies;
- Lack of parental understanding about the value of education/staying at shebeen with children; and
- Lack of parental involvement by some parents.

The analysis of systemic contradictions revealed four secondary contradictions, these are: (1) policy related contradictions; (2) socio-economic and cultural contradiction; (3) evolution in policies; and (4) cultural influence. Through the questionnaires and interviews, these contradictions were highlighted after challenges emerged which were identified as constraining factors to parent leadership.

6.3.5.1 Contradiction 1: Policy hindrances

A CHAT analysis revealed that the school attempted to meet the policy requirements as prescribed rules regarding the remuneration of parents. As a result, this policy prescription gave rise to tension between the rules (policy) and the subject (parents). It came to light that the promotion and constraints of parent leadership largely relied on mediated artefacts such as policies and cultural aspects.

6.3.5.2 Contradiction 2: Socio-economic contradictions

The CHAT approach further unveiled that parent leadership was constrained when the subject (parents) were not fully supported when they engaged with the community of significant others, (other parents or teachers) within the activity system. As such, there was tension between the *community of significant others* and *the subjects.* This gave rise to the new concept that parent leadership is an activity to be accomplished jointly by parents' School Board members, non-School Board parents, and teachers (community of significant others).

6.3.5.3 Contradiction 3: evolution in policies

The study revealed a gap in the language policy. It was revealed that the transition in language policy created a tension between the subject, the rules and mediated artefacts within the activity

system. Language being the mediated artefact for communication inhibited parents to become catalysts for change in most decision-making processes in the school. This, of course, demonstrated that a nuanced understanding of historicity may aid in developing parents' leadership in school.

6.3.5.4 Contradiction 4: Cultural influence

The CHAT lens helped to trace that *non-School Board parents* (*community of significant others)* inhibited parents' leadership as they dialogically engaged with *parents' School Board membe*rs. The accumulated cultural beliefs among the non-School Board members negatively impacted parent leadership in school which was an indication that all activities are encultured (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010).

Next, I highlight the process of modelling solutions as were set in CLW3 and CLW4.

6.3.6 Modelling of solutions as a consequence of CLW3 and CLW4

A collaborative learning by the participants was made to design new solutions for the emerged contradictions in an effort to enhance parent leadership**.** Although a number of solutions were discussed, only two emerged as priorities and were regarded as doable. The first solution was to establish an information dissemination committee to address contradictions two and four. The second solution was a contribution of N$3 per learner per term to generate funds for parents' School Board transport in an effort to address contradiction three.

In spite of this collaborative learning opportunity, I could not observe the implementation of the new concept due to the time constraints of my M Ed study. Expansive learning actions such as implementation (five), reflecting on and evaluating (six) and consolidating of outcome (seven) could not be achieved as participants and I only completed the first four learning actions of the cycle, culminating in the examination of the new model (four).

Having discussed the contradictions and the model solutions, next I discuss the findings in relation to my final research question.

6.4 The potential contribution of Change Laboratory Workshops to the leadership development of parents

To answer question six: *What can a Change Laboratory Workshop process contribute to the leadership development of parents*?, the study revealed that CLWs were robust methodologies in the development of parent leadership. Change Laboratory Workshops offered a space for participants to interact and to learn collectively in an effort to enhance parent leadership. Change Laboratory Workshops enabled the participants to engage and, through collaboration and interaction, expanded learning opportunities arose. Through the interaction, participants were able to identify cultural-historical accumulated disturbances and tensions that were hindering parents' leadership in school and they were also able to envision the new models that may enhance parents' leadership in the school.

A change in practice was realised during this study. As participants collaborated, they were able to articulate their views which consequently expanded their knowledge about parents' leadership. The fact that I observed agentive transformative expressions during the CLWs was significant in itself to support my claim that expansive learning, with its core quality of transformative agency, has indeed taken place. I do however, still have a question whether participants will implement the new models. Participants in this study claimed that they were committed to collaborate and to become agents in the development of parent leadership in school. This demonstrated that they were willing to integrate what they had learnt into the existing knowledge and practices. This was indeed a *stepping off into the unknown* process to them, which they also regard as *a new sense of purpose* in their lives.

6.5 Challenges in adopting the Change Laboratory Workshop as a research methodology

While I embraced the adoption of CLWs as a method for data gathering, I equally acknowledge the difficulties I experienced during the research process. Change Laboratory Workshop being an interface between the researcher-interventionist's world of research and development, and the practitioner's world of productive work as asserted by Virkkunen and Newnham (2013), it can also be regarded as a platform that allowed a researcher interventionist to interfere in the world of the research participants. Indeed, bringing participants together was not an easy task for me as an interventionist as it disturbed the normal schedules for participants especially after school hours.

Moreover, not all participants attended the CLWs consecutively. This break in attendance led to a break in expansive learning actions as CLWs were organised around the expansive learning actions. It was also difficult for the participants, especially parent School Board members, to reveal the historicity of the parents' leadership practices in school. This was due to the fact that the School Board members had only been some months in operation as the board was recently elected in August 2018, so they were still in the learning process. Finally, surfacing contradictions were also a challenge to participants. To them, contradictions were only apparent challenges that they experienced which they thought they could fix quickly.

6.6 Limitations of the study

One limitation of this study was the lack of availability of literature on the concept of parent leadership. I, therefore, drew from teachers' leadership literature and drew from other concepts like parental involvement and parental empowerment to come up with the definition. Drawing from Hallinger (2018), there is a need for the publication of leadership literature to contribute "to what we know, what we think we know and what we do not know about the practice of educational leadership and management in societies across the world" (pp. 362-363). Based on this, I plan to publish from my study so that I build the literature in this important area.

The study was an interventionist study and due to its nature, it required sufficient time, especially for the Change Laboratory Workshops. Thus, one of the limitations of the study was the time constraints. Though Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) recommend five to 10 Change Laboratory Workshops with follow-ups, I was only able to conduct four Change Laboratory Workshops due to the fact that I only had a few months for data collection and writing of the thesis. As such, this limitation has a potentially negative impact on the expansive learning actions for participants as they were not provided sufficient time to engage in the seven learning actions fully. To be more effective, a minimum of eight CLWs with follow-ups within a year period is preferable.

Another limitation is based on the scope of the study. The study was limited to the second generation of CHAT, thus only based on one activity system. To obtain rich findings of parent leadership, the study could have drawn on the third generation of CHAT by including multiple activity systems like circuit and regional officials, general parents and learners, in order to develop parent leadership. Thus, if granted an opportunity to pursue my Ph.D., I plan to expand the scope

of an activity system to a third generation of CHAT so that I include most of these stakeholders and make the study more longitudinal.

6.7 Recommendations for good practice

Developing parent leadership requires an understanding of all the stakeholders in education for them to work collaboratively towards collective leadership. Thus, drawing on the data and relevant literature, the study makes the following recommendations.

6.7.1 Parent leadership programmes

There is a need to initiate programmes that focus on training parents in their roles on the School Board. I suggest that leadership seminars, workshops or guest speakers be introduced both at school and the circuit, at regional and national levels, which could aid in the development of leadership at school. I recommend that educating educators about parental participation in schools as well as educating and encouraging parents to participate in school activities should be the focal point for these training programmes. These programmes should be ongoing and should involve practical and reflexive challenges about leadership practice. I recommend the CPD unit, under the auspices of the University of Namibia, to include parent leadership in their programmes. These programmes should cascade down the line to regional, circuit and cluster centre CPDs to School Board members. Furthermore, the non-governmental organisations (NGO's), like the Rossing Foundation which currently offers workshops on the roles of the School Board, should expand their programmes to focus on parent leadership and should be rolled out to as many regions as possible in a year. As an education officer, I am planning to be the focal person at regional level in the parent leadership development-related activities. I would therefore, with the permission of the Regional Director for the Oshikoto Education Directorate, plan to be a parent leadership agent in the region.

It is also considered important that, to develop parent leadership in school, leadership programmes should form part of the curriculum of pre-service teachers, in order to enlighten them before joining the profession, so that they would be able to support parents when they join the profession. Added to that, existing educators like teachers, HOD's and principals should also be provided with the

necessary in-service training for them to get an insight into the importance of parent leadership in schools.

6.7.2 Parents' literacy and language issues

The issue of parents' level of literacy and language should be honestly and carefully considered in order to allow for their adequate and effective participation in deliberations and arguments during School Board and other related meetings. I suggest that, to accommodate the parents in discussions and to ensure they are following the deliberations, the vernacular language should be an option during the deliberations where possible. In this regard, I plan to consult the Regional Director of the Oshikoto Education Directorate in order to table the issue of School Board language problems to the education forums to see if the amendment can be done in the future. This may not only reduce the power relationships among parents with teachers but also build their confidence and mutual trust.

6.7.3 Consultation with other stakeholders

My recommendation is that leadership should also be clarified to other learners, teachers, other parents and regional officials as stakeholders in order to understand the importance of parent leadership in school and to enable them to consider parents as equal partners to teachers in education. Apart from the training programmes I suggested for parents, awareness campaigns should also be held among the parents in the community about why and how parent leadership is necessary. In my personal capacity as an education officer, I would like to start the awareness campaigns about parent leadership as soon as next year, 2020. This could be done through circuit teachers' conferences. In this regard, I would work hand in hand with the Inspectors of Education for them to integrate the topic of parents leadership in their teacher conferences' agendas. Through this, the issue of partnership between teachers and parents should be emphasised, because it is through partnership that parents' voices may be heard and embraced in the school decision-making process.

6.8 Recommendations for future research

The parent leadership area is under-researched. Even the definition was hard to obtain from literature. The recent studies conducted were based on mere parental involvement and not on

parent participation and parent leadership, thus, there is a need to focus on parents' participation and leadership in particular. I, therefore, recommend that more studies, using the same methodology (formative intervention), need to be conducted, preferably on a larger scale than mine. It would also be good to conduct these studies in different environments (such as rural and urban areas) in order to get a comprehensive picture of parent leadership in different contexts.

One important factor that gives a distinction between the intervention and interpretive studies is the time factor. Interventionist research, especially when employing CHAT as an analytical and theoretical framework, requires sufficient time in order to allow for expansive learning actions to unfold. I, therefore, recommend that the research period for intervention studies be extended to at least two years in order to allow the researcher ample time to complete the Change Laboratory Workshop process and enable all seven expansive learning actions to be completed. I recommend that the interventionist study is more viable for Ph.D. scholars who have two years of data gathering than Med scholars who only have a year. In addition, I recommend that future researchers extend the scope of the leadership to a third generation of CHAT so that it may include other stakeholders rather than one activity system. This may offer an opportunity to understand dialogue, multiple perspectives and networks of interacting activity systems (Engeström, 2001).

6.9 The significance of the study

My study was significant in contributing to filling the existing gap in the field of Educational Leadership and Management (ELM), specifically in the area of parent leadership which seems to be under-researched. It also has potential benefits to policymakers, for them to detect the gap that is hampering the participation of parents, despite the fact that the involvement platforms were created by the legislatures. Moreover, in line with CHAT and distributed leadership, the study may benefit the schools to practice their leadership collectively and shift from the notion of hierarchical leadership to a network of leaders in the school. Finally, the stakeholders in education may make use of the study findings during School Board training programmes and material design possibly to enhance parents' participation in school governance and decision-making.

The study also led to the generativity of the local initiated appropriate solutions, which were created locally within the case study school (local continuity) as suggested by Sannino et al. (2016). The model solutions generated had manifested in the decision of the participants

themselves and were anticipated to be implemented soon. Both the two solutions were medium-term and the implementation could only possibly be done by January 2020.

6.10 Conclusion

Grant (2006) suggests that, "in order to strengthen school leadership, the key concern is how to assist the internal management of schools in becoming more collaborative" (p. 513). This study aimed at contributing to Grant's suggestion by employing CHAT as a methodological, analytical and theoretical framework in studying parent leadership as an object for the activity. Through the intervention, collaboration was emphasised which became a key to the development of the parent leadership. CHAT allowed participants to investigate leadership as emergent and explored how leadership is distributed through a network of leaders in school. However, this still left me with pondering questions such as "did these participants become the agents of change regarding the development of parent leadership in school and, if so, will they really lead for change? Another question was "were the parents now really aware of what was expected from them or were they only pleasing me by giving their positive reflections on the process? What could possibly be done to ensure parent leadership is realised in all the schools? Finally, how do we extend the notion of distributed leadership on which parents leadership is founded, to all schools in Namibia, in order for schools to be more responsive to the educational needs of the time? With these in mind, I am inspired to study my topic further up to the Ph.D. level if allowed to. I should state that this ***was a voyage of exploration!***

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APPENDICES

Appendix A**: Document analysis schedule guide**

The purpose of using document analysis is to get an insight on how parents' leadership developed and practiced at school. To understand its historical roots and development, I used CHAT lens as an analytical tool, based on its principle of historicity in order to trace parents' participation in decision making of the school. In line with Bowen (2009), document analysis provides means of tracking change and development of a phenomenon under study thus I analyzed the following documents:

Document to be analysed	Historical-cultural practices	Comments
School Board agenda meetings		…… …… …….
School Board Meeting minutes		…… ……. ……. ……

Education Act 16 of 2001		……. . …… …. …… ….. …… ….
Internal School Financial policy		…… …. …… ……. …… …… …… ……..
Other relevant documents		…… ……. …… ……. …… ……. …… ……..

Appendix B: Questionnaire for the teacher School Board and SMT members

This questionnaire is part of a research to fulfil the requirements of a Masters' degree in Educational Leadership and Management at the Rhodes University. The questionnaire aims to collect data for a research project on how leadership can be developed within parents who are School Board members.

You have been selected to receive this questionnaire because the researcher trusts that you would greatly contribute to this study by providing relevant information. Please note that this information will be treated as confidential and will not be used to rate any participant or the school. For any clarifications, kindly contact me at 0812559559

Participant information

Gender……

Position……

1. Parents' leadership is encouraged in school.

(Please tick (√) one) | Agree | Disagree | Not sure |

2. What do you understand by the concept parents' leadership in school?

……
……
……
……
……
……

3. Parents know their role in the School Board

| Agree | Disagree | Not sure |

(Please tick (√) one

4. The parents School Board members do participate well in the decision making of the school.

(Please tick (√) one Always | Sometimes | Never

5. The decisions by Parents' School Board members are valued by other School Board members and SMTs.

(Please tick (√) one Always | Sometimes | Never

6. In your views, what are the roles of parents in the School Board?

……
……
……
……
……
……..

7. How can parents' leadership be developed in the school?

……
……
……
……
……
…….

8. Briefly describe the working relationship amongst the School Board members.

……
……

……
……
……
……..

9. Does the School Board get any support in carrying out their duties? If yes, what kind of support and from whom?

……
……
……
……
……
……

10. Do the parents in the School Board face challenges in carrying out their duties? Please explain

……
……
……
……
……

11. Is there anything that you would like to share with me regarding parents' involvement and participation in the School Board?

……
……
……

Thank you for your time

Appendix C: Consent letters for teacher School Board members, SMT and the Principal

Enq: H. Nghiteeka

Cell: 0812559559

P. O Box 1567

Ondangwa

Namibia

Dear Mr/Ms----------

REQUEST TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I am Hileni Nghiteeka and currently studying with Rhodes University as a part-time Master of Education student in the field of Educational Leadership and Management. I would like to kindly invite you to participate in a research study that I am currently undertaking in your school. My study is an interventionist study, aiming at developing parents' leadership in school governance and empowering them to carry out their roles effectively. Your honest contribution will therefore help in realizing the research objectives.

Furthermore, please note that this is not an evaluation of your performance or your competence. The information shared will remain confidential and your identity will not be revealed. I further undertake to uphold your autonomy and you will be free to withdraw from the research study at any time without negative consequences to yourself. In this regard, you will be asked to complete a consent form for taking part in the interview or in filling out a questionnaire. Should you have any query, please feel free to contact me at the above contact details.

Thank you

Yours faithfully

……

Hileni Nghiteeka

Research student

Declaration

I ---------- (full names of a parent/ teacher/ Principal) hereby testify that I understand the content of this document and the nature of this research study and that I have accepted to participate. I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw my participation from this study at any time.

Signature

Teacher/Principal

Appendix D: Interview schedule

Interview questions for parents

For the purpose of this study, these questions are in English but I asked them in the vernacular, Oshiwambo.

Introduction

My name is Hileni Nghiteeka I am currently studying towards a Masters' degree in Educational Leadership and Management with Rhodes University. I am carrying out a research, focusing on parents' leadership, as part of the requirements to fulfil my Masters' programme. The study aims at exploring parents' leadership in school governance. It is an interventionist study and it will benefit the participants especially parents as they will be empowered to carry out their roles in School Board effectively. Kindly be assured that the information that you will share with me here will remain confidential and your name will not appear anywhere in my research. After the interview, I will transcribe the recording and I will bring it to you to see whether what I have captured reflects what you have said.

English version

Kindly allow me a few minutes of your time to ask a few questions to enable me to gather data for this research project.

1. What do you understand by the concept parents' leadership in the school?
2. What are your roles as a parent School Board member in this school?
3. As a parent, how do you feel being part of the school leadership? Please explain
4. Are there any visible changes/ activities you brought about in the school as a parent School Board member? Please elaborate
5. Does the school help you to carry out your duties smoothly? Explain in detail.
6. How do you as a parent School Board member work in relation with other School Board members? Please explain.
7. As a parent School Board member do you face any challenge in executing your role? If yes, please elaborate, if no, why not?
8. What can be done to overcome the challenges you mentioned in question 7?

9. Please indicate the most important factors that reduce parents' participation in decision making in the school related matters
10. What do you think needs to be done to help you in carrying out your School Board duties?
11. Is there anything that you would like to share with me regarding parents' involvement and participation in the School Board?

Oshiwambo Version

1. Ou uvite ko ngiini koshitya elelo nenge ewiliko Omuvali?

2. Iilonga yoye onga oshilyo shetonatelonongelo yosikola ndjino oyini?

3. Ngoye onga omuvali ou uvite ngiini okukala oshilyo shelelo lyosikola? Yelitha omaiuvo goye

4. Oshike nenge omalunduluko geni gi iwetikile mosikola muka ga za miilonga yeni onga iilyo yetonatelonongelo? Yelitha

5. Osikola ohayi mu kwatha ngiini opo mu vule okulonga iilonga yeni nuupu onga iilyoyetonatelonongelo? Fatulula niitya yoye mwene.

6. Onga iilyo yetonatelonongelo, ohamu longo ngiini, na ekwatathano lyeni niilyo yilwe yetonatelonongelo oli li ngiini? Yelitha kutya omolwashike to tile ngaaka.

7. Ngoye onga oshilyo shetonatelonongelo, omashongo geni wa tsakaneka nenge wa taalela ngono tage ku imbi opo wu longe iilonga yoye nuupu? Ngele ope na omashongo, yelitha niitya yoye mwene, nongele kape na omolwashike to tile ngaaka?

8. Pamadhiladhilo goye oshike shi na oku ningwa po, opo omashongo wa tumbula metetekelo (epulo7) ga kandulwe po?

9. Oto vulu okutothamo yimwe yomiinenenima mbyono hayi imbi aavali opo ya kuthe ombinga momatokolo ge na sha niipambele yoskola?

10. Pamadhiladhilo goye onga oshilyo shetonatelononge lo, oshike shi na okuningwapo, opo wu kwathelwe mokulonga iilonga yoye yetonatelononge lo nondjungu?

11. Ope na sha shilwe wa hala u lombwele ndje shi na sha nekuthombinga lyaavali momatokolo ge na sha niipambele yosikola?

Tangi unene kethimbo lyoye

Appendix E: Informed consents for parents' School Board members

Enq: H. Nghiteeka
Cell: 0812559559

P. O Box 1567
Ondangwa
Namibia

Omukuluntu omusimanekwa

EINDILO LYEZIMININO OPO U KUTHE OMBINGA MOMAPEKAAPEKO NOMAPULAAPULO GENA SHA NEILONGO

Edhina lyandje ongame Hileni Nghiteeka nondi li omwiilongi wopaumwene koshiputudhilo shelongo lyopombanda sha Rhodes University, ya South Africa. Otandi ilongele onkatu yo Master miipambele yomalelo gooskola. Onkene otandi indile nesimaneko enene opo u kuthe ombinga momapekaapeko ngoka tandi ningi onga shimwe shoomiipumbiwa opo ndi vule oku mana onkatu yandje ndjika yeilongo. Eilongo lyandje otali ka kutha oonkatu nelalakano oku nkondopaleka elelopangelo lyaakuluntu ,metonatelonongelo. Onkene ekuthombinga lyoye neitulomo otali ka kwatha ndje opo ndi vule okwa adha omalalakano geilongo lyandje.

Mpaka otandi kwashilipaleke kutya, epekapeko ndino, kali nasha nokukonakona iilonga yoye nenge uupondoli woye. Uuyelele tandi ka mona oku ziilila mungoye nenge muyalwe itandi ke u pititha mo nando nenge ndi ugandje komuntu omutitatu, ano otau kala oshiholekwa nowa nuninwa owala eilongo ndika. Omadhina nuukwatyaa auhe tau vulu oku kudhimbululitha nawo otau ka kala oshiholekwa. Onda hala wo oku kutseyithila mpano kutya, otandi ka simaneka uuthemba woye, na ouna uuthemba wu udha oku za mo nenge oku kala inoo tsikila nomapulaapulo ngaka ethimbo kehe wu uvite inoo hala we no itapa kakala oshilanduli oshiwinayi nando.

Pompito mpano nandi ku indile nesimaneko opo wu udhithe ombapila yezimino, kutya owa zimina oku kutha ombinga momapulaapulo tandi kaninga pakana nangoye.

Ngele ou na epulo nenge wa hala uuyelele wa gwedhwa po shinasha nomapekapeko ngaka, oto vulu oku dhengela ndje kongodhi yandje ndji: 0812559559

Tangi unene

Nesimako, Gweni

……

Hileni Nghiteeka

Omwiilongi

Declaration by parents: Ekwashilipaleko

Ngame ---------- (edhina lyomukuluntu lyuudha

Otandi kwashilipaleke mpaka kutya ondu uviteko oshikalimo shombapila ndjino nuukwatya womapekaapeko taga ningwa, onkene otandi kwashilipaleke kutya onda zimina oku kutha ombinga momapuulapulo. Otandi gandja wo ekwashilipaleko kutya ondu uvite ko kutya otandi vulu oku za mo nenge oku kala nda hulitha po omapulapuulo kehe ethimbo uuna nda hala no pwaana nando omathiminiko gasha tandi ga ningilwa.

Eshainokaha

…….

Omukuluntu

Appendix F: Change Laboratory Workshops reflection/evaluation form by parents' School Board members

1. Owi ilongo mo shike mooworkshop dhomapekapeko ngano?
   ……
   ……

   ……
   ……
   ……..

2. Oshike sha li tashi hokitha?
……
……
…… ……

3. Oshike wa li waahole ?
……
……
……

4. oshike shono to ka ninga sha yooloka kwaashi ho longo shito?
……
……
……
……
.

5. Opena sha we shimwe wa hala u lombwele ndje shin a sha nomapekapeko ngano?
……

Appendix G: Change Laboratory Workshops reflection/evaluation form by teachers' School Board members, SMT

2. What did you learn in these workshops?

……

……

……

……..

2. What was interesting about the workshops?

……

……

…… ……

3. What did you like or dislike about the workshop?

……

……

……

4. What is it that you never did that you would want to do at this school after attending these workshops?

……

……

5. Any comment you wish to share with me regarding these sessions or my study?

……

Appendix H: Ethical clearance letter

RHODES UNIVERSITY
Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

EDUCATION FACULTY • PO Box 94, Grahamstown, 6140
Tel: (046) 603 8385 / (046) 603 8393 • Fax: (046) 622 8028 • e-mail: d.wilmot@ru.ac.za

PROPOSAL AND ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL

Ethical clearance number 2018.5.04.04

The minute of the EHDC meeting of 6 September 2018 reflect the following:

2018.5.04 CLASS B RESTRICTED MATTERS
MASTER OF EDUCATION RESEARCH PROPOSALS

To consider the following research proposal for the degree of Master of Education in the Faculty of Education:

Nghiteeka, Hileni (11N7084)

Topic: Exploring parents' participation in school governance: A formative intervention for developing parents' leadership in a state, rural combined school in Northern Namibia.

Supervisor: Professor C Grant
Co-Supervisors: Dr F Kajee

Decision: *Approved*

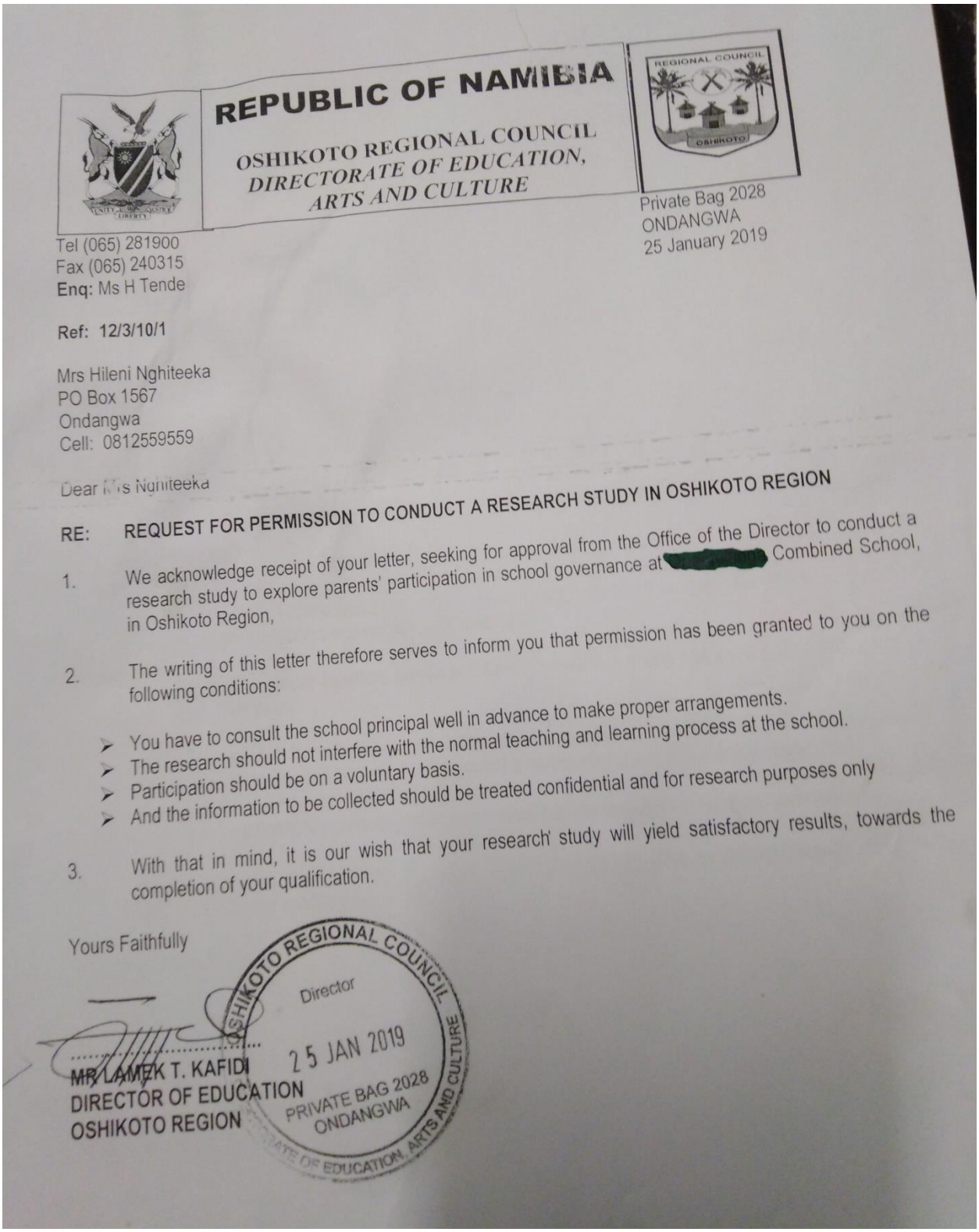
This letter confirms the approval of the above proposal at a meeting of the Faculty of Education Higher Degrees' Committee on the 6 September 2018.

The proposal demonstrates an awareness of ethical responsibilities and a commitment to ethical research processes. The approval of the proposal by the committee thus constitutes ethical clearance.

Sincerely

Prof Marc Schäfer
Chair of the EHDC, Rhodes University
5th October 2018

Appendix I: Letter for permission to regional director



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OSHIKOTO REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Private Bag 2028
ONDANGWA
25 January 2019

Tel (065) 281900
Fax (065) 240315
Enq: Ms H Tende

Ref: 12/3/10/1

Mrs Hileni Nghiteeka
PO Box 1567
Ondangwa
Cell: 0812559559

Dear Mrs Nghiteeka

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN OSHIKOTO REGION

1. We acknowledge receipt of your letter, seeking for approval from the Office of the Director to conduct a research study to explore parents' participation in school governance at [redacted] Combined School, in Oshikoto Region,

2. The writing of this letter therefore serves to inform you that permission has been granted to you on the following conditions:

   - You have to consult the school principal well in advance to make proper arrangements.
   - The research should not interfere with the normal teaching and learning process at the school.
   - Participation should be on a voluntary basis.
   - And the information to be collected should be treated confidential and for research purposes only

3. With that in mind, it is our wish that your research study will yield satisfactory results, towards the completion of your qualification.

Yours Faithfully

MR LAMEK T. KAFIDI
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
OSHIKOTO REGION

OSHIKOTO REGIONAL COUNCIL
Director
25 JAN 2019
PRIVATE BAG 2028
ONDANGWA
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Appendix J: Permission letter to the principal

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
OSHIKOTO REGION
ONANKALI CIRCUIT
HAPPY COMBINED SCHOOL
(Pseudonym)

Enq: Paulus T. Nambahu
Cell: 0811284981
Email: tnambahu25@gmail.com

08 April 2019

To: Ms Hileni Nghiteeka
Rhodes University
Cell: 0812559559

Dear Ms Nghiteeka

RE: Permission for Ms Hileni Nghiteeka (11N7084) to conduct a research study

Permission is hereby granted from the office of the principal for the above mentioned student to conduct her research study at the above mentioned school as required for her Master's Degree in Education Leadership and Management at Rhodes University.

Please accord her necessary support she might require.

Yours sincerely

Paulus T Nambahu
School Principal

Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
Principal
ONANKALI SOUTH
COMBINED SCHOOL
08 APR 2019
P.O. Box 30027, Onankali
Tel/Fax: 065-000 000
Onankali Circuit
Oshikoto Regional Council

Appendix K: Declaration by translator

A consent and Declaration by the translator and the camera person (during the CLWs).

I ---------- (full names of a translator/photographer

hereby testify that I understand the nature of this research study and that I have accepted to participate. I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw my participation from this study at any time.

Signature

Translator/photographer