

**RHODES UNIVERSITY**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**The enactment of teacher leadership in a township High School:  
A restricted form**

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**By**

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## ABSTRACT

Whilst the concept of teacher leadership is not new in the international literature (Grant, 2006), research on the topic of teacher leadership is emerging slowly as a new area of research interest in South Africa (Grant, 2006; Grant, 2005; Singh, 2007). Teacher leadership is basically about teachers who are leaders within and outside the classroom, who identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, influence others to improve their teaching practice and accept responsibility for realising the goals of their organisation (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001 in Grant, 2006). Therefore, teachers' roles in operating as leaders in schools are acknowledged in literature.

This study is a replication of a University of KwaZulu-Natal multi-case study on the enactment of teacher leadership conducted in various educational institutions in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. In line with the original study, this study aimed at obtaining an understanding of the enactment of teacher leadership in a township high school in the King William's Town education district, in the Eastern Cape. I further explored what factors promoted or hindered such enactment. As an Eastern Cape Master of Education student participating in a group research programme at Rhodes University, we adopted and used the same research questions, research approach, data collection methods as well as data analysis techniques as utilised in the original study. Therefore, this research study was conducted within the interpretive paradigm, following a qualitative approach. I adopted a case study methodology, with the case being the school and three teacher leaders as units of analysis. Data were gathered through a multi-method approach which consisted of a school profile, a focus group interview, semi-structured individual interviews, questionnaires, self reflective journaling and observations. Whilst the research was guided by distributed leadership theory, Grant's (2008) Model of teacher leadership and thematic content analysis was used to analyse data.

Research findings revealed that the enactment of teacher leadership was evident in Zones 1, 2 and 4 of Grant's (2008) Model of teacher leadership in the case study school. However, a restricted form of teacher leadership was enacted in Zone 3, whereby teachers were not regularly involved in school-wide decision-making processes. When teacher leadership was enacted, it was in a form of authorised distributed leadership.

The study further identified the autocratic leadership style of the principal and of the School Management Team members, as well as the non-inclusive school culture as main barriers towards the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school. Despite these barriers, teachers' high levels of enthusiasm were identified as an enabling factor that promoted the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school.

# DECLARATION

**I, MANCOKO MELIKHAYA**

Hereby declare that this study, "*The enactment of teacher leadership in a township high school: A restricted form*", is my own work and all sources utilized or cited have been pointed out, acknowledged and listed in the references.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study investigates the enactment of teacher leadership in a township high school in the King William's Town district, in the Eastern Cape Province. This chapter highlights the background to and the context of the study and contextualises the problem that led to the study. In this chapter, I further outline the rationale for undertaking the study; I present the research questions and provide a brief account of the methodology and theoretical framework that was used as a lens as I moved through the research process. The chapter ends with a summary of how the remaining chapters in the thesis are organised.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

Before 1994, during the apartheid era in South Africa, government policies promoted “centralized, authoritarian control of education at all levels within the system” (Grant, 2009, p. 289). Furthermore, the education system was characterised by 19 different education departments, which endorsed inequality of education provided to different races. In line with this notion, scholars confirm that, because of the apartheid policies, principals' leadership and management practices were characterised by being authoritarian, non-consultative and non-participative (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008, p. 4). Such a situation resulted in principals being solely responsible for leading and managing schools as well as accustomed to receiving instructions from departmental officials. In addition, teachers were obliged to execute instructions received from the principal and other departmental authorities. This situation resulted in teachers who were mostly confined to the leadership and management of classrooms.

However, post 1994 in South Africa, the government introduced a range of new educational policies to “address the country’s educational legacy” (Naidu, *et al.*, 2008, p. 2). Such policies were, among others, the *South African Schools’ Act* (1996), the *Government Gazette of the Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) and the *Task Team Report on Education Management Development* (1996) which challenged schools to review their management practices (Grant, 2009, p. 289).

The new legislation including provincial legislation and other policy directives pointed South Africa strongly towards democratisation and the decentralisation of a school-based system of education management and governance, with substantial decision-making authority in schools (Mestry & Singh, 2007, p. 477). As a result of the new legislation, considerably more power and responsibility for decision-making has been assigned to the level of the school (Thurlow, Bush & Coleman, 2003). These policies require principals to share leadership with School Governing Bodies (SGB) and School Management Teams (SMTs) as well as promote participatory decision-making within the organisation (Naidu *et al.*, 2008; Steyn, 2010).

This policy change accompanied by structural transformation created space for schools to share leadership and management which literature refers to as “dispersed leadership, shared leadership, distributive leadership and collaborative” leadership (Williams, 2011, p. 191). For the purpose of this study, I will be working with the concept of distributed leadership as it is understood by Spillane and his colleagues. According to Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004), distributed leadership refers to leadership activities that are widely distributed within the organisation over leaders, followers and their situation. To Harris and Spillane (2008), teacher leadership acknowledges work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice, whether or not they are formally designated as leaders.

Thus, the characteristics that prevail in a distributed leadership perspective, that of collective engagement by all staff members and sharing of leadership across the organisation are similar to those principles promoted through teacher leadership. As Harris and Muijs (2005) put it, teacher leadership is understood as leadership exercised by teachers regardless of position or

designation. Hence, Hoy and Hoy (2003) in Lawrence (2010, p. 4) asserts that “leadership is an instructional matter that should emerge freely from both principal and teachers”. Based on the above assertions, teacher leadership is then understood within the framework of distributed leadership in this study. Therefore, distributed leadership becomes relevant to an understanding of teacher leadership.

Whilst educational policies in South Africa call for a shift from an autocratic, non-participatory form of leadership towards a shared participatory form of leadership, research studies reveal that leadership of many South African schools remain firmly embedded in the formal hierarchical management structures (Grant, 2009). Taking the same view, policy makers confirm that one of the core duties of teachers is to take a leadership role with regards to their subjects and phases (DoE, 1998). Thus, this restricts the involvement of teachers in the various levels of leadership activities within the school structures.

However, it became evident from literature that the concept of teacher leadership is gaining attention from both practitioners and researchers (Muijs & Harris, 2007) and research on the topic of teacher leadership is emerging slowly as a new area of research interest in South Africa (Grant, 2005; Grant, 2006; Singh, 2007; Lawrence, 2010). Research tells us that teacher leadership where it is evident, is largely restricted to the classroom and to curricular and extra-curricular activities (Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley & Somaroo, 2010). Practice indicates that many schools in South Africa are still led autocratically and this is because of the autocratic leadership styles of principals and their SMTs which are often identified as main barriers to leadership (Harris, 2004; Singh, 2007; Khumalo, 2008; Ntuzela, 2008 in Grant *et al.*, 2010). This means that distributing leadership responsibilities amongst teachers is still a challenge in many South African schools. Therefore, such findings suggest an authorised form of distributed leadership within schools and it is against this background that this study was conceived.

### **1.3. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

As a provincial coordinator for Institutional Development, Support & Governance (IDS&G) in the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE), my role is to monitor and provide support to schools with regards to policy implementation and ensure that schools are managed effectively and are functional. As per the *Employment of Educators Act* (EEA) (1998), ensuring that schools are managed effectively and as per policy prescripts becomes the responsibility of the principal. In addition, literature indicates that new educational policies in South Africa after 1994 called for new ways of managing schools (Moloi, 2002) - that of moving towards more participation and collaboration in the practice of school leadership and management (DoE, 1996). However, Moloi (2002) asserts that many schools remain unresponsive and retain their rigid structures, with educators unable to shift from patriarchal and hierarchical ways of thinking. This implies that such practice prevails in most South African schools and in the Eastern Cape in particular.

As I conduct support and monitoring visits to schools across the province, it became evident during my visits that in most schools, leadership and management activities are mostly shared between the principal and SMTs. This means that, practically, schools relate leadership to those in positions of authority, thus limiting teacher involvement to the grades they teach. Furthermore, the reports that we receive from schools indicate a high rate of insubordination of SMT by teachers (ECDoE, 2009). Shared participatory and collaborative leadership is not evident in most schools in the province and one of the contributing factors may be the lack of involvement of teachers in the whole-school decision-making process.

Based on my observation of how leadership is practiced in most schools across the province, I developed a keen interest in how teacher leadership can be promoted in schools and how the SMT can create a culture that will promote teacher leadership in their schools.

Pursuing my interest in this area, I came across the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) study on the enactment of teacher leadership in the course work component of my MEd degree. I became aware through reading the international and local literature on teacher leadership that its enactment may provide leadership development opportunities for teachers

that may contribute towards improved school performance. Together with my MEd group of co-researchers, we decided to replicate the UKZN study on the enactment of teacher leadership.

#### **1.4. THE ORIGINAL UKZN STUDY**

Studies on teacher leadership first emerged in South Africa at the University of KwaZulu – Natal. See for example the work of Grant (2005, 2006, 2008 & 2009); Grant and Singh, (2009) and Grant *et al.*, (2010) in this regard. This work was followed by a large MEd multi-case study on the enactment of teacher leadership across a number of educational institutions. This was done by 11 Master of Education students at UKZN. The UKZN study was designed as a multi-case study within a qualitative research paradigm, involving three post level one teachers at each of the case study schools. The purpose of this study was to explore the enactment of teacher leadership within schools. It was then guided by the following research questions:

- How is teacher leadership enacted within a school?
- What are the factors that enhance or hinder this enactment?

Data were collected through questionnaires, focus group interviews, semi-structured individual interviews, self-reflecting journaling and observations. Data were analysed utilising thematic content analysis and Grant's (2008) Model of teacher leadership. Findings from the original study revealed that, in most schools, there were some examples of teacher leadership being enacted across all zones (Grant, 2008 in Gumede, 2010). However, teacher leadership was enacted mostly in Zone 1 (leading in the classroom) and Zone 2 (working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities). Teacher leadership was very restricted in Zone 3 and Zone 4, outside the classroom in whole school development as well as beyond the school into the community (Gumede, 2010; Hlatshwayo, 2010; Lawrence, 2010). The research findings further identified the autocratic leadership style of the principal, control by the SMT, time constraints

as well as hierarchical school structures as the main barriers to teacher leadership (Gumede, 2010; Jasson, 2010; Lawrence, 2010, Hlatshwayo, 2010).

## **1.5. MY STUDY**

In replicating the original UKZN study on teacher leadership, we as an Eastern Cape MEd student group from Rhodes University, adopted the same research questions, research approach, data collection methods as well as data analysis techniques as utilised in the original study. As in the original study, the following research questions guided my study:

- How is teacher leadership enacted in a township high school in the King William's Town education district, in the Eastern Cape?
- What factors enhanced or hindered such enactment?

The study was carried out in a township high school in the King William's Town district, in the Eastern Cape. In line with the original study, this research was carried out within the interpretive paradigm. This is based on the claim made by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 9) that the interpretive paradigm supports the view that "the social world can be understood only from the standpoint of individuals, who are part of the ongoing action being investigated". This study further subscribed to the qualitative approach which appears appropriate for the research questions posed for this particular study as well as to better understand the phenomenon under study, which is the enactment of teacher leadership. This is based on Leedy and Ormrod's (2005, p. 132) description of the qualitative approach, which is concerned with the understanding of human beings through their description of experiences as lived and defined by the actors themselves, which are teacher leaders in this case. The sampled teacher leaders would be able to describe their experiences and understanding on how teacher leadership was enacted in their school. In addition, a case study design was adopted which, according to Yin (1984) cited in Maree (2010, p. 75), is "an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real – life context".

The study was conducted over a period of two terms, which were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> terms of 2013. I selected a township high school in King William's Town as my case study school because of its accessibility and convenience to me as a researcher for the study. Literature

refers to this type of sampling as convenience sampling, whereby participants are selected on the basis that they are easily available and accessible (Maree, 2007, p. 177).

In line with the original study, we collected data through questionnaires, a focus group interview, semi-structured individual interviews, self reflective journaling and observations (Gumede, 2010; Hlatshwayo, 2010; Lawrence, 2010). However, we adapted the data collection instruments used in the original study to suit the context of the Eastern Cape school. We also used thematic content analysis and Grant's (2008) Model of teacher leadership to analyse data as well as provide sound explanations on how teacher leadership is enacted at schools and what factors hinder or enhance teacher leadership.

## **1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The concept of teacher leadership in this study is located and understood within the theoretical framework of distributed leadership which, according to Harris and Spillane (2008) focuses on how leadership practice is distributed among formal and informal leaders. Whilst scholars provide varying definitions of distributed leadership, their focus is on sharing leadership across the organisation (Hartley, 2007, p. 203). According to Harris (2007), through distributed leadership, leadership activities are widely distributed within and between organisations. To Hatcher (2005, p. 258) distributed leadership refers to a shared and collective attempt that engages all members of the organisation. In line with this idea, Harris and Lambert (2003, p. 16) suggest that distributed leadership should "extend the boundaries of leadership insofar as it entails higher levels of teacher involvement and utilizes a wide variety of expertise, knowledge and skills". These views around distributed leadership relate to what characterises teacher leadership. Therefore, distributed leadership is relevant to an understanding of teacher leadership, which is the focus of this study.

## **1.7 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS**

This part of the chapter offers a brief overview of the chapters in the thesis in order to provide the reader with a broad understanding of the study.

The current chapter, which is **Chapter One**, is introductory in that it gives the background to and context of the study. It introduces the statement of the problem, the study as a replication study, the research questions, rationale and significance of the study.

**Chapter Two** covers related international and local literature that I employed to obtain a comprehensive picture of the concept of teacher leadership. This chapter further defines concepts related to my study, namely, traditional and contemporary leadership and management. This chapter further presents the theoretical framework guiding the study, which is distributed leadership, in order to understand the concept of teacher leadership.

**Chapter Three** outlines the research design and methodology used in the study. It provides a description and discussion of the research process including the research paradigm, research design, population, sample and sampling, data collection methods, as well as rationale for the choice of research methodology. The chapter further looks at the ethical issues for consideration.

**Chapter Four** presents and analyses data as well as discusses the findings from the data collected.

**Chapter Five** is the last chapter where the study's summary, conclusions and recommendations are made.

The subsequent chapter discusses the literature relevant to my study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

As mentioned in the first chapter, this study aimed to investigate how teacher leadership is enacted in one township high school in the King William's Town education district, in the Eastern Cape Province. This chapter comprises a literature review of both international and local literature on how the concept of teacher leadership is understood and what factors enhance or hinder teacher leadership in schools. In addition, the chapter locates this literature within the broader field of educational leadership and management and so provides a discussion of the basic concepts central to the study, that of leadership and management. It also tracks the history and development of this literature over time. Distributed theory, the theoretical framework of the study and within which teacher leadership is embedded, is also discussed in this chapter.

I begin this chapter by defining the concepts of leadership and management which need to be clearly understood in order to understand teacher leadership.

#### **2.2 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

In order to comprehend the concept of teacher leadership, one should have a clear understanding of the terms leadership and management. A discussion of both these concepts is now presented.

### 2.2.1 Defining leadership

To articulate a clear and concise definition of the concept 'leadership' as portrayed in an educational organization, is not a simple task. However, Bush (2008) maintains that the main component in various definitions of leadership is that there is a process of influence. To Yulk (2002) cited in Bush, "most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization" (2008, p. 3). On the same notion, Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge and Ngcobo (2007) define leadership as an act or the process of influencing other people to modify their behaviour in order to realise the goals of the organisation. In addition, to Bush (2007) leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Therefore, leadership can be understood as a process of influence based on clear values, beliefs and leading to a vision for the school (Bush, 2007, p. 6) working towards movement and change in an organisation (Grant, 2008; Donaldson, 2006).

To expand on the above stated definitions, Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley and Somaroo (2010) are of the view that leadership is not individual or positional but alternatively, a group process in which a variety of people can partake. For York-Barr and Duke (2004, p. 262), "leadership is not vested in one person who is high up in the hierarchy and assigned to a formal position of power and authority". As Grant (2008) puts it, leadership is understood as a shared activity involving a range of social relationships with educators operating as agents for change as they work towards the goal of improved teaching and learning. Thus, according to Muijs and Harris (2003), leadership is detached from person, role and status and is concerned with relationships and connections amongst individuals.

Developing the discussion further, Grant *et al.* (2010, p. 403) argue that "one cannot talk about education leadership without talking about issues of power". For these authors, power is key to leadership and it becomes evident on how, who and where distribution of authority and power is done at the school. This means that leadership relates to "authority and

influence allocated to formal positions in proportion to the status of those positions in the organizational hierarchy” (Leithwood, 1999 in Bush, 2007, p. 395).

It becomes clear from the above discussion that there is no one proposed way of giving meaning to the concept of leadership. However, leadership focuses, among other aspects, on the process of influence, shared activity as well as on bringing change within the organisation. Hence, for the purpose of this study, I align myself with Harris (2003) and Grant (2008) who contend that leadership needs to be understood as a shared process and collective endeavour which entails working with all stakeholders in a collegial and creative way to look for the untapped leadership potential of people and develop this potential in a supportive environment for school improvement.

### **2.2.2 Defining management**

Literature indicates that there is no single generally accepted explanation of the subject “management”. According to Bush (2007), managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements. Bush (2011, p. 6), further maintains that managing is about making things happen, by all involved. In addition, Naidu *et al.*, (2008) claim that management deals with systems, structures and a culture of school for effective day to day operations, with the purpose of enabling conditions under which high quality teaching and learning can take place. Based on the above mentioned explanations, I align myself with Van der Westhuizen’s (1991, p. 38) assertion that “various connotations may be attached to management”.

Bush claims that “management is linked to authority, tends to reside in formal positions such as principals or head teachers” (2011, p. 6). However, in the context of South African policy, management is “seen as an activity in which all members of educational organisations engage and should not be seen as the task of a few” (DoE, 1996, p. 27). This excerpt signals a shift from a traditional view of management to a more contemporary stance post 1994 when South Africa became a democracy.

For schools to achieve organisational goals, literature confirms that the concepts of leadership and management should supplement one another (Kotter, 1990 in Grant, 2008; Bush, 2011). Therefore, the following section presents a discussion on the relationship between leadership and management.

### **2.2.3 The relationship between leadership and management**

Literature confirms that leadership and management are two different processes, with leadership working towards movement and change in an organisation while management focuses on processes which work towards stability, preservation and maintenance within the organisation (Astin & Astin, 2000 cited in Grant, 2008). Drawing on Kotter (1990), Grant (2008) takes the view that the two processes of leadership and management supplement each other and both are key for an organization to grow. In a similar vein, Bush (2011) argues that leading and managing processes are distinct but both are important and they need to be given equal prominence if schools are to function effectively and achieve their objectives. Bush (2011) draws on Bolman and Deal (1997) who state that “the challenge of modern organisations requires the objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment wise leadership provides” (p. 392). Furthermore, it is evident from literature that successful principals do both functions simultaneously and iteratively.

Based on the above discussion, the two processes of leading and managing need not be compared. As Davidoff and Lazarus (1997, p. 32) put it, it becomes problematic when compared unfairly, that is, “leaders do the right thing, managers do things right”. Nevertheless, it became evident from a Ministerial Review report of underperforming schools in South Africa (2004) that there is a need to put great emphasis on basic management, ensuring functional organization first rather than emphasizing a visionary approach. The report indicates that once schools are functional, leaders can progress developing vision, outlining clear aims and policies. However, Grant (2009) found in her research that the majority of schools in her study overemphasised management processes in favour of real leadership.

In my view, I believe such a situation may be influenced by the notion that leadership and management processes have traditionally been located within a single individual and most often been equated with headship (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Grant, 2006). Hence the subsequent section discusses the traditional approach to leadership.

#### **2.2.4 Traditional view of leadership**

This section presents the traditional view of educational leadership. Traditionally, research on education leadership has been grounded in a singular view of leadership and has focused on the difference principals make to schools, thus reinforcing that “school leadership is synonymous with the principal” (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004, p. 4). It further became evident in South Africa that during the era of apartheid, leadership was viewed as relating to headship and understood in terms of position, status and authority (Grant, 2009). In support of the above assertions, scholars claim that leadership and management processes have traditionally been positioned within a particular individual and most often been associated with headship (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Grant, 2006). The traditional view to leadership, according to Yukl (1999) in Grant and Singh (2009), is referred to as the ‘great man’ leadership theory, whereby power to lead is understood as positional, vested in one person and historically male. Yukl (1999 in Grant & Singh, 2009) further argues the ‘great man’ leadership theory assumes that effective performance depends on the unidirectional influence of an individual leader with the skills to identify the correct way and convince others to take it.

It further became evident from literature that this traditional view of leadership resulted in the majority of South African schools being characterised by a culture of opposition, dependency and non-participation as a legacy of apartheid (Thurlow, 2003 cited in Bush, 2007). To expand on this notion, Grant (2009) in her work reported that the style of leadership adopted in such an environment was often autocratic in nature and involved a process of delegation where tasks and directives were passed down on a managerial structure by a head, to subordinates, without consultation or negotiation.

Whilst leadership is viewed as critical to the transformation of schools, York-Barr and Duke (2004) argue that a different understanding of leadership is needed, a shift from leadership as headship to a distributed form of leadership which the contemporary view on leadership presently promotes. I therefore move to present the contemporary view of educational leadership in the subsequent section.

### **2.2.5 Contemporary views of leadership**

Theories on leadership have recently undergone a key paradigm shift moving from the traditional view of leadership as located within an individual to alternative leadership theories which put the focus on various sources of leadership (Harris, 2005). According to York-Barr and Duke (2004, p. 262), the latest conceptions of leadership are viewed as “participative, organisational, distributed, and parallel which share in common the view that leadership is not vested in one person who is high up in the hierarchy and assigned to a formal position of power and authority”. For Harris, “leadership is a shared and collective endeavour that engages all members of the organisation” (2003, p. 75). Similarly Senge, as early as 1990 (quoted in de Villiers & Pretorius, 2011) proposed a new conceptualisation of leadership, whereby leadership is seen as a shared responsibility which is widely distributed beyond the principal. Grant (2008) expands on this thinking; for her leadership is understood as a joint activity involving a variety of social interactions with educators working as agents for change as they perform their duties towards improving teaching and learning. This conceptualisation of leadership creates the space for the leadership of teachers.

It is clear from the above discussion that more recent theories on leadership work from the basis that leadership need not be located only in the principal of a school but should be “stretched over multiple leaders” (Spillane, 2006, p. 15) including teachers. One such alternative theory has been referred to as distributed leadership (Grant *et al.*, 2010) which I now present as the theoretical framework to my study.

## **2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP**

This section presents the theory of distributed leadership which is of particular relevance to the study because, as Grant *et al.* (2010) argue, teacher leadership is one of the manifestations of distributed leadership. This section involves the discussion on how distributed leadership is defined, what characterises distributed leadership and how distributed leadership is criticised in literature.

### **2.3.1 Defining distributed leadership**

Whist literature indicates that distributed leadership is currently gaining much attention and growing in popularity (Harris & Spillane, 2008), scholars contend that there is not much consensus as to the meaning of the concept. Furthermore, the interpretations and understanding of the concept differ (Bennet, Harvey, Wise & Woods, 2003 in Grant, 2009). Therefore, various authors define distributed leadership differently with a central focus on concepts such as “dispersed leadership, shared leadership, distributive leadership and collaborative” leadership (Williams, 2011, p. 191).

According to Spillane (2006), distributed leadership is primarily and mainly about leadership practice which is framed as a product of shared interactions of school leaders, followers and aspects of their situation such as the daily routines. In similar thinking, Harris (2004) argues that distributed leadership focuses on how leadership practice is distributed among formal and informal leaders. For Harris, distributed leadership is described “as a form of collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working together” (2004, p. 14). Harris (2004) further claims that “distributed leadership focuses on employing expertise wherever it exists within the organisation rather than seeking this only through formal position or role” (2004, p. 13). Therefore, distributed leadership is not merely about roles and positions (Spillane, 2006) but focuses upon the interactions rather than the actions of those in formal or informal leadership roles, with the aim of influencing organisational and instructional improvement (Harris & Spillane, 2008). However, distributed leadership does not suggest that there is no one responsible for the overall performance of the organisation (Harris, 2004).

To expand on how distributed leadership is described in literature, Grant (2008) argues that distributed leadership is powerful in that it opens up a variety of opportunities for teachers to lead in varying areas, at different times and with different purposes in their professional lives. However, distributed leadership is not without some challenges, because scholars are still concerned about how distributed leadership works in practice (Hartley, 2007 in Gumedé, 2010) and how leadership practice is distributed among formal and informal leaders in schools (Harris, 2003 cited in Hlatshwayo, 2010).

Whilst literature indicates that distributed leadership should be seriously considered to address the leadership crisis in many South African schools (Williams, 2011), Spillane asserts that “distributed leadership is not a blue print for doing school leadership more effectively, it is a way to generate insights into how leadership can be practiced more or less effectively” (2006, pp. 9 - 10). Therefore, according to Harris and Spillane, “distributed leadership is not necessarily a good or bad thing... it depends on the context within which leadership is distributed and the prime aim of the distribution” (2008, p. 33).

In describing the term distributed leadership and for the purpose of this study, I align myself with the work of Woods, Bennett, Harvey and Wise (2004), who claim that distributed leadership is a model of leadership with three distinctive elements, namely: it belongs to a group or network of interacting individuals; it has open restrictions with no limits on who should be brought into leadership; leadership depends more on expertise and leadership is distributed across the many and not the few.

To better understand the theory of distributed leadership, Gunter's (2005) characterisation of distributed leadership is presented in the subsequent section.

## **2.5.2 Depictions of distributed leadership**

For Gunter (2005 in Grant, 2008), the key to distributed leadership theory are questions regarding the location and carrying out of power in an organisation and further contends that researchers should be investigating how leadership practice is distributed as well as what is being distributed.

A characterisation of distributed leadership is suggested by Gunter (2005 quoted in Grant, 2008), who suggests that distributed leadership is depicted in varying forms, namely authorised, dispersed and democratic distributed leadership. According to Gunter (2005 in Grant, 2008), authorised distributed leadership is where work is shared out by the principal to others and is usually accepted as it is regarded as legal within the hierarchical system of relations and because it gives a sense of importance to the person who accepts the allocated responsibility. In such an environment, the school principal or those in management positions instruct teachers to serve and lead in various committees and in different initiatives in the school. Since the principal has authority over teachers, they are compelled to accept the delegation. Thus, such practice indicates that authorised distributive leadership prevails in most South African schools.

The second form of distributed leadership is dispersed distributed leadership, which refers to a practice whereby leadership is disseminated among staff members throughout the school (Gunter, 2005 in Grant, 2008). To expand on this view, Grant (2009, p. 292) asserts that “dispersed distributed leadership requires ‘letting go’ by senior staff rather than just delegating tasks”. In line with these ideas, distributed leadership theory “implies a social distribution of leadership where leadership function is stretched over the work of a number of individuals and where the leadership task is accomplished through the interaction of multiple leaders” (Muijs & Harris, 2003, p. 440). In my view, the implications are that those in formal positions become threatened as they have to surrender power to others.

The last form of distributed leadership is democratic distributed leadership which share similar elements with dispersed distributed leadership in that both have the possibility of intensive action, but democratic distributed leadership extends its focus towards transforming and promoting democratic values within the organisation (Gunter, 2005 in Grant, 2008; Nauyoma – Hamupembe, 2011).

### **2.5.3. Critiques on distributed leadership**

Whilst literature view distributed leadership as a powerful tool to bring about school change (Grant, 2010). to analyse and think about leadership (Spillane, 2006 in Nauyoma-Hamupembe, 2011) as well as being a key and necessary tool for school improvement (Muijs & Harris, 2003), Gunter (2005 in Lawrence, 2010) “raises a question regarding what is actually distributed and whether it is merely a technical task or are authority, responsibility, and legitimacy also distributed” (p. 17). In addition, Harris asserts that “distributed leadership creates the challenge of “how to distribute responsibility and authority, and more importantly, who distributes responsibility and authority” (2003, p. 319) in schools. Harris warns that if the “head distributes leadership responsibilities to teachers, then distributed leadership becomes nothing more than informed delegation” (2003, p. 319). However, Lawrence (2010) argues that it is important for formal managers in schools to employ a type of leadership where all teachers in the organisation are able to work jointly within a distributed leadership practice.

Taking this discussion further, scholars share similar critiques of distributed leadership. To Harris (2004) distributed leadership affects the authority and ego of the principal. To reinforce this idea, I align myself with Lawrence (2010), who maintains that by “redefining roles within a school, the power relations are shifted away from the heads creating flatter leadership structures” (2010, p. 18). In a similar vein, Harris (2004) claims that distributed leadership put principals in an ‘at risk’ position as they lack control and power over certain activities. Nevertheless, Williams suggests that “school principals should be empowered enough not to feel threatened by the perceived loss of status and power which accompanies the establishment of free spaces at their schools” (Williams, 2011, p. 195). On the same

notion, Harris (2004) recommends that “to secure informal leadership in schools will require heads to use other incentives and to seek alternative ways of remunerating staff who take on leadership responsibilities” (Harris, 2004, p. 20).

This section presented the theory of distributed leadership in terms of its relevance to teacher leadership, which, according to Grant *et al.*, (2010), is a manifestation of the distributed approach to leadership. I now move on to a discussion of teacher leadership.

## **2.4. TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

This section presents the review of literature on the topic of teacher leadership. It provides a brief overview of how teacher leadership is defined and enacted in schools. It further discusses factors that enhance and hinder the enactment of teacher leadership in schools.

### **2.4.1 Defining teacher leadership**

In defining the concept teacher leadership, literature indicates that teacher leadership is a broad and complex concept to define (Grant, 2006; Grant, 2005; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Muijs and Harris assert that there are “overlapping and competing definitions of the term teacher leadership” (2003, p. 438). I therefore concur with Lawrence (2010) who claims that the wide-ranging literature on teacher leadership reveals that it is complicated to come up with one general definition of the concept. Therefore, as Grant (2006) states, defining teacher leadership is not simple; it is “understood and defined differently by many different writers internationally” (Grant, 2008, p. 88). Nevertheless, scholars claim that what is key and exclusive to teacher leadership is the notion that “all organisational members can lead and that leadership is a form of agency that can be distributed or shared” (Muijs & Harris, 2003, p. 440). It also became evident that the concept teacher leadership is not new in the international literature (Grant, 2006). In addition, it is developing as a new area of research in South Africa (Grant, 2008).

To get a better understanding of the concept teacher leadership, scholars provide varying definitions of the concept. To Grant *et al.*, (2010) teacher leadership points out that leadership need not be located only in the position of the principal but can be stretched over a range of people who work at different levels in a school. Harris and Lambert (2003) in Lawrence (2010) reinforce this thinking, stating that teacher leadership refers to teacher leaders who are expert teachers who spend the majority of their time in their classrooms but take on leadership roles when it is needed. Endorsing the above assertions, Gumede (2010) claims that teacher leadership is basically about teachers taking up leadership roles in school, both in the classroom and beyond. Thus, as Lawrence puts it, “teacher leadership refers to more than positional leadership in schools...it is about taking up formal and informal leadership roles in schools to create a more stimulating and productive work environment” (2010, p. 20). In summary, teacher leadership is centrally concerned with forms of empowerment.

To further understand the concept of teacher leadership, Grant (2008) in her work reveals that teacher leadership can occur in four zones; namely in the classroom, outside the classroom working with teachers and learners in curricular and extra-curricular activities, outside the classroom in whole school development activities and leading between neighbouring schools in the community. However, literature within the South African context reveals a lack of enactment of teacher leadership in many schools; when enacted, it becomes a restricted form of teacher leadership (Grant *et al.*, 2010; Grant & Singh, 2009; Grant, 2008). Thus, in my view and in line with Grant, there is a need for teachers to “shift from a follower role to one of operating as teacher leaders, whether they are informal leaders or in a formal leadership role such as head of department, learning area coordinator” (2006, p. 513). Harris and Muijs (2003) agree with Grant and suggest that teacher leaders should provide leadership to other teachers, for example, through coaching, mentoring and leading working groups.

Based on the above discussion, I believe that teacher leadership refers to both formal and informal leadership roles teachers perform in their schools, regardless of formal positions (Grant, 2006). In defining teacher leadership for my study, I align myself with Katzenmeyer and Moller’s (2001 in Grant, 2006, p. 514) definition of teacher leadership. They acknowledge that “Teachers, who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify

with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice”. Based on this definition, I am of the view that teacher leadership implies that all teachers are leaders and leadership roles in schools must be disseminated justly. I then argue that for schools to realise the purpose of teacher leadership, a culture of collaboration among stakeholders, mutual respect and trust (Grant, 2006) along with other factors, must be promoted. I now move on to present how teacher leadership is enacted in schools in the following section.

## **2.5 THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS**

This section is a review of the literature on how teacher leadership is enacted in schools. It presents Grant’s (2008) Model of teacher leadership which will be used as a tool to understand, interpret and explain how teacher leadership is enacted in the case study school. In addition, factors and conditions that enhance the practice of teacher leadership in schools are also discussed.

### **2.5.1 Grant’s Model of teacher leadership**

In her model, Grant (2008) suggests four areas which she refers to as ‘Zones’ in which teachers lead in a South African context. Grant’s (2008) Model of teacher leadership indicates levels in which teachers perform their leadership roles within and across schools. According to Grant (2008), the four zones are referred to as “first level of analysis and they are linked with roles that are referred to as the second level of analysis” (Grant, 2008, p. 93). I adopted this Model to analyse, interpret and understand how teacher leadership was enacted in the case study school and in dealing with data analysis in Chapter Four. It further assisted me to understand the concept of teacher leadership in the South African context.

Grant’s (2008) Model illustrates that teachers perform leadership roles within the classroom (Zone 1), whereby they exercise Role One by continuing to teach and improve their own teaching. Zone 2 of Grant’s (2008) Model refers to teacher leadership in the context of

teachers working together with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (Grant, 2008). In Zone 2, teachers provide curriculum development knowledge, lead in-service education and assist other teachers as well as participate in performance evaluation of teachers (Grant, 2008). Zone 3 is about teacher leadership outside the classroom in the area of whole-school development where teachers exercise role five which has to do with organizing and leading peer reviews as well as Role Six which is about teachers participating in school level decision-making. The last level of the model is Zone 4, which refers to teacher leadership between neighbouring schools in the community, whereby teachers provide curriculum development knowledge and lead in-service education and assist other teachers (Grant, 2008) across neighbouring schools. The following diagram depicts Grant’s (2008) Model of teacher leadership.

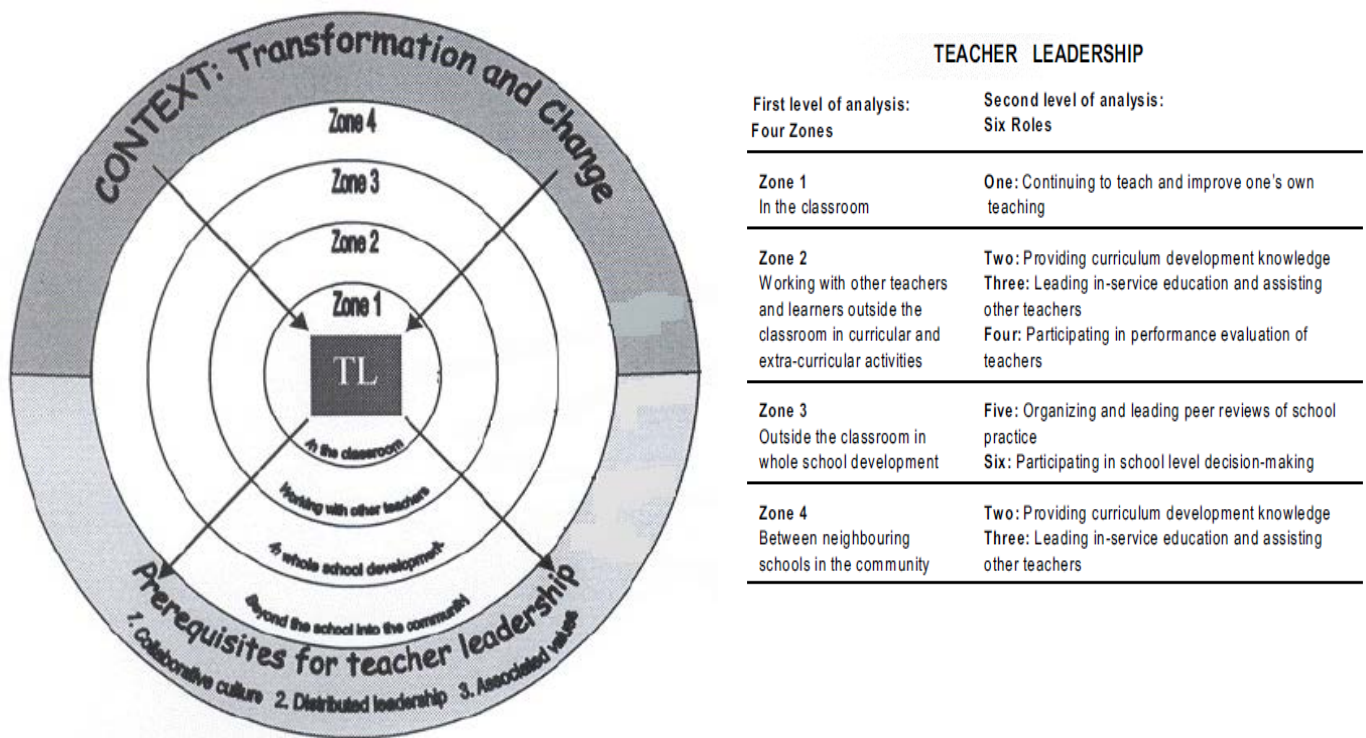


FIGURE 1: Grant, 2008 Model of teacher leadership

I now move to the next section to review literature on how schools can enhance and develop teacher leadership.

## **2.5.2 Factors enhancing teacher leadership in schools**

Whilst it emerges from literature that teacher leadership can benefit both individual teachers and their schools, there are a number of barriers that need to be overcome, and therefore, there are prerequisites that need to be met to ensure that teacher leadership functions successfully (Vail & Redick, 1993 cited in Muijs & Harris, 2003). Key factors that can contribute towards enhancing teacher leadership in schools are then discussed in the subsequent section.

### **2.5.2.1 Culture of collaborative practice**

Much research on teacher leadership points to the importance of establishing a school culture that promotes collaborative practice between teachers, collegiality, shared norms, values as well as shared decision-making processes within the school (Grant, 2006; Muijs & Harris, 2003; Muijs & Harris, 2007). According to Grant (2006, p. 523), “a collaborative culture with participatory decision-making and vision sharing; a set of values which assist to develop this collaborative culture and distributed leadership on the part of the principal and formal management teams” are preconditions for enhancing teacher leadership in schools. For Harris and Lambert (2003), collaboration and shared decision-making within a culture of mutual trust are key to secure successful teacher leadership.

To expand on the importance of collaborative practice in schools, Muijs and Harris (2003) confirm that creating teacher leadership with its combination of improved collaboration and increased responsibility has positive effects on changing schools as organisations. In addition, research studies conducted on teacher leadership reported that the expansion of shared leadership had positive school-level effects (Griffin, 1995 cited in Muijs & Harris, 2003). Therefore, as Grant (2006, p. 524) asserts, the success of the concept of teacher leaders would be directly related to “school culture that supports collaboration, partnership, team teaching and collective decision-making”.

Sharing the same view, Ntuzela (2008) cited in Grant *et al.*, (2010) reported that a culture of collegiality and shared decision-making was the characteristic of one of the historically advantaged schools in his study, leading to the enactment of teacher leadership within and extending beyond the classroom. Muijs and Harris (2007) further claim that in their case study school where successful teacher leadership existed, there was evidence of a culture that promoted teacher leadership, collaboration and partnership. In addition, Muijs and Harris (2003) in their work reported that, as a result of a shared vision in their two case study schools, teacher leadership was facilitated and enhanced and the process of implementation became stronger because of joint commitment to the success of new developments.

Based on the above assertions, I therefore align myself with Muijs and Harris (2003; 2007), claiming that for teacher leadership to increase, traditional top-down leadership styles need to be substituted by an emphasis on more delegated and more shared decision-making processes, as teacher leadership grows most in collaborative environments. Therefore, for teacher leadership to flourish, “there should be a fundamental cultural shift in the vision and values of the organization” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 129). In my view, it becomes the role of the principal and SMT to enhance teacher leadership in schools, which is outlined in the following section.

#### **2.5.2.2 Role of the principal and SMT to enhance teacher leadership**

Literature points out the importance of the role that principals and school management teams play with regards to the promotion of teacher leadership (De Villiers & Pretorius, 2011). In line with this thinking, Grant (2008) suggests that for principals to enable teacher leadership, they need to generate opportunities for teachers to lead through the “creation of a culture of collaboration and by using the strengths and talents of the individual teachers” (2008, p. 89). To reinforce this notion, Pillay (2008) cited in Grant *et al.*, (2010) reported that in her study, the role of the principal was critical in developing a school culture contributing to the practice of distributed and teacher leadership.

To expand on the role that principals need to play in promoting teacher leadership, scholars recommend that principals should provide infrastructure, create opportunities for teachers to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities, build learning communities and observe teacher expertise (York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999 cited in de Villiers & Pretorius, 2011). In addition, de Villiers and Pretorius (2011) assert that principals should set aside sufficient time for teacher leadership activities. In a similar vein, Muijs and Harris suggest that “heads need to encourage teacher’s continuous learning, by providing time and resources for continuing professional development (CPD) activities, need to support and validate the concept of teacher leadership” (2003, p. 442). To reinforce this idea, York-Barr and Duke (2004) recommend that school principals and their management teams need to encourage team work, where teacher leaders work together, sharing information regularly and are provided with frequent and regular opportunities to share feedback. Thus it becomes evident from literature that for teachers to be able to lead new initiatives, they need support from the principal and school management (Grant *et al.*, 2010; Grant, 2006).

Research studies on teacher leadership also revealed that heads of schools played a critical role in schools where successful teacher leadership existed. Findings from three case studies of contrasting schools conducted by Muijs and Harris (2007, p. 118) reported that the “head teacher orchestrated a set of opportunities for teachers to lead and provided moral support to encourage teachers to take risks”. The research findings further reported that the principal reinforced the set of shared values in the case study school where successful teacher leadership existed (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Therefore, as Muijs and Harris (2007) put it, the head teacher became the “central driving force behind the development of teacher leadership” (2007, p. 120) and thus it became clear from the work of Grant (2006) that principals played a critical responsibility in the success or otherwise of teacher leadership.

### **2.5.2.3 Teacher empowerment and interpersonal factors**

Literature indicates that developing teacher leadership is not an easy process, and it has become evident from research studies that teachers lack confidence and sometimes leadership skills to perform their duties (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Hence Muijs and Harris, (2003) suggest various ways in which teacher leadership can be developed and improved in schools.

Empowerment of teachers is thus viewed as one of factors that contribute towards the success of teacher leadership. To reinforce this idea, Muijs and Harris (2003) argue that there is a need for intense and varied opportunities for continuous professional development. In addition, Clemson-Ingram and Fessler (1997) cited in Muijs and Harris (2003) claim that such developmental opportunities involve amongst others, structured programmes of networking, whereby teachers collaborate with others within and across schools in order to develop their leadership potential. For Harris (2003, p. 320) “time needs to be set aside for teachers to meet to plan and discuss issues such as curriculum matters, developing school-wide plans, leading study groups, organizing visits to other schools, collaborating with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and collaborating with colleagues”.

In their work, Muijs and Harris (2003, 2007) reported that in more successful schools teachers were provided more time to collaborate with one another, and that in schools where successful teacher leadership existed, innovative staff development methods, such as mentoring and coaching were being used to develop leadership and collaborative skills. Thus in my view, joint collaboration of teachers forms part of teacher empowerment, which Muijs and Harris (2003) view as a central form of teacher leadership. However, Muijs and Harris (2003) assert that professional development of teachers should not only focus on the development of teachers’ knowledge and skills but also on aspects specific to their leadership roles as well as on improving their self-confidence. I therefore argue that if teachers are exposed to a variety of professional development opportunities, the possibilities of generating teacher leadership are improved, thus leading towards transforming schools as organisations (Muijs & Harris, 2003).

Whilst professional development of teachers is seen as key for promoting teacher development in school, literature indicate that the accomplishment or otherwise of teacher leadership within a school can also be influenced by interpersonal factors such as relationships between teachers and school management (Muijs & Harris, 2003). Furthermore, strong interpersonal skills which, according to Muijs and Harris (2003), may be associated with the effectiveness of teacher leadership are key to the success of teacher leadership. For example, findings from three case studies of contrasting schools by Muijs and Harris (2007)

revealed that teachers viewed good communication with the senior management team as a key factor in the development of teacher leadership in their schools.

However, Muijs and Harris (2007) in their study reported that lack of communication among staff and the SMT was evident in the other two case study schools where emergent and restricted teacher leadership existed. Thus, I align myself with Muijs and Harris (2003) arguing that building positive relationships within schools are key to continued improvement.

While there are conditions and mechanisms required to enhance teacher leadership, there are also barriers that hinder the enactment of teacher leadership (Nauyoma-Hamupembe, 2011) which are then discussed in the next section.

### **2.5.3. BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

In this section, some of the many barriers that might be inherent in the enactment of teacher leadership as they are explained in the literature are discussed. Among others, the following are regarded as major barriers towards teacher leadership, namely, the autocratic leadership style of the principal and top-down management structures, lack of time, as well as teacher resistance to change (Harris, 2004; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Grant, 2008). Echoing this assertion, Williams (2011) claims that the major obstacles towards teacher leadership are resistance due to self-interest of those who want to keep authority and control or those who want to remain free from responsibility, traditional deference, belief in the dominance of hierarchy, as well as capacity problems.

### **2.5.3.1 Autocratic leadership style of the principal and top-down management structures**

It emerged from literature that an autocratic leadership style of the principal is viewed as the major barrier to teacher leadership in most schools (Harris, 2004). Along the same line, scholars point to top-down leadership and hierarchical school management structure as the main impediment to the development of teacher leadership (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Grant, 2008).

To Grant *et al.*, (2010) school management teams act as a hindrance to teacher leadership as they demonstrate a lack of trust in teacher leadership ability and do not distribute leadership, instead they autocratically control the leadership process. This means that school principals do not want to share their authority with teachers and other stakeholders in the school, whilst some teachers do not want to leave their classrooms to extend their leadership roles (Grant *et al.*, 2010). To expand on this notion, Harris (2003) states that the practice of teacher leadership puts principals in an exposed situation as they do not have power over certain activities. Along the same line, Harris (2004) argues that the existing hierarchy of leadership within both primary and secondary schools means that power is located in the leadership team. In addition, Harris (2004) further argues that the “separate pastoral and academic structures in schools, such as the subject or department divisions plus the strong year groupings, present significant barriers to teachers working together” ( p. 20).

To support the above assertion, studies by Harris (2004) and Grant (2006) reported that the main and most powerful barriers to the take-up of teacher leadership are the bureaucratically and hierarchically organised structures in most South African schools, with principals who are autocratic and show negativity to teachers who attempt to take up a leading role. In such an environment, schools are characterised by lack of teamwork, collaboration and shared vision, which Grant (2008) views as a major cultural barrier to professional development.

Based on the above discussion, I align myself with Harris (2004) on the notion that the top-down management structures can actively inhibit teachers accomplishing autonomy and taking on leadership roles. Thus, as Grant (2006) puts it, these barriers are existent and must be taken seriously in pursuing teacher leadership. Therefore, for teacher leadership to flourish, a need for structures that promote teacher's learning and working together on a daily basis, with a focus on valued teaching practices is recommended (York & Barr, 2004).

### **2.5.3.2 Lack of time for teachers**

Literature indicates that insufficient time for leadership work poses challenges towards the enactment of teacher leadership. In addition, practice reveals that teachers complain about insufficient time for performing both leadership and teaching responsibilities during the school day. Echoing this notion, Muijs and Harris (2007) reported that in all the case study schools that participated in their study, an important perceived barrier was a lack of time which hindered staff initiatives. However, it became clear from literature that, for teacher leadership to develop, “time needs to be set aside for teachers to meet to plan and to discuss issues such as curriculum matters, developing school-wide plans, leading study discuss groups, organizing visits to other schools, collaborating with HEIs and colleagues” (Harris, 2003, p. 320).

### **2.5.3.3 Teacher resistance to change**

Literature view teacher resistance to change as one of the key barriers towards development of teacher leadership. Grant (2006) claims that the main barriers to teacher leadership that emerged in her study were teachers who were initially resistant to change because of their lack of understanding of the complexity of the change process. On the same notion, Muijs and Harris (2007) reported that in their study, teachers did not want to take ownership or leadership responsibilities. Yet for teacher leadership to happen, not only do principals need to distribute authority, but teachers also need to understand and assume their agency role (Muijs & Harris, 2003). The next section concludes the chapter.

## **2.6. CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented literature on the enactment of teacher leadership and therefore I gained a better understanding of the concept of teacher leadership within the framework of distributed leadership. Furthermore, it became evident from literature that the enactment of teacher leadership is portrayed in different forms in schools, whereby restricted teacher leadership as well as authorised distributed leadership prevail in most South African schools (Grant, 2006; Grant, 2008). This reveals that most schools in South Africa are still characterised by bureaucratically and hierarchically organised structures, with principals who are autocratic and show negativity to teachers who attempt to take up a leading role (Grant, 2006; Harris, 2004). In my view, this means that most schools in South Africa are not yet ready to embrace teacher leadership.

Research studies on teacher leadership indicate a gap between theory and practice within schools. Whilst there are certain conditions and mechanisms required to enhance teacher leadership in schools, a number of barriers that hinder the enactment of teacher leadership are evident from literature. I believe that leaders need to create an environment that is supportive of teacher leadership. Therefore, I argue that, for the establishment of such an environment, various forms of support and empowerment need to be provided to both leaders and teachers in order to promote teacher leadership and bring change within schools. The following chapter concentrates on the research design and methodology of the study.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study aimed to explore how teacher leadership was enacted in a township high school in the King William's Town education district, in the Eastern Cape. It was crucial for the study to explore how teacher leaders understood the concept of teacher leadership and what factors enhanced or hindered the practice of teacher leadership in the case study school.

In this chapter, I introduce and expand on the research methodology, research paradigm as well as the research design I employed in my study in order to gather and analyse data that allowed me to answer the research questions. This chapter further describes sampling techniques, data collection methods chosen and data analysis procedures followed.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of my work, this study is part of a replication study of a multi-case study conducted on the enactment of teacher leadership, across a number of educational institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. Therefore, as a group of MEd Rhodes university co-researchers, we adopted the research questions, data collection techniques and theoretical and analytical framework that were employed in the original study to discover the extent to which the findings of our Eastern Cape studies might be similar to or different from the findings of the initial KwaZulu-Natal studies.

Furthermore, the selection of data collection approaches was based on the nature of the research questions, research aim and the topic under investigation. This chapter also deals with trustworthiness and ethical considerations which are key components of the research process and add value to the quality of the research. I now move on to outline the research questions which guided my study.

## **3.2 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS**

The aim of this research was to investigate the enactment of teacher leadership in a township high school in the King William's Town education district, in the Eastern Cape. As I mentioned earlier, this study is a replication study, thus the following research questions used from the KZN multi-case study (Grant, 2010b) on the topic of teacher leadership guided this study:

- How is teacher leadership enacted in a township high school in the King William's Town education district?
- What factors enhance or hinder this enactment?

## **3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND APPROACH**

### **3.3.1 A qualitative approach within the interpretive paradigm**

In line with the original study, (see for example, Gumede, 2010; Gunkel, 2010; Hlatshwayo, 2010; Lawrence, 2010), this research was carried out within the interpretive research paradigm, using a qualitative approach. My choice of this paradigm is also based on the claim made by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 9) that the interpretive paradigm supports the view that “the social world can be understood only from the standpoint of individuals, who are part of the ongoing action being investigated”. In line with this notion, scholars claim that the interpretive research paradigm posits that knowledge is constructed not only by observable phenomena but by also people's subjective beliefs, values, reasons and understanding (Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004; Creswell, 2007). Hence, a research paradigm is defined as a “basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guide their enquiries” (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2011, p. 298).

This study, therefore, provided three sample key teachers with an opportunity to construct their understanding of teacher leadership and describe how they experienced their enactment of teacher leadership at their school and what factors enhanced or hindered such enactment.

This paradigm was appropriate for this study because it attempted to understand reality from the participants' point of view.

This study further subscribed to a qualitative approach which was appropriate for the research questions posed for this particular study as well as to better understand the phenomenon under study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 132), the qualitative approach is concerned with the understanding of human beings through their description of experiences as lived and defined by the actors themselves, which, in my study, were three teacher leaders. Therefore, a qualitative approach seemed appropriate since teachers themselves described their experiences on how teacher leadership was practiced in their school.

### **3.3.2 A case study**

The study adopted a case study design which Yin (1984) in Maree (2010, p. 75) refers to as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real – life context...” and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

The case study design as defined above applies to this study, as it investigated how teacher leadership was enacted in a township high school in the King William's Town district, which is the real context where the study was conducted. The set timeframe for the data collection process was the period between May and August 2013.

Furthermore, a case study enables the researcher to study the actions of a particular case, (which in my study was the leadership of teachers and therefore I had three sub-cases within the case) which may help to understand situations in other schools (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 253). Based on Lawrence (2010), I used a case study because of its applicability to real life situations. Therefore, in this study, I got in touch with a real situation and engaged with the people in that situation, so as to listen to what they were saying or to observe what they are doing in relation to the phenomenon in question, which, in my study, was the enactment of teacher leadership in a school. This implies that, as the researcher, I did not create my own ideas of what schools are supposed to do in order to promote teacher

leadership, but rather depended on the participants to provide rich information on the case in hand. Therefore, I sought to understand the phenomenon as it was experienced and interpreted by the participants.

## **3.4 RESEARCH SITE AND PARTICIPANTS**

### **3.4.1 Selection of the case study school**

In line with the original study which employed convenience and purposeful sampling, I selected a township high school in King William's Town as my case study school because of its accessibility and convenience to me as a researcher for the study. Literature refer to this type of sampling as convenience sampling, whereby participants are selected on the basis that they are easily available and accessible (Maree, 2007, p. 177). Therefore, the sampled school and teachers were easily accessible because the school was 15 km to King Williams' Town where I live. In addition, my selection was influenced by the fact that I had previously worked as a principal at the school and I was therefore familiar with staff personalities and the school context.

### **3.4.2 The research site**

The school where the research was conducted is a township high school situated in the King William's Town education district, in the Eastern Cape. The school is a high enrolment senior secondary school offering grades 8 to 12, with a learner enrolment of 485, a staff complement of 24 educators, inclusive of SMT members, that is, a principal, two deputy principals and four HoDs. The school curriculum is divided into three streams, namely, Maths and Science, Commerce and General Subjects which consist of languages and humanities. The school's performance for the past three consecutive years is as follows: 2010 – 54%, 2011 – 62%, 2012 – 77, 7%. This information indicates that the school performance as per the matriculation results is gradually improving. This would indicate that the school is functional.

The school falls under quintile 3, which implies that it is a no fee charging school and the community around the school is one of abject poverty and it serves a community of a very low socio-economic class (DoE, 2006). Most learners' parents are unemployed, whilst some learners live in child-headed families. Furthermore, the poverty index is very high as most families and learners solely depend on a child support grant. As a result, learners receive meals from the school nutrition scheme offered by the Eastern Cape Department of Education.

The school is not well-resourced; it has six old prefabricated classrooms as well as block structures, which need major renovation. The blocks comprise of two offices (one for the principal and the other for the deputy principal), a staff room and a consumer studies block. The school is generally under resourced, with no library and laboratory. The school also offers consumer studies but it lacks equipment. Such inadequacies impact directly on learner and school performance. However, the school is well fenced, with a 24 hour caretaker.

### **3.3.3 Sampling of participants**

The three key participants, all post level one teachers were purposively selected, as in the original study. According to Merriam (2001, p. 61), "purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned". Therefore, the three sampled participants were identified with the assistance of the principal and the SMT members, on the basis of being able to demonstrate the characteristics of leadership that I was looking for in my study. Furthermore, the three teacher leaders were selected on the basis of their teaching experience, as well as performance in leadership, either in relation to their subjects, phases or extra and co-curricular committees. For example, amongst them they had taken the lead in various different committees within the school and had mentored newly appointed teachers. All three teacher leaders were aged between 50 and 55 years. Their teaching experience ranged from 15 to 24 years. They were all females. They had acquired secondary teacher's diplomas as well as upgraded their studies with bachelor's degrees.

Thus purposive sampling seemed appropriate to access knowledgeable teachers, with in-depth knowledge and experience of a particular issue, by virtue of their professional role, power, and access to networks, expertise or experience (Ball, 1990 cited in Cohen, *et al.*, 2007, p. 115).

#### **3.4.4 Access and ethical issues**

The following ethical issues were dealt with carefully throughout the study, that of gaining access, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, voluntary participation and the right to withdraw, since I worked with human beings whose rights needed to be protected and respected. Merriam (2007, pp. 212 - 213) argues that “ethics begins with the conception of the research project and ends with how we present and share with others what we have learned”.

Permission to gain access and conduct research at the school was secured through written letters to the school principal (Appendices 1 and 2), requesting official permission for access to the school to conduct my research. Furthermore, I then explained the aim and nature of the study to all educators, included my three primary participants in the school before the study commenced. At that meeting, the informed consent of all participants was received. This was done through a letter of consent, which all three teacher leaders signed and in this way, they committed themselves to the study (Appendix 3). I further explained that the study was for research purposes only. The study did not intend to assess the level of learner performance at the school. The participants were also informed that they were not forced to partake in the study.

I assured the participants that the information collected would be used for research purposes only and I also ensured them of confidentiality. Participants were further assured that the name of the school as well as their own names would be protected through the use of pseudonyms.

### **3.4.5 The positionality of the researcher**

As the researcher, I was fully aware that my position as a Deputy Chief Education Specialist within the Eastern Cape Department of Education responsible for monitoring policy implementation in schools might be intimidating to the participants. I was aware that they might not feel free to disclose any required information regarding how the principal and the SMT members distributed leadership roles to teachers as well as how they created opportunities for the development of teacher leadership within the school.

To address this situation, as a researcher I emphasised to the participants that the research was for study purposes only. Furthermore, I reassured the participants that the information obtained from them would, in no way, be used against anyone within the school or for any other purpose, other than my research purpose.

To further address the question of my authority as a departmental official, I arranged and secured venues away from the school premises for conducting interviews with the participants, so that they could feel relaxed and comfortable. For example, I interviewed one of the participants at her residential flat whilst I met the other two participants in an open public park in Dimbaza Township. The reason for taking the primary participants out of the school premises was that I wanted them to feel free and relaxed during the interview sessions so that they could communicate freely, without feeling intimidated by supervisors or the school.

My status as a departmental official as well as the fact that I was a former principal at the case study school led to certain implications in the study, that of being both an insider and outsider within the school, which may have complicated my ability to observe and interpret data (Chavez, 2008). As an insider, I was aware of what was taking place at the school. In addition, as a departmental official I provide a support and monitoring role to the case study school which has led to my continuous interaction with the school. Therefore, my knowledge and interaction with the school may have influenced my interpretation of data, which may

have resulted in a level of bias. Conducting the individual semi-structured interviews out of the school premises might have reduced levels of bias. Whilst I viewed myself as an outsider as I no longer worked as a principal at the school, being an insider/outsider may have had strong implications for the study, as Trowler (2011) states, the involvement of an insider as an actor means that,

you may lose the ability to produce good, culturally neutral, 'etic' accounts; you may find it difficult to 'see' some dimensions of social life because they have become normalized for you, there may be conflicts between your role as a researcher and your professional or student role...and respondents who know you may have pre-formed expectations of your alignments and preferences in ways which change their responses (a form of the effect called interview bias) (2011, p. 2).

Similarly, as an outsider who was also a supervisor at the case study school, my position, as Chavez (2008) asserts, may have complicated the researcher's role, resulting in, among other factors, an over-reliance on status which conceals the researcher role, an overload of exchange or reciprocity requests from participants, compromised professional ethics and/or research results. The fact that the purpose of the study was fully explained to the participants, that it is for research purposes only, minimised the influence of my position.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

As mentioned earlier, I conducted my research over two school terms, namely, term 2 and 3 of 2013.

In this section, I introduce the data collection methods that I employed in my study and I also give reasons for choosing these methods. Because this study was a replication of the KZN multi-case study on the enactment of teacher leadership, we adopted all the data collection instruments from the UKZN study (see Gunkel, 2010; Gumede, 2010; Hlatshwayo, 2010; Lawrence, 2010) and adjusted them where necessary to suit the context of our Eastern Cape schools. Therefore, I used questionnaires, a focus group interview, individual semi-structured interviews, observations, self-reflective journaling and a school profile as data collection techniques. Our choice as a group of MEd students to use this multi-method approach is

explained by Lawrence, stating that this approach “allowed data to be scrutinized, compared and assessed ensuring that the data collected is trustworthy” (2010, p. 44).

I now discuss individually the data collection methods I employed in the study.

### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (1998, p. 166), a questionnaire suggests a collection of questions, with the basic objective of obtaining facts and opinions about a phenomenon from people who are informed on the particular issue. To Mouton (1988 cited in Lawrence, 2010), questionnaires offer certain richness to the respondent’s response for they allow to the respondent to speak freely for there is no direct contact with the researcher. Therefore, I used questionnaires in the study so as to obtain information from all teachers, that is, post level one teachers and SMT members, on how teacher leadership was enacted in their school, as well as which factors hindered or enhanced such enactment.

Therefore, the questionnaire from the original study was reworked. The revised questionnaire contained closed questions and it was distributed and hand delivered to 17 post level one teachers, four HoDs, two deputy principals and a principal at the commencement of the project in April 2013 (Appendix 6). The re-worked questionnaire was comprised of section A (Biographical Information) and section B dealing with teacher leadership. Sections B2 and B4 in the questionnaire were relevant to post level one teachers only whilst B3 and B5 were relevant to the SMT only. Section B1 was relevant to both post level one teachers and SMT members.

The questionnaires were collected back after a week of delivery. The return rate of the questionnaire was 96%, which was a positive indication that data was collected from the majority of staff members in the school. Thus, the use of questionnaire afforded me the opportunity to collect data from across a number of participants (it offered me breadth) and represented the voices of two groups of educator constituents.

### **3.5.2 A focus group interview**

I employed a focus group interview as one of my data collection techniques (Appendix 7). According to Cohen *et al.*, (2007, p. 376) focus group interviews refer to a “form of group interviews, with a reliance on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher”. Focus groups are viewed as “contrived settings, bringing together a specifically chosen sector of the population to discuss a particular given topic, where the interaction with the group lead to data and outcomes” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007, p. 376). In line with these definitions, Patton (1990 cited in Maree, 2010) further defines a focus group interview as an interview with a small group of people on a specific topic. According to Maree, “the goal is to hear participants’ general perspectives and to ease them into a process where they will actively debate issues” (2010, p. 91).

In this case study, a focus group interview was conducted during the third term of 2013 with my primary participants, the three teacher leaders. The purpose of the focus group interview was to get the participants’ understanding and their views on issues of teacher leadership within their school.

Interview questions for the focus group were also reworked from the UKZN original study (Gumede, 2010; Hlatshwayo, 2010; Lawrence, 2010), by the group of co-researchers participating in the Rhodes University MEd programme prior to the data collection phase. During the data collection phase, the focus group interview was recorded with the permission of participants and transcribed soon after the interview while my mind was still fresh and it was easy to bring to mind what happened during the interview process.

### **3.5.3 Observation**

Cohen *et al.*, (2007, p. 396) describe observation as a research process that offers an investigator the opportunity to collect live data from naturally occurring social situations. I used an observation schedule to record and gather data. In line with Lawrence (2010), I realized that what was critical about an observation schedule is the fact that a researcher

collects data from participants without questioning and talking with them. In this case study, I recorded what I saw and heard during my visits at the school, without actually taking part in any activities (Payne & Payne, 2004 quoted in Nauyoma-Hamupembe, 2011) as I was not a staff member within the school.

I had intended to use observation schedules (Appendix 4) to observe and record formal and informal leadership roles for the targeted group in and outside the classrooms, during morning devotions, staff-meetings as well as during committee meetings. This I did in Zone 2, 3 and 4 of Grant's Model (2008). However, I did not observe teachers as they performed leadership roles within their classrooms (Zone 1) because they were not comfortable with my observation of their classroom teaching, claiming that the stance of their union was against classroom visits. I therefore had to forego classroom observation.

However, I did observe key participants as they participated in extra-curricular activities as well as working informally with other teachers, which is Zone 2 of Grant's (2008) Model of teacher leadership (as discussed in the previous chapter). In addition, I had an opportunity to observe a staff meeting (teacher leadership within Zone 3) conducted by the principal, whereby I was able to determine whether teachers were involved in school-level decision-making activities and whether they were consulted on issues or not. For example, I observed the first staff meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2013, whereby teachers were welcomed back from June vacation. During this first staff meeting, SMTs and staff members reviewed their plans and operations, in preparation for the 3<sup>rd</sup> term, which falls within Zone 3 of teacher leadership (Grant, 2008). The second staff meeting I observed was conducted on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August 2013. This was a standing monthly meeting for the staff, whereby other committees report on progress for the month, reflecting Zone 2 and 3 of the Grant Model (2008) of teacher leadership.

Thus I observed teachers informally as they worked with other teachers as well as during formal staff and committee meetings. During this process, I wrote my own notes and did not use an observation schedule. The use of observation as a data collection method allowed me

to observe the leadership of teachers as well as understand the school culture of the case study school.

One of the disadvantages of observation was that my presence might have affected participants' behaviour and interactions. However, I am of the view that participants behaved normally during my visits to the school as the findings that surfaced from observation substantiated findings that emerged from other data collection methods.

### **3.5.4 Teacher leaders' self-reflective journals**

Journaling is a method of data production and collection that is frequently used by researchers (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). During this journaling process, the key teacher leaders were requested to provide written descriptions of situations regarding their experiences on the enactment of teacher leadership in their school. The teacher leaders' self-reflective journals were used as data collecting instruments to acquire data from participants. The self-reflective journal entries (Appendix 9) were issued to the three teacher leaders on a weekly basis, for five consecutive weeks, commencing on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July to the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2013. As the group of co-researchers participating in this group project, we set up structured questions that guided teacher leaders during self-reflecting journaling.

Journal entry one was distributed to all three teacher leaders during week three of July 2013. It provided me with an opportunity to get a better understanding of each participant, their experiences, allocated roles at school as well as their contribution towards the school and the community. In addition, background information about the school was extracted from journal one. Journal entry two was scheduled for week four of July 2013. The entry was intended to obtain information on any initiatives introduced by teacher leaders in the classroom or school as well as around the community. Journal entry three was scheduled for the last week of July, aimed at obtaining data on how the participants have worked as teacher leaders in the classroom, sharing with other teachers, in school decision-making processes as well as networking across schools in the community.

Journal entry four was scheduled for the first week of August 2013, whereby teacher leaders were expected to reflect on themselves as teacher leaders and the personal attributes which made them teacher leaders. The final journal entry was entry five, which was scheduled for the third week of August 2013. This last journal entry aimed at getting information on the leadership role teacher leaders played at school, in the different Zones 1, 2, and 3 of the Grant Model (2008), as well as to identify factors that hindered or promoted the enactment of teacher leadership in their school.

During the self-reflective journaling process, participants illustrated and explained how they felt about their enactment of teacher leadership in their school. In addition, the use of self-reflective journaling assisted me to examine patterns that emerged from their journals, by sorting these patterns into themes. However, the self-reflective journaling process was not an easy exercise in the case study school in that I had to re-issue journal three to two participants who lost them. In addition, during the collection of journals, I had to be patient and wait for the participants to complete their journals for submission because they were not ready or teacher leaders were not at school at the time arranged for collection. Nevertheless, I did eventually receive back all the five journal entries from all three teacher leaders.

### **3.5.5 Individual semi-structured interviews**

Maree (2010) describes an interview as a two way discussion whereby an interviewer asks participants questions to gather data, with the aim of gaining rich descriptive data that will help to understand the participant's view of social reality. Similarly, Cohen *et al.*, (2007 in Lawrence, 2010) view interviews as a key way of collecting information having a direct bearing on the research question. Common to these definitions of various authors on interviews, is the notion that in an interview the participant provides the researcher with the information through conversation.

I used individual semi-structured interviews to obtain information from the sampled three teacher leaders. The interviews were conducted towards the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> term in 2013, after I had completed the journaling process. Semi-structured interviews afforded me the opportunity to ask probing questions and follow up on responses that were not clear from the questionnaires and during focus group interviews.

Teacher leader 1 and teacher leader 2 were both interviewed on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 2013, but different timeslots and venues were afforded to each participant. The interview of Teacher leader 1 was conducted in the car at the open public park in the township, whilst for teacher leader 2, the interview was conducted at her residential flat. Teacher leader 3 was interviewed on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2013 at the open public park in the township. Appointments were secured in advance with participants. Prior to the commencement of interviews, the purpose of the interviews, which among others, was to gain insight into the teachers' perspectives regarding the research questions, was explained to each participant. All the interview sessions were guided by an interview guide (Appendix 8). In addition, all interview sessions were scheduled for an hour. However, the length of the interviews ranged between one and one and half hours. For example, teacher leader 2 took more than an hour due to her interactions with the interviewer.

Interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participants and transcribed. This exercise helped me to capture longer responses for easy retrieval during the transcription stage. The interview questions focused mostly on getting each participant's understanding of teacher leadership - whether teacher leadership was practiced in their school and if any support was received from colleagues and SMTs to promote and create an environment that would enhance the practice of teacher leadership. In addition, the interview questions aimed at identifying factors that prevented or promoted enactment of teacher leadership in their school. During the interview process, follow up questions were raised to obtain in-depth information from the participants.

During the interview process, I was able to probe using more questions (Gumede, 2010; Lawrence, 2010) that related to journal entry three and entry five, which were not clearly articulated in the journals. Thus, teacher leaders explained in-depth how they worked as teacher leaders in their classrooms, with other teachers in curricular and extra-curricular activities, their involvement in school-wide decision-making processes as well as how best they worked with other schools. Through these individual semi-structured interviews, all three teacher leaders were able to highlight factors that encouraged or prevented them from continuing the initiatives they had introduced at the school.

Therefore, the data from interviews was triangulated during data analysis with data from self-reflecting journals, observation, as well as a focus group interview. Thus, these four sets of data offered a full picture of how the phenomenon of teacher leadership was viewed and practised at the case study school.

## **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

### **3.6.1 Thematic content analysis**

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007, p. 462), qualitative data analysis “involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data in terms of the participants definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. In addition, Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 140) define data analysis as encompassing “reading through your data repeatedly, and engaging in activities of breaking the data down (thematizing and categorising) and building it up in novel ways elaborating and interpreting”.

In line with the original study, I used thematic content analysis to analyse qualitative data in this study which, according to Creswell *et al.*, (2010, p. 101), refers to “the analysis of, among others, text from transcripts, journals, individual and focus group interviews”. Therefore, this study repeated “previous research procedures in order to strengthen the evidence of previous research finding, and correct limitations, and thus overall results may be

in favour of the results of previous study or you may find completely different results” (Hani, 2009, p. 1).

During the data analysis process, I read repeatedly through the individual interview scripts of the three cases, familiarising myself broadly with the data and was able to identify preliminary themes or categories. I immediately started looking for patterns from the answers given by the participants which helped me to understand the relationship between the patterns and the meaning in the data. I further used journal entries and observation to supplement the transcribed data. The findings were grouped together, the less important separated from the significant data.

As already mentioned, I used Grant’s Model of teacher leadership (2008) as an analytical tool to indicate how themes were organised in this study, to get understanding of how teacher leadership was enacted in the context of an Eastern Cape school across the four zones. [Refer to Figure 1 in Chapter Two for the diagram of Grant’s (2008) Model of teacher leadership that I utilised to analyse data that emerged from the study.

### **3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Scholars relate validity and reliability in qualitative research to research that is credible and trustworthy (Creswell *et al.*, 2007). In line with this notion, Lincoln and Guba (1985) in Maree (2010, p. 80) identify “credibility, applicability, dependability and confirmability as key criteria for trustworthiness and these are constructed to parallel the conventional criteria of inquiry of internal and external validity, reliability and neutrality respectively”. In this study I particularly looked at credibility (internal validity), which ensures that findings describe precisely the phenomena being investigated and reliability to assure trustworthiness of the findings.

The study used triangulation, which, according to Maree (2010), refers to the use of several kinds of data collecting methods, so as to strengthen the study by combining those methods.

Therefore, the study used focus group and individual semi-structured interviews, observation, questionnaires and self-reflecting journaling for data collection in order to ensure trustworthiness. In addition, use of triangulation reduced the chances of reaching false conclusions. To further improve validity, records of data were kept and I was able to recover these when needed.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the methodology and design of the study, which was in the form of a qualitative case study. It further unpacked all the data collection procedures employed in gathering data on the enactment of teacher leadership pertaining to three teacher leaders in the case study school. Data analysis techniques and ensuring trustworthiness of the study were discussed.

The next chapter presents and discusses the findings of my study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the data that were collected for this study on the enactment of teacher leadership in a township high school in the King William's Town education district, in the Eastern Cape. Research findings on how teacher leadership was understood and enacted, as well as factors that hindered or enhanced the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school, are presented and discussed. In this chapter, I frequently use quotes as evidence to support the claims I make and, in so doing, present a rich and convincing portrait of teacher leadership in the case study school.

To remind the reader, the primary participants in my study were three teacher leaders while all other teaching staff members, including the SMT members in the case study school, were my secondary participants. For ease of reading, when I present data in this chapter, I refer to the three teacher leaders, my primary participants, as TL1, TL2 and TL3 and I refer to myself, the researcher, as R. I also use coding to represent the data collecting tools utilised.

<b>DATA COLLECTION TOOL</b>	<b>CODE</b>
Individual Interview	II
Focus Group Interview	FGI
Questionnaire	Q
Observation	O
Self-Reflective Journal	SRJ

The presentation of data in this chapter is arranged according to the two research questions, which sought to understand how teacher leadership was understood and enacted as well as what factors hindered or facilitated the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school. However, before I move on to these research questions, I first present a short discussion on how the concept of teacher leadership was understood in the study.

## **4.2. HOW THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP WAS UNDERSTOOD AT THE CASE STUDY SCHOOL**

Before I present data related directly to my two research questions, I begin this chapter by presenting how the concept of teacher leadership was understood by the teaching staff at the case study school. The overriding view was that staff believed that teacher leadership was important in the life of the institution so everyone could have a say. For example, data that emerged from questionnaires indicated that 90% of the teaching staff believed that all teachers can take up leadership roles and that they needed to be supported when taking up such roles. This was confirmed and supported by the primary participants who were of the view that teacher leadership is key as it promotes participation of staff members in school activities. According to TL1, *“Teachers are also leaders and managers, so they need to be offered opportunities to perform leadership roles for the betterment of the school”* (II). TL3 further explained his views: *“There are a lot of young innovative teachers who want to make an impact in our school, but only if they are given opportunities to lead”* (II). However, TL2 had a different view: *“Not everybody who is a teacher is a leader; teacher leadership refers to a person who initiates things and is visionary”* (II).

During the focus group interview, it emerged that the concept of teacher leadership was understood in relation to personal qualities.

### **4.2.1 The personal qualities of a teacher leader**

Respondents shared a similar understanding of the concept ‘teacher leadership’ as was portrayed in the individual and focus group interviews. The three primary participants associated teacher leadership with a person who possesses certain personal or leadership

qualities. During the FGI, TL1 shared her view: for her, teacher leadership referred to “*a determined person, who is willing to work with others, learners in particular*” (FGI). This view was supported by TL3 who stated that “*if one takes responsibility, is aware of situations, initiates, and consult others; to me that person is a teacher leader*” (FGI). TL2 further explained, “*A teacher leader is someone who can do his work from morning till afternoon, knows what to initiate, consults with others and maintains order in class*” (FGI). In a similar vein, data that emerged from self-reflective journals showed that the primary participants related teacher leadership with individual personal characteristics and qualities. As TL1 described, a “*teacher leader refers to a person who is a communicator, listener, advisor, helpful and trustworthy*” (SRJ).

Participants shared similar sentiments on the notion that the most important quality of a teacher leader is to have a vision. Participants viewed a teacher leader as someone who has a vision about the organisation, someone who can take initiative that will improve the performance within the organisation. It was evident from raw data that my primary participants believed that most teachers in the school possessed the quality of being visionary, as they had introduced new ideas for the betterment of the organisation. Data obtained from questionnaires confirmed that 60% of post level one teachers took initiative without being delegated tasks by the SMT (Q). In addition, data from self-reflective journals supported the notion of a teacher leader as someone who has a vision. As explained by TL2, “*If a person initiates a new idea or project, and has a vision about the school and its environment, s/he is a teacher leader*” (SRJ). In the same vein, TL3 described a teacher leader as follows, “*A teacher leader is someone who dreams about the future of the school, who does not work alone but is dedicated to a team, an advisor sharing views with others for the betterment of the institution*” (SRJ). TL3 further commented, “*For example, as an individual teacher, I have introduced more than one initiative in this school, I always think about how we can improve school performance. I believe these new ideas will contribute in creating a conducive environment for the school and the learners in particular*” (SRJ). TL2 shared a similar view, “*Some teachers do have a vision for the school. They want good things to happen and come up with great ideas that will benefit the school*” (SRJ).

Whilst participants viewed teacher leadership as associated with certain personal and leadership qualities, for instance being visionary as discussed above, data also revealed that

teacher leadership was enacted in different Zones or areas that are presented below. To remind the reader, Grant's Model of teacher leadership (2008) is used as an organising framework in this chapter and particularly as it relates to my first research question.

## **4.3 THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

### **4.3.1 Teacher leadership in the zone of the classroom**

Generally, data obtained from questionnaires confirmed that teacher leadership in the case study school existed in the zone of the classroom, which is referred to as "within Zone 1" of Grant's (2008) Model of teacher leadership. In this zone, the leadership role of teachers is to continually teach and improve their teaching and learning. It emerged from questionnaires that 70% of teachers took a leading role in their classrooms, as for example, they chose their teaching resources, textbooks for their subjects and were held responsible for learners in their classrooms. It also became evident from data obtained through focus group and individual interviews that teacher leaders continue to lead in their classrooms and improve their teaching. TL1 explained,

*Since our performance is judged through learner performance, I become the source of information and hope for my learners. I provide clear guidance to my learners regarding setting standards for them and required levels for promotion. I make sure we travel the journey together. I am always supportive to those who need remedial support, without being told by SMT members (FGI).*

In support of this notion, TL2 commented, "*I know that if anything happens to learners that are in my class, the SMT will hold me accountable for that, even if I was not there*" (FGI). In the same vein, TL3 further explained her role as teacher leader in the classroom: "*Since we are always reminded of our role at school, that of teaching and learning, I do my best for my learners, I motivate them, ensuring discipline and teach them responsibility and I know for a fact, in this school you only interact with the learners that you teach*" (FGI). TL3 shared an example of teacher leadership enacted within the classroom:

*I introduced an intensive reading programme for grade 10 learners. When I start an extensive reading programme, I have to interview a sample of learners to assess their reading skills and habits. I completed the exercise even during the*

*holidays. I was able to group my learners as per their abilities for reading sessions. It took me some time to see some improvements (SJR, entry 2).*

Participants through self-reflective journaling indicated that they were also involved in their classrooms when they dealt with learner discipline. According to TL1,

*I am working with a big class for consumer studies, where we have to do theory and practice. Ill-discipline amongst learners prevails, as others eat, and steal food during the practical work. I was so vigilant by leading them in setting standards, grouping them in small groups and doing practical work in turns (SRJ, entry 2).*

In summary, teacher leadership was confined strongly to the classroom in the case study school as teachers provided leadership in their classrooms, upholding effective discipline and significant interactions with learners. This was evident as the primary participants took control of their classes and performed their roles effectively to promote teaching within their classrooms. Sharing similar findings in their survey study, Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley and Somaroo (2010) report that teacher leadership was enacted strongly in the zone of the classroom. The involvement of teacher leaders in their classrooms portrayed more management activities than providing teachers with opportunities to display leadership skills.

In the subsequent section, I discuss the enactment of teacher leadership that takes place beyond the classroom, where teachers work with other teachers in curricular and extra-curricular activities. According to the model, such enactment is where teachers work with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities. As Grant (2008) illustrates, in Zone 2 teachers provide curriculum development knowledge, lead in-service education and assist other teachers as well as participate in performance evaluation of teachers.

### 4.3.2 Teachers leading in curricular and extra-curricular activities

In this zone, findings indicated that teachers worked with and supported other teachers informally as well as formally outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities in the case study school. Teacher leadership roles in the zone outside the classroom, may, according to Grant (2008), involve providing curriculum development knowledge, leading in-service education and assisting other teachers as well as participating in performance evaluation of other teachers. Whilst data from questionnaires indicated that 80% of teachers provided leadership mostly in their classrooms, data from individual interviews revealed that most teachers worked with each other in subject committees informally, providing curriculum development knowledge, which Grant (2008) refers to as informal leadership in Zone 2 of the teacher leadership model. During the focus group interview, two of my primary participants (TL1 & TL2) confirmed that they supported one another informally, through informal conversations. The participants shared the following examples of leading opportunities where support and assistance was provided to other colleagues, which is Role Three, whereby teachers lead in in-service education and assisting other teachers. According to TL3, *“After I have introduced new techniques for teaching reading, I share and introduce this new initiative to other teachers and extend it to other classes as well”* (SRJ, entry 2).

Other activities that emerged were that of team teaching to *formally* support one another. To support this view, TL2 stated that: *“I appreciate what teachers do. I once taught a topic in my colleague’s class, and she requested me because she had a challenge in understanding the topic. We do practice team teaching to assist one another”* (II). TL1 shared a similar view: *“For languages, we as grade 12 teachers, share literature and language instruction among ourselves. There are also periods scheduled for demonstration lessons as well, which assist language teachers to improve in all language aspects”* (FGI). TL3 presented another aspect to this topic, claiming that teachers did not usually get support from the SMT. She said: *“I don’t usually get support or individual attention from my HoD; I understand that she does not have a good understanding of the content of my subject”* (II). In support of TL1 and TL2, she confirmed though that teachers do support each other: *“No support is provided as such from the SMT, hence we guide one another when there is a need”* (II).

Data obtained through individual interviews indicated that teachers did support one another informally in other aspects such as learner discipline and learner social welfare. This is how TL1 explained the situation: *“We usually get support from other colleagues through informal chats, coming up with ways of dealing with learner discipline or providing more support to learners” (II)*. TL2 shared the same sentiments with the other two primary participants on how they support one another as staff: *“We advise one another informally, for example in nutrition, learner discipline and even correct each other’s behaviour without being told or instructed by the SMT” (FGI)*.

Findings of the study also revealed that teachers supported other colleagues formally. Data generated from questionnaires revealed that 70% of the teaching staff do provide curriculum development knowledge to colleagues as well as coordinate extra-mural activities in their school. To support the claim, TL2 in her self-reflective journal provided the following explanation,

*We are two educators teaching English in grade ten. The one educator struggles with teaching poetry so through our subject committee, we scheduled two hours per week where I take him through teaching poetry to all ten learners while another teacher helps the learners with language. We continued with the exercise for a term and it assisted our learners a lot (SRJ, entry 3).*

Teachers further led and also supported one another in extra-mural activities. This is how TL1 explained it: *“There is a sport committee here. Each sport code is led by teachers, for example, Netball, Soccer, rugby. We assist each other during practice time because some of the teachers do not have expertise in the field and rules are changing regularly” (SRJ, entry 3)*. In the same vein, TL3 commented, *“Teachers are further assigned extra-curricular activities and we assist one another during coaching sessions, to me that is teacher leadership” (II)*.

The findings indicate that teacher leadership in the case study school was enacted in line with Zone 2 of the model. These findings are supported by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) cited in Grant (2006), in their definition of teacher leadership which states that “teachers who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of

teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice” (p. 514).

The following section looks at the enactment of teacher leadership within the zone of whole-school development, focusing on who are involved in decision-making within this zone.

### **4.3.3 Teacher leadership in the zone of whole-school development**

Generally, research findings revealed that the enactment of teacher leadership was limited in this zone of whole-school decision-making (referred to as Zone 3 of the teacher leadership model) at the case study school. This zone of the model encompasses involving teacher participation in school-level decision-making as well as in organising and leading reviews of school practice (Grant, 2008).

Data generated from questionnaires revealed that 90% of the teaching staff believed that all staff members should be involved in the school’s decision-making processes. Furthermore, data from questionnaires indicated that 100% of SMT members claimed that they did encourage teachers to participate in whole-school decision-making. However, data obtained from the focus group interview revealed that only those who held formal management positions participated in the school’s decision-making processes. This meant that teachers in the case study school were not regularly involved in the whole-school decision-making processes. When they did participate, it became a restricted form of teacher leadership, which Harris and Muijs (2005, p. 90) depicted as “individual or collective consultation with the senior management team”.

The following sub-themes which emerged from raw data in relation to this third zone of teacher leadership are discussed below to indicate how teacher leadership was enacted in the zone of whole school development in the case study school.

#### 4.3.3.1 Teacher leadership through school committees

Generally, research findings revealed that teacher leadership was not really happening in Zone 3 of Grant's Model (2008) of teacher leadership at the case study school. Data surfaced from questionnaires indicated that only 33% of participants believed that the establishment of various school committees provided them with opportunities to expose their leadership skills, as well as participate in decision-making processes at school. These statistics suggest limited involvement of staff members in whole-school decision-making processes – teacher leadership was not reflected as part of the school's organisational culture. However, in discussion there was recognition that teachers did participate in school related committees. TL3 maintained that the involvement of staff in different committees implies that teachers did participate in school-level decision processes. According to TL3:

*Teachers in this school are members of different committees, such as admission, subject, entertainment, SGB, finance and others. This implies involvement in school decision-making processes. Teachers are coordinators or chairpersons of those committees. Therefore, they have opportunities to provide leadership to others (II).*

TL1 echoed a similar view: *“Even if the situation seems not promising at school, I believe that teachers are given opportunities to lead as they lead in different committees”* (FGI). TL1 further explained that *“Committees are a platform where teachers should display their leadership and their decision-making skills”* (FGI).

Whilst participants reported that teachers led in committees in the case study school, the climate of the school did not allow teachers to participate in whole-school decision-making processes. Based on the low statistics presented above, these findings indicate that teacher leadership was not really enacted in this zone; therefore teacher leadership was not part of the school culture. In other words, teachers in the study were not regularly involved in school-wide decision-making processes and when they did participate, it was in a form of restricted teacher leadership which according to Harris and Muijs (2005, p. 90) is based on “individual or collective consultation with the senior management team”.

#### 4.3.3.2 Teacher leaders participating in school-level decision-making

Generally, participants believed that teacher leadership is about participating in activities that will bring change within the school as well as participating in each other's introduced initiatives for the benefit of the school. However, data obtained from the questionnaires revealed that a mere 30% of the post level one teachers introduced and participated in projects without them being delegated by the SMT. This view of the teaching staff was supported by the primary participants in their self-reflective journals, reporting that few of the teaching staff introduced and led some of the initiatives at their school. TL2 reported on some examples of teacher leadership within this zone of whole-school development. TL2 explained, "*I have initiated a prize-giving ceremony to motivate learners at school, which became a success*" (SRJ). It is also evident from participant's journals that two of my primary participants participated in more than one initiative, which received minimal support from the SMT. TL3 reported further, "*I established a flower garden with the aim of creating a pleasant healthy environment and I also initiated the opening of learner files for learner admissions*" (SRJ, entry 2).

These findings revealed that post level one educators provided leadership activities mostly in learner-related issues rather than in whole-school decision-making processes. In support of these findings, data obtained through observation indicated that, whilst teacher leaders came up with ideas during staff meetings, exposing their expertise, their engagement was cut short by the principal, reminding them that there was "*no time for debates as it is break time*" (O). I observed this scenario while the case study school was holding a staff meeting. During the meeting, "*the principal outlined the agenda for the teaching staff and communicated expectations to them. Questions and concerns were not entertained*" (O). This is how TL2 further supported this notion, "*I was not given an opportunity to lead the prize-giving ceremony I initiated for learners*" (SRJ, entry 2). TL2 further presented the situation in her journal, "*One of the SMT members made the venture hers, and once the initiative took off, I was sidelined, delegating the tasks to others. Unfortunately, it was not implemented as I had planned it, and it was not a success*" (SRJ, entry 2). In direct contrast, findings from the questionnaire data indicated that SMT members claimed that they did provide support to teachers whilst post level one teachers expressed different views.

To expand on how teacher leadership was enacted in Zone 3 of the model in the case study school, findings further revealed minimal involvement of teachers in whole-school decision-making processes. Whilst there were few examples of teacher leadership in the zone of whole-school decision-making, the study found out that teachers were not intensively involved in whole-school decision-making processes (Zone 3). Data acquired from across the data sets indicated that the majority of participants strongly felt that teachers were not intensively involved in the whole-school decision-making processes. Teachers were not happy about how staff members were disregarded in school decision-making sessions. For example, *“During observation of staff meeting that was chaired by the principal, explaining the expectations for teachers in preparation for term 4, I observed that teachers were told what is expected of them, but not afforded an opportunity to ask clarity-seeking questions”* (O). This view was further confirmed during the focus group interview as TL2 was concerned about how the agenda for staff meetings were drafted as well as how staff meetings were conducted at school. According to TL2, *“Agenda items come from SMT members, no inputs are requested from us”*. She further explained that the *“SMT want us to rubber stamp their decisions. We end up discussing issues that management feels comfortable with”* (FGI).

To confirm the view of minimal involvement of teachers in school decision-making processes in the case study school, primary participants reported that their inputs during staff meetings were not considered, especially when the principal was absent from school. According to TL1, *“There is no use in holding staff meetings if the principal is not around”* (FGI). TL1 provided additional information, *“That’s the way things are here; we rather cancel the meeting because the resolutions we took during the meeting in the absence of the principal will not be considered and implemented”* (FGI).

Generally, participants confirmed that teachers did initiate activities at school and introduced new ideas so as to improve the running of the school, but some of those ideas were not fully supported by the SMT if they were not initiated by them. This implies that leadership was restricted to the SMT in this third zone. Therefore, teachers in the case study school were not regularly involved in school-wide decision-making processes and when teachers were involved, an authorised form of distributed leadership prevails which Gunter (2005) in Grant (2008) claims, is when work is distributed from the principal to others. This is usually accepted because it is regarded as lawful within the hierarchical system of relations and

because it gives an element of significance to the person who takes on the work. In addition, a restricted form of teacher leadership, as Harris and Muijs (2005, p. 90) contend, happens through “individual or collective consultation with the senior management team”.

The next section presents findings on the enactment of teacher leadership beyond the school into the community, which is Zone 4 of Grant’s (2008) Model of teacher leadership.

#### **4.3.4 Teacher leadership beyond the school into the community**

Teacher leadership roles in this fourth zone involve providing curriculum development knowledge and leading in in-service education as well as assisting other teachers across schools (Grant, 2008). Generally, participants provided curriculum development knowledge and assisted other teachers from neighbouring schools. Findings indicate that teachers participated in the leadership of co-curricular or extra-curricular programmes beyond the school, and in social welfare issues that affected learners within the community. It became evident from data acquired through questionnaires that 57% of participants participated in and provided curriculum development knowledge to teachers in other schools, assisted other teachers as well as worked with other schools in clusters. This implies that, according to the staff, half of the teaching staff led in in-service education beyond the school. In addition, the primary participants confirmed that they co-ordinated extra-curricular activities with other schools. To support these findings, TL3 shared her excitement on how she introduced and coordinated a Mathematics and Science programme in partnership with a NGO named Kutlaonong, and ended up providing extra Maths opportunities for grade 12 learners from neighbouring as well as other schools within the district.

*I started this project for my learners first, without being instructed by management. I was concerned about Maths and Science performance in my school. I networked with friends and curriculum officials, as a result the school ended with this project. I was so excited when I observed the commitment from my students, inviting learners from neighbouring schools. Today as learners, teachers and parents we are reaping those fruits. Our Maths and Science performance is improving as well as for other districts (FGI).*

TL2 described her story of working with other schools, whereby the initiative in which she was involved in developed her leadership skills, encouraged her and built her self-esteem:

*I volunteered to accompany learners to a provincial two week cultural winter school held at Mngqesha, in King Williams Town. This was a cultural camp including a winter school programme. I have to be vigilant, as I had the responsibility of supervising, caring, guiding and motivating the selected learners from my school. I had to display my leadership skills so as to ensure the success of these learners. It was so wonderful as my learners were selected to participate in a national festival in Durban (SRJ, entry 3).*

TL1 was also eager to share how she forged and built relationships with a teacher from a neighbouring school, for the benefit of her learners. She stated:

*I was so concerned and frustrated when my learners struggled to understand and realise some of the learning outcomes in my subject. I contacted an educator teaching my subject from the neighbouring school and we started by discussing the performance of our learners, shared areas that learners were struggling with in the subject and further, shared topics as per our level of understanding. I taught those topics I understood and he did the same. We ended up teaching learners from both schools in a common place. As a result our learners performed better that year (SRJ, entry 3).*

It is evident from the findings that teachers themselves initiated their involvement and networking with other schools without any directives from management. TL3 further indicated that participating in school committees created more opportunities to work with neighbouring schools. Sharing her excitement, she explained:

*I was so excited when I was elected to represent my school in a schools restoration programme - a programme aiming at addressing the needs of the community, which is composed of many schools within our district. I had an opportunity to work with teachers from other schools, as well as with other stakeholders from the community. The programme was composed of teachers, church organizations, business people and social groups. I was able to showcase my leadership qualities. (SRJ, entry 3).*

Whilst research findings from across the data sets indicated that teacher leadership was enacted mostly in the classroom, it became evident that teacher leadership was also evident in another two zones, which are Zone 2 and Zone 4 in the case study school. It further became evident from findings that teacher leadership in Zone 3 was largely absent. Furthermore, in

relation to Zone 3, there were a number of factors which hindered the leadership of teachers in the case study school. It is to these hindering factors that I now turn.

#### **4.4 HINDERING FACTORS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

In response to my second research question, the findings of my study indicated that the hindering factors to teacher leadership far outweighed the enhancing factors in the case study school. I therefore discuss these hindering factors before I discuss the enhancing factors. I now move to focus on the most prevailing hindering factor in the case study school.

##### **4.4.1 Decisions the prerogative of the SMT**

Data from questionnaires (70%) indicate that the SMT was aware of its role in providing support and working with other teachers with regard to curriculum issues, encouraging them to participate in whole-school decision-making and allowing teachers to initiate new ideas. However, data from the other data sets presented contrary views, implying that provision of support to teachers by the SMT was not evident in practice. In support of the findings, the three teacher leaders, my primary participants, believed that the whole-school decision-making was confined to the SMT members. This implies that only those teachers who were in senior positions were expected to provide leadership and participate in decision-making processes. TL1 elucidated,

*Post level one teachers are expected to report any initiative to the SMTs for a nod of approval. What we noticed is that our initiatives are not usually supported and therefore not implemented. Suggestions are accepted when they come from the SMTs. For example, I advised the school on how a new subject that was in line with consumer studies can be introduced, nevertheless, it did not receive much support from the management (FGI).*

TL2 further supported and confirmed this view: *“There are teachers who have leadership qualities here, but positional constraints frustrate the practice of teacher leadership. I think the SMT feels threatened by teachers; they always claim their positions, instructing teachers on what to do” (II).*

Participants reported that they were always reminded about the positions and authority held by the SMT. TL2 quoted one SMT member addressing teachers and highlighting that “*I am accountable and therefore in power in this department*” (II). TL3 further maintained this view during the focus group interview: “*The problem here is not only about how teachers are provided with opportunities and encouraged to display their leadership skills, leadership itself is confined to the SMT, forgetting that teachers are also leaders*” (FGI).

Given this position of the SMT, a culture of non-participation prevented teachers from taking the initiative as leaders in their school (Ntuzela, 2008 in Grant *et al.*, 2010), hence teachers decided to minimise their participation and withdraw their ideas. TL2 further confirmed, “*Post level one teachers who are senior teachers were co-opted as SMT members, but as we speak they are no longer allowed to attend SMT meetings because they do not have authority over other staff members*” (FGI).

Another example of the SMT’s lack of commitment in promoting teacher leadership was offered by TL1. She explained as follows:

*I have initiated a prize-giving ceremony with the aim of motivating learners. Initially the idea has been accepted by the SMT until it gets to its implementation stage, whereby it was delegated to one SMT member who ended up being responsible for the ceremony. There was no acknowledgement and appreciation from the SMT and as a result I felt sidelined by the school” (SRJ, entry 2).*

In the same vein, TL2 described the situation further,

*It is difficult to take decisions in a situation where you know you will not be approved by management who feel threatened as if you are taking over their position. The management of our school uses a top-down approach and comes up with concluded decisions when approaching the staff. If one comes up with another suggestion, the SMT take it as an attack (SRJ).*

Generally, participants claimed that post level one teachers were not involved in decision-making processes as well as in other leadership and management aspects such as school finances. According to TL3, “*Unfortunately, teachers are not afforded opportunities to*

*implement their views; moreover some of the initiatives are not supported by the SMT. We end up being discouraged” (FGI). TL2 further emphasised her concern: “School finances are not discussed openly and only a few individuals decide on the school needs. We as the junior staff members hardly receive feedback or reports on how finances are spent” (FGI). This indicates a closed organisational culture whereby a lack of proper communication between those in authority and subordinates prevail. Furthermore, since a hierarchical approach to leadership was employed in the case study school, it became one of the constraining factors to teacher leadership.*

In addition, participants further believed that the attitude of the SMT as well as their autocratic leadership style contributed in hindering the enactment of teacher leadership in the school. The three teacher leaders felt that post level one teachers were sometimes undermined by SMT members. According to TL3, *“I feel discouraged, as we post level one teachers are sometimes taken for granted” (FGI)*. In a similar vein, TL2 commented, *“A negative attitude towards us from the SMT promotes non-involvement and non-cooperation from teachers in other school activities” (FGI)*.

The findings indicate that teacher leadership was still not feasible as an organisational phenomenon in this Eastern Cape school. This school is similar to the school in Ntuzela’s (2008) study (in Grant *et al.*, 2010) which was characterised by a non-participatory culture, preventing teachers from taking initiative as leaders in their school, and this led to the demotivation of teachers.

The research findings from the case study school showed that not many enhancing factors emerged from the data. In support of this claim, during the focus group interview, two of my primary participants claimed that among other factors, post level one teachers were not encouraged to participate in leadership activities. According to TL2, *“I feel discouraged as we post level one teachers are sometimes undermined by the SMT” (FGI)*. She further explained, *“Working in such an environment promotes non-involvement and non-cooperation of teachers in school activities” (FGI)*. TL3 shared a similar view, *“Even if you do initiate*

*something in our school, one is not appreciated and we end up being discouraged”* (FGI). In summary, data generated from across the data sets indicated that participants generally felt that the non-inclusive approach by SMT members hindered the enactment of teacher leadership within the institution. Hence, the three primary participants recommended factors that they felt would be necessary in the promotion of teacher leadership which I discuss next.

## **4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

To remind the reader, no clear enhancing factors to teacher leadership emerged in my study. However, participants offered some recommendations to enhance the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school. I discuss three of their recommendations.

### **4.5.1 A culture of collegiality**

Data from across the data sets revealed that most participants believed that teacher leadership could be enhanced when operating in a conducive atmosphere characterised by collegiality and collective leadership. For example, TL2 explained, *“Whether someone holds a position of power or not, views from all staff members need to be considered and be acknowledged as an important stakeholder”* (SRJ, entry 5). TL2 also believed that *“leaders should not impose decisions on subordinates as this does not motivate and encourage people, but manipulates them”* (FGI).

Participants generally recommended that the SMT needed to practice collective leadership, characterised by principles, skills and tasks such as *“being consultative, inclusive, decisive, appreciative, motivating, empowering staff, providing pastoral care, building healthy relationships”* (SRJ, entry 4, TL 1 & 2). TL3 shared her views on the importance of acknowledging staff for promoting teacher leadership, *“Appreciation of work done promotes staff morale and employees are able to go an extra mile in doing their work effectively and efficiently”* (SRJ, entry 4). In the same vein, TL2 stated that *“Staff should be encouraged and*

*be acknowledged for their efforts, for example, be acknowledged for good results they produce” (FGI).*

Participants further believed that promoting a culture of collegiality, building healthy relationship with colleagues as well as creating a supportive working environment could promote the practice of teacher leadership. According to TL1, *“Allowing teachers to voice their suggestions and ideas, supporting and implementing those ideas could assist schools in promoting a healthy school environment, everybody working as a team” (FGI).* TL1 supported this idea, *“Teachers should be given opportunities to lead, and grounds to expose their leadership skills” (FGI).* TL2 shared a similar sentiment, *“Valuing other people’s ideas promotes team work and makes staff trust management” (SRJ, entry 5).* TL2 further indicated that *“We expect intense involvement of teachers in school decision-making processes and to be given an opportunity to throw ideas around on how the school can be run” (II).*

#### **4.5.2 Effective communication**

Data acquired from individual interviews showed that effective communication was identified as one critical leadership skill that could enhance enactment of teacher leadership in schools. TL3 explained the importance of effective communication in any organization: *“People have to understand what is expected from them, instructions need to be clear, priorities must be clear and agreed upon by the collective” (II).* TL3 further emphasised the importance of conducting staff meetings to promote effective communication: *“Meetings are vehicles for effective communication and should not be a form of window dressing but should have clear objectives” (II).* TL2 supported the idea during the individual interview, *“Teacher leadership can be practiced better in our school if regular communication between the SMT and teachers can improve, working closely together as a team and setting expectations for everybody before monitoring commences” (II).*

#### **4.5.3 Modelling good leadership**

Participants identified modelling good behaviour as one factor that could enhance teacher leadership in the case study school. They believed that the type of behaviour the SMT

members displayed at school could contribute positively or negatively towards enhancing the practice of teacher leadership. Participants claimed that SMT members should be exemplary and be role models to other staff members. TL3 unpacked her expectations of the SMT, “*It is useless to tell people what to do whilst you do not practice that*”. TL3 further explained, “*Work hard if you expect your followers to work hard*” (SRJ).

## **4.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has offered a picture of how teacher leadership was enacted in a township high school, in the King William’s Town education district. Individual teachers were continually trying to assert their leadership across the four zones of the model of teacher leadership. However, teacher leadership was not an organisational phenomenon in the case study school and it emerged from the study that a restricted form of teacher leadership was practiced.

The next chapter presents the summary of findings for the study, provides recommendations for future research and concludes the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a summary of the main findings of my research and draws conclusions about the study. The main findings are briefly outlined as they respond to each of the research questions. Recommendations for future research on teacher leadership are also offered.

#### **5.2 HOW THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP WAS UNDERSTOOD**

This section presents preliminary work prior to the introduction of my research questions. I needed to know how teachers understood the concept of teacher leadership before they were asked about its enactment. The findings of the study revealed that teachers in the case study school shared a common understanding of the concept 'teacher leadership'. In their definitions of teacher leadership, it became evident that to them, teacher leadership is about providing leadership roles to every teacher at school. To the key participants, the School Management Team (SMT) should facilitate and provide teachers with opportunities to lead. The teachers' understanding of the concept teacher leadership was in line with Harris and Lambert's (2003) description of teacher leadership as it refers to the application of leadership by teachers, in spite of position or designation, and where the teaching staff at various levels within the organisation has the chance to lead. Such leadership roles, as Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) claim, refer to formal leadership roles - that of being a head of department or subject co-coordinator - and informal leadership roles which involve coaching, leading new teams and setting up action research groups.

The meaning teacher leaders gave to the concept of teacher leadership in the case study school further reflects that they are conversant with the concept of teacher leadership. In addition, teachers shared a similar understanding of the concept of teacher leadership as their

descriptions of teacher leadership, as indicated across data sets, related strongly to the possession of certain leadership skills and personal qualities such as being visionary, determined, taking initiative, a communicator, listener, building team work, being able to communicate and being disciplined. Their responses to teacher leadership further indicated that teachers viewed teacher leadership as key in promoting involvement of teachers in school activities.

Whilst literature indicates that the concept teacher leadership is attracting growing attention from both practitioners and researchers (Muijs & Harris, 2007), my research findings indicated that the school culture and context did not promote the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school. The findings on the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study are presented below.

### **5.3 THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP: A RESTRICTED FORM**

To respond to the first significant research question, on how teacher leadership was enacted in a township high school in the King William's Town education district, I used Grant's teacher leadership model (2008) to analyse data and get a clear understanding of participants' responses on the enactment of teacher leadership. Generally, research findings revealed that teacher leadership was enacted in Zones 1, 2 and 4 of the model in the case study school. However, the degree of enactment varied from zone to zone.

In utilizing Zone 1, 2 and 4 of the model, research findings from the case study school revealed that teacher leaders continued to lead in their classrooms (Zone 1) where they continued improving their own teaching in their classrooms (Role One). Data further showed that teachers in the case study school supported other teachers informally as well as formally outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (Zone 2). It became evident that teacher leaders participated and initiated co-curricular and/or extra-curricular programmes beyond the school, as well as in social welfare issues that affect learners within

the community, which falls under Zone 4 of Grant's Model (2008). My research findings indicated that teachers provided curriculum development knowledge through networking with other schools within the district (Role Two) and coordinated extra-curricular activities with other schools.

My study shared similar findings with a survey analysis of teacher leadership done in KwaZulu-Natal (Grant *et al.*, 2010), which reported that teacher leadership was enacted strongly in the zone of the classroom (Zone 1). Research studies on teacher leadership conducted in KwaZulu-Natal (Grant, 2006; 2008) further revealed that teacher leadership was enacted mostly in Zone 1 of Grant's Model. However, teacher leadership, as Grant *et al.*, (2010) put it, was evident across other zones, but the extent of teacher leadership differed from zone to zone and it declined dramatically in Zone 2, 3 and 4 in the KZN survey.

It further became evident from across the data sets in my study that there was minimal involvement of teachers in whole-school decision-making processes, which is Zone 3 of Grant's Model. The research findings reflected that a restricted form of teacher leadership in Zone 3 was enacted in the case study school, whereby teachers were not regularly involved in school-wide decision-making processes and, when they did participate, it was based on "individual or collective consultation with the senior management team" (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 90). Teacher leaders from the case study school reported that SMT members were more concerned about positional authority. In addition, it became clear to teachers that the SMT members were afraid to delegate their powers; as a result they felt threatened by efforts made by teachers.

However, participants reported that they participated in issues such as learner discipline, fundraising, prize giving, heritage celebrations, initiated a flower garden and in informal staff development. In addition, teachers reported that suggestions proposed by them with regard to school improvement were not always supported and appreciated by the SMT. It further became clear from data that teachers' contributions during staff meetings were not considered by the SMT and, as a result, teachers felt disregarded in school decision-making processes.

Thus participation in whole-school decision-making processes resided with the SMT in the case study school, that is, teacher leadership was restricted in Zone 3 of Grant's (2008) Model. These findings are in line with literature, which indicates that in restricted forms of teacher leadership, leadership at whole-school level is confined to the SMT members only (Muijs & Harris, 2007).

In line with my findings, Muijs and Harris (2007) report on a study comparing three case studies on teacher leadership. They found that a school where a restricted form of teacher leadership prevails is characterised by a "traditional top-down leadership style, top-down management structures" (Harris & Muijs, 2003, p. 442) whereby teachers await a nod of approval from the SMT. In similar thinking, Ntuzela (2008) in Grant *et al.*, (2010) asserts that, in such a school, a non-participatory culture inhibits teachers from taking the initiative as leaders in their school and this leads to teacher demotivation. Hence scholars concur on the significant role that school culture, context and management structures play in support of teacher leadership (Muijs & Harris, 2007; Grant *et al.*, 2010). Thus, the culture and context of the case study school did not promote the enactment of teacher leadership. My findings thus support research studies on teacher leadership, revealing that teacher leadership increases most where a culture of collegiality, shared decision-making and collaborative practices are established (Muijs & Harris, 2007).

Literature further indicates that a restricted form of teacher leadership is still evident in many of South African case studies (see for example, Grant *et al.*, 2010; Grant & Singh, 2009). In line with literature, Gumede (2010) reported on her research findings that teacher leadership was apparent across all four zones in her case study but was located mainly in the zone of the classroom. Sharing similar findings, Hlatshwayo (2010) further revealed that teacher leadership was found across all zones, in particular Zone 1 and 2 but limited in Zone 3 and 4 in his study. Thus literature reveals that, in most South African schools, teacher leadership is strongly evident in Zones 1 and 2 whilst restricted in Zone 3 and 4.

However, it must be noted that while my findings revealed that teacher leadership was enacted in Zone 1, 2 and 4 of Grant's (2008) Model of teacher leadership, teachers performed leadership roles without support from the SMT. In relation to research findings in the case study school, one can further conclude that the lack of support and trust of teachers by the SMT contributed significantly to the enactment of a restricted form of teacher leadership.

Since my findings revealed that a restricted form of teacher leadership prevailed in the case study school, it would be appropriate for the study to present the main barrier to the enactment of teacher leadership in the school.

#### **5.4 SMT AS THE MAIN BARRIER TO THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

In response to the second research question on the factors that enhanced or hindered teacher leadership within the case study school, my findings revealed that hindering factors to teacher leadership prevailed over the enhancing factors. From data, it became apparent that the traditional top-down approach to leadership and the attitude of the SMT were the main barriers that prevented the enactment of teacher leadership in the school. These findings are in line with Muijs and Harris (2003, p. 443) who claim that "top-down management structures in schools are pointed as major impediment to the development of teacher leadership, as they militate against teachers attaining autonomy and taking on leadership roles within the school". In similar thinking, scholars further argue that traditional top-down leadership style, top-down management structures and a non-participatory culture prevent teachers from taking initiatives as leaders in their school (Ntuzela, 2008 cited in Grant *et al.*, 2010; Muijs & Harris, 2003). As a result, teachers felt that they have been left out of the school's decision-making processes and their contributions were not valued because of their position. Hence teachers sometimes decided to withdraw and minimise their participation and rather remained focused on managing their classrooms. Thus, teacher leadership was limited because there was no collegiality and collaboration, implying that it was not an organisational phenomenon in the case study school. Therefore, the leadership style and attitude of the SMT became the main factors inhibiting teacher leadership enacted in the case study school. Nevertheless, there are strong examples of teachers trying to enact leadership and initiate change despite the lack of culture to support it.

Data further showed that power within those in leadership positions, the principal in particular, strongly influenced how things were done in the case study school. Holding on to power by the principal became another significant finding in my study. In addition, findings from the pilot study (Mancoko, 2012) revealed that the principal and SMT were obsessed with power. To support these findings, the principal commented during the interviews in the pilot study, “*Power is not umwangalala, it is not for free and is not for everybody, it needs to be managed*” (II) (Mancoko, 2012). These claims imply that the principal and SMT were not willing to share power and authority with teachers.

Based on my findings, the principal associated leadership with power, which Gronn (2002, p. 322), refers to as “the exercise of structural authority and influence”. Use of power by head teachers, as Hatcher (2005, p. 256) argues, is influenced by the fact that “the head occupies the dominant position in the power structure and therefore the privileged site of influence”. This means that leadership can only be translated into action when it is sanctioned by the authority of the head-teacher (Hatcher, 2005). In the same vein, literature reveals that principals hold on to power because sharing leadership is uncertain for head teachers and therefore, they “may not succeed in reinforcing commitment to management agendas and it is head teachers who are held accountable for meeting government targets” (Hatcher, 2005, p. 260). Therefore, my findings on identified barriers which hindered the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school, are in contrast with principles of distributed leadership, which “implies redistribution of power and re-alignment of authority within the organisation” (Harris, 2003, p. 77). Thus, the findings for this study suggest a need for the SMT to support teachers at all levels in order to encourage teacher leadership (Harris, 2007).

To support my findings of the SMT as the main barrier to teacher leadership, research on teacher leadership contrasting three case studies in the UK, reported that the main barrier to teacher leadership in a school that enacted a restricted form of teacher leadership was perceived to be the head of the school (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Furthermore, a survey study conducted in KwaZulu-Natal on the enactment of teacher leadership revealed that the SMT was perceived as an impediment to teacher leadership because “SMT members did not

distribute leadership but instead autocratically controlled the leadership practice” (Grant *et al.*, 2010, p. 415). My study also shared similar findings with most of the UKZN multi-case studies conducted in various educational institutions, which identified, among other factors, control of the SMT, hierarchical school structures and the autocratic leadership style of the principal as barriers towards teacher leadership (Gunkel, 2010; Lawrence, 2010; Jasson, 2010; Gumede, 2010). Therefore, the leadership style of those in management positions have an effect on how teacher leadership is enacted in schools.

Therefore, the research findings presented in my study are a result of factors such as school context and culture prevailing in the case study school, as well as the autocratic leadership style of the SMT. Hence a restricted form of teacher leadership within authorised distributed leadership was enacted in the case study school. Having presented the findings of the study, I now progress to present restricted teacher leadership within a distributed leadership framework in the subsequent section.

## **5.5 RESTRICTED TEACHER LEADERSHIP WITHIN AN AUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK**

To remind the reader, it became evident from my research findings that teacher leadership was enacted in Zones 1, 2 and 4 of Grant’s (2008) Model of teacher leadership in the case study school. However, it was restricted to the SMT only in Zone 3 of the model where there was minimal involvement of teachers in whole-school decision-making processes. Whilst my findings indicated that a restricted form of teacher leadership was enacted in the case study school, there were strong examples of teachers trying to enact leadership and initiate change despite the lack of culture which supports it. In such instances, participants reported that they needed to consult with the SMT before implementing any initiative for approval and for performing other leadership activities they needed to receive instructions from the SMT. Such an environment reflects a restricted form of teacher leadership within an authorised distributed framework.

These findings are in line with literature, as Gunter (2005 in Grant, 2008) describes, authorised distributed leadership is where work is distributed from the principal to others and is usually accepted because it is regarded as lawful within the hierarchical system of relations and because it gives an element of significance to the person who takes on the work. For example, in the case study school, the principal and SMT authorised teachers to serve either as committee heads, to study or to lead different initiatives in the school. Since the principal had authority over teachers, they were obliged to accept the delegation.

## **5.6 REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH JOURNEY**

To remind the reader, my study was a replication of a UKZN multi-case study on the enactment of teacher leadership. Furthermore, I was part of a group project of Rhodes University MEd students who worked together as co-researchers on the enactment of teacher leadership. Working with a group of students was beneficial to me as a novice researcher, as I became more committed to my study. Initially, I feared that I may not be able to complete my study with the group. However, the support I received from the group assisted me in reaching the final research stages. In addition, conducting a replication study and being part of the group project contributed towards my personal growth with regard to the application of research knowledge and skills as required for the study.

The focus of the study, the enactment of teacher leadership in schools, was developmental to me as an educationist. Using Grant's (2008) teacher leadership model to analyse the enactment of teacher leadership in the case study school revealed whether teacher leadership was enacted and promoted in the case study school. After I concluded my research, I became aware that promoting teacher leadership is still a challenge in the case study school. Through engagement with literature, I acquired a broader perspective on how leadership can be distributed and teacher leadership can be promoted in schools, which is the area that is still not evident in many of our Eastern Cape schools.

Nevertheless, I experienced times when I felt discouraged because of a lack of sufficient time to consistently adjust and improve on my postgraduate studies, due to the nature of operations

at my workplace. I also had a challenge with my research participants who were not always punctual with regard to the returning of their self-reflective journal entries and honouring of scheduled times for the interviews. However, I managed to complete all the research processes with the guidance and the support I received from my supervisors, as well as from our group of co-researchers.

If I were to conduct this research study again, I would consider changing the research site and participants. My conclusion is based on the observations I made during the interviews, whereby the research participants were quite resistant and reserved to speak out freely. My role as a former Principal of the case study school as well as my current role of being a departmental official responsible for monitoring schools may have influenced the manner in which participants responded to the interview questions. However, if I have to use the same participants for the study, I would ask an assistant researcher, someone who would be less threatening to the participant to conduct the interviews for me.

## **5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Whilst research studies revealed that the concept of teacher leadership is gaining increasing interest in international as well as in South African literature, research findings reported on varying factors that impede its enactment in practice. However, Moonsamy (2010, p.viii) asserts that “the practise of teacher leadership is not deeply rooted in the culture of many of the country’s schools”. Therefore, there is a need to offer rich and diverse professional development opportunities to teachers (Muijs & Harris, 2003), the SMT as well as principals if successful teacher leadership is to be developed in schools. Whilst there have been a lot of recent South African studies and publications on teacher leadership (see Grant 2008, 2009; Gumede, 2010; Hlatshwayo, 2010; Grant, 2010a; Grant, 2012), there are definite gaps in South African research and practice that needs an in-depth study.

I therefore suggest that an area for further research would be to assess to what extent the ACE school leadership programme and other leadership and management development programmes are relevant to the development of teacher leadership in schools. In addition, a study can be conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between the leadership style of a principal and SMT members who participated in the ACE school leadership programme and a form of teacher leadership enacted in a particular school. These research

areas are supported by De Villiers and Pretorius (2011) who recommend that school principals, school management teams and other leaders in schools should be included in a process of capacity building and professional development focusing on distributed and democratic leadership practices. It would be of great benefit for schools, if capacity building programmes for SMTs empower them with knowledge and skills that will promote the practice of shared leadership in schools, so that SMTs are able to promote shared, collaborative leadership and decision-making powers in schools.

My findings further reported on how the SMT, and the principal in particular, were reluctant to release their powers to post level one teachers. Therefore, another area for future research would be to conduct an in-depth study to determine whether there is a relationship between personal qualities of an individual principal and the leadership style provided, in promoting teacher leadership. I concur with Muijs and Harris (2003, p. 445) that teacher leadership must “reclaim school leadership from the individual to the collective” if transformation in education is to be achieved.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

It seemed from the research findings that teacher leadership was not particularly promoted in the case study school. It is evident that the school enacted restricted teacher leadership, whereby whole-school decision-making resided with those in authority, the SMT in this case. For the enhancement of teacher leadership, the SMT needs to change its attitude to teacher leadership as well as its traditional top-down leadership style.

In conclusion, if teacher leadership continues to be restricted, as in the case study school, its aim of bringing change and improvement (Grant *et al.*, 2010) in schools in particular, and transformation in the educational arena in general, will not be achieved. Teachers will remain reserved, withdrawing from contributing positively to their schools, leading to reduced levels of productivity and teacher commitment. Therefore, schools should be expected to promote a culture of shared vision and values, shared decision-making, trust, collaborative practice, clear line management structures and strong leadership development programmes (Muijs & Harris, 2007) if teacher leadership is to be encouraged and nurtured.

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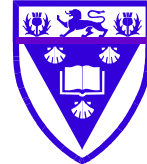
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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH STUDY



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

**Tel: +27 (0) 46 603 8384**

**Fax: +27 (0) 46 622 8028**

**PO Box 94, Grahamstown, 6140**

**E-mail: [c.grant@ru.ac.za](mailto:c.grant@ru.ac.za)**

14 March 2013

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

### **Request for permission to carry out a research study**

We have a group of 9 part-time Master of Education students in the field of Educational Leadership and Management at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa who are presently engaged in a research project which aims to explore the enactment of “teacher leadership” in schools in the Eastern Cape. In this regard we request that you allow the students access to their selected schools in order to carry out their research.

Please feel free to contact us at any time should you have any questions you would like answered. Our details are as follows:

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C Grant'.

Dr. Callie Grant

Tel: 046 6037508

Email: [c.grant@ru.ac.ca](mailto:c.grant@ru.ac.ca)

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'H van der Mescht'.

Prof. Hennie van der Mescht

Tel: 046 6038384

Email: [h.vandermescht@ru.ac.za](mailto:h.vandermescht@ru.ac.za)

## **APPENDIX 2: LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL**

100 Amatola Road  
King Williams Town  
Eastern Cape, South Africa  
14 March 2013

To: The Principal  
Kuyasa High School  
King William's Town District  
Eastern Cape  
South Africa

Dear Mr Vukuza

### **Request for permission to carry out a research study**

I am a part-time Masters of Education student in the field of Educational Leadership and Management at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. I am presently engaged in a research project which aims to explore the enactment of “teacher leadership” in schools in the Eastern Cape. In this regard I have, for the purpose of convenience, selected your school for my research study which I plan to do from April to end August 2013. I would like to work with you as the principal and 3 post level teachers in your school.

I also need to address the staff once to put them into picture and also give them some short questionnaires. As part of this research I also need to observe at least two staff meetings as well. I will also request to observe the teacher leaders in their classrooms and in any other areas that they may be exhibiting leadership. Further to that I will need them to keep a journal as part of data collection. I would also like to peruse any documents that you may have related to the enactment of teacher leadership.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of your teachers. I undertake to uphold the autonomy of all participants and they will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves. In this regard, participants will be asked to complete a consent form.

It is against this background that I am requesting your permission to conduct a research study at your school. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have any queries or

questions you would like answered. Attached please find a copy of the confirmation letter from my supervisors, Prof. Hennie van der Mescht and Dr. Callie Grant who can be contacted as follow: Hennie Tel: 046 6038384 email: [h.vandermescht@ru.ac.za](mailto:h.vandermescht@ru.ac.za) and Callie Tel: 046 6037508 email: [c.grant@ru.ac.za](mailto:c.grant@ru.ac.za)

Yours faithfully

.....

Mr. Mancoko. M.

### APPENDIX 3: LETTER TO TEACHERS

Enq: Mancoko.M  
Cell: 0825774918

100 Matola Road  
King William's Town  
South Africa  
14 March 2013

Dear Mr/Ms.....

#### **Invitation to take part in a research study on teacher leadership**

I am sending this invitation to you as a teacher who might be interested in participating in a research study. I am a part-time Masters of Education student in the field of Educational Leadership and Management at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. I am presently engaged in a research project which aims to explore the enactment of “teacher leadership” in schools in the Eastern Cape. In this regard I have, for the purpose of convenience, selected **Kuyasa High school** for my research study which I plan to do from April to August 2013. I would like to work with you to conduct a research to explore this enactment of “teacher leadership” and work closely with you to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this enactment.

I will request you to allow me to make some observations in your classroom and any other areas where teacher leadership is enacted. I would also need your kind cooperation in keeping a journal which you will be guided by me.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of your performance or competence. I undertake to uphold your autonomy and will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to yourself. In this regard, you will be asked to complete a consent form.

It is against this background that I am humbly inviting you to participate in the research study at your school. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have any queries or questions you would like answered.

Yours faithfully

.....

Mancoko.M. (Researcher)

**Declaration**

I ..... (full names of participant ) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of Teacher Leader

Date

.....

.....

## APPENDIX 4

### TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2013

#### SCHOOL OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

○ **Background information on the school**

- Name of the school
- Number of learners
- Number of teachers
- Number on SMT
- School Quintile
- Subjects offered
- What is the medium of instruction
- Pass rate 2010\_\_\_\_\_ 2011\_\_\_\_\_ 2012\_\_\_\_\_
- Classrooms: Block\_\_\_ Bricks\_\_\_ Prefab\_\_\_ Mud\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the school have the following:

○ <b>List</b>	○ <b>Yes (describe)</b>	○ <b>No</b>
○ Library	○	○
○ Laboratory	○	○
○ Sports facilities/sports kit	○	○
○ Soccer field	○	○
○ netball field	○	○
○ tennis court	○	○
○ cricket field	○	○

- School fenced Yes/No
- Does your school fund raise? Yes/No
- List your fundraising activities.....
- School attendance : Poor\_\_\_ Regular\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Good\_\_\_ Fair\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_
- What is the average drop-out rate per year?.....
- Possible reasons for the drop out:.....
- Does the school have an admission policy? Yes/No
- Is the vision and mission of the school displayed? Yes/No
- What is the furthest distance that learners travel to and from school?.....
- Have there been any evident changes in your community after 1994? Yes/No, if yes explain.

- **Staffing**
  - Staff room- notices (budget), seating arrangements.....
  - Classroom sizes (min).....(max).....
  - Pupil-teacher ratio.....
  - Offices- who occupies etc.....
  - Staff turnover- numbers on a given day.....
  - School timetable visibility: Yes/No
  - Assemblies- teachers' roles.....
  - Unionism-break-time, meetings.....
  - Numbers in staff male:female ratio.....
  - Years of service of principal at the school.....
  - Professional ethos

	Excellent	Good	Fair
Punctuality			
Discipline			
Attendance			
General behaviour			

## APPENDIX 5: TEACHER LEADERSHIP ENACTMENT 2013

### SCHOOL PROFILE

○ Name of the school-----

○ School type

Primary		Secondary		Combined	
---------	--	-----------	--	----------	--

○ Learner Enrolment

1-299		300-599		600+	
-------	--	---------	--	------	--

○ Number of teachers (including the SMT)

0-5		6-10		11-15		16-20		21+	
-----	--	------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-----	--

○ Number on the SMT

1		2		3		4		5		5+	
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	----	--

○ Years of service of the principal at the school: \_\_\_\_\_

○ Teacher / learner ratio: \_\_\_\_\_

○ School Quintile

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

○ What is the medium of instruction?

English	Xhosa	Afrikaans
---------	-------	-----------

○ Pass rate: 2010 \_\_\_\_\_ 2011 \_\_\_\_\_ 2012 \_\_\_\_\_

○ Classrooms:

Block	Bricks	Prefab	Mud	Other
-------	--------	--------	-----	-------

○ General Condition of facilities: -----

○ General cleanliness: -----

○ Is the school fenced? Yes/No

○ Does the school have the following:

List	Yes/No	Comment
Hall		
Offices; how many? For whom?		
Library		
Laboratory		
Sports facilities/sports kits		
Sports fields		
Staff room		
Feeding scheme		
Other		

○ Does the school fund raise? Yes /No

○ List the fundraising activities-----

-----

○ Learner attendance :

Poor		Satisfactory		Good		Excellent	
------	--	--------------	--	------	--	-----------	--

- What is the average learner drop-out rate per year? -----
  
- What are the possible reasons for the learners drop out? -----  
-----
  
- Does the school have an admission policy? Yes/No
  
- Is the vision and mission of the school displayed? Yes/No
  
- What is the average distance that learners travel to school? -----
  
- Have there been any evident changes in the school community since 1994? Yes/ No. If yes, explain. -----
  
- If there is a staffroom, what notices are displayed on the walls?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- Describe the seating arrangements in the staff room? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- How visible is the school timetable? \_\_\_\_\_

○ How often are assemblies held and who runs them? -----  
-----

○ What is the relationship between the school and the unions? -----  
-----  
-----

○ How professional are the teachers?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
punctuality				
discipline				
attendance				
general commitment				

## APPENDIX 6: TEACHER LEADERSHIP ENACTMENT 2013

### QUESTIONNAIRE

#### A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

##### 1. Gender

Male	Female	
------	--------	--

##### 2. Age

21-30	31-40	41-50	51+	
-------	-------	-------	-----	--

##### 3. Your formal qualification is:

Below M+3	M+3	M+4	M+5 and above	
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##### 4. Nature of employment

Permanent	Temporary	Contract	
-----------	-----------	----------	--

5. Employer

State		SGB	
-------	--	-----	--

6. Years of teaching experience

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	
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7. Period of service in current position

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	
--------	--	---------	--	----------	--	--------	--

## B. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

**Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of teacher leadership in your school.**

**Scale: 4= Strongly Agree 3=Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree**

**B. 1 to be completed by post level 1 teachers AND the SMT**

I believe:	4	3	2	1
1. Only the SMT should make decisions in the school.				
2. All teachers can take a leadership role in the school.				
3. That only people in positions of authority should lead.				
4. Teachers should be supported when taking on leadership roles				

**B. 2: To be completed by post level one teachers ONLY.**

	4	3	2	1
1. I take initiative without being delegated duties.				
2. I reflect critically on my own classroom teaching.				
3. I organise and lead reviews of the school year plan.				
4. I participate in in-school decision making.				
5. I give in-service training to colleagues.				
6. I provide curriculum development knowledge to colleagues in my school.				
7. I provide curriculum development knowledge to teachers in other schools				
8. I participate in the performance evaluation of teachers.				
9. I choose textbook and instructional materials for my grade/subject/learning				
10. I co-ordinate aspects of the extra-mural activities in my school.				
11. I co-ordinate aspects of the extra-mural activities beyond my school.				

12. I set standards for learner behaviour in my school.				
13. I design staff development programmes for my school.				
14. I co-ordinate cluster meetings for my subject / learning area.				
15. I keep up to date with developments in teaching practices and learning area				
16. I set the duty roster for my colleagues.				

### B.3: To be completed by the SMT ONLY

	4	3	2	1
1. I work with other teachers in organising and leading reviews of the school year plan				
2. I encourage teachers to participate in whole school decision making				
3. I support teachers in providing curriculum development knowledge to other teachers in my school				
4. I support teachers in providing curriculum development knowledge to teachers in other schools				
5. I provide teachers with opportunities to choose textbooks and learning materials for their grade, subject or learning area				
6. I work with other teachers in designing staff development programmes for the school				
7. I include other teachers in designing the duty roster				

**B.4: To be completed by post level 1 teachers ONLY**

<b>My school is a place where:</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
1. The SMT has trust in my ability to lead.				
2. Teachers resist leadership from other teachers.				
3. Teachers are allowed to try out new ideas.				
4 The SMT values teachers' opinions.				
5. The SMT allows teachers to participate in school level decision-making.				
6. Only the SMT takes important decisions.				
7. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school.				
8. Adequate opportunities are created for the staff to develop professionally.				
9. Team work is encouraged.				

**B.5: To be completed by the SMT ONLY**

My school is a place where:	4	3	2	1
1. The SMT has trust in educators' abilities to lead.				
2. Teachers are allowed to try out new ideas.				
3. The SMT values teachers' opinions.				
4. The SMT allows teachers to participate in school level decision-making.				
5. Only the SMT takes important decisions.				
6. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school.				
7. Adequate opportunities are created for the staff to develop professionally.				
8. Team work is encouraged.				

**Thank you for your time and efforts!**

## **APPENDIX 7: TEACHER LEADERSHIP ENACTMENT 2013**

### **FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW**

Spend the first part of the interview outlining the project and explaining our expectations of the teacher leaders. Also talk about the subjective role of the researcher in the process, as well as all the ethical issues. Make them feel as comfortable as possible and try to get them excited about the research!

1. Talk to me about leadership. What does the word ‘leadership’ mean to you? Who do you think is involved? (Principal/SMT etc) Why?
2. Have you ever come across the term “teacher leadership”? If yes – explain, If no, what do you think it is?
3. Is it happening in this school? How would one recognize it? What examples of teacher leadership can you think of?
4. When you think of yourself as a teacher leader, what emotions are conjured up? Why do you think you feel this way? What do you suspect is the cause of these emotions?
5. Imagine yourself as a teacher leader in a perfect school! What support would you have to enable you to lead (probe culture/ SMT/other teachers etc.)? Do you think any of this exists in your school?

Thank you!

## **APPENDIX 8**

### **TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2013**

#### **TEACHER LEADER INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW**

This interview will be loosely structured and based on the reading of the journals of the teacher leaders. Questions cannot therefore be planned at the outset of the project but will emerge as the research progresses. Questions may also differ from the one teacher leader to the other.

However, broadly speaking, we would like to ascertain during this interview, the following:

1. the personal attributes of these teacher leaders
2. the zones and roles that teacher leaders are engaged in
3. the conditions affecting teacher leadership, i.e. the enabling and constraining factors.

## APPENDIX 9

### TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2013

#### TEACHER LEADER JOURNAL ENTRIES

##### Journal Entry 1 ( 15 – 19 July 2013)

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself:

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- Years of experience as a teacher
- Qualifications
- Which subjects do you teach and which grades
- Do you enjoy teaching? Yes/No/Mostly/Occasionally. Why do you say so?
- Describe your family to me.
- Anything else you would like to share.

2. Tell me a little about your school:

- i. What is your experience of your learners and the surrounding community?
- ii. What is your experience of the teaching staff.
- iii. How would you describe the culture of your school; in other words, ‘the way things are done here’?

3. I have identified you as a teacher who has demonstrated leadership in the school.  
Think about yourself as a teacher leader:

1. What do you understand the term 'teacher leader' to mean?
2. Describe at least two examples of situations where you have been able to take the initiative/introduce a new initiative in your school.

### **Journal Entry 2 (22 -26 July 2013)**

Think about a memory (strongly positive or strongly negative) you have when, as a teacher, you led a new initiative in your classroom or school.

1. Tell the story by describing the situation and explaining the new initiative.
2. How did leading this initiative initially make you feel?
3. What was the response to your leadership (either good or bad)?
4. How did this response make you feel?

### **Journal Entry 3 (29 July – 02 August 2013)**

Can you tell a story/describe a situation in each of the following contexts when you work/have worked as a teacher leader:

1. In your classroom
2. Working with other teachers in curricular/extra-curricular activities
3. In school-wide issues
4. Networking across schools or working in the school community

### **Journal Entry 4 (05 -09 August 2013)**

1. Think about yourself as a teacher leader and the personal attributes you have that make you a teacher leader.

- i. List these personal attributes.

- ii. Why do you think these particular attributes are important in developing teacher leaders?
- iii. Are there any other attributes you think are important and which you would like to develop to make you an even better teacher leader?

2. Think about yourself as a teacher leader and the knowledge and skills you have that make you a teacher leader.

- i. List the skills and knowledge you have.
- ii. Why do you think this knowledge and these skills are important in developing teacher leaders?
- iii. Are there any other skills/knowledge you think are important and which you would like to develop to make you an even better teacher leader?

### **Journal Entry 5 (12 -16 August 2013)**

1. Go back to your third journal entry and read through your comments. Reflect on the examples of teacher leadership that you wrote about. With these experiences in mind:  
What factors enabled you to lead in these various contexts?
  - i. What factors hindered your leadership in these various contexts?
  - ii. How do you think teacher leadership can be promoted in your school?
  
2. You have come to the end of your journaling process. Please feel free now to:
  - i. Ask me any questions
  - ii. Raise further points
  - iii. Reflect on the writing process
  - iv. Reflect on the research process as a whole

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT!**