INVESTIGATING THE PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN MANAGING THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME: A CASE STUDY

by

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROF.A.G. KRUGER

JUNE 2010

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation entitled *INVESTIGATING THE PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN MANAGING THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME: A CASE STUDY*, is my own work, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed:…………………………….. Date:………………………

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following persons and institutions for their invaluable inspiration and contributions to this study:

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the memory of my late father, Jephta William Daniel du Plooy, and to my mother, Ann Susan Elizabeth du Plooy.

Also, to my loving wife, Gardencia Nydea du Plooy, and to my two sons, Lyle and Wesley du Plooy.

ABSTRACT

Public concern about the quality of teaching and learning is at an all time high in respect of certain schools in South Africa. This study focuses on the participation of the SMT members in managing the instructional programme with a view on improving the academic performance of learners. The lack of the involvement of all the members of the SMT thus prompted this investigation.

Apart from the literature review, an empirical investigation, based on a qualitative paradigm involving interviews, was undertaken to collect data at selected primary schools in Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape Education Department. Other methods used included observations as well as the analyses of documents relevant to the investigation.

As a case study this research examined the involvement of all the members of the SMT by utilizing the principles of participative management. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the improvement of the academic performance of schools by virtue of what has been highlighted as a reason for the poor performance of schools namely the lack of involvement of all the members of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme.

The literature findings revealed that School Management Teams (SMTs) have to be properly structured. The SMT should be involved in decision-making in matters that concern them. This, together with a more effective and efficiently managed instructional programme, should improve the academic performance of learners.

Empirical findings indicated that the members of the SMT consider themselves professionally trained individuals with the expertise needed to deliver what is expected from them. The study further revealed that the success of a school depends on effective instruction as a result of the effective management and leading of the instructional programme by all members of the SMT.

Key terms:

School management team, participative management, consultation, instructional programme, interaction, involvement of SMT members, the principal as member of the SMT, sub-committees, instructional leadership tasks, paradigm shift.

ABBREVIATIONS

EMDC: Educational Management Development Centres

IQMS: Integrated Quality Management System

SMT: School Management Team

H.O.D: Head of Department

NCS: National Curriculum Statement

SGB: School Governing Body

WCED: Western Cape Education Department

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

In South Africa there is now, more than ever before, an outcry for better academic achievements at some schools. This outcry should be seen against the background of the inequalities of the previous education system where there existed 17 different education departments. In the past schools operated in different contexts and cultures with a variety of different value systems. During the Apartheid era the school system was characterized by inequality: racially, regionally and in terms of gender (Department of Education 2000a:1). Schools were structured in such a way that control came from the top. If the school achieved good results, the principal was regarded as an excellent administrator (Department of Education 2000a:1).

Due to the revolt against Apartheid, effective teaching and learning came to a standstill in some schools. In many cases relations, and resources, were destroyed (Department of Education 2000a:1). The outcome of the Apartheid system and the resistance against inequality in education is still felt today, as is reflected in the examination results of certain schools. Although improvements have been brought about over the last fourteen years, the academic performance of some schools, who are suffering as a result of the poor qualifications and skills of teachers and administrators, is still unacceptable. Their achievement is not up to standard. This could be ascribed to, amongst others, the ineffective management of the instruction programme.

The prescriptions regarding the leading, management, and governing of schools are contained in the New Policy Framework. In the Employment of Educators Act (Act 76 of 1998:64) it is stated that the principal is ultimately responsible for the day-to-day professional and operational leadership and management of a school. He/she does not, however, carry the burden of managing the school alone. The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa 1996:11) makes provision for the governance of schools by the

School Governing Bodies (SGBs), which includes the professional duties of educators and the instruction of learners.

The principal is thus forced to make use of the services of others to assist him in managing the school. In this regard Bezzina (2000:305) states that "…leadership cannot remain the prerogative of one person. It has to become team based and collegial. Leaders of the future need to be trained to master the art of forming teams, to collaborate through teams rather than directing edicts. Shared leadership encourages a horizontal extension of power".

The process of transformation has not yet been completed in South Africa, and it is obvious that in some instances academic standards have dropped. This means that teaching and learning have not taken place as were envisaged. In fact, in many schools the learning environment has collapsed (Department of Education 2000a:1). This collapse could be ascribed to the fact that members of the school management teams (SMTs) are not effectively involved in the instructional programme of the schools in terms of providing instructional leadership.

A SMT comprises of the following senior educators, namely the principal, the deputy principal/s heads of department, and in some cases, two post level 1 educators. The reason for having post level 1 educators serving on the SMT is to ensure transparency, as well as to guarantee an "us" instead of a "they" perspective. The principal is an important member of the SMT.

As teaching and learning is the core function of the school, the SMT has, apart from its other responsibilities, to provide instructional leadership (Department of Education 2000a:1). The other responsibilities of the SMT include the following: decision-making, delegating and coordinating work, solving problems and monitoring activities (South African Schools Act, Republic of South Africa 1998:66).

In respect of the above this study focused on the following two aspects:

- the application of participative management to ensure the involvement of all members of the SMT in instructional leadership; and

- the involvement of school teams or committees in the management of the instructional programme.

From research it seems that the services of SMTs could be utilized more effectively in order to improve the academic results of a school. The fact that SMTs are currently being trained to take up their responsibilities, is testimony to the fact that the developmental needs of the schools are being addressed. One of these needs is the effective involvement of the SMT to ensure academic achievement.

 Previous research done on the roles of SMTs includes the following two dissertations:

- their role in promoting a culture of teaching and learning: "The role of the SMT in promoting a culture of teaching and learning in schools", by J. Naidoo; and
- their role in motivating staff members: "Doeltreffende onderwysbestuur en die motivering van die personeel, met besondere verwysing na die rol van die bestuurspan in 'n skool", by P. Matthee.

The effective involvement of the SMT in leading and managing the instructional programme of the school was researched in this study. This will include the improvement of the academic performance of schools by means of the effective involvement of the SMT in the management of the teaching and learning programme.

Should the skills and knowledge of the SMTs be applied more effectively at schools, the frustration of the lack of trust and so-called incompetence will be largely addressed. In terms of the 'incompetence' of SMTs, it is important to involve them in the management programme to add value to the school. SMT members sometimes feel that they could be entrusted with more responsibilities, and that they are under-utilized. If staff members can be involved in matters pertaining to curriculum delivery, chances are that they will be more willing to cooperate. Educators will not simply accept ownership, but they will indeed be empowered (Marks & Printy 2003b:374). Educators are professional employees, and want to be respected as such. They, too, have opinions on curriculum delivery, and should be given the opportunity to contribute. This may result in them doing more than what is expected of them. Conversely, if they are not taken seriously, the school could become a place of competition, and not of contribution. A simple mistake could be blown out of

proportion and used against a colleague, as opposed to acknowledging the shortcoming and proposing a solution to the problem. Deal and Petersen (1994) in Marks & Printy, 2003a:131) call this behaviour the 'leadership paradox'. Deal and Petersen (1994) in Marks and Printy (2003a:131) continue by saying "……. rather than canceling out or undermining the other, the contradicting leadership tensions support and complement one another". In this respect the principal plays a major role in ensuring that the educational outcomes of the school are met (Marcoulides, Larsen & Heck 1995:7).

If staff members can be involved by means of committees or teams, one could indeed be speaking of an integrated approach to addressing shortcomings (Lambert 2002:40). Educators should be motivated to teach; they need to be positive about the school, and have the necessary resources to produce acceptable results (Marcoulides, *et al* 1995:4). A SMT can therefore play a major role in ensuring a properly managed instructional programme, but only if they have been given the mandate to do so. The heads of departments should manage their phases with confidence, provided their leadership and guidance are in line with the goals of the school. The principal is important in this respect, as he or she will not be the sole leader, but will indeed be leading other instructional leaders, as educators are experts in their fields of expertise (Marks & Printy 2003b:371). Principals also need to adapt their management style to one that is more inclusive.

The focus thus was on instructional leadership, with special reference to the SMTs and their involvement in the management of relevant aspects of the instructional programme.

It is important for the principal to involve his or her staff members, as opposed to alienating them, to achieve the goals of the school. If the principal is able to utilize the expertise of his or her SMT members, they would be more than willing to influence the rest of the staff. Then it would be easier to convince them that their input is of value to the school. The principal and SMT should agree as to what they perceive as quality education. At some schools, judging from the results, this does not seem to be the case.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the improvement of the involvement of SMTs in schools to deliver quality teaching and learning, despite all the other limitations, such as the lack of resources.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The success or failure of a school is measured against its academic achievement. It is the primary responsibility of the principal, and thus the task of the school, to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place. Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:249) support this point of view by saying that "….the primary task of the school is to offer instruction". The successful outcome of the process of instruction at a school does not happen automatically. It needs to be managed. This refers to the task of principals and the SMT to provide leadership by means of the effective management of the instructional programme of the school. The SMT is responsible for the management of the curriculum, and will function effectively with the help of the school committees, such as the learning area committees. The principal should optimally make use of the rest of the SMT to ensure good academic results.

The key factor is *leadership,* and more specifically the role of the SMT in leading and managing the instructional programme of the school. The question that can now be asked is, "How can principals involve other members of the SMT more effectively in the management of the instructional programme of the school?" Dean (1995:1) is of the opinion that "…there is now a good deal of evidence to confirm the view that in any school the leadership determines the quality of what happens".

Successful academic achievement in a school rests with the principal, supported by his or her SMT. In the context of a school, quality is measured against results, results such as in respect of the organisation and coordination of the various school tasks (Marcoulides, *et al* 1995:4). Whilst a number of role-players affect quality at a school, cognizance should be taken of the role of the principal as the primary instructional leader. Other role-players include the School Governing Body (SGB), the staff, the learners, and the school district, which includes the Educational Management and Development Centres (EMDCs). The ethos of the school needs to be in line with the expectations of all of these role-players.

The principal is indeed a necessary 'pillar' to ensure that the school meets its outcomes. For the school to improve its academic standards, the principal needs to be supported, and it is here where the rest of the SMT can play a very important role.

The involvement of all members of the SMT in the instructional programme by applying the principles of participative management in the school, was researched in this study.

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(1)   School Management Teams (SMTs)

SMTs have been in existence for almost 25 years (Cranston & Ehrich 2005:80). Over the years much research has been done on the changing roles of principals and the management of schools. There have been indications of SMTs being created as a sub-group to take on certain responsibilities, instead of the principal taking all the responsibility alone (Mortimore & Mortimore 1991, Alexander 1992, Bolam, McMahon, Pocklinton & Weindling 1993, and Vulliamy & Webb 1996). Reference has been made to devolution and school-based management development (Cranston 2002, and Gronn 2003 in Cranston & Ehrich 2005:80). Not much research has, however, been done on the working practices of the SMTs of schools (Cranston & Ehrich 2005:80).

In South Africa only in 1996 reference was made to SMTs. Only since then have school managers of large primary schools been embracing the notion of a team as a basis of their approach to management, in contrast to the individualistic practices of the past (Huckman & Wallace 1996:310). The South African Schools Act, (Act 84 of 1996) does not specifically mention that each school should have a SMT. It assumes that the principal will be assisted by senior members of staff (Department of Education 2000a:i). As mentioned before, the principal is the person ultimately responsible and accountable for the academic performance at his or her school. It is, however, impossible for him or her to fulfil the task on his or her own. To ensure excellent results the principal will have to involve the rest of the SMT.

(2) Instructional leadership

'Instructional leadership' is not a new concept, and much research has been done on this topic (Quinn 2002:447). According to Hallinger (2003:342), instructional leadership was first mentioned in the 1980s when research was done on effective schools, which were a reflection of the leadership capabilities of the principal.

'Instructional leadership' has different meanings for different authors, but all are in agreement that the manner in which the principal manages his or her school has an effect on teaching and learning (Kruger 2003:205). Hallinger (2000) in Hallinger 2003:332), for instance, briefly defines 'instructional leadership' as "…defining the schools' mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate".

In general, instructional leadership can be carried out within the following two domains (Fidler 1997:33; Firestone & Wilson 1985:19; Blase & Blase 1999:353; Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee 1982:40 in Kruger 2003:211), namely

- bureaucratic and structural aspects, which directly influence teaching and instruction, also regarded as the formal tasks, *e.g* coordinating the curriculum and framing the school goals; and
- informal aspects, which have an indirect influence on teaching and learning, for example, the establishment of a favourable and supportive climate for teaching and learning by means of shared decision-making and collaboration.

The responsibilities of principals in South Africa have compounded since the democratization of the country in 1994. This democratization has filtered through to education, as well as towards site-based management, where it is envisaged that schools would accept greater responsibility for the management of the school. Despite the complexity of the task of the principal, it is still expected from him or her to ensure effective teaching and learning (American Association of School Administrators 1992:21). Kruger in (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003:245) also confirms that apart from the management tasks of the principal, his or her core function is to ensure effective teaching and learning. Given the enormity of instructional leadership it is impossible for the principal to do it on his or her own. Lambert (2002:37) states that "…the days of the principal as the one instructional leader are over". Marks and Printy (2003b:371) refer to this replacement of the hierarchical and procedural situation as 'shared instructional leadership'.

This study has approached instructional leadership from a 'shared' perspective, with special reference to the management of the instructional programme (Hallinger 2000, in Hallinger 2003:332). According to Marks and Printy (2003b:371), shared instructional leadership involves the active collaboration of the principal and teachers in respect of the

curriculum, instruction and assessment. In view of the above, the SMT should endeavour to work as a unit to improve the academic results of the school. To actively involve the heads of department and the deputy principal, the principal will have to empower them with more responsibilities, such as taking charge of the various school phases. The HOD of the foundation phase should, for example, be given the mandate to manage his or her department without having to look over his or her shoulders. Regular feed-back to the principal should, however, take place as he or she is ultimately responsible for the management of the instructional programme. In this way the principal will boost the morale of the SMT, which will in turn, rub off on the rest of the staff. By adopting this approach the principal will acknowledge the professionalism of the SMT and of his staff. These aspects refer to the management of the instructional programme, and it is thus here where the principal has to demonstrate his trust in his fellow SMT members, in order to work as an effective team.

From the above it is evident that it is impossible for the principal not to involve his or her fellow SMT members in managing the instructional programme of the school. The SMT will indeed have to assist in the management of the instructional programme to ensure excellent academic performance.

(3) Participative management

Koopman and Wierdsma 1998 in Somech and Wenderow (2006:746) define 'participative leadership' as "…..joint decision-making, or at least shared influence in decision-making by a superior and his or her employees". Marks and Printy (2003b:379) comment that shared instructional leadership satisfies the need of educators to have a say in matters which affect them. Lambert (2002:40) explains 'participative management' as"….. most powerful when combined into a thoughtful and integrated school improvement process". Van Deventer in Van Deventer & Kruger (2003:100) remarks that participative decision-making has the following advantages:

- it reduces the possibility of conflict;
- it results in the more effective functioning of the school and of education;
- more expertise and knowledge are made available; and
- a greater number of stakeholders become involved in decision-making.

Participative management is therefore not a new concept, yet one finds that some principals operate autocratically and do not allow their staff any input. It is essential to have the input of all the members of the SMT concerning the management of the instructional program. The principal as instructional leader should involve the oher members of the SMT by allocating certain responsibilities to them. The programme should not be managed by the principal alone, as the SMT shares the management functions with the principal (Department of Education 2000a:24).

Having motivated the problem of this research, the problem statement will next be presented.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Over the years some schools have adopted an autocratic approach to management and leadership. This autocratic approach is now, however, outdated and should not be practiced, although it may be applied in some instances. Everard and Morris (1990:53) confirm this point of view where they assert that "…the appropriate style will depend on the people and circumstances". With the new dispensation the role of the principal has changed dramatically, especially with the delegation of power to SMTs. It is now not so easy for a principal to take decisions about the school without consultation with the SMT. This new development poses a challenge to principals as they have to be very careful in their conduct. The challenge referred to above, concerns not involving the rest of the SMT in managing the instructional programme of the school. If the SMTs are ineffectively utilized in the management of the instructional programme, it may give rise to other problems such as a lack of trust and of cohesion, and poor teamwork.

The issue of leadership to ensure quality schools is important to the National Education Department, to the point that a 'Directorate Quality Assurance' has been established. The problem presents itself in the poor academic performance of some schools due to the possible lack of involvement the other members of SMTs in managing the instructional programme of the school.

In view of the above the following research problem can be stated:

How can the application of the principles of participative management ensure the effective involvement of all members of the SMT (including the principal) in managing the instructional programme of the school?

Based on this research problem, the following research questions may be formulated:

1. To what extent are the members of the SMT involved in the management of the instructional programme?
2. How can the practice of participative management ensure that the members of the SMT are involved in instructional leadership?
3. To what extent can members of the different sub-committees of the school, *i.e.* the foundation phase, the intermediate and senior phases, and learning area committees, be involved in instructional leadership?
4. How should the principal go about mobilizing his or her school management team to improve the academic results of the school?

1.4   AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

In terms of the research questions formulated above, the aims of the study are

1. to determine the extent of the involvement of the members of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme;
2. to determine how the practice of participative management can contribute to the involvement of the members of the SMT in instructional leadership;
3. to determine to what extent members of the different sub-committees in the school can be involved in instructional leadership; and
4. to make recommendations to enable the principal to mobilize his or her SMT to improve the academic results of the school.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 The nature of the study

The methodology applied in this study was the following:

(1) Research of the literature on the involvement of SMTs in the instructional programme of the school. This literature included books, articles, departmental guides, and legislation on the role of the SMTs in primary schools, and on instructional leadership, teamwork, and participative management.

(2) An empirical study, based on a qualitative approach, with the purpose of indicating how the principles of participative management can be applied to involve all the members of the SMT in the management of a school's instructional programme.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:391) state that "…qualitative research is naturalistic enquiry, the use of non-interfering data collection strategies to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them. Most qualitative research describes and analyzes people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions".

Against this background the researcher attempted to understand SMT members and principals in terms of their own definition of their respective responsibilities (Mouton 2001:194).

As this study was based on a qualitative approach, its other distinguishing characteristic is its ethnographic nature. According to McNeill (1990:64), 'ethnography' means "writing about a way of life". McNeill (1990:64) continues to say that "…at its simplest ethnography involves the researcher in describing the way of life of a group of people". With this in mind, interviews will be conducted with SMTs to identify how they perceive themselves as leaders.

1.5.2 Sampling

The research for this study has been conducted at three primary schools. As the purpose of the study was is to establish the involvement of SMTs in the instructional programme of the school, all the members of the SMTs of the three schools were used in the sample. By doing this, the information found ought to be more reliable, as the informants are knowledgeable and informative about what the researcher is investigating (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:397).

The schools that participated in this research are those where the SMTs are involved in the instructional programme, as well as being schools with excellent results. The motivation is to identify the reasons why they are successful in especially the management of the instructional programme. Information regarding the identification of the three schools was obtained by means of informal discussions with colleagues, or with the Institutional, Management and Governance Manager (IMG Manager). Aspects that may be of help are the track record of the school, its academic results, and the activities taking place at the school (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:433). McMillan and Schumacher (1997:433) refer to this approach as "site selection". The identification of the schools was done with the assistance of the staff of Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape in Bellville, as they would know which SMTs are performing well.The schools will be contacted to make arrangements for the intended visits (Kruger 2003:208).

The above method was indicative of purposeful selection. The SMTs were specifically selected, based on the perception that they may be functioning as a team. By working with the entire SMT, useful information was obtained for this particular research (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:434).

1.5.3 Data collection

This study focused on a case study approach. According to Borg, Gall and Gall (2007:446), a 'case study' can be defined as "…the in-depth study of one or more instances of a phenomenon in its real-life contexts that reflects the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon". With a case study approach a multiple of data collection methods may be utelized, such as interviews producing narrative data,

participant observation, ethnographic fieldwork, and the study of relevant documents (McMillan and Schumacher 1997:570).

1.5.3.1 Interviews

In this study three focus group interviews were conducted with members of the SMTs of the three schools, to ascertain how they experience their involvement in the instructional programme of the school. The principals were included in the interviews as they formed part of the SMT. This approach also highlighted the influence the principal had on the rest of the SMT, as well as his or her management style. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:435) refer to this approach as speaking to "…persons who would have knowledge of the topic".   Open-ended questions were asked, so as to enable the researcher to ask follow-up questions if necessary. In the open-ended interview "…reformulated questions are carefully arranged and put to all interviewees in a similar sequence; this reduces interviewer effects and biases" (McMillan and Schumacher 1997:447).   This kind of interview is also called the 'standardized open-ended interview' (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:447). According to Rubin and Rubin (1995:31), the interview emphasizes the relativism of culture, the active participation of the interviewer, and the importance of giving the interviewee voice.

1.5.3.2 Observation

Observation forms a very important part of qualitative research. It provides insight into the context in which the research is done. The researcher has been able to observe things that the participants were unaware of, *e.g.* facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. By observing the participants in their natural surroundings the energy in terms of power play can also be recognized.

In this research it was necessary to observe at least one SMT meeting at each of the three schools, as there were different aspects observed with regard to the instructional leadership task.

1.5.3.3 Field notes

Because it was impossible for the researcher to remember everything during the observation process, field notes have been taken during observation and after each interview. Each school had a different way of managing its programme. The field notes were dated and the context identified for reference purposes at a later stage (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:444).

1.5.3.4 Relevant documents

Documents that have been relevant to the study were the following:

- the minutes of SMT meetings;
- the school's mission statement;
- the school's instructional policy;
- assessment strategies; and
- the minutes of learning area meetings.

The minutes also gave an idea of how decisions were made, for instance, does the principal give instructions, or does he or she ask for the input of members of the SMT?

In terms of matters relating to instructional leadership, the focus has been on the involvement of the SMT in managing the instructional programme. By studying the documentation the researcher gained an understanding of how the SMT functioned.

1.5.4 Data analysis

According to Airasian, Gay and Mills (2006:468), qualitative research is based on induction. The researcher starts with a large set of issues and data, and progressively narrows it down into small and important groups of information.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 501) mention that qualitative data analysis is essentially an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories.

In this study coding was used to analyze data. Airasian et al (2006:470) indicate that coding is a process of categorically marking or referencing units into a manageable form.

Borg et al (2007: 315) concur with Airasian et al (2006:471) that data analysis in qualitative research involves a systematic set of procedures to code and classify qualitative data to ensure that important constructs, themes and patterns emerge.

Various authors agree that the problem virtually all qualitative researchers face is the lack of agreed-upon approaches for analyzing data (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:502, Borg et al 2005:306, Airasian et al 2006:469). This does not suggest that the research is by any means disorganized.

Airasian et al (2006:469) suggest the following three steps:

- reading;
- describing what is going on in the setting; and
- classifying the research data.

The approach suggested by Airasian et al (2006:471) correlates with Tesch's method, as described in Borg et al (2007:469), which is described in detail in section 3.3.3.6.

In this study the researcher has analyzed, compared, and identified patterns to interpret and provide explanations of the phenomena being researched (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:502).

Airasian et al (2006:467) assert that qualitative analysis takes the form of a narrative, of a description, and is non-numerical in nature.

The researcher did, in this study, try to make sense of the multiple data resources, which included field notes from observations and interviews, transcriptions of interviews, as well as of documents. This enabled him to determine when the data had become saturated, that is, when repetitive themes occur (refer to section 3.3.1 for the research appproach).

The research findings were presented in a narrative form, in the words of the participants, to illustrate particular interpretations (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:501).

1.5.5 Ethical considerations

Schools are generally very sensitive about their functioning and may be hesitant to co-operate. As any information may be sensitive to informants, they ought to be assured of confidentiality. In this study this precautionary measure was taken by obtaining the informed consent of all participants. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:194), "…educational researchers need to be very sensitive to ethical principles because of the nature of the research topic, the fact that they collect data on a face-to-face, interactive basis because of the emergent nature of the research design and, finally, because of the participants' reciprocity".

1.5.6 Administrative matters

The consent of the Department of Education and of the principals of the schools had to be obtained to enter the schools to do the research. In order not to disrupt the academic programme, the interviews were conducted after school hours and by appointment. The schools have been provided with a summary of the research done at their particular school.

1.6. DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPTS

1.6.1 School management team

The school management team includes the principal, deputy principal/s, HODs, as well as in some cases, two post level 1 educators. The SMTs are instructional leaders, thus they are responsible for translating the curriculum into practice (Department of Education 2000b:29).

1.6.2   The instructional programme

The instructional programme includes both the curricular and extra-curricular activities of the school, and is regarded as the 'broad curriculum' of the school. The function of the broad curriculum is to structure the different learning areas and activities in the school to ensure educative teaching (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003:249).

'Instructional organisation' refers to the manner in which opportunities for teaching and learning are created, including the grouping of learners, curriculum tracking, as well as aspects of the formal curriculum (Hallinger, Bickmann & Davis 1996:535). Because of its magnitude the instructional programme needs to be carefully managed to ensure educative teaching.

1.6.3   Participative management

'Participative management' indicates the act of utilizing the expertise, skills and opinions of educators to the advantage of the school, and in doing so, giving them a sense ofbelonging. According to Van der Westhuizen (1997:155) and Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:100), participative decision-making satisfies the need of educators to have a say in matters which affect them.

1.7   DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

The study confined itself to Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape. The respondents were the SMTs of three primary schools in Bellville City and surrounding areas.

1.8   CHAPTER DIVISION

This dissertation will comprise of five chapters.

Chapter one

This chapter introduces the study and provides the motivation for the research as well as a description of the problem statement. It also indicates the background to the study, and a definition of the concepts.

Chapter two

Chapter two consists of a literature review to construct a conceptual framework on instructional leadership, with special reference to the school management team and participative management, in order to provide insight into the practice at some schools. It provides the theoretical background to the study.

Chapter three

This chapter deals with the research methodology used in investigating the involvement of the principal in the SMT by means of participative management. This chapter further provides an explanation of the data collection methods which were used.

Chapter four

Chapter four provides the research findings derived from the research questions, and a discussion of these findings.

Chapter five

In chapter five a summary, conclusions and recommendations are discussed.

1.9 SUMMARY

In this chapter an introduction and the background to the problem were given. The researcher clarified the concepts relevant to this study.

The following chapter focuses on the theoretical framework for the research, where a literature review was done on the concepts 'school management team', 'participative management' and 'instructional leadership'. These aspects are discussed, and the involvement of members of the SMTs in instructional leadership is highlighted.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 1 an introduction to the study was provided, and aspects such as a background to the study, the problem statement, and the aims of the study were dealt with.

This chapter focusses on the theoretical framework for the research, which includes an exploration of the concepts 'school management team' (SMT), 'participative management' and 'instructional leadership'. The discussion of these aspects will focus on the manner that the participation of members of the school management teams in the instructional programme contribute to improving the teaching and learning activities.

2.1.1 The lack of the participation of all the members of the SMT in leading and managing the instructional programme of the school

The Department of Education (2000a:1) indicates that an environment of teaching and learning has collapsed in some schools. The principal, as head of the school management team, has as his or her main responsibility the effective management of the instructional programme to ensure excellent school performance. In many schools the academic standards have dropped, which means that teaching and learning do not happen effectively. It may be argued that this collapse can be ascribed to the fact that members of the school management teams at schools are not effectively involved in the instructional programme in terms of providing instructional leadership (Department of Education 2000b:1). Some schools are still in the habit of discussing the curriculum at the beginning of the year, where it is decided who should teach which learning areas, and then again at the end of the year when the results of the learners are discussed (Department of Education 2000b:1). Although the system of Apartheid was rejected, some schools became indicative of the struggle against Apartheid. The culture of teaching and learning

was destroyed (Department of Education 2000a:1), with no instructional leadership forthcoming.   Instead, principals and heads of departments regarded it their duty to 'control' educators and learners, because they were controlled by the education authorities (Department of Education 2000a:1). The resistance which existed during the eighties undermined the management and leadership of the school (Department of Education 2000a:1). The current education system in South Africa emphasizes quality education, and school leaders are assessed on their school's academic performance (Department of Education 2000a:1). The new education dispensation, however, makes it very difficult for principals to manage the instructional programme on their own as a result of the increasingly greater responsibilities they have to attend to (Kruger 2003:206).   These responsibilities, according to Kruger (2003:206), include the following: labour relations matters, financial management and empowering governng bodies.

Previously, under the former education system in South Africa, principals had limited authority over finances, staffing, and curriculum matters, which have now become the principals' responsibilities, leaving them limited time to manage the instructional programme (Fleisch & Christie 2004:95-111). In order to address this problem, the principals have to rely on the input of the members of the school management team. Involving them in the management of the instructional programme would lead to a more participative form of management which would not only improve their morale, but also their productivity. In this regard, Conzemius and O'Neill (2001:67) state that "…people in a collaborative environment feel appreciated, valued and respected". The HODs ought to be given greater responsibility to manage their departments, and should, for example, be trusted to manage their particular portfolios within the framework of the decisions taken at SMT level. With this in mind, it is purported that the first responsibility of the principal is to bring about a workteam to ensure performance, and to require that members work together interdependently to achieve an identifiable collective outcome (Hackman 2002:43-44).   With regard to the enormous changes taking place in education, some schools reckon that it would make sense to involve the SMT more effectively, as it would help the principal to get the work done (Hackman 2002:133).

2.1.2 Towards shared instructional leadership

With reference to the literature, efficient leadership results in effective schools. Carter and McDonald (2002:3) argue that "…successful leadership is invariably linked to school effectiveness". As schools are constantly under pressure to improve their academic performance, they need to revisit their methods of instructional management, and indeed, how their schools are managed. Marks and Printy (2003a:125) assert that shared forms of educational leadership could impact on the way learners learn at school. The instructional role of school leadership being debated in the literature, brought the concept of *shared leadership* to the fore (Marks & Printy 2003a:125). Shared instructional leadership acknowledges that the contribution of both the educator and the principal impacts on teaching and learning at school (Marks & Printy 2003a:125). The active involvement of the school management team will subsequently lead to leadership that is distributive and interdependent (Marks & Printy 2003a:125). This approach to leadership would contribute to the greater involvement of members of the school management team as well as the rest of the staff, where they will be able to participate as members of sub-committees at various levels. Despite the fact that the members of the school management team have other duties to fulfill as well, teaching and learning remains the core business of schooling. Members of the SMT should be granted the time to pay primary attention to the management of the instructional programme.

As indicated before, this study will approach instructional leadership from the perspective of 'shared' leadership, with special reference to the management of the instructional programme, as indicated by Hallinger (2000) in Hallinger (2003:332). The importance of this study is related to the improvement of the academic performance at school by means of the effective involvement of the school management team in the management of the teaching and learning programme. Essentially, the members of the school management team are instructional leaders, which mean they are responsible for translating the curriculum into practice (Department of Education 2000b:2). Lambert (2002:37) asserts that instructional leadership should be a shared community undertaking, and that leadership is the professional work of everyone in the school.

2.2 THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM (SMT)

2.2.1 The introduction of School Management Teams: An overview

Historically, principals were regarded as the ones managing schools on their own (Huckman & Wallace 1996:309). They were considered to be "autocrats", "leading professionals" or "chief executives", but also "team leaders" (Hall & Wallace1996:297). Earlier research confirms the notion that principals managed largely on their own (Coulson & Cox 1975 in Huckman & Wallace 1996:309). Coulson and Cox (1975) in Huckman & Wallace 1996:309) assert that not even the deputy principal was given a chance to contribute to the management of the school. It can thus be deduced that the principals managed the schools on their own, despite the presence of a deputy principal and heads of department. It seems, therefore, that the role of school management teams, in terms of the management of the school, was either ignored or non-existent. The fact that the school management teams were ignored implies that they may have existed in name only (Huckman & Wallace 1996:4). Principals used to manage schools mainly on their own, and this confirms the autocratic management style, which had its advantages, but even more so, its disadvantages. A huge disadvantage in terms of the management of the instructional programme was that members of the school management team stagnated, and basically copied the style of their predecessors when they became principals.

According to Huckman and Wallace (1996:309), principals of large primary schools have increasingly turned to some form of school management teams to assist them in the management of their schools. School management teams were effectively functioning at some schools, but they were not officially constituted as such. Cranston and Ehrich (2005:80) confirm that these teams were in existence for more than 25 years. Not much research has, however, been conducted into their nature and role. The notion of school management teams has evolved over time, at least in larger primary schools where there has been a significant shift in the management style of school principals specifically in the United States of America (Huckman & Wallace 1996:309). Over the years there has been an increase in research with regard to the changing role of the principal and the subsequent management of schools. There have been indications of teams of senior staff members being created to become more involved in the management of the school (Mortimore & Mortimore 1991, Alexander 1992, Bolam et al 1993, Vulliamy & Webb 1996). Recent research on school management focuses, *inter alia,* on aspects such as the

devolution of power and school-based management developments (Cranston 2002, and Gronn 2003 in Cranston & Ehrich 2005:80).

Huckman and Wallace (1996:314) assert that members of the school management team are perceived to be ambassadors of principals, being regarded as their eyes and ears, keeping them informed about happenings in the school. This particular role of members of the SMT is often regarded as spying, which inevitably leads to mistrust. The challenge facing the SMT is to restore trust. One way of achieving this, is to involve the staff members in decision-making, as well as empowering them with shared responsibility. Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith and Kleiner (1999:72) confirm this notion by saying that in the new work relationship authority is shared.

In South Africa the concept of school management teams was officially introduced in 1998, when reference was made to them in the Employment of Educators Act (Act 76 of 1998) (Republic of South Africa 1998: 64-66). In the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996:11) (Republic of South Africa 1996: 11) it is suggested that school management be shared with others, *i.e.* educators and the School Governing Body. For the first time senior managers in large primary schools embraced the notion of working together in a team as a basis of their approach to management, in contrast to the individualistic practices of the past (Huckman & Wallace 1996:310). The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) does not specifically say that each school must have a school management team, as mentioned previously (on page 6). It assumes, however, that the principal will be assisted by senior members of staff (Department of Education 2000a: i).

2.2.2 The structure of the SMT

The SMT forms part of the management structure of a school and is also related to roles, responsibilities, areas of work, in short, indicating who does what, when and how (Smith 2002:6). The SMT consists of senior educators (the heads of department, deputy principal and principal), with different roles and responsibilities. The structure of the SMT, however, depends on the size of the school. In larger schools the SMT would consist of the heads of the departments, the deputy principal and the principal, whereas in smaller schools it would comprise of the principal and senior educators. In this regard, Huckman and Wallace (1996:5) assert that school size is likely to be a decisive factor in terms of the

development of SMTs. The rationale behind this is that for a staff of 10 or more it becomes less feasible to be equally involved in decision-making, and that some form of representation may be created (Huckman & Wallace 1996:5). Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:89) postulate that there are three key elements of importance considering the organisational structure of a school, namely decision-making structures, accountability, and the flow of information between organisational structures at school. These structures will determine how people will relate to one another, thus making the relationship a dynamic one (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:90). By adhering to a democratic structure, open participation is possible, and it is within this structure that the school can assure academic performance, provided that the SMT members have good working relationships. Cohen in Cranston & Ehrich (2005: 79) argues that "…flexible organisations place decision-making authority in the hands of those close to the sources of information and those who have the expertise to interpret and act on it". It is, however, not always possible to take decisions in a collaborative fashion, as different situations will dictate which actions will be taken. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:93) support this notion by saying that "…although maximum participation is an ideal in decision-making, there are different degrees of decision-making".

The structure of a school, which could either be autocratic or democratic, can best be reflected in an organogram (see figure 2. 1) (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:901). The figure is that of a school indicating how the structures and the people in schools can work together and that the same principles such as co-operation and participation should also be applicable in the structure of the SMT. It is important for a school to reflect the democratic nature of society, and as such the school should form a micro-cosmos of society as a whole. This conviction is also reflected in the White Paper (Republic of South Africa 1995:18), where it is stated that the principle of democracy should increasingly be reflected in every level of the education system. It further requires a commitment from education authorities at all levels, which includes the principal, to share information with stakeholder groups and to treat them genuinely as partners (Republic of South Africa 1995:18). The reality is that the principles of democracy, as stipulated in the White Paper (Republic of South Africa 1995), are not realised in some schools. What education in South Africa needs is to adopt a post-modern approach to reverse the contradictions that exist in schools, and to make decisions appropriate for the situation at hand (Skinner 2008:2). A post-modern approach is an open theoretical framework, understanding that

there is more than one answer to a question (Skinner 2008:2). It is ironic that currently modernistic approaches are still being applied in some schools. A modernist is concerned about being 'right', despite what the context of the school may be (Skinner 2008:2). Many members of SMTs do not see eye to eye with their principals because of this rigid approach.
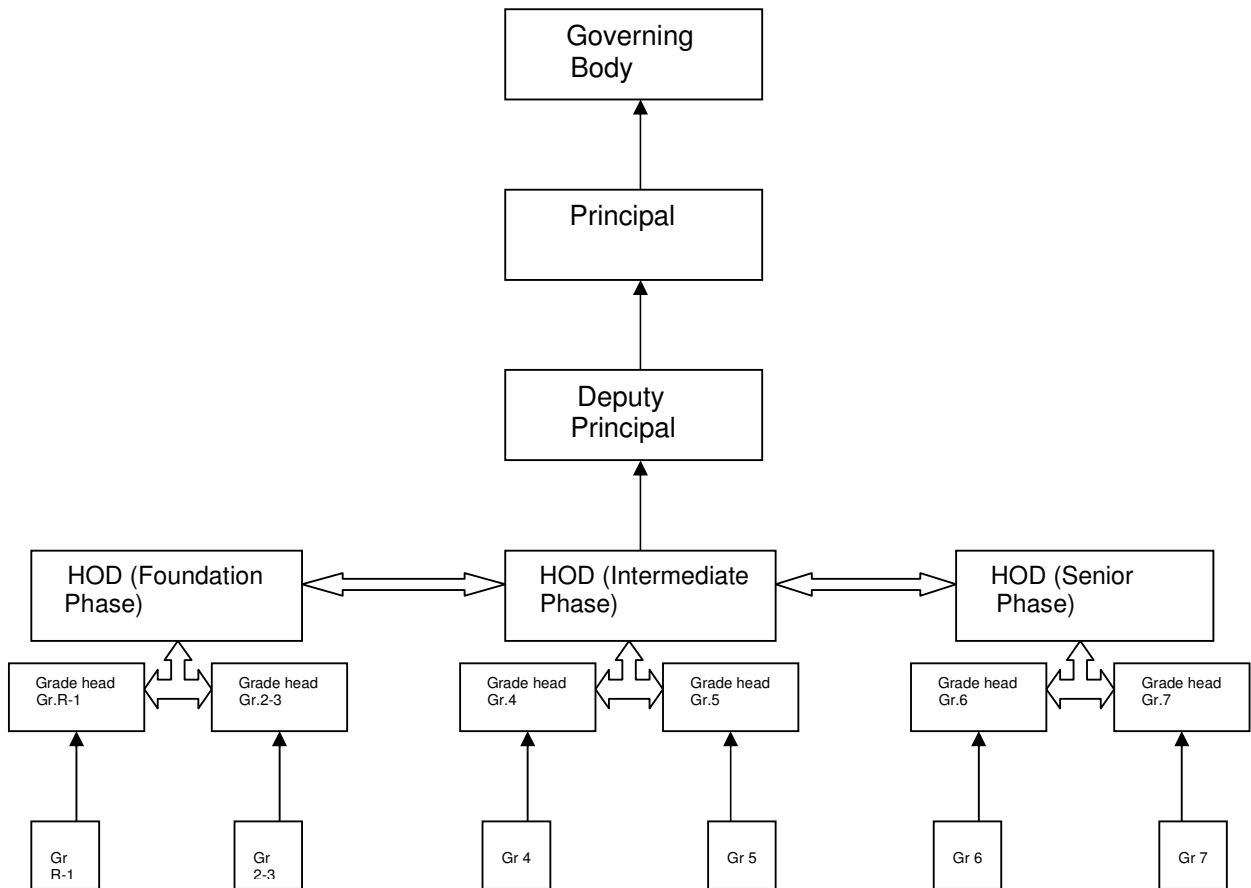
Figure 2.1: Collegial pyramid (Adapted from Smith 2002:11)

Smith (2002:11) uses the concept 'collegial' instead of 'democratic'. The term 'collegiality' implies cooperating, participating, and delegating within a structure where teamwork is important. Members of the SMT have particular skills and they should be able to exhibit those skills. In this regard, Senge et al (1999:436) confirm that "…leaders are not granting subordinates more power to plan and to implement ". Involving the members of the SMT in a manner which includes consulting more with them, receiving suggestions and working towards a decision, will ensure a sense of freedom, participation, and investment in educators (Smith 2002:40). Senge et al (1999:435) agree with the fact that organisations

have moved away from the 'great individual' model of leadership towards being 'led by a team, instead. If one speaks about collective leadership, every member of the SMT should be held accountable for the effective management of the school, and in particular, the instructional programme.

An organogram of the organisational structure of a school (figure 2.1) should also reflect who takes what decision and at which level (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997: 91). If decisions are taken at different levels such as at class group level, phase level, and at SMT level, everybody is acknowledged, and they experience a sense of belonging. In this way shared authority is created, and with shared authority creativity blooms, as more people become involved in various matters pertaining to them (Senge et al 1999: 72). It is a given that policy in respect of the curriculum must be followed, and educators generally heed this fact, as it provides them with a sense of direction. In some instances, however, they may have a problem where decisions are taken on their behalf without them having any say in the matter. In this regard, Jones (1997:80) postulates, educators want to be consulted. The SMT as an important management structure at school level has, in view of the above, a great responsibility to ensure the delivery of quality teaching and learning, as well as the active participation of the rest of the staff in matters pertaining to the instructional programme. The SMT needs to nurture participation, as opposed to alienating staff. A happy staff member is a productive staff member. Hall and Wallace (1996 134) refer to this notion as "…a SMT that can joke together, can work together". The leadership role and influence of the SMT is therefore an important issue in managing the school. Ulrich and Smallwood (2003:226) put it in simple terms as "leadership matters". As high academic standards should be the SMTs' top priority, their operations should be a model to the rest of the staff (Hall & Wallace 1996: 132).

2.2.3 The roles and responsibilities of the SMT

In order for a school to be effective there has to exist a strong organisational culture. It is within this organisational culture that people work together under the umbrella of strong and effective leadership (Smith 2002:14).

With reference to the Employment of Educators Act (Act 76 of 1998:64-66), the duties of the SMT are inter alia as follows:

- to organise activities that support teaching and learning;
- to administer teaching and learning;
- to perform professional functions;
- to decide on extra- and intra-mural activities; and
- to decide which learning and support material should be purchased.

The Department of Education (2000a:24) asserts that a school management team has the day-to-day responsibility of the professional and operational management of the school. This implies to ascertain that the agreed-upon policies of the School Governing Body is put into practice, that the school operates effectively as a whole, and that the staff works towards achieving the vision of the school (Department of Education 2000a:24). Ideally, the principal should be supported by the members of the school management team to assist him or her in the execution of the management tasks of the school. In some schools, however, this is not the case, due to poor working relationships which inevitably develop into poor personal relationships. It is unfortunate that the learner suffers as a result. This implies that the SMT should always endeavour to put the interests of the learner first.

Other duties of the school management team include decision-making, the coordination of work, the solving of problems, and monitoring whether educators adhere to standards as prescribed in the National Curiculum Statement (Republic of South Africa, Act 76 of 1998:66). With a view to improving learners' learning, the SMT should, according to Donohue, Gleason and Leader (1995:26), do the following:

1. develop a manageable workplan each year focused on learners' learning;
2. spend its time on activities that have a significant impact on learners' learning;
3. have a shared vision and mission with the school that focus on learners' learning;
4. oversee the development and implementation of the school's development plan; and
5. ensure that the school regularly assesses itself and revises plans as needed.

Essentially, it is the responsibility of the SMT to ensure that the staff receives the necessary support to deliver quality teaching. To be able to achieve this outcome the HODs should, for example, know and understand the assessment standards. They should execute the curriculum in their respective phases, and as such, be held accountable.

Given these responsibilities, it is clear that the SMT holds a considerable position at school, and is a key contributor in decision-making and in the leadership of the school (Cranston & Ehrich 2005:80). The members of the SMT form part of the leadership, and they have to realise that the success of the school depends on how they execute their tasks. All the SMT members have a responsibility to fulfill their duties and can only succeed if they all function together as a team. Thus, the SMT forms the backbone of the school. Hall and Wallace (1996:130) state that a principal cannot merely wave the management wand and say that he or she has a team – he or she should do everything in his or her power to create as much of a team as possible. In order to enable the principal to foster this team spirit, the SMT must work together in their respective roles, and know that they are indeed part of important decision-making (Hackman 2002:33).

Cranston and Ehrich (2005:83) identified five issues for considering the effectiveness of the school management team, namely

- clearly define the roles and objectives of the SMT;
- ensure the competency, credibility, and commitment of SMT members;
- develop a shared culture, value and beliefs, and effective teamwork processes;
- develop quality relations with other staff members, and ensure that communication with them is effective; and
- ensure there are learning opportunities available for members of the SMT to guarantee that they can operate competently.

To be able to address these issues, the SMT should be properly equipped to provide the necessary guidance. Staff development can play a major role in achieving these outcomes (Algozzine & Jazzar 2007:106).

2.2.4 Teamwork

All the above-mentioned tasks imply teamwork, hence the name *School Management Team*. It is worth noting that the school management team is not referred to as the school management *group*. The concept 'team' refers to structure and oneness, while the concept 'group' has a looser connotation (Bush & West-Burnham 1994:266). Moloi (2005:65-66) asserts that successful teams have a "…shared sense of purpose and vision which is

clear, well articulated and elevating, because they are committed to learning and to a common direction." It would also make more sense to draw from the expertise of team members. Hall and Wallace (1996:299) agree in asserting that from the synergy that exist among team members, so much more could be achieved as from individuals. In the context of the school where the principal has to effectively make use of his or her SMT, he or she should ensure that the input of each SMT member is valued and acknowledged. As a team the SMT is able to achieve much more than the principal would on his or her own. Telford (1996:20) asserts that "…a collaborative environment makes it possible for all staff to work unselfconsciously together as a team, despite all their differences, sharing a common goal to be collectively responsible for its attainment and to help each other towards it".

Despite the notion of functioning as a team, the onus still rests with the principal to take the initiative in ensuring that the SMT operates as such (Hall & Wallace 1996:299). In order for principals to be effective, they will have to involve other role-players in the pursuit of academic excellence. They will have to involve their school management team. Berry (1997:52) asserts that "… it is through the example and commitment to quality of the school management that the whole organisation is able to adopt a 'quality' ethos. Principals can only secure the buy-in of the members of the school management team if they involve them in decision-making". Griffith (2004:333) said, "Effective school principals had clear and well articulated goals; delegated tasks to others; encouraged staff to participate in decision-making; incorporated others in problem-solving, treated staff fairly and equitably, and provided staff support in difficult situations". The opposite is also true: should the SMT fail in the execution of its responsibilities, the principal is the most vulnerable, as the credibility of the principal, more than that of the other senior colleagues, is at stake (Hall & Wallace 1996:300). The reason cited by Hall and Wallace (1996:300) is that *"…heads are accountable as SMT leaders"*. It would thus make more sense to operate as a team, as there is more to lose otherwise (Hall & Wallace 1996:300).

2.2.5 The empowerment of the SMT

The principal as leader of the school has a huge responsibility to involve his or her SMT members to work together as a unit. In this regard, Hackman (2002:19) says, "When we think about a great team the image we conjure up almost always includes a great leader".

If the principal chooses not to involve his or her SMT members, the fruition of the learning outcomes will not be as great as if he or she had allowed them to take the responsibility of improving teaching and learning in the different phases at school. HODs, for example, should be given the responsibility to manage their phases. The HOD of the intermediate phase (grades 4 to 6), for example, should accept the responsibility for managing it. Currently in some schools, they merely agree with the views of the principal. In these schools the SMT members will never develop to become leaders. Some principals are afraid of giving SMT members too much power, but in the process they frustrate the SMT members, and this may have a negative impact on the progress of the learners. By empowering their SMT members, all of them will develop into a real task-performing team (Hackman 2002:47). In an attempt to empower the SMTs, the principal may allow them to

- chair SMT meetings;
- assist with staff development programmes; and
- ensure that teaching time is managed effectively (Department of Education 2000b:10).

It is good practice for principals to allow HODs to chair SMT meetings. Not only will it boost their morale, but it will also indicate that the principal has a high regard for them. The principal could then also assess their knowledge of meeting procedures, their people and conflict management skills. In terms of staff development programmes, HODs could be asked to facilitate a workshop on a particular aspect of the curriculum, *i.e.* the recording of assessment tasks. This could demonstrate to the staff that the principal trusts the members of the SMT. Members of the SMT may be called to discuss aspects of educational policy, for example contact time. By involving the SMT in this manner, the staff may take note that responsibilities are being shared, and that the principal trusts the SMT with aspects relevant to the curriculum. It is therefore of paramount importance that the principal involves his or her senior teachers in the management of the curriculum. Not only will it improve the school's academic results, but it will prepare the SMT members for their responsibilities when they become principals. Dean (1995:5) asserts that "…..in sharing the tasks of leadership, you are preparing others for the task of leadership in their turn".

Empowering the members of the SMT would indeed contribute to a culture of collaboration and teamwork. In so doing there will be a much greater chance of achieving improved academic performance.

2.2.6 The organisational culture of the school

Effectiveness, cooperation, and professionalism should be part of the culture of a school. The question is, who has the power to shape the organisational culture of a school? Huckman and Wallace (1996:311) assert that 'power' refers to who can make things happen: the use of resources to achieve the desired ends, whether synergistically as staff working together or antagonistically as they pursue their own agendas. Unless a sound culture of teaching and learning prevails at a school, quality education cannot take place. Members of the SMT can play a key role in establishing a culture of teaching and learning. Examples of aspects of school life that reflect the overall culture, according to Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:20), are:

- the extent to which educators and learners are motivated;
- the way in which learners and parents are involved or not involved in the school;
- the manner in which people relate to one another;
- the general attitude towards teaching and learning;
- the approach towards discipline;
- arriving late, or punctually;
- the missing of classes; and
- whether staff development is fostered or supported.

Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:89) define 'culture' as the way in which the school organises itself. Culture includes the beliefs and values about education, about management, and the relations that are common to the staff at school (Huckman & Wallace 1996:311). To be able to work in close collaboration with staff members, it is important for the members to communicate effectively in their teams. Then the HODs may, for example, be able to argue matters pertaining to their specific departments during SMT meetings. In this regard it is important to develop communication structures with the rest of the staff (Huckman & Wallace 1996:313). These structures could be in the form of informal discussions, phase and learning area meetings, or even by means of memoranda. Staff members would then

not feel alienated by the school management team. Where this is not happening, conflict between staff members and the SMT is inevitable. The characteristics of a sound organisational culture link closely with what is termed a 'shared' approach, as indicated by Hallinger 2000 in Hallinger (2003:332). It presupposes communication, consultation, and consensus. A 'shared' approach implies that more people, other than the principal only, become involved in the management of the instructional programme. This is a feature of effective leadership, in the sense that responsibilities are shared with senior colleagues, and other teachers are also involved in decision-making (Southworth 1998:12).

Effective communication and collaboration concerning instructional matters will indeed strengthen a sound school culture which will then reflect the importance of collaboration and instruction.

2.3 PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT

The pressure upon schools to improve their academic performance is immense. As stated in the White Paper (Republic of South Africa 1995) the improvement of the quality of education is essential. It is the responsibility of the principal as well as the SMT, to ensure that the school is managed in such a way that its academic performance is enhanced. Successful school leadership is of paramount importance if this is to happen (Carter & McDonald 2002:3).

With school restructuring and site-based management as means of educational reform becoming a common feature of modern schools, participative leadership has become the trend of the 21st century (Brouilette 1997, O'Hair & Reitzug 1997) in Koopman and Wierdsma (1998:777). Various authors are in agreement that the selection of more collaborative strategies has become crucial in the effective management of teams (Blase & Blase, 1999; Boyle, Boyle & Brown 1999, Klecker & Loadman 1998; Wall & Rhinehart 1998) in Koopman and Wierdsma (1998:778).

2.3.1 A Definition of 'participative management'

'Participative leadership', as defined by Koopman and Wierdsma (1998) in Somech (2005: 778) has to do with joint decision-making by a superior and his or her employees. This definition of participative leadership has much in common with what Day, Hall and

Whitaker (1998) in Carter and McDonald (2002:4) describe as the 'headship' collective, which promotes a heterarchical, as opposed to hierarchical, approach to school leadership and management. In providing a rationale for this form of leadership, Day et al(1998) in Carter & McDonald (2002:4) argue that "…the time has come to consider radical alternatives to the traditional model….in times of rapid change and novel circumstances we need the most flexible and adaptable structures it is possible to devise".

The notion of involving others in the decision-making process was observed by Dewey more than a century ago. He (1903) in Hargreaves and Fink (2006:97) argued that public education should be organised in such a way that every teacher has some regular way to register judgment upon matters of educational importance, with the assurance that this judgment will somehow affect the school system. Effective participative management is about *sharing* leadership. It implies that educators at every level of the organogram be involved in the decision-making process. Distributed leadership or participative management, has formed an integral part of organisational management since the 1960's. Barnard (1968) in Hargreaves and Fink (2006:97) is quoted as saying that "…leadership is not limited to executive positions, and might be carried out by any member of an organisation". Thompson (1967) in Hargreaves and Fink (2006:97) was among the first to argue that leadership flows throughout an organisation, working up and down hierarchies.

In taking a closer look at what needs to happen, it becomes clear that the modernist approach is outdated, and that both learners and educators suffer as a result of it. English (2003) in Skinner (2008:3) categorically states that "…the *status quo* is not a viable option and must come to an end". In post-modern organisations the functions of leadership and management are perceived as multi-layered, and are distributed throughout the organisation (Carter & McDonald 2002:5). The practice of distributed leadership needs to be "……grounded in an approach to leadership that is opportunistic, flexible, responsive and content specific, rather than prescribed by roles, inflexible, hierarchical and status driven"(Hopkins 2001 in Carter & McDonald 2002:5). This view of leadership, then, is not hierarchical, but federal, and involves clarity of direction and support (Hopkins 2001 in Carter & McDonald 2002:5).

The fact that Day et al *(*1998) in Carter & McDonald (2002:4) have already observed that "…the time has come to consider radical alternatives to the traditional model", is proof that

it is not so easy to change culture. It will most probably take some time for most leaders to realise that in order to take their schools to their full potential, they will have to involve and trust others as well. Marks and Printy (2003a:127) postulate that, "In effective schools, teaching is a social practice, not an individual one, and interaction with school colleagues is a primary source of teacher learning."   To make this shift from an investment in central power and supervision towards a more empowering process requires a paradigm shift, as illustrated below (Carter & McDonald 2002:6).

Management	⟶	leadership
Vertical	⟶	sideways
Fixed roles	⟶	flexible roles
Individual responsibility	⟶	shared responsibility
Autocratic	⟶	collaborative
Delivering expertise	⟶	developing expertise
Status	⟶	stature
Efficiency	⟶	effectiveness
Control	⟶	release
Power	⟶	empowerment
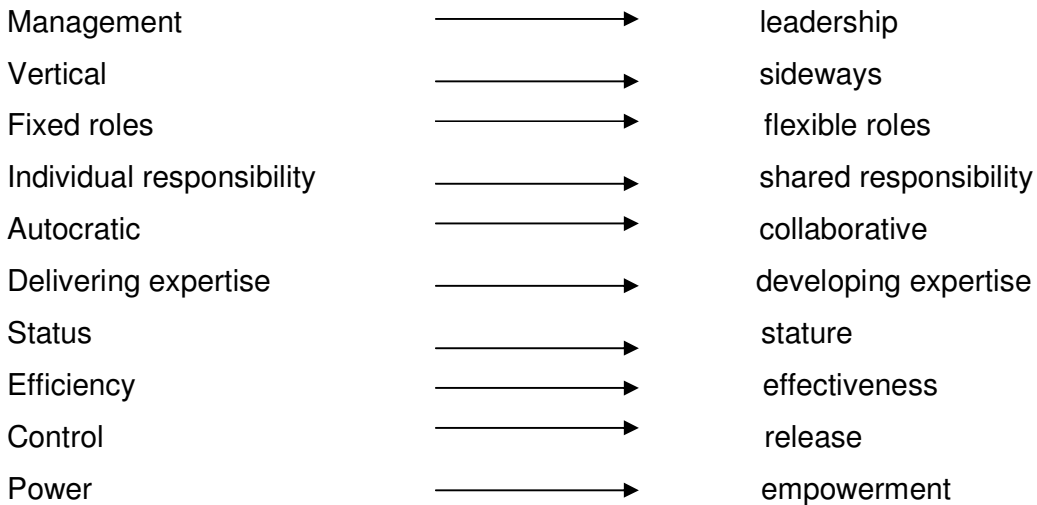
Figure 2.2: Characteristics of a paradigm shift (Source: Whitaker 1993:73-74 in (Carter & McDonald 2002:6)

This paradigm shift entails looking differently at leadership. It is a move away from the modernist point of view of conformity, security and boundaries (Skinner 2008:2). Skinner (2008:2) continues by saying that "…schools are still running in the same fashion as they did when they came into existence". The researcher agrees to some extent with Skinner (2008:3) that there are still principals taking decisions in a top-down fashion, ignoring the input of the rest of the SMT. This approach could be one of the reasons why SMTs do not take full responsibility for the management of the instructional programme.

Participative management *per se* is not a new concept, yet one finds that some principals operate hierarchical, and do not allow staff members to give their input. In terms of the management of the instructional progamme, it is essential to obtain the input of the entire SMT. The principal as instructional leader should involve the SMT by allocating certain responsibilities to it. Having said this, it implies that the SMT members should jointly

decide on management issues, in this instance the instructional programme, as defined by Koopman and Wierdsma (1998) in Somech & Wenderow (2006:746). The SMT is therefore the think-tank of the school, and involving it in all matters pertaining to the management of the school will ultimately result in a higher staff morale and service delivery (Jones 1997: 76).

2.3.2 Advantages of participative management

The literature reflects that utilizing participative management as a means of managing an organisation such as a school, has more advantages than a school with an autocratic or directive management style (Bryk, Eason, Kerbo, Rollow & Sebring 1993, and Hargreaves 1994 in Somech (2005:778). In this regard, Smith (2002:115 -116) asserts that "…a well-led and coordinated team working together towards agreed objectives produces better results than a collection of individuals accountable only for their own performance".

The advantages according to Smith (2002:115 -116) that accrue to a group of professionals working well together as a team are:
- a greater capacity to cope with complicated professional matters by being able to utilize a wider but related range of experience and talent;
- better professional decisions arising from collective rather than individual wisdom - several heads are better that one;
- more and better ideas for improving service quality, marketing, skills development, data banks, systems and processes;
- improved client services by always having people available to deal with queries and to respond to requests;
- the easier sharing of knowledge, skills and experience; and
- stronger support of colleagues for one another when needed.

It would be in the interest of the school as a whole to brain-storm particular issues and then collectively decide on the way forward. The chances of the school management team or even the staff taking ownership of the instructional programme are better if a collective decision is reached and the opinions of all educators are considered. By following the route of participative management conflict is reduced considerably.

2.3.3 Participative management as a tool to empower the SMT

In figure 2.3, as adapted from Somech (2005:779), a model is presented demonstrating the powerful role of participative management as a tool to empower the SMT with a view to improving academic performance.

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              ┌─────────────────┐
              │  Participative  │
              │   management    │
              └────────┬────────┘
                       │
                       ▼
              ┌─────────────────┐
              │   Empowerment   │
              │   of the SMT    │
              └────────┬────────┘
                  ┌────┴────┐
                  ▼         ▼
       ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
       │Team Creativity│ │   In-role    │
       │              │  │ performance  │
       └──────┬───────┘  └──────┬───────┘
              └────────┬─────────┘
                       ▼
              ┌─────────────────┐
              │ Organisational  │
              │   Commitment    │
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              │Improve academic │
              │  performance    │
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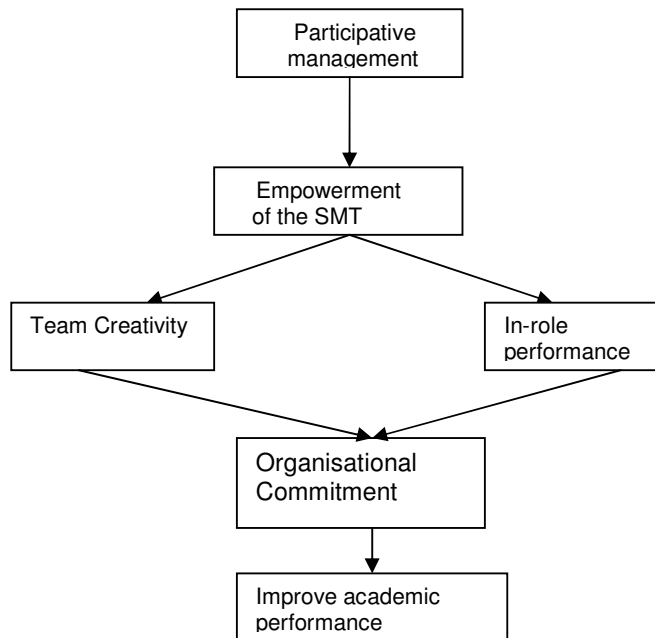
Figure 2.3: Participative management as a tool of empowerment (Source: Somech 2005:779)

Empowering staff members leads to creativity and keeps them motivated to realise the organisational goals which were identified as a collective, and not by the principal alone. There is a direct link between in-role performance and team accomplishment, as it leads to the intended or desired result (Chatman & Flynn 2001 in Somech 2005:779). Team creativity is the application of new ideas and processes that are designed for the benefit of the school (West 1990 in Somech 2005:779). The net result of involving the school management team is improved academic performance.

The SMT, as part of the leadership of the school, plays an important role in structuring the work-environment, and in providing feedback to the rest of the staff. It thus stands to reason that the leadership provided by the SMT is a key factor in the effectiveness of staff or sub-committees (Somech 2005:780). The introduction of teams may have a significant influence on the role of the leadership within the school (Griffin, Patterson & West 2001 in Somech 2005:780). Parker and Wall (1998) in Somech (2005:780) identified a number of

options for leading roles in teams. These options range from the retention of supervisory positions to redefined leadership requirements. Having said this, it does not imply that the role of the principal is diminished.

According to Bass (1997) in Somech (2005:780) leadership is still recognised as important for team development. Team leaders remain responsible for their team's performance. In the context of the school, the principal assumes this position, and in terms of the sub-committees, the members of the SMT accept responsibility for the functioning of the different phases, *i.e.* the foundation, the intermediate, and the senior phases (Druscat & Wheeler 2003 in Somech 2005:780). By involving members of the SMT in this manner, participative principals or leaders are encouraging educators to discover new opportunities and challenges to learn through acquiring, sharing and combining knowledge (Edmonson 1999) in Somech (2005:781). Somech (2005:781) confirms this notion by saying, "Teachers in participative environments can improve the pool of ideas, materials and methods which will lead to a higher quality of instruction".

2.3.4 The importance of having a shared vision

There should exist a shared vision in terms of what the school wants to achieve.   A 'shared vision' is a vision that belongs to all role-players (staff, parents and school management team) so that when it comes to implementing it there is commitment, because it belongs to them (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:58). This vision can only be realised if there exists an alignment of the vision of the school management team with that of the sub-committees (Gravells & Wallace 2007:52). In this regard, Smith (2002:115-116), as indicated before, postulates, "A well-led and coordinated team working together towards agreed objectives, produces better results than a collection of individuals accountable only for their own performance". What it boils down to, is that there should be a shared vision in terms of what the school wants to achieve. This vision can only be realised if there exists an alignment (Gravells & Wallace 2007:52) meaning, namely, that the leaders, albeit members of the SMT or leaders of sub-committees, cannot merely frame their own vision. The SMT should, in view of the possibility of leaders framing their own vision, ensure that the vision is aligned to the corporate vision (Gravells & Wallace 2007:52). Leaders at the various levels should all speak the same language. The importance of an aligned vision is that it can help to motivate staff - something which is lacking at some schools. The full set

of values around which a vision may be formulated, is summarised in figure 2.4. This figure illustrates how all the role-players can contribute to the vision of the school.   It addresses the needs of the role-players as alluded to earlier as well as the common values they want the school to adhere to. In order for a team to respect each other for example, it is necessary to listen to what others can contribute towards managing and leading the instructional programme as well. In this way the relationships will be strong which will enable the team to face any problem they might encounter from time to time. Staff will then also see the need to develop professionally and in so doing provide a better service to the community at large.
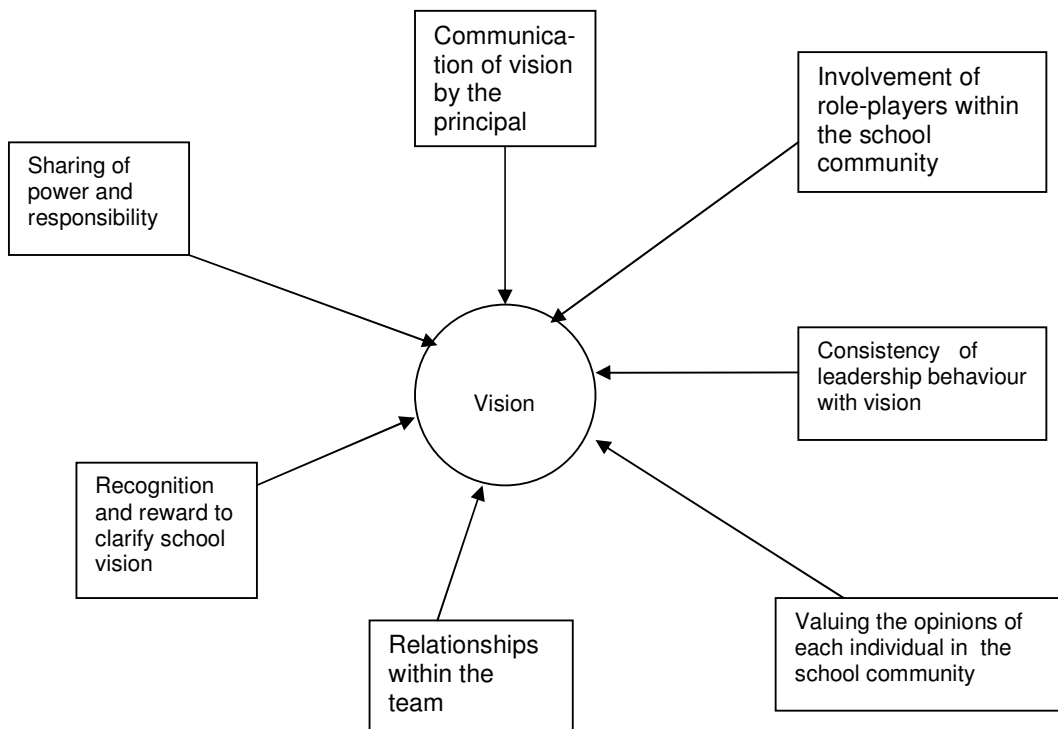
Figure 2. 4: Values for team vision: Source (Barnett and McCormick 2002:62-65)

2.4   INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

2.4.1 Instructional leadership as an integral part of the school culture

Instructional leadership is not a 'new' concept. Much research has been done on this topic (Quinn 2002:447). According to Hallinger (2003:329), the term 'instructional leadership' came to the fore in the 1980s when research was done on effective schools, schools

which were a reflection of the leadership capabilities of the principal. Earlier studies done by Edward (1979), and Leithwood and Montgomery (1982) in Hallinger (2003:329) highlighted the prominence of the principal in terms of the curriculum and instruction in poor urban communities. The socio-economic circumstances of a particular community, however, do not warrant a single-handed approach by any principal. What is important is that the school needs to be organised. The socio-economic context in which the school finds itself does, however, have an impact on its management. An aspect of concern includes, amongst others, the non-payment of school fees. It is indicated that the lack of sufficient school funds may result in overcrowded classrooms, which impact negatively on the provision of quality education. But, many schools in poor communities have done exceptionally well, despite their socio-economic circumstances. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:4) assert that "…in spite of the most disenabling realities, many teachers have managed to achieve remarkable success in terms of fostering a real love for learning and being extremely innovative with almost no resources". A well-managed instructional programme is evidence of a sound organisational culture. Educators generally perform better in a strong organisational culture headed by effective leadership (Smith 2002:14). A school that is poorly managed cannot deliver excellent results. Aspects that run like a golden thread through both effective schools and strong organisational cultures are strong leadership, participation, and teamwork. Smith (2002:6) further postulates that effective schools with a strong organisational culture should have the following characteristics (see figure 2.5). It is important to note that strong leadership, participation and team work as illustrated in figure 2.5 are also applicable to SMTs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL	CHARACTERISTICS OF A STRONG ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE
- Coherent ethos with agreed ways of doing things - Importance of leadership - Strong beliefs about teaching and learning - Teachers act as role models - Staff training influences what happens at school - There are effective meetings with joint	- A strong culture with shared values and a consensus on 'how we do things around here' - Importance of a strong leader who embodies core values and who finds other leaders with similar values - Widely shared beliefs that are reflected in common practices ad rituals - All employees represent core values to

planning and problem-solving • There exists an orderly atmosphere without rigidity • There is joint participation in decision-making	the children • The staff see training as a way of renewing their attempts to create and maintain an effective school • Core values are constantly reinforced within working teams • There exists an appropriate balance between innovation, tradition, autonomy and authority • Teams are recognised as the main focus of effectively maintaining the culture as well as innovating change that was agreed on

Figure 2.5: Characteristics of an effective school (Source: Smith 2002:6)

2.4.2 Views on instructional leadership

Instructional leadership has different meanings for different authors, but all agree that the manner in which principals manage their schools has an impact on teaching and learning (Kruger 2003:205). The following views represent this difference of opinions on what instructional leadership entails:

(i)   Some authors agree that instructional leadership falls into the following four broad categories (Blase & Blase 2000; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon 1995 in Blase & Blase (2000:130):

• the integration of the tasks of direct assistance to educators;
• group development;
• staff and curriculum development; and
• action research.

(ii)   Gordon (1997) in Blase & Blase (2000:130) postulates that instructional leadership is a democratic, developmental, and transformational activity based on equality and growth.

(iii)   According to Smyth (1997) in Blase & Blase (2000:131), instructional   leadership is a discursive critical study of classroom interaction to achieve   social justice.

(iv)   For Short (1995) in Blase & Blase (2000:131) instructional leadership includes investigative commentary of the direct and indirect effects of principal instructional conferences, such as the outcome of monitoring student progress.

(v)   Sheppard (1996) in Blase & Blase (2000:131) demonstrates the direct effects of the principal's behaviour on the commitment of educators, on involvement and innovation.

(vi)   Hallinger and Heck (1996:723-783) focus on the role of the principal in terms of constructs such as participative leadership and decentralised decision-making on school effectiveness.

(vii)   Leithwood (1994) in Quinn (2002:447) describes instructional leadership as a series of behaviours that are designed to affect classroom instruction.

The studies referred to above allude to aspects such as staff development, curriculum development, democratic leadership, the monitoring of learner progress, the effect of the management style of the principal on educator commitment, involvement and innovation, and the use of constructs such as participative leadership and decentralized decision-making. It is the responsibility of the school management team to create synergy among all these aspects to ensure academic performance. Carter and McDonald (2002:3) confirm the importance of effective leadership by saying that "…leadership has also been shown to have an impact upon school improvement processes". Unless the SMT functions as a team, the academic performance will not be as good as it could be. Of great significance, however, is the behaviour of educators when they take part in activities concerning teaching and learning (Leithwood, Jautzi & Steinbach 1999 in Southworth 2002:77). This

particular point of view magnifies the responsibility of the principal in terms of curriculum delivery, the quality of which is closely linked to the school culture.

The instructional programme will not deliver excellent results unless educators adhere to the following two basic elements: educators must be punctual, for their behaviour sets the tone for the learners, which implies that if they regularly arrive at school late, they are not in a position to reprimand learners for being late; they must not be absent without reason, because if they are continuously absent, the learners will suffer, as they are losing out on instruction time. Of great importance is the fact that educators must come to school well-prepared, or else the lesson is doomed to failure.

In order to ensure curriculum delivery, principals will have to involve their SMTs in a significant way. Leithwood et al (1999) in Southworth (2002:77) confirm this where they say that "…principals alone cannot fulfill all of a school's needs for instructional leadership". Kruger (2003:207) adds to this by indicating that various authors have identified specific management functions that impact on teaching and learning.

2.4.3 The necessity of involving all members of the SMT in the instructional leadership programme

The responsibilities of principals in South Africa have compounded since the democratization of the country in 1994. This democratization filtered through to education as well, especially with the movement towards site-based management, where it is envisaged that schools would accept greater responsibility in terms of the management of the school. Simultaneously, the South African Government has embarked upon curriculum reform and a general drive to enhance a culture of teaching and learning (Kruger 2003:206, Republic of South Africa 1995). The devolution of power has placed tremendous pressure on principals to execute their mandate in respect of curriculum delivery, as they are ultimately responsible for teaching and learning at school (Castle & Mitchell 2005:427). Despite the complexity of the task of the principal, his or her core function is to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place (American Association of School Administrators 1992:21, Kruger in Van Deventer & Kruger 2003:245). It is here where the involvement of all members of the SMT becomes crucial in the management of the educational programme of the school.

When one has a close look at the instructional tasks that have to be performed at school, it is evident that the principal cannot do it alone. According to Kruger (2003:206), there is widespread agreement that the principal's workload is becoming increasingly unmanageable, and that he/she should be supported in some way. The best way is to involve the members of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme. The responsibilities should be shared among the members of the SMT. Day and Parker (1997:87), Kruger (1992:432-433) and (Joyner 2005:3) assert that HODs could, for example,

- assist with the formulation of the mission, goals, objectives, instructional policy and planning;
- coordinate the curriculum;
- supervise teaching;
- deal with learner assessment;
- promote an instructional climate; and
- involve colleagues in committees.

Ultimately, all of these aspects are essential in providing an atmosphere that supports the effective teaching that will correspond with learner outcomes (Quinn 2002:459). Principals should apply the knowledge and skills of the members of their SMT by allowing them to manage their different departments within the framework of the decisions taken at SMT level. Quinn (2002:451) supports this notion by saying that "…pre-eminent in the principal's role as an instructional leader is to motivate and inspire teachers with the end-goal of impacting instructional practice and ultimately student achievement". Given the vast task of instructional leadership, the principal should be supported by his or her SMT, or conversely, should allow the SMT to assist him or her.

From the above it is evident that it is impossible for the principal not to involve his or her fellow SMT members in managing the instructional programme of the school. The SMT will indeed have to assist in the management of the programme to ensure excellent academic performance.

2.4.4 A 'shared' instructional leadership approach

Various authors support the notion of a 'shared' approach to leadership. According to Cohen and Ball (1998:5), "The capacity to produce worthwhile and substantial learning is a function of the interaction among elements of the instructional unit, not the sole province of any single element". Hackman (2002:33) asserts that "No person has the sole responsibility for team leadership." According to Marks and Printy (2003b:371), shared instructional leadership involves the active collaboration of the principal and the teachers on instructional matters, such as the curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Hallinger (2003:330) continues by saying that shared, distributed, transformational, and teacher leadership were all popularized during the 1990s. The emergence of these theories indicated a sense of dissatisfaction with the instructional leadership model which many believed highlighted the expertise, power, and authority of the principal. Based on the above theories, there now exists a change in culture, namely the role of the principal in the management of the instructional programme. This change in culture (figure 2.6) can be indicated as follows:

From the old order	To new conditions of work
Individualism, isolation, privacy, ⟶	Professional community (based on collegiality, openness and trust)
Teaching at the centre ⟶	Learning at the centre (focus on how learners learn; adjust teaching accordingly)
Technical work (toolbox of techniques)	Intellectual work (posing problems, systematic inquiry, seeking solutions)
Control("Keeping the lid on") ⟶	Accountability (measure student performance), empowerment (focus on trust and respect)
Focus on classroom ⟶	Focus on whole school (teacher contributes to school culture, mission accomplishment).

Figure 2.6: A change in culture (Source: Blase & Blase 1999:176)

In view of the above, the SMT should endeavour to work as a unit to improve the academic results of the school. To actively involve the heads of departments and the deputy principal, the principal will have to empower them with more responsibilities, such

as taking charge of the various school phases. The HOD's should accept responsibility and be held accountable for the progress of their respective departments. The school should build a culture based on a collaborative approach to instructional leadership, where the principal should, if it is not already the case, work more closely with the SMT.   By following this approach the principal will boost the morale of the school management team, and this will in turn rub off on the rest of the staff. By adopting this approach the principal will acknowledge the professionalism of the school management team, as well as of his or her members of staff.   The aspects mentioned above refer to the management of the instructional programme, and it is here where the principals have to demonstrate their trust in their fellow SMT members.

2.4.5   Instructional leadership tasks

Various authors have their own views on what instructional leadership tasks entail. According to Day and Parker 1997:87), Kruger (1992:432-433), Hallinger (2003:332), and Joyner (2005:1), instructional leadership tasks include the following: managing the curriculum and instruction, supervising teaching, monitoring learner progress, analyzing data and promoting an instructional climate.

When one has a closer look at these instructional leaderships tasks, it is evident that there is a direct relation between the instructional role of the principal and the other management functions he or she needs to perform (Kruger 2003:207). It further demonstrates the interrelatedness of the various school management tasks, as well as the necessity to effectively involve the SMT in the execution of these tasks (Kruger 2003:207). The principal needs to be supported by the SMT to ensure that the instructional programme is taken to its full consequences.

Graphically, the instructional leadership tasks can be presented as follows:

WHAT	HOW
Formulating the mission, goals, objectives, instructional policy and planning	• Providing support to educators as well as empowering them
Coordinating the curriculum and instructional programme	• Providing resources to staff • Aligning of curriculum, instruction assessment and standards • Discussing flexibility and teacher decision-making regarding curriculum and instruction
Supervising teaching	• Giving direction and support to educators • Setting expectations • Providing support to educators in terms of enrichment programmes
Assessing learners	• Discussing results • Analysing information
Promoting an instructional climate	• Creating a positive school climate • Creating a shared sense of purpose
Instructional committees	• SMT and staff working as a team • Empowering staff and holding them accountable • Educators and learners actively participating in the school improvement process • The SMT reflecting a diversity of perspectives • Principals drawing on their expertise to strengthen the school programme

Figure 2.7: Instructional leadership tasks (Sources: Day & Parker 1997:87, and Kruger 1992:432-433).

What follow now is a discussion of the instructional leadership tasks, as well as a demonstration of how the SMT may become involved in them.

(1)   The formulation of the mission, goals, objectives, instructional policy, and planning

The formulation of the mission, goals, objectives, instructional policy, and planning ought to be done in collaboration with the staff. According to Day and Parker (1997:85), the aforementioned are some of the most essential functions of a leader. In an attempt to arrive at a 'shared' mission, goals and objectives, all stakeholders need to be involved. It

is only then that the SMT can be assured of the buy-in of the staff. In this regard Telford (1996:16) postulates that by drawing on the expertise and skills of everybody within the school through participative decision-making, everybody is acknowledged, believing that they can contribute in a meaningful way.

Goals and objectives are closely linked with policies (Dean 1995:32). Dean (1995:33) continues by saying that schools need to make policies explicit, setting them as a statement of guidance for staff members and attempting to establish a 'normal' way of working in given circumstances. Policy, and in this instance the instructional policy, will be respected and applied if the staff was given an opportunity for their input. Generally, policy contains statements such as the following (Dean 1995:33):

- the overall philosophy and principles operating in the area;
- the attitudes expected;
- the roles of those concerned;
- specific arrangements needed;
- the organisation of any material resources or equipment;
- methods of reviewing progress and recording, where appropriate;
- the support available to educators;
- relevant staff development; and
- the relevance of any links with contributory schools or transfer schools.

From the aspects cited above it is evident that in order for the instruction policy to be a workable one, it cannot be done by only one person. It needs to be a joint effort by the staff as well as the SMT. In this regard Telford (1996:20) asserts that "… collaboration is immersed in the very culture of the school".

As regards planning, the HOD's should plan with the grades as opposed to plan for them. The NCS (National Curriculum Statement) expects from schools to plan together in respect of expectations, dates of assessment, the ambit of work to be covered, and especially, outcomes. The reality is that in some schools educators work in isolation. They prepare their work in their classes, set their own question papers, and submit grades when they are due (Danielson 2002:62). This isolated approach is detrimental to a school that wants to improve its performance, as educators may be unaware of other successful

strategies and approaches utilized by their colleagues (Danielson 2002:62). By planning together, every educator concerned accepts responsibility for the successful implementation of the curriculum, and can be held accountable in the event of poor performance (Newman & Wehlage 1995, in: Conzemius & O'Neill 2001:68). This joint instructional planning needs to be systematic, disciplined, skilled, pre-arranged, and be accorded high priority (Danielson 2002: 62). If this planning is well organised it will raise the expectations and morale of the educators and the learners alike. The responsibility thus rests with the SMT to ensure that the necessary guidance is provided. The staff will then also feel empowered to deliver what is expected from them.

(2)   The coordination of the curriculum

The Department of Education (2000b:26) asserts that the SMT has a crucial role to play in the management of time as a resource in the school. In this regard, the heads of departments can guide the staff on which activities should be prioritized on the time-table (Department of Education 2000b:26). Given the approach the new curriculum has adopted in terms of curriculum delivery, such as more groupwork and research, periods cannot be limited to the traditional 30/35 minutes. It is the responsibility of the SMT to organise the time-table in such a manner as to enable staff members to utilize these new integrated methods (Department of Education 2000b:26).

Kruger (2003:207) asserts that the curriculum and instruction should be coordinated so that instruction time can be used optimally. The coordination of the curriculum links up with what is formulated in the mission statement. If the mission statement makes mention of preparedness in terms of their daily responsibilities, the SMT should ensure that educators are taken to task if they are unprepared for their lessons. The coordination of the curriculum and instruction ought to be done with the focus on education-related rather than administrative-related issues (Day & Parker 1997:86). The mission of the school can only be accomplished if the staff is provided with the necessary resources to fulfil it (Day & Parker 1997:86). The SMT ought to set an example in this regard. They themselves should come to school prepared for the day in terms of what they require for a particular lesson. Duplicating worksheets during contact time does not set a good example. By being unprepared valuable instruction time is lost.

Another aspect concerns aligning the curriculum, instruction, assessment, and standards. If learner achievement is the goal, and that goal is measured by standards-based

assessment, the curriculum, instruction, and assessment must be aligned with the standards (Joyner 2005:2). The work schedule, assessment standards and lesson plan, for example, should address one another in terms of what the educator wants to achieve in a particular lesson. Unless these aspects are aligned, it is an indication of a lack of preparation. It is the responsibility of the SMT to ensure that alignment takes place. For this reason the staff needs to hand in their weekly/two-weekly planning to the HOD with a view to monitoring tendencies. Joyner (2005:2) asserts that alignment is an ongoing process as standards, curriculum, and assessment cycle through improvements. The SMT must know what the assessment standards entail in order to be able to give guidance.

The SMT must also be aware of new approaches in education, both at school and at district level. The members have to be informed of new approaches in the curriculum, *i.e.*, making use of alternative assessments with a view of accommodating learners who cannot read. Questions arising in respect of these new approaches are: "How flexible is the curriculum to address this approach?" "Are educators empowered to make decisions to modify the curriculum or to change the instructional methods?" (Day & Parker 1997:86) To be able to answer these questions, both the SMT and staff should engage in meaningful discussions. In an attempt to address this challenge the SMT needs to adopt a problem-solving approach to address barriers that may arise. This can be done by taking note of what others in similar roles and situations do. It would be good practice if SMTs allow educators to reflect on their own experiences, and to share them with others (Day & Parker 1997:86). When the SMT and staff work together they remain focused on the mission. It also helps them to get unstuck if they do not know how to proceed, and guides them back if they have lost their way (Conzemius & O'Neill 2001:34). As the mission is acted out by the educators through engaging with the learners on a daily basis, the supervision of teaching as one of the dimensions of instructional leadership becomes apparent (Day & Parker 1997:86). The SMT should thus create opportunities that allow educators to reflect on their experiences, and to share them with others.

In conclusion, educators are keener to cooperate if they are treated as professionals. A flexible approach is indicative of trust and respect (Cross & Reitzug 1995:18).

(3)   Supervising teaching

According to Kruger (2003:207), the supervision of teaching is to ensure that educators receive guidance and support to be able to teach effectively. This support can only be provided if the SMT is well-informed of the teaching capabilities of their respective teams. Knowledge about the teams' teaching abilities can be acquired by doing class visits.   It is during these contact sessions that the SMT can determine the areas of development of an educator. Kruger (2003:207) asserts that the focus of the instructional leader ought to be geared towards staff development, as opposed to performance appraisal. Danielson (2002:64) indicates that the main purpose of staff development is two-fold: quality assurance, and professional learning. Staff development is not an assumption that the teaching of the educators is not up to standard. On the contrary, it highlights the complexities of the profession (Danielson 2002:62). Staff development can take place both internally and externally. Some schools tend to forget about the wealth of knowledge they have among themselves, their own staff. That is why the SMT should make provision for staff members to share their successes with one another, as well as to motivate them to attend enrichment programmes (Kruger 2003:207).

Danielson (2002:63) asserts that a school's development plan should include both internal and external sources of new ideas. Professional inquiry should become part of the school's culture. If this professional inquiry presumes high-level teaching skills, if it is embedded in an ethos of sharing, it will energise educators to learn new techniques (Danielson 2002:63).

(4)   Learner assessment

As instructional leadership is geared towards academic performance, discussions about learner assessment are crucial. According to Kruger (2003:207), the progress of learners can be assessed by means of a number of assessment strategies, such as tests and examinations. The information gathered by means of these tests and examinations provides the SMT with valuable information to support both the learners and the educator to improve, as well as to assist the parents to understand why improvement is necessary (Kruger 2003:207). Danielson (2002:87) asserts that learner assessment basically concerns providing feedback on how well the learners have measured up against the standards at school, district, and at national level. Learner assessment also entails

holding learners accountable for their learning, and evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional programme of the school (Danielson 2002:86).

As some schools are in the process of improving their performance, their approach towards learner assessment needs to be absolutely transparent to both the learners and the parents (Danielson 2002:86). It is only when all stake-holders (parents, learners, educators, and the School Governing Body) are fully aware of the outcomes of the assessments that meaningful discussions can take place. It is here where the SMT can engage parents and educators in discussions around what the curriculum statements really mean. Both the curriculum and assessment define what learners will learn: the curriculum indicates *what* the learners will learn, assessment shows *how* learners have learned. The SMT needs to play an important role in these discussions. The information can be used to determine which aspects of teaching and learning need attention. The SMT can also use this information to establish grouping arrangements, as well as to pinpoint specific learner intervention needs (Joyner 2005:2).

(5)   The promotion of a climate of instruction

The instructional climate at school should reinforce teaching and learning (Day & Parker 1997:88). Kruger (2003:2007) asserts that schools have to create a positive climate where teaching and learning can take place. The staff must be motivated to teach, and the SMT can play an important role in this regard. It is the responsibility of the SMT to ensure that educators are in possession of what is needed to deliver excellent teaching. Instructional needs have to exceed everything else, as teaching and learning is the core business of schooling. Parents send their children to school to learn. The SMT must see to it that the instructional needs receive high priority. Joyner (2005:1) asserts that teaching and learning "…must be at the top of the priority list on a consistent basis". According to Kruger (2003:207), learning must be made exciting, and it is the responsibility of the SMT to ensure that it happens. There should be a shared sense of purpose, and for this to happen, the SMT has to provide the necessary guidance.

(6)   Instructional committees

In order for the instructional programme to effectively address teaching and learning, the SMT must function as a team. According to Algozzine and Jazzar (2007:105), successful

leaders will promote the achievement of all learners by encouraging the support and commitment of all stakeholders. The SMT and the school staff must share their responsibilities and participate in decision-making, in order to address the school's mission (Joyner 2005:3). If participative management is to be correctly understood, it means that the school management team will also involve their different teams in the management of the instructional programme, for example, involving educators in the different phases, such as the foundation, intermediate, and senior phases, as well as on the different learning area committees. In this way everybody at school forms part of a committee, working out the detail of what needs to be happening, and everybody becomes involved in decisions at different levels (Cross & Reitzug 1995:19). By involving all the SMT members in this manner they also serve as a link between the staff and the SMT per sè. In following this approach of involving others in leadership roles, the principal is, in fact, investing in a distributed form of leadership, which has been acknowledged as one of the core elements needed to achieve the sustainability of leadership within the school (Fullan in Carter & McDonald 2002:3). Should the principal leave the school due to retirement or being promoted, the management of the school programme would not come to a standstill, but will continue to function. The school would then draw dividends from its investment in distributed leadership. Gronn (2003) in Carter & McDonald (2002:4) supports this notion where he says that "…sustaining improvement requires the leadership capacity of the many rather than the few". Lambert (2003:4) agrees by saying that leadership refers to an organisation's capacity to lead itself, and to sustain this effort when key individuals leave.

If the notion of teams is elaborated on, one could argue that each HOD serving on the SMT may be responsible for a group of educators. You would then allocate a HOD to the foundation, the intermediate, and the senior phases of the primary school. The HODs could also take charge of the learning area committees. It is then the responsibility of the HOD to manage his or her own team within the ambit of decisions taken at SMT level by, for example,

- **Discussing the results**. Algozzine and Jazzar (2007:105) assert that successful leaders render decisions based on research. In this way areas for improvement can be identified. The data provided by the systemic tests of the WCED are most helpful in determining the areas for improvement. Joyner (2005:2) postulates that, "…decisions at all levels should be based on pertinent data". During these

discussions educators can assess themselves, based on the feedback they receive from colleagues and class-leaders, and from the education department. By engaging in this type of discussion professional growth can be encouraged (Day & Parker 1997:87). Essentially, everyone is then focused on a common goal, and has to rely on one another to achieve these goals (Conzemius & O'Neill 2001:15). Conzemius and O'Neill (2001:15) refer to this type of discussions as 'collaboration'.Collaboration, according to them, is the process of developing interdependent relationships where everybody is focused on a common purpose.

- **Allocating duplicating paper**. The foundation phase, for example, discusses their decision with regard to the allocation of duplicating paper with their head of department, who brings that decision to the SMT. In the context of this small committee, the educators are given the opportunity to provide initial leadership for school improvement practices (Marks & Printy 2003a:128). It can thus be postulated that the SMT is mandated by the rest of the staff in terms of decision-making. It is within these small groups or committees where educators, who otherwise would not have contributed, are now given the opportunity to do so. In this way all the educators at school form part of a committee and become involved in decisions at different levels (Cross & Reitzug 1995:19). Marks and Printy (2003a:127) agree by saying that, "…the teacher's initiative and participation in important decisions often takes place in smaller committees related to instructional matters".

- **The structuring of work schedules**. With the dawning of a new curriculum such as the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), educators are allowed to have a say in the structuring of work schedules in a particular phase. This can be done by getting them involved in discussions around the content that needs to be covered in a particular learning area within the framework of the NCS, as well as the context of the school. Educators would then consider themselves to be responsible, trustworthy, and professional (Cross & Reitzug 1995:18). Only then can one speak of genuine involvement in school decision-making (Telford 1996:16). He further (1996:16) postulates that "…participatory decision-making ensures that those responsible for implementing decisions or policies are actively engaged in the decision-making process itself; not in a once-off or occasional capacity, but as continuous, ongoing and integral part of school operations". Participative decision-making should become part of the culture of the school.

Principals should realise, given the enormity of the school management task, that it would be wise to tap in on the   expertise of the most important tool - their staff.

According to Sillins and Mulford (2001) in Carter & McDonald (2002:3), leadership, when shared throughout the school, is in a positive relation to learner improvement. Marks and Printy (2003a:130) assert that the lack of a shared leadership approach is indeed the reason why school-wide involvement is an important contributor to change in educational practice.

By involving the SMT members in this way, they would feel that they add value to the school, and are not merely executing instructions in terms of managing the instructional programme. In some schools this is indeed the case, hence the lack of creativity in the management of the instructional programme. The HODs report to the deputy principal, who is accountable to the principal, if the context within which the school operates, allows it. In this manner the entire staff becomes involved in the instructional programme, because the HODs are now also accountable for the activities in their departments or phases. Through participative management the principal should draw from the expertise of each SMT member, and as each contribution is valued, the team cohesion grows, which would inevitably lead to the development of trust. In order for the principal to involve the various role-players, there needs to be an element of trust. If mutual trust prevails, there would be more commitment and co-operation, and a problem-solving approach would be adopted. One way of demonstrating to his or her staff that he/she trusts them, is by involving them in the development of policies and procedures (Cross & Reitzug 1995:18). Cross and Reitzug (1995:18) continue by saying that "…trust and respect are the foundation of democratic decision-making". Various researchers have pointed to factors such as honesty, integrity, trust, care, and compassion (Brown & Townsend 1997:12-14, McEwen & Salters 1997:69-79, Sale 1997:16-19, Swann 1998:21-29). In other words, the relationship with the principal as leader needs to be based on sound principles and values. If this is the case, principals will then endeavour to consider the work of their staff meaningful. They will help their staff members to realise that they too have an important role to play, and that their contributions are valued. For the principal to improve the academic performance of his or her school, teamwork would be the answer. Day, Hall and Whitaker(1998:14)   assert that teamwork allows for schools to move out of the

traditional model of hierarchy with its distinctive status differentials, into a more collaborative and participative agreement to get the work done in a way that is personally supportive and professionally enriching. If much could be achieved through teamwork, it may be indicated that in some schools the SMTs function merely as a group of individuals, and not as a team.

The researcher, therefore, agrees with the notion that the proper structuring of the SMTs at school, involving them in decision-making, may lead to the more effective management of the instructional programme of the school, which in turn, will contribute to improving the academic performance of the learners. In order for principals to ensure that the instructional programme addresses the needs of the learners, they will have to draw on the expertise of all the members of the SMT. As has been illustrated above, the instructional programme is so vast and complex, that it would be unwise for principals not to utilize the expert knowledge available to them in the interest of the learners.

2.5   SUMMARY

In this chapter an attempt was made to highlight the views of various authors on the concepts school management team, participative management and instructional leadership. The objective was to give an insight into how SMTs could contribute to the management of the instructional programme. The researcher also illustrated the importance of teamwork, and indicated that the emphasis should fall on the unit rather than on the individual. Of great importance is the paradigm shift in favour of a more participative *modus operandi.* The notion of shared leadership was discussed, as opposed to the traditional manner in which some schools are still managed. The professionalism of the heads of departments should be acknowledged, and they should be trusted to represent the principal during phase meetings. There is now a move away from the notion that the principal alone is responsible for curriculum delivery. He or she still remains accountable for the successful delivery of teaching and learning, but should involve the members of his or her SMT to a greater extent. While increasing the involvement of the SMT, the principal will more and more assume the role of an instructional *facilitator,* as opposed to instructional *leader.*

Various authors regard teaching and learning as the core business of the school. The SMT should ensure that every decision they take is in the interest of the learners, as well as to improve teaching and learning. Also important is the fact that the school should have balanced approach in terms of curriculum delivery. As much as teaching and learning are the core business of the school, the school should also attempt to provide a holistic approach, meaning that learners should be developed to become responsible citizens. In order to realise this goal, the curriculum should be continued outside the classroom as well. This can be achieved by making provision for extra-curricular activities such as various sport and cultural acticvities, and co-curricular activities such as excursions related to a particular learning area for the learners(Department of Education 2000b:2).

Unless the school management team accepts accountability as a collective, there is no notion of a management team.

The next chapter will focus on the research methodology that will be used to address the problems stated in chapter one.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with a review of the literature on the participation of all the members of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme. This served as a basis to obtain comprehensive information on the particular topic.

 In this chapter the focus will be on the research design for the empirical investigation.

The results from the empirical investigation will hopefully

- shed light on similarities or differences to those found in the literature;
- reveal the extent of the problem as indicated, namely the lack of involvement of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme in some schools.

Furthermore, this chapter will focus on, *inter alia,*

- the aims and objectives of the empirical research;
- the research design and methodology;
- sampling;
- trustworthiness (validity and reliability); and
- ethical considerations.

3.2 THE RESEARCH AIMS

The main problem of the study is formulated as follows (see section 1.3):

How can the application of participative management principles ensure the effective involvement of all members of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme of a school?

The research aim is to determine qualitatively:

1.   the level of involvement of the members of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme;
2.   how the practice of participative management can add value to the involvement of members of the SMT in instructional leadership;
3.   the extent to which the members of different sub-committees in the school, *i.e.* the learning area committees, can play a role in instructional leadership;
4.   which guidelines will enable the SMT to improve the academic results of the school.

While doing the literature research reasons were found for the lack of involvement of the members of the SMT in some schools. The literature review provided solutions to the problem of how members of the SMT could become involved in the management of the instructional progamme with a view to improving the academic performance of the learners.

The empirical study was aimed at finding solutions to the sub-problems as mentioned above, and this was done by focusing on the participation of school management teams in selected schools in Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape Education Department.   The performance of the school management teams was looked into and measured against the ideal performance of other school management teams. The purpose of this approach was to provide guidelines for improving the situation as it was found in some schools. The information will be gathered by conducting three focus group interviews, one interview at each of the three identified schools. Other methods that will be used include observations, as well as the analysis of documents relevant to the investigation.

3.3   RESEARCH DESIGN

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:33) indicate that 'research design' refers to a plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions. The design indicates how the research is set up, namely what happens to the subjects, and what methods of data collection are used. For the purpose of this research aqualitative rsearch design was chosen.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:391) assert that "…qualitative research is naturalistic enquiry, the use of non-interfering data collection strategies to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them. Most qualitative research describes and analyzes people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions". Rallis and Rossman (2003) in Marshall & Rossman (2006:2) support this notion in asserting that qualitative research

- is naturalistic;
- draws on multiple methods that respect the humanity of participants in the study;
- focuses on context;
- is emergent and evolving; and
- is fundamentally interpretive.

Marshall and Rossman (2006:54) assert that qualitative research accepts the value of context and setting, searching for a deeper understanding of the participant's lived experiences of the particular phenomenon. Given the uniqueness of each context, the results would best be described in words as opposed to numbers as in a quantitative approach (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:46).

The following are some considerations for using a qualitative approach:

Firstly, a qualitative approach allows for purposeful sampling (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:171). The informants utilized in this research are knowledgeable and information-rich concerning what the researcher is investigating (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:397). They were able to provide information about the participation of the school management team in the instructional programme.

Secondly, the research is context-bound. This form of research is also called 'field research', as it is conducted in the natural environment of the participants (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:531).

Thirdly, a qualitative approach ensures that the researcher remains the main data-collecting instrument. This implies that the researcher assumes interactive social roles in which he records observations with participants in many situations (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:393).
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Finally, the researcher considered a qualitative approach to be the best approach, as it would allow him to collect data until it is saturated. This implies that the researcher would continue until he could not identify any new information (Creswell 1994:154).

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, is the fact that more than one method of data collection may be used (Marshall & Rossman 2006:2).

In this study the researcher made use of interviews, observations, and document analysis to collect data. Using these three data collecting methods implies the triangulation of data which improves trustworthiness (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:520).

3.4   RESEARCH METHODS

In terms of 'research methodology' researchers use perspectives with interactive strategies (ethnographic observation or ethnographic interview) and noninteractive strategies (use of documents). These strategies are flexible with various combinations of participant observation, in-depth interviews and artifact collection (McMillan and Schumacher (1997:392). The following is a discussion of the methodological aspects utilized in this research.

3.4.1 Population and sample

Ezzy and Liamputtong (2005:87) indicate that in making use of qualitative methods, the participants need to be selected to suit the phenomenon under investigation. McMillan and

Schumacher (1997:171) assert that, based on the researcher's knowledge about the population, specific subjects are selected to address the purpose of the research. This particular method is called "purposeful sampling" (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:171). Borg and Gall (2005:310) postulate that the goal of the sampling method "…is to select individuals for case study who are likely to be 'information–rich' with repect to the researchers' purposes.which would be in the best position to provide the desired data".

The total number of primary schools in Circuit 1 is twenty. For the purpose of this study, three primary schools were selected from Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape. These schools were selected because their SMTs are fully involved in the management of the instructional programme (section 1.5.2).

The SMTs at the identified schools were purposefully selected as opposed to being randomly selected. As the purpose of the study is to investigate the involvement of SMTs in the instructional programme of the school, all the members of the SMT of the three schools were part of the sample.

3.4.2   Data collection

As mentioned in chapter 1 section 1.5.3, this research is a case study. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:393) and McNeill (1990:87) assert that a case study focuses on one phenomenon which the researcher selects to fully understand, regardless of the number of sites, participants or documents. A case study, as an ethnographic approach, concentrates on a relatively small group or a single institution (McNeill 1990:89). The end product ought to be, according to Creswell (1998:37), a 'thick' description of the phenomenon under study. He further asserts (1998:37) that a 'thick' description refers to the complete, literal description of the phenomenon being investigated within a context bound by time and place.

This study focuses on the participation of all SMT members in managing the instructional programme.

Marshall and Rossman (2006:57) contest that a case study is a very complex strategy, and may entail multiple methods, such as in this study, interviews, observation and

document analysis. The methods will be used to obtain data in order to be able to answer the research question on involving the members of the SMT in managing the instructional programme.

3.4.2.1 Interviews

Wengraf (2006:4) postulates that in-depth interviewing is one or more face-to-face interactions between interviewer and interviewee with the sole purpose of understanding the interviewee's life experience as expressed in his or her own words. He continues (2006:4) by asserting that when face-to-face interviews are being conducted, one must be mindful of the specificity of society, the setting and types of people involved. Interviews, according to (Wengraf 2006:3), have the following features:

- the interview is designed to improve knowledge;

- it is a special type of conversational interaction: in some ways it is like other conversations;

- it has to be planned and prepared for like any other form of research activity, but what is planned is a deliberate half-scripted or quarter-scripted interview: its questions are only partially prepared in advance (semi-structured), and will be largely improvised by the interviewer. The interview itself, however, is a joint production, a co-production by the interviewer and the interviewee; and

- its purpose is to go into matters 'in depth'.

The semi-structured focus group interview is a variation of the ethnographic interview, in the sense of achieving a better understanding of the problem by interviewing a purposefully selected group of people, rather than individuals (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:453). Essentially, a focus group consists of the bringing together of several people because they share certain characteristics relevant to the questions of the study (Marshall & Rossman 2006:114). Marshall & Rossman (2006:114) further indicate that a supportive environment is created by asking focused questions to encourage a discussion and debate of the particular topic. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:453), the quality and richness of data obtained from a focus group interview are much greater than in one-on-one interviewing.

(i)   Advantages of focus group interviews:

- focus group interviews are socially oriented, studying participants in a natural atmosphere, rather than in artificial experimental surroundings;

- they are more relaxed than one-to-one interviews;

- combined with participant observation, focus group interviews are especially useful for gaining access, focusing site on selection and sampling, as well as to check tentative conclusions;

- their format is more flexible, as it allows the facilitator to explore unanticipated issues as they arise in the discussion; and

- the cost of focus group interviews is relatively low (Marshall & Rossman 2006:114-115).

(ii)   Disadvantages of focus group interviews:

- the researcher should be aware of power dynamics and be able to facilitate well;

- the researcher has less control over a group interview than over an individual interview;

- time can be lost if irrelevant issues are discussed; and

- the data are difficult to analyze, because the context also is essential to understand the participant's comments (Marshall & Rossman 2006:114-115).

In this study semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with the members of the SMTs. The interviews were used to obtain their opinion at another level, that is, the group's consensus or disagreement on their involvement in the instructional programme of the school. Each group consisted of all the members of the school management team (SMT) of each of the three schools, thus 5 to 6 people, depending on their availability.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:453) refer to this approach as interviewing "...persons who would have knowledge of the topic". Because of the informal setting, the relaxed atmosphere, and the open-ended nature of the questions, interaction was easy (Ezzy & Liamputtong 2005:81).

The open-ended questions enabled the researcher to ask follow-up questions where it was deemed necessary. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:447) assert that in the open-ended interview "...reformulated questions are carefully arranged and put to all interviewees in a similar sequence; this reduces interviewer effects and biases". This type of interview is also called the 'standardized open-ended interview' (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:447).

All the interviews were audio-taped, and were transcribed *verbatim* (appendix D). The resulting text was analyzed. Appendix D is an example of one of the transcripts of the three primary schools. The interview schedule used for conducting the three focus group interviews is attached as Appendix C. Appendix C is an example of the interview schedules of the interviews used at the three primary schools.

3.4.2.2 Observation

As stated in chapter 1, section 1.5.3.2, observation forms a very important part of qualitative research. It provides insight into the context in which the research is done.

Observation also provided the researcher with the opportunity to access information which could not be obtained during the interview, probably due to the sensitive nature of the interview (Ezzy & Liamputtong 2005:102). According to Marshall and Rossman (2006:9), observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events in the natural setting of the participants. The researcher was able to observe aspects that the participants were unaware of, namely facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:441).

In this research, at least one SMT meeting at each of the three schools was observed. Specific aspects could be observed regarding the instructional leadership task, for instance how decisions are taken. The SMT meetings were also observed with a view to determining the *modus operandi* of the members of the SMT to ensure academic progress. In order not to influence the SMT in any way, the researcher maintained an unobtrusive role by not participating in the meeting. Observation, thus, as a method in

qualitative enquiry, is fundamental and very important (Marshall & Rossman 2006:99; Ezzy & Liamputtong 2005:102).

(i)   The following are two advantages of observation:

- by means of observation the researcher is able to observe aspects that the participants are unaware of, like facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, etc.(Marshall & Rossman 2006:99) and

- it provides insight into the context in which the research is done. By observing the participants in their natural surroundings, the energy in terms of power-play can also be recognized (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:441).

(ii)   Disadvantages of observation.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006:99), observation has the following disadvantages:

- the possibility of discomfort and uncomfortable ethical dilemmas, and even danger, *e.g.,* situations in which social tensions may erupt into violence;

- difficulty in managing a relatively unobtrusive role; and

- the challenge of identifying the big picture, while finely observing a lot of fast-moving and complex behaviour.

In this study the purpose of observation was

- to observe how the principles of participative management are applied in the management of the instructional programme;

- to obtain information which was not covered during the interview (Ezzy & Liamputtong 2005:102); and

- to observe how the behaviour and attitude of the SMT members contribute to academic performance (Marshall & Rossman 2006:99).

3.4.2.3   Field notes

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:444), as well as Ezzy and Liamputtong (2005:171), the purpose of field notes is to document what is experienced. Marshall and Rossman (2006:99) insist that field notes are not scribbles. Field notes should demonstrate explicit note-organising and note-managing strategies. For field notes to make sense, it should make provision for descriptive notes on the left, while leaving room for comments on the right (Marshall & Rossman (2006:99).

In this study the experiences of the researcher were indicated in the notes, and this helped with perceptions and interpretations (Ezzy & Liamputtong 2005:171). The field notes were dated and the context identified (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 422).

3.4.2.4   Relevant documents

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006:107), researchers supplement observation and interviews with gathering and analyzing documents relevant to the research. In documents the beliefs and values of the participants in the setting are portrayed. The analysis of documents is an unobtrusive method (Marshall & Rossman 2006:107).

Documents such as the following were collected and integrated with the data already collected

- the minutes of SMT meetings;
- the school's mission statement;
- the school and instructional policy;
- assessment strategies; and
- the minutes, *etc.* of learning area meetings.

By studying these documents, the researcher obtained a better understanding of how the specific SMT operated. The minutes of the meetings provided confirmation of the manner in which decisions were taken. The level of involvement of the SMT could also be established with reference to the job descriptions of members of the SMT.

3.4.3 Administrative matters

McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 195) mention that in order for research to be conducted at an institution such as a school, approval needs to be sought beforehand.

In this study the approval of the Western Cape Education Department (Appendix A), and of the principals of the three relevant schools (Appendix B) were obtained. Appendix B is a copy of one of the letters that was sent to the principals of the relevant schools. In order not to disrupt the academic programme, interviews were conducted after school hours, and by appointment.

3.4.4 Data analysis

In section 1.5.3.5 it was mentioned that an inductive analysis would be done (Borg, Gall & Gall 2005:329, and McMillan & Schumacher 1997:502). Inductive analysis or interpretational analysis, involves a systematic set of procedures to code and classify qualitative data to ensure that the important constructs, themes and patterns emerge (Borg, *et al* 2005: 315). The research problem stated in chapter 1 section 1.3, led to the formulation of the following sub-questions:

1. To what level are the members of the SMT involved in managing and leading the instructional programme?
2. In what way can the practice of participative management ensure that the members of the SMT are involved in instructional leadership?
3. Can the members of different sub-committees in the school, *i.e.* the foundation phase, the intermediate and senior phases, and learning area committees be involved in instructional leadership?
4. What should the principal be doing in mobilizing his or her school management team to improve the academic results of the school?

The above elements are referred to as 'variables'. Airasian et al (2006:468) assert that variables indicate what will be examined in a research study. The variables mentioned above formed the basis of the interview questions (Appendix C). The data gathered from the interviews were grouped according to these variables to facilitate the analysis process.

According to Tesch (1990) in Borg et al (2005: 315), the steps in interpretational analysis are:

- prepare a data base containing the field data (field notes, documents, transcripts, records, etc.) collected during the study;
- number each line of text sequentially and then divide them into meaningful segments (e.g. in the analysis of interview data each question plus the participant's response may be a separate segment);
- develop meaningful categories to code the data;
- encode each segment and all the categories that apply to it;
- cumulate all the segments that have been coded by a given category; and
- generate constructs that emerge from the categories.

In view of the above, McMillan and Schumacher (1997:502) concur in asserting that qualitative analysis is a systematic process of selecting, categorizing, comparing, synthesizing, and interpreting, to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest (section 1.5.3.5).

This study followed an inductive approach, where the data were narrowed down to small and important groups (Airasian et al 2006:469). The approach suggested by Airasian, *et al* (2006:471) corresponds with Tesch's method (section 1.5.3.5), as described by Borg et al (2007: 469).

In this study the interviews were transcribed *verbatim* (McMillan & Schumacher 1997: 500). Thereafter, all transcripts were read and re-read to gain a sense of the data. Ideas were jotted down as it sprung to mind. A list of all the topics was made, and clustered into smaller topics. From this, major topics were identified. The topics were further abbreviated by means of codes, and these codes were written next to each segment of data in the transcribed interview. Airasian et al (2006:471) mention that 'coding' is the process of categorically marking units as a way to indicate meaning and patterns.

In this study the research findings are presented in a narrative form, supported by the direct words of the participants to illustrate particular interpretations (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:501).

3.5   TRUSTWORTHINESS (validity and reliability)

With reference to trustworthiness, McMillan and Schumacher (1997:404) assert that 'validity' refers to the degree that the explanations of the phenomena match the realities of the world.

Any research conducted on a particular phenomenon is subjected to 'canons of quality' - criteria against which the trustworthiness of the research can be evaluated (Marshall & Rossman 2006:201). These 'canons' can be rephrased to questions to which all research needs to respond (Lincoln & Guba 2000 in Marshall & Rossman 2006:201). According to Guba and Lincoln (2000) in Marshall & Rossman (2006:201), the following questions may be asked:

1. How credible are the particular findings of the study?
2. How applicable and transferable are these findings to other settings?
3. How can one be reasonably sure that the findings can be simulated if the study was conducted with the participants in the same context?
4. How can one be sure that the findings reflect the participants' opinion and the inquiry itself rather than a fabrication from the researcher's biases or prejudices?

Guba and Lincoln (2000) in Marshall & Rossman (2006:201) refer to these questions as establishing the truth value, and applicability and transferability, dependability, and neutrality/conformability.

These values will be briefly discussed below.

3.5.1 Truth value

In terms of truth value, the aim is to demonstrate that the research was done in such a way that the phenomenon was accurately identified and described (Marshall & Rossman 2006:201). By following a multi-method approach such as interviews, observation and the study of relevant documents, as in this study, the truth value will be enhanced, as each method should address the other. The comments made in the interviews should be

reflected in the minutes of the SMT meetings as well as school and instructional policies. During the observations the researcher should also be able to observe how the principles of participative management are applied. The data derived at would then be convincing to readers (Marshall & Rossman 2006:201). In this regard, De Vos, Fouchè, Strydom, Pogggenpoel, Schurinck and Schurinck (1998:349-351) assert that 'truth value' is the confidence a researcher has in the truth of the findings, based on a proper research design, gained from information-rich participants, as well as the context in which the research was conducted.

3.5.2 Applicability and transferability

In terms of applicability, Guba and Lincoln (1985) in Marshall & Rossman (2006:201), as well as Schulze (2002:79), mention that the researcher should be able to argue that his findings will be useful to others in similar situations, with similar questions, or questions of practice. Transferability demonstrates the applicability of the findings to another context.

The findings of this study should be applicable to schools in similar situations.

3.5.3 Dependability

According to Poggenpoel 1994 in De Vos et al (1998:350), 'dependability' refers to the degree to which the research design is adequately described so that it can be extended to other studies.

3.5.4 Neutrality / confirmability

Marshall and Rossman (2006:203) assert that neutrality/confirmability portrays objectivity. In this regard, Guba and Lincoln (1985) in Marshall & Rossman (2006:203) emphasize the need for the study to be confirmed by another. In this way the qualitative nature of the enquiry increases the strength of statements made by others (Guba & Lincoln 1985 in Marshall & Rossman 2006:203).

The following strategies were used in this study to ensure the trustworthiness of the research (McMillan & Schumacher 1997: 405):

- The triangulation of methods, which refers to a number of methods. Interviews, the observation technique, and the study of documents were used in this particular research.

- The participants' language. The participants were allowed to answer the questions in the language of their choice to ensure a more spontaneous response, and to avoid misunderstanding.

- *Verbatim* accounts. *Verbatim* accounts from the transcripts and direct quotes from the documents were used.

- Mechanically recorded data. The interviews were tape recorded.

- Field research. The interviews were conducted and the observations done in the natural settings that reflect the reality of the participants' life experience.

- Low-inference descriptors. 'Low-inference descriptors' refer to concrete, precise descriptions from field notes and interview elaborations.

- The research design was adequately described.

3.6   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations are principles which every researcher should adhere to, given the sensitivity of information. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:194), "Educational researchers need to be very sensitive to ethical principles because of the nature of the research topic, the fact that they collect data on a face-to-face interactive basis, because of the emergent nature of the research design and, finally, because of the participants' reciprocity".

The following aspects of ethics were considered in this study:

3.6.1 Informed consent

According to Schulze (2002:17), participants should be given sufficient information before the data collection process begins.

In this study the participants were provided with the aims of the study, the procedure (including the using of tape recordings during the interviews) which would be followed, the importance of confidentiality, and how the information could be of benefit to their schools.

In addition, a letter of information was sent to the participating schools which, among others, included the title of the research, with a space for the principal to give his consent. (Appendix B)

3.6.2 Deception, privacy, and empowerment

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:420) indicate that 'deception' is viewed by most researchers as "…violating informed consent". Other researchers suggest that field workers may negotiate with the participants for them (the participants) to understand the power they have in the interviews. This power and the decisions that emerge on grounds thereof may be in exchange for the privacy lost by participating in the study (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:420).

In this respect participants were informed by letter of the purpose of the study (appendix B), as mentioned earlier.

3.6.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:195), information regarding the participants has to be kept confidential, unless otherwise agreed upon, and only after obtaining their consent. Only the researcher is entitled to access the names of the participants and the data, and he or she has to undertake not to release this information to anyone (Airasian & Gay 2003:84).

In this research the names of the participants as well as the names of the schools were indicated other means, for example 'SMT member 1'.

3.6.4 Dissemination of the research findings

As a gesture of gratitude towards the participants in the research, the findings could be communicated to them (Schulze 2002:17). This should be done in an objective manner. Unnecessary detail should not be provided, and the principle of confidentiality has to be upheld.

Each school who participated in this study will be given a copy of the results of the research.

3.7   SUMMARY

In this chapter the research aims, the research design, as well as the rationale for using a qualitative approach were discussed. The advantages and disadvantages of focus group interviews also received attention. The data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and the inspection of documents were dealt with. Ethical issues were also indicated, as was the trustworthiness of the research findings. Truth value, applicability, dependability, and neutrality were also briefly discussed.

The research findings will be elaborated on in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to investigate the involvement of the members of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme. The investigation was based on a literature review, and an empirical study.

This chapter will focus on a discussion of the research questions as formulated in chapter 1(sections 1.3 and 1.4). Furthermore, there will be reported on how the SMTs of the three schools in Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape manage their instructional programmes.   The research was done by means of qualitative methods, which included focus group interviews with the respective school management teams, a study of relevant documents, and observations. The findings will be discussed under the headings observations, documents and interviews.

4.2   DATA COLLECTION

Focus group interviews were conducted with the SMTs of the three primary schools in Circuit 1 in the Metropole North of the Western Cape Education Department. A total of 18 SMT members were used in the sample (section 4.2). In addition to the interviews, the researcher attended one SMT meeting at each of the three schools, the school context was observed, and a study was made of certain relevant documents. In terms of the observation of the SMT meetings, aspects that were looked at were the atmosphere at the meeting, the mode of decision-making, and the interaction of SMT members with one another. The observations also served as a confirmation of what had been said or not been said during the interviews. The aim of the interviews was to gain a sense of how these schools manage their respective instructional programmes. By means of the interviews the researcher could correlate what was found in the literature with reality, that is, what happens at the school, in comparison to what the literature indicates.

The data from the interviews were collected from the participants of the three schools, as indicated in table 4.1.

PARTICIPANTS	SEX		TOTAL
	MALE	**FEMALE**	
School Management Team: School A	3	3	6
School Management Team: School B	4	3	7
School Management Team: School C	1	4	5

Table 4: Biographical information of the participants.

4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.3.1 Research Findings: Observations

The following main findings regarding the observations can be formulated. Observations were made of SMT meetings, as mentioned in sections 1.5.3.2 and 3.4.2.2. The format used in table 4.3 was based on McMillan & Schumacher's model (1993:424).

1. General observations
2. Who are in the group?
3. What is happening here? • What behaviour is repetitive and irregular? • How do people in the group behave towards one another? • What is the content of their conversations?
4. Where does the group meet?

5. When does the group meet?
6. Why does the group interact as it does?

Table 4.2: Observation table (Source: McMillan and Schumacher 1993:424).

Observations were done at three primary schools in Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape Education Department.

What follows is general information about the schools observed, as well as observations of the school management team meetings as well as the findings regarding the focus of the research emanating from the observations. The observation focused on how the meetings of the school management teams were conducted. These observations, known as field notes (Marshall & Rossman 2006:99), were recorded as soon as possible after the meetings.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION: SCHOOL A
Date of observation: 14.09.09
Place: Bellville South

School A is situated in a sub-economic area, renowned for its anti-social activities. The school has an enrolment of 660 learners and a staff of 21 educators.

It is a pre-fabricated structure, and makes provision for the basic needs of a school, such as sufficient classrooms, a staffroom and administration block, and a science laboratory. There is a big playground. The schoolgrounds are well-maintained. No graffiti were observed on the school walls. The school has electricity, a telephone, running water and proper ablution facilities.

Lessons commence at 08:00 in the morning and end at 14:05 in the afternoons. The school time-table makes provision for 11 periods of 30 minutes each. There are two intervals of 20 minutes and 15 minutes respectively (Educator Information Guide 2008:7).

Despite the surroundings, a healthy culture of teaching and learning prevails.

OBSERVATION OF A SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

The observation focused on how meetings of the school management teams of the three schools were conducted with reference to aspects such as:

- The application of participative management
- The attitudes towards instructional leadership
- The extend of the involvement of the SMT members.

Observations	Observer's comments
There were six people present at the meeting. The SMT consisted of one HOD each for the foundation and intermediate phases, 2 post level 1 educators, of whom one took charge of the senior phase, a deputy principal and the principal. The second senior educator is co-opted to assist with the senior phase. The SMT meets every two weeks. Meetings are relatively short as the SMT meets regularly.	*The SMT is well constituted. I also noticed that post level 1 educators form part of the SMT. This helps a lot in terms of breaking down barriers between the SMT and the rest of the staff.*
The staffroom is situated in the administration section of the school. The school has a pre-fabricated structure and is 30 years old. The staffroom is about 10m by 5.6m. The room is very neat. Provision is made for a notice board to pin relevant notices on, such as notices of staff meetings. I also noticed an overhead projector as well as a white pulldown screen. On the walls were inspirational quotations by education philosophers. The room was well lit.	*The SMT is in control of the situation at school. They do not allow the surroundings to get the better of them.* *There existed open communication between the principal and the staff*
The principal provided each SMT member with a standardized agenda. The items were pre-approved. Aspects not covered during the meeting were indicated as "not applicable". A positive atmosphere existed. The principal declared the meeting open, and explained my presence at the meeting. The SMT	*No autocratic management style was visible. The staff felt free to express their views. This I think gives meaning to them forming part of the SMT.*

had no problem with me observing their meeting. The principal asked for inputs from the floor. The SMT responded with ease. Nobody seemed scared to speak, or intimidated in any way. Their body language was generally positive. The principal constantly asked for input, but he also gave direction. From there the discussions developed. Participants were listened to. Nobody interrupted while somebody was speaking. Everybody felt free to speak. The discussions were focused on academic matters.	*It appears that the SMT regularly operates in this fashion. The input of the SMT members is valued.* *The principal was at ease with his SMT and this made it easier for the SMT to participate in the discussions*

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION: SCHOOL B
Date of observation: 08.10.09
Place: Belhar

School B is situated in Extension 13, a sub-economic area in Belhar East. The township is about six kilometers from Cape Town International Airport. Extension 13 is a gangster paradise, and is renowned for its gang-related violence, drug abuse, and single parents (*http://archive.lib. msu.edu/DMC*). As the school is situated amongst houses, negative elements have easy access to the school. For this reason the school has proper fencing, with barbed wire to keep villians at bay.

The school has an enrolment of 1140 learners, with 32 educators.

The school is a brick building consisting of 31 classrooms, a staffroom and administration block, a science laboratory and a huge rugby field. The school has electricity, a telephone, running water and proper ablution facilities.

The lessons commence at 08:00 and end at 14:15 in the afternoons. The school time-table makes provision for 5 periods of 40 and 50 minutes. There are two intervals of 20 minutes each.

There exists a healthy culture of teaching and learning at the school. Learners and educators alike seem to be very proud of their school. The school is exceptionally neat, despite the adverse surroundings. It has a beautiful garden and a well developed sports fields. The achievements of the learners and the educators are celebrated. This can be observed when entering the the school.

OBSERVATION OF A SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

Observations	Observer's comments
The SMT seemed relaxed, cracked a few jokes and were suitably dressed.	*To me this is sign of professionalism and pride.*
The SMT consisted of seven people. Two HODs were responsible for the foundation phase of whom one took charge of the grade R's. The other two HODs were responsible for the intermediate and senior phases respectively. There were two deputy principals of whom one was responsible for the academic programme of the school and the other for the management of discipline. The principal was also present.	*The SMT consisted of competent educators. Each one knew what was expected from him/her.*
The HODs and deputy principals had applied through the education bulletin for their posts. They were interviewed and then appointed. The principal could not appoint them.	
The purpose of the meeting was to plan for the last term of 2009, as well as for 2010. The agenda was distributed beforehand to allow the members of the SMT to add points to be discussed. The principal respectfully allowed anybody who had something to say to speak.	*The principal follows a democratic management style. He does, however, take stance, if necessary.* *.* *Each SMT member could give his or her input. They were not*
Someboby proposed and someone else seconded	*scared in any way to air their*

the motions. The principal allowed SMT members to give their input before a decision was taken.	*opinions.*
The discussions were about issues pertaining to the curriculum. The agenda was fixed. Discussions were frank and to the point. It was mentioned, for example, that the staffroom should not only be used for discussions, but for staff development as well. The meeting took place in the principal's office. The conference table was of medium size so that the SMT members could sit close together.	*Discussions were frank, and were considered to be in the interest of the school.*
Meetings take place every two weeks after school hours. An important observation was that the SMT members were given the opportunity to discuss, and recommend, and only then is a decision taken.	*It appears that the SMT regularly operates in this way.* *The inputs of SMT members are valued.* *This school experienced a difficult time, and decided that the best way to move forward was through participative management. For this reason the principal allows the SMT to participate in discussions pertaining to the management of the school.*

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION: SCHOOL C
Date of observation: 12.10.09
Place: Bellville

School C is situated in Bellville City, in a middle-class area that is well resourced. It has a fully developed rugby field, netball fields and tennis courts.

This school is indeed a place where teaching and learning can take place and are taken to its full consequence. The school, furthermore, has its own mini-busses to assist with the school's transport needs.

The school has an enrolment of 500 learners with 13 educators.

It is a large brick building that makes provision for 30 plus classrooms, and everything that is required to ensure quality education, such as a computer room, a library, and a science laboratory.

The school time-table makes provision for 10 periods of 35 minutes. There are two intervals of 20 minutes each.

The school is generally quiet and a good culture of teaching and learning prevails. School safety is clearly a priority as access control is exercised. When entering the school you are welcomed by a friendly receptionist, and this sets the tone of the entire school. The rich history of the school's achievements is displayed in the foyer and the corridors.

OBSERVATION OF A SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

Observations	Observer's comments
The first thing that struck me was the punctuality of the SMT members. While I was talking to the principal, at exactly 14:45 there was knock on the door. The person who entered was a well-dressed female educator who had great respect for the principal and his office. The entire SMT, except for the principal, was female.	*To me this is sign of professionalism and pride.* *Punctuality was part of their work ethic.*
The SMT consists of five people, with two HODs and two post level 1 educators who were co-opted to serve on the SMT. One of the HODs was the second in command (at the school) and also responsible for the senior phase. The other HOD and post level 1 educator were responsible for the foundation phase, and the second post level 1 educator took charge of the intermediate phase.	*There were no barriers between the SMT and the staff as post level 1 educators formed part of the SMT.* *The principal did not have*

The HODs applied by means of the education bulletin for their posts, and the post level 1 educators were appointed via an internal process. In this case the principal would have had a great say in the appointment of these educators. One could say that they were hand-picked. This is an advantage for any principal. This particular meeting was the first of the fourth term. More meetings would follow once a month.

From what I could gather from the educators' information books, every SMT member had her own job description. They all knew what was expected from them. The principal opened the meeting and introduced me to the members of his staff. From the outset I noted that every SMT member could give her opinion on matters. The SMT was very professional in their interaction with one another. Topics were discussed and then the SMT as a collective came to a decision. The principal did not influence them into what to decide or how they should deal with a particular issue.

The content of their discussions included curriculum matters, and the admission of foreign learners. The members of the SMT were very attentive, and made decisions in the interest of the school.

The meeting took place in the office of the principal. This particular office is big enough to accommodate the SMT.

The number of meetings varied according to the need. They would also have special meetings from time to

much control over the appointment of his SMT, except for the post level 1 educators. He had to be satisfied with the staff members he had, and he moulded them into what he wanted them to be.

The SMT met on a regular basis.

SMT members were well briefed regarding their responsibilities.

Openhearted discussions are encouraged and the input of SMT members is valued.

The SMT is focused on the core business of the school.

Time was not an issue for this

time. It was of no consequence when the meetings ended. This particular meeting continued until 18:00. From what I could gather, the SMT was influential to change. The demographics of the learners reflected this. This school used to be a school for white learners, now it is a multi-cultural school. The SMT members were also not scared to take risks if it would benefit the school. This SMT was very serious about their vocation, and exhibited strong Christian values.	*SMT. They discussed matters at length in the best interest of the school.* *They are not inhibited to challenge policy if it does not make sense.*

The following main findings regarding the observations can be formulated:

- It was found that SMT members could freely express their opinion about the instructional programme. An open communication thus existed between the principal and the rest of the SMT members. In this way the SMT felt that they formed part of a team whose sole aim was to improve the academic results of the school. Of greater importance was the fact that they have been consulted on issues pertaining to the management of the instructional programme. This response addressed research aims one and two as formulated in section 1.4 and section 3.4.4. If further confirmed the fact that the principal acknlowledged their expertise as professional educators.

- It has further been found that the attitude of the principal was conducive to them participating in discussions the way they did. This inviting approach of the principal confirms the critical role he or she plays in terms of involving all the members of the SMT. Should a principal demonstrate an autocratic management style, without reason, he or she would be directly responsible for poor relations among the SMT members and indeed the rest of the staff. No autocratic management style was visible and in doing so the rest of the SMT members could contribute to discussion, thus applying the principle of participative management. The SMT meetings focused on the core business of the school which is teaching and learning. This was evident in the reports that were given from the HODs with regard to the

academic perforfmance in the different phases. This observation answered the second and third aims as formulated in sections 1.4 and section 3.4.4.

In summary it has been found during the observations done at the SMT meeting(s) that the principal thus allow the rest of the SMT members to participate in matters pertaining to managing and leading the instructional programme of the school

4.3.2 Research Findings: Documents

The researcher studied a variety of documents, together with the interviews and observations with a view to triangulation, namely to cross-validate sources (section 1.5.3). Different sources were used for this purpose, such as the minutes of SMT meetings, assessment policies, the schools' mission statements, educator information books and the job-descriptions of SMT members (section 1.5.3.4). The emphasis here related to research aims one and two as well as the research questions formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4 namely the extent of the involvement of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme and the application of participative management. Various instructional leadership tasks were assigned to the entire SMT, and they had to report on their progress at SMT meetings (SMT minutes dated 14 September and 12 October 2009 of school C). The documents used in this research confirmed that all the members of the SMT have been assigned duties which they had to perform and be accountable for. This addressed research aim and question three as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4. By studying the mission statements of the schools, it was obvious that all of the schools were striving towards quality education and the development of the child as a whole. Their job descriptions were geared towards this end. Each SMT member was fully aware of what was expected from him or her. This could be observed from the information booklets of the particular schools. A very important observation was the fact that quality control was part of the SMTs' responsibilities. Assessment tasks, question papers, exercise books, as well as learner portfolios, were inspected at regular intervals, at least once per term.

In all the documents meaning was given to the mission statement of the schools. The actions of the SMT were geared towards quality education, and the needs of the learners were addressed. In all the schools the SMT members were fully involved in the management of the instructional programme thus answering to the research aims and

questions as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4. The documents furthermore served as a confirmation of the comments given during the interviews.

In summary it has been found that that the documents studied answered the research aims and questions as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4.

4.3.3 Research findings: Interviews

The interview schedule as research instrument was used as a point of departure to determine categories (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:516). The researcher started off with predetermined categories, based on the interview schedule. The transcripts of the interviews were read a number of times to get a sense of the contents, before numbering each line and dissecting it into smaller parts (Schumacher & McMillan 1997: 510). The questions were read and re-read to establish which categories could be clustered to determine the main categories. Related topics were categorized, coded and the data material belonging together were grouped together to form the main categories. After establishing the main categories, sub-categories were identified, as indicated in table 4.2 below (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:516). The categories were then filed separately, with one comprehensive transcription list stored in a safe place (McMillan & Schumacher 1997: 526).

Category one: The task of the instructional leader
Sub-categories: • Effective instruction as key management responsibility • The principal as the leader, and not the decision-maker, of the SMT
Category two: The involvement of the SMT
Sub-categories: • The complexity of the principal's responsibilities • The necessity of involving SMT members • Various responsibilities as instructional leadership tasks

Category three: Interaction and coherence

Sub-categories:
   • Shared decision-making
 	
   • Acceptance of ownership of the instructional programme
 	
   • To be valued as an SMT member

Category four: Contributions of SMT members

Sub-categories:
   • Staff development
 	
   • Academic results

Category five: Sub-committees

Sub-categories:
   • Phases
 	
   • Accountability and responsibility
 	
   • The involvement of post level 1 educators
 	
   • Learning area committees

Table 4.3: Categories formulated from the interview data.

The findings of the empirical investigation were based on the information received during the interviews with the three respective SMTs. This data were subsequently categorized into five main categories, namely

- the task of the instructional leader;
- the involvement of the SMT;
- interaction and coherence;
- contributions of SMT members; and
- sub-committees.

What follows now is a discussion of the findings of the main categories in sub-sections which are aligned with the sub-categories derived from the interviews.   For the purpose of

a discussion of the results of the interviews, the relevant parts originally done in Afrikaans were translated to English to accommodate all readers.

4.3.3.1 The task of the instructional leader

The researcher identified the following sub-categories related to the task of the instructional leader from the interviews:

- effective instruction as key management responsibility;

- the principal as the leader, and not the decision-maker, of the SMT;

Each sub-category will be discussed briefly.

(1) Effective instruction as key management responsibility

According to Kruger (2003:207) (section 2.4.5), there exists a direct relation between the instructional role of the principal and the other management functions he or she needs to perform. Kruger (2003:207) further asserts that this link between the instructional leadership task of the principal and the other management areas, demonstrates the interrelatedness of the various school management tasks, as well as the need to effectively involve the SMT in the execution of these tasks. The principal has to be supported by the SMT to ensure that the instructional programme is taken to its full consequences. The core business of the school is teaching and learning. The principal as leader of the SMT has to use everything in his or her power to ensure that teaching and learning take place at school. Kruger in (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003:245) confirms that apart from the management tasks of the principal, his or her core function is to ensure effective teaching and learning. In the interview conducted at school C, a SMT member asserted that "…*since the success of the school depends on effective instruction the learners receive, the management of the instructional programme of the school is the most important managerial task of the principal*".   Based on what this SMT member said, the academic results of the school determine whether the school has fulfilled its mandate thus answering the first research aim and question in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4. It further confirms that the primary reason for learners attending school is to learn, and for teachers it is to

teach. This SMT member categorically stated that it is indeed the principal's responsibility to ensure that the instructional programme is properly managed.

As the management of the instructional programme is such a mammoth task, the principal will have to involve the rest of the SMT. Lambert (2002:37) asserts in this regard that, "Instructional leadership must be a shared community undertaking". The principal at school A took this point of view to a higher level by saying that "…*as principal I am under the impression that the role of the heads of departments in terms of the instructional programme is greater than that of the principal".* This implies that the responsibility of managing the instructional programme is the responsibility of the entire SMT and not only of the principal. In this instance the second research aim and question has been addressed as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4. Of great importance is that the principal must make use of all the expertise available. A SMT member at school C confirms this notion in asserting that *"…he is the leader of people who are professionally qualified for their job and (he) can therefore utilize their expertise to contribute to the improvement of teaching and staff in-service training".* Another SMT member at school C said, *"Everybody is partially responsible, but the one who takes the lead - the chairperson of the SMT, is the principal……"* In all the interviews it was ascertained that the responsibility of managing the instructional programme of the school is a 'shared' responsibility, as mentioned in chapter 2, section 2.1.2.

With reference the above it was found that the SMT fully understood the concept of instructional leadership, thus answering to the question of the extend of the involvement of all the members of the SMT as well the application of participative management (section 1.4 and 3.4.4)

(2) The principal as the leader, and not the decision-maker of the SMT

As mentioned above, the management of the instructional programme is a joint effort between the principal and the rest of the SMT. In any organisation decisions are taken on a regular basis. Marks and Printy (2003b:379), as indicated in section 1.2, assert that shared instructional leadership satisfies the need of educators to have a say in matters which affect them. The principal as leader of the SMT should be mindful of the fact that he or she is working with professional educators. What is significant is the fact that the leadership of the principal is not disregarded in any way. A SMT member at school C

indicated that *"…the leadership mainly lies with the principal and everybody else contributes as well".* A SMT member at school B is more assertive, and said that *"…the principal as such is the leader of leaders at school and forms part of the SMT as a participative group of people - we are a participative group of workers who strengthen the arms of the principal. I regard him as the leader and not the decision-maker as such, rather as one of the decision-makers within the team".* According to most of the educators who were interviewed, shared decision-making is considered a very important factor in managing the instructional programme. In this regard a SMT member at school B indicated that *"….the principal is considered to be part of the team and not as somebody who dictates to us. A matter is discussed first and then we decide as a management team what would be in the best interest of the school".* Based on the reponses of the participants the second research aim was answered viz whether there is a need to involve the rest of the members of the SMT (section 1.4) as well as the first research question in section 3.4.4.

From the discussion above it was found that the input of the entire SMT should be considered, to ensure transparent decision-making. The interviewees indicated that they would prefer to be considered in this respect. By allowing the SMT members to participate, the second research (section 3.4.4) was dealt with.

4.3.3.2   The involvement of the SMT in managing the instructional programme

In section 2.4.3 the necessity of involving the SMT was highlighted. From the interviews reasons were identified as to why the SMshould be involved in the management of the instructional programme. These responses relate to the literature in chapter two, as well as to the documentation, such as the educator information books of the relevant personnel.

The researcher identified the following three sub-categories:

- the complexity of the principal's responsibilities;

- the necessity for involving the SMT members; and

- various responsibilities as instructional leadership tasks.

Each sub-category will be discussed briefly.

(1) The complexity of the principal's responsibilities

According to the interviewees, the task of the principal is too complex to manage the instructional programme on his or her own. Despite the complexity of the task, it is still expected from him or her to ensure effective teaching and learning, (American Association of School Administrators (1992:21) (section 1.2, sub- section 2.) In this regard a SMT member of school C indicated that *"…the role the principal has, always had, two major dimensions, namely that of instructional leader and school manager".* This dual function, according to this SMT member, has as its consequence that *"…he cannot always be available to give individual teachers intensive assistance with their teaching tasks".* In order for the principal, therefore, to perform his or her day-to-day tasks, he/she will have to involve the members of the SMT, thus answering the question on participative mananagement as alluded to in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4.

The principal of school A is adamant about the involvement of the SMT. He categorically states that the education department expects from SMTs to perform certain duties. He mentioned that *"…the duties of both the HODs and the deputy principal are prescribed by the education department and it is unfortunately non-negotiable".* In the educators' information books of the three schools concerned, this practice is confirmed in the manner that the duties are allocated to the SMTs. This allocation of responsibilities to all members of the SMT confirms the notion that the principal should consult his or her SMT on matters pertaining to the management and leading of the instuctional programme. In so doing research aims one and two as well as research questions one and two as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4 were addressed.

The interviewees at the three schools agreed that, given their huge responsibilities, and by virtue of the prescriptons of the education department regarding their duties, the principals have to involve their SMTs to a greater extent in the management of the instructional progamme. This finding addressed the aims and research questions as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4.

The finding was that given the complexity of the principal's task, he or she must involve the rest of the SMT in managing the instructional programme by assigning particular duties to them (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4).

(2) The necessity of involving SMT members

From the literature (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003:245) (section 2.4.3), as well as from the interview data, it was obvious that there exists a necessity to involve the SMT in the management of the instructional programme. This necessity of involving the SMT as well as others, derives from the fact that the democratization of schools has placed added pressure on principals to successfully fulfill their mandate in terms of curriculum delivery (Castle & Mitchell 2005:427) (section 2.4.3). In view of the enormous task of instructional leadership, the principal has to be supported, and he or she must provide the SMT with the opportunity to assist him or her. In so doing research aims one, two and three were addressed as well as the research questions (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4).

With regard to the responsibility of the management of the instructional programme, a SMT member at school B said, *"The SMT must accept the responsibility for the management and standard-setting of the academic programme".* This willingness of SMT members to contribute to the success of the school was evident at all three schools. Another SMT member at school C said, "*I believe that all members of the SMT should be involved and not just the principal. It is impossible for the principal to perform all the duties (by himself)".* By involving more people, the management of the instructional programme would also be more effective. In this regard a SMT member at school C mentioned that *"…not only is everybody part of it, and it would also be difficult for him to manage it alone, but management will also be more effective if there are more parties involved and taking part in deliberations".* This particular response also has addressed the first and second research aims as mentioned in sections 1.4 and 3.3.

The researcher came to the conclusion that generally there exists a willingness among SMTs members to co-operate. The lack of involvement of SMT members at some schools could be as a result of power play on the part of the principal or, as mentioned in chapter 1, section 1.1, due to defiance, or to factors that are politically motivated.

It was therefore found that by involving the rest of the SMT the management of the instructional programme would be more effective (section 1.4 and 3.4.4).

(3) Various responsibilities as instructional leadership tasks

As mentioned in section 2.4.3, the workload of the principal compels him or her to delegate some of the instructional leadership tasks to the rest of the SMT. In this regard a SMT member at school C asserted that "…*because of the extensiveness of the school's instructional programme the principal is compelled to delegate elements of the programme to the vice-principal or the heads of department* ".

In the previous paragraph it was indicated that SMT members should become involved in the management of the instructional programme. It would be unwise of a principal not to take full advantage of the expertise of his or her SMT. According to a SMT member at school C, "…*the management team should be included in the identification of the aims and objectives. Teachers should also be invited to share in the setting of goals, because then they will make them their own and implement them voluntarily. Uhm….. the SMT is responsible for the strategic and operational planning".* Sharing the instructional leadership tasks will not only boost the morale of the SMT, but will necessarily improve the academic results of the school. This sharing of responsibilities answers the second research aim as well as the second research question as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4.

The principal should take advantage of this positive attitude of his or her SMT by drawing from their experience and expertise in their respective areas of specialization. Despite the fact that the principal remains accountable, the mere fact that the load is shared, will reduce the stress on the principal considerably.

It was found that by sharing the work-load the SMT members become involved in the management of the instructional programme and by participating in decision-making processes, the SMT would be more effective in performing their respective duties (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4)

4.3.3.3 Interaction and coherence of the SMT members

From what was gathered from the interviews pertaining to the responsibility of the SMT in managing the instructional programme, the following sub-categories were identified:

- shared decision-making;
- acceptance of ownership of the instructional programme; and
- to be valued as an SMT member.

Each sub-category will be briefly deliberated upon.

(1) Shared decision-making

In section 2.3.1 it was mentioned that it is the responsibility of the principal, together with the members of the SMT, to ensure that the instructional programme is managed in such a way that the academic performance of the school is enhanced. Carter and McDonald (2002:3) (section 2.3.1) assert that successful school leadership is of paramount importance if this is to happen. This implies shared decision-making and consultation. Marks and Printy (2003a:125) (section 2.1.2) are of the opinion that shared forms of educational leadership could impact on the way learners learn at school. In section 2.1.2 mention was also made of the concept of *shared leadership* as a means of managing the instructional programme (Marks & Printy 2003a:125).

All the interviewees were in agreement that it is almost impossible to be part of a team without consulting one another. A SMT member at school C confessed that *"…since the HODs are responsible for managing the phases and serve on the SMT, consultation is inevitable, because it will be brought to the table. Uhm ….. as a management team of the school operating as a body we are responsible for the instructional programme. So consultation will have to take place".* This respons answers the question related to the involvement of the SMT in different sub-committees (third aim in section 1.4 and third research question in section 3.4.4).

The principal at school B mentioned that simply by acknowledging an educator one is sure of success. *"The mere fact that a person was acknowledged makes him or her more*

positive with regard to the task at hand, irrespective of the outcome thereof". A SMT member at school B insisted that "…. unless there is consultation ,*you are going to have a situation where it's going to become autocratic in a sense where you have our leader, being the principal, making the decisions and no one really having a fair input".* Smith (2002:115 -116), in section 2.3.3, confirms that "…a coordinated team, focusing on agreed objectives, produces better results than a collection of individuals accountable only for their own performance". Marks and Printy (2003a:125) (section 2.1.2) agree with this point of view by saying that the active involvement of the school management team will eventually lead to leadership that is distributive and interdependent.   By involving the SMT in this manner, the first three aims as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4 were addressed.

The finding in this regard was that consultation is inevitable if the SMT is to function as a team. The risk of conflict will then also be drastically minimized. It also reaffirmed that no man is an island, especially in a complex organisation such as a school where the personnel are dependent on one another to ensure effective teaching and learning.

(2) Acceptance of ownership of the instructional programme

According to Kruger (2003:207) (section 2.4.5), there is a direct relation between the instructional role of the principal and the other management functions he or she needs to perform. In section 2.4.5, sub-section 1, the importance of involving others was emphasized with a view to accepting ownership and collective responsibility.   By consulting one another there is a greater chance of assuring that SMT members take ownership of whichever task is assigned to them.   A SMT member at school C confirms this notion as follows *"…. people would take ownership of whatever is on the table. When it has been discussed all of us accept responsibility therefor".* This answers the second research question with regard to the application of participative management in ensuring that all members of the SMT are involved in instructional leadership (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4).

At school A the importance of being informed came to the fore. A SMT member said, *"We are then informed about it. The principal doesn't know alone, but we are also informed about it".*   In essence it addresses the fact that the principal needs to be informative about

school matters, as a SMT member at school A mentioned *"…basically it is about transparency ...uh…transparency to involve everybody in the programme".*

The researcher found that the chances of staff members buying into the instructional programme will be enhanced when consulting with them about related matters. Only then will the SMT be considered as part of the management of the school and, indeed, of the instructional programme as suggested in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4.

(3)   To be valued as a SMT member

In section 2.2.4 the value of being a team was highlighted. The response of the principal in respect of the input of team members is most important. According to Hall and Wallace (1996:299) (section 2.2.4), a principal has to ensure that the input of his or her SMT members are acknowledged and valued. In the interviews the role that the principal played was highlighted. A SMT member at school C mentioned that *"…continued acknowledgement of my input and gratitude shown by the principal motivates me to give even more than is expected".* This answers the question whether the SMT members felt that their input was valued as part of the management of the school. This respons also answered the importance of the roles and responsibilities as well as the level of participative management (sections 1.4 and section 3.4.4).   When educators are valued they will be more than willing to run the proverbial extra mile.   Apart from being acknowledged as SMT members, the value of being a SMT member will be enhanced if they are involved in decision-making. According to Telford (1996:20) (see section 2.2.4), the principal will much easier gain the co-operation of his or her co-educators if his or her leadership takes on the form of a collaborative rather than by an autocratic approach. At school B a SMT member noted that "*…your opinion is taken to heart and what you say is implemented.   Your co-operation or your contribution is appreciated".* In this case the importance of being listened to became relevant. Another SMT member at school A said, "*I am of the view that our input is taken to heart".*

In view of the above it was found that the appreciation demonstrated by a principal will go a long way in assuring the full participation of his or her SMT members. The interviewees all noted that the opinion of the principal concerning their contributions is most important in respect of their input. The principal, in order to successfully involve his or her SMT, must

be a person of high emotional intelligence, and he or she must be willing to listen to his or her SMT

4.3.3.4 Contributions of SMT members to instructional leadership matters

In terms of the contributions of SMT members, the following two sub-categories from the interview data were identified:

- staff development; and
- academic results.

Each sub-category will be discussed briefly.

(1) Staff development

Allowing SMT members to assist with staff development is a way of empowering them. Hackman (2002:47) (section 2.2.5) insists that it is very important to empower SMT members, as it will help them to develop into a real task-performing team. This indicates that staff development is a very important function of the SMT, as was evident in the responses of the interviewees from the participating schools. A SMT member at school C mentioned that they are to a large extent involved in staff development. She continued by saying that "……. *staff development sessions are provided by the HODs and other staff members who have the necessary expertise and knowledge".* Another SMT member insisted that *"…I see it as a very important part of my job. It's to develop the staff because that will lead to the development of our school and to ensure, you know, effective teaching and learning in our school, because if the staff doesn't develop, then the school won't grow".* This question answered the second aim in that the level of empowerment of the SMT is determined (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4).   It is significant to note that the SMT members are aware of the link between staff development and the results of the school. According to Chatman and Flynn (2001) in Somech (2005:779) (section 2.3.4), there is a direct link between in-role performance and team accomplishment, as it leads to the intended or desired results. Unless the staff is fully equipped, has a positive attitude and is motivated, there will be no improved academic performance.

One principal revealed that he has to trust his SMT. By involving the SMT in staff development, the principal is demonstrating that he or she trusts them. In this way the first aim and research questions in sections1.4 and 3.4.4 were addressed. The principal of school A attested "*…and that responsibility* [staff development] *is given to them".*

The finding in terms of the question under discussion is that principals have the responsibility to demonstrate to their SMTs that they trust them by allowing them, for example, to manage staff development workshops. Not only will it boost their confidence and selfworth, but it will also convey the message that their leaders are competent in the execution of their duties.

(2) Academic results

It is important for a school to produce results of a high standard. Excellent results are possible if the staff is well equipped and well trained for the task at hand. The SMT should also take cognisance of the fact that the instructional programmme should be managed to meet this end. Carter and Macdonald (2002:3) (section 2.1.2) argue that *"…successful leadership is invariably linked to school effectiveness".* The SMT should thus focus on improving the academic performance of the learners. A SMT member at school C mentioned as follows in this regard "*…through the development of educators which should include the improvement of their knowledge, skills and attitudes, the academic results of the school should also improve. Implementing rewards and incentives for educators would also improve the team spirit and motivate the staff to achieve the objective of improving the academic results of the school*". This answers the question around inclusion as opposed to excluding people. It also responds to the second research aim as well as to the second research question as alluded to in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4. To empower the staff takes a team effort. The fact of the matter is that SMTs *want* to fulfil the task of improving the skills of the staff with the view to improving the academic performance of the school.

The discussion of the examination results should be done by the entire SMT, as observed at school A. According to the principal at school A, *"… when we receive the results it is discussed".* It is important to note that it is not only the principal's   duty, but that of the SMT as the whole SMT is participating in this excercise (sections1.4, 3.4.4 and 2.1.2). The same *modus operandi* is followed at school B regarding the discussion of results. This principal also asserted that "*…in the final analysis it also becomes the responsibility*

of the management team to analyse the results". SMTs also have the responsibility to evaluate the standard of their colleagues' work. In this respect a SMT member at school B mentioned that "*… the academic results are also available when question papers and memoranda are moderated".*

In terms of managing the instructional programme, the SMT has a huge responsibility in setting standards, as well as maintaining them. According to the principal of school B, it is imperative "…. *that the management team ensures that differentiation happens in both classes and grades and that different teaching strategies are considered in terms of the various teaching styles, etc.".* It is important for the SMT to be informed in terms of differentiation as it is a given that learners learn differently. It then becomes the responsibility of the SMT to see to it that all learners receive the instruction best suited for them. In section 2.2.3 the roles and responsibilities of the SMT were discussed.

From the discussions above it was found that the SMT needs to play a more significant role if schools want to improve their academic performance. HODs have to motivate their colleagues in their respective departments to come to school well prepared to teach.

4.3.3.5 Sub-committees in instructional leadership

In analysing the interview data in respect of the importance of sub-committees, the researcher identified four sub-categories, which will be briefly discussed below, namely

- SMT member's role in school phases;
- accountability and responsibility of SMT members
- the involvement of post level 1 educators as instructional leaders and
- SMT members and learning area committees.

(1) SMT member's role in school phases

All the interviewees agreed that the HODs should manage their phases, that is, the foundation, intermediate, and senior phases. A well-led team is sure to be productive, and educators want to be led as well. A SMT member at school C asserted that *"….somebody must take the lead",* and that someone needs not only be the principal. This respons

answered the second research aim as well as the second research question as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4. It also determined whether the principal really exhibits confidence in the instructional management capabilities of the SMT. The purpose of an SMT, amongst others, is to assist the principal in the management of the school and in particular, the instructional programme (South African Schools Act, Republic of South Africa 1996:11), as mentioned in section 1.1. The importance of sharing the responsibility of managing the instructional programme is confirmed by a SMT member of school C where she mentioned that "*…it is not just the task of an individual SMT member or the principal to manage the instructional programme*". This answer affirms the notion that the HODs are in fact responsible for delivering the curriculum in their respective phases. This respons also answers the third research aim as well as the third research question as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4.

Another SMT member at the same school was of the opinion that "*…being the instructional leaders in their phases, I think it is a privilege to manage their own responsibilities*". In this case there prevailed a sense of pride and professionalism among the SMT members. It is this positive attitude that makes all the difference at this particular school. According to Berry (1997:52) (section 2.2.4), should the school management be committed to quality, a quality ethos will rub off on the entire school.

The necessity of involving HODs in the management of their respective phases was emphasized in section 2.2.5. At school B a SMT member reckoned that by allowing SMT members to manage their phases they are indeed afforded the opportunity to grow as leaders and as individuals. This SMT member is quoted as saying *"…when we look at our foundation, intermediate and senior phases, growth took place. People who were a bit insecure at first have grown to such an extent that they themselves are now in a position to initiate projects and complete them successfully. It can thus be said that there is merit in the provision of opportunities for growth".* By involving all the members of the SMT their level of participation is enhanced thus responding to the second research aim as well as the third research question (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4).

It was found that the management of the instructional programme is a team effort. The researcher also found that professionalism and a positive attitude that prevails among the personnel must be nurtured, as it helps to contribute to a quality ethos. Finally, the finding

also revealed that the involvement of SMT members also led to growth in terms of their professional development.

(2) Accountability and responsibility of SMT members

According to a circular of the Department of Education (2000b:20), as mentioned in section 2.1.2, SMT members are instructional leaders, and as such they are responsible for translating the curriculum into practice. In section 2.4.4 the importance was emphasised of involving the heads of departments and deputy principals with more responsibilities, such as taking charge of the various school phases. The HODs should not only accept the responsibility for the added duties, but they should also be held accountable for the progress in their respective departments. It is one thing to manage the instructional programme of a school, but quite another to accept responsibility and accountability for it. For some SMT members it is an indication of trust, and he or she would not do anything irresponsible to jeopardize that trust. A SMT member at school C indicated that "…… *as the principal says" The buck stops right over here….." , so if he trusts me to be part of the instructional programme uhm.… then I would do my utmost not to disappoint him, but yes,….. because I know at the back of my mind he will be held accountable for [it], that he, in a sense, also holds me accountable for what I do…uhm…I mean, I can't just do whatever I want to, and keep him responsible".* This outlook is held by the entire SMT, not only by one SMT member. Another SMT member at school C confirmed this notion by asserting that *"….there is always a hierarchy, being the principal and the deputy principal, who shares the responsibility with the head of the department".* Given the response of this SMT member it is clear that the principal trust them by providing them with the responsibility of managing their phases. It also answers the question related to research aim three (sections 1.4 and sections 3.4.4) dealing with the involvement of the rest of SMT members in a system of sub-committees.

Finally it was found that the HODs need to accept the responsibility for their phases, and also to realise their accountability regarding curriculum delivery. It was also found that if the principal indicates his or her trust in their professionalism, SMT members will also be acute in terms of their attitude towards him or her (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4).

(3) The involvement of post level 1 educators as instructional leaders

All of the interviewees had no problem with endorsing post level 1 educators with responsibilities that are usually performed by senior educators. This is a very important observation, as this would help to break down the proverbial walls between the SMT and the rest of the staff. The principal at school A admitted that *"…we involve all the educators from grade one onwards".* Of even greater significance is the fact that he acknowledges that *"… this is where we get the input of experienced educators to provide leadership to those who are inexperienced".* At school A there existed no discrimination between post level 1 educators and the SMT. The principal confirms this observation by asserting that *"……we definitely have huge staff participation"*. In section 2.2.4 the researcher alluded to the fact that it makes sense to draw from the expertise of other members of the staff. It also answers to aims one to three and research questions one to three (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4) where the matter of involving the SMT in managing the instructional programme was alluded to-the level of participation of the rest of the staff in particular. Hall and Wallace (1996:299) (section 2.2.4) mention that in respect of the synergy that exists among team members, so much more can be achieved, than from them as individuals.

The principal at school B takes the involvement of post level 1 educators to another level in asserting that *"…at our school this happens to the extreme, uh… because each and everyone has the right to give his or her input concerning teaching – irrespective of the nature thereof. Should there be a problem in one of the phases, the whole staff contributes to seeking a solution to the problem".* The principal is quoted as saying that *"…if it is found that the grade 3's are struggling and the problem has been established, it will be brought to the plenary where everybody, from management level to post level 1, will conclude that a new decision be taken in the interest of the instructional programme".* Smith (2002:15-16), as indicated in section 2.3.3, supports this notion in asserting that *"… a well-led and coordinated team working together towards agreed objectives produces better results than a collective of individuals accountable only for their own performance".* In this regard research aim two was answered as well as research question no two (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4)

In some schools post level 1 educators are involved as members of the SMT as the circumstances require them. Due to the relatively small staff at school C, the SMT is compelled to utilize the post level 1 educators, and they do so to a great extent. A SMT

member at this school mentioned that "*…as HOD of the intermediate and senior phases I am compelled to rely* [on] *senior educators to assist in the management of the instructional programme. They act as heads of learning areas and are responsible for checking and moderating the assessment planning and evidence of learner performance, chair meetings, compile learning area reports, and policies, etc."*

The finding in this instance was that it makes sense to work together as a team, keeping the end in mind, the end in this instance being better equipped learners, and excellent academic performance. Despite the fact that post level 1 educators are the 'foot soldiers' in terms of the execution of the curriculum at school, they also have much to offer regarding management. It is commendable that these educators are willing to form part of the SMT without being remunerated for it. It says a lot about their character and quality as educators. These educators should be nurtured and groomed for greater things, as education needs educators of this caliber.

(4) SMT members and learning area committees

Algozzine and Jazzar (2007:105) assert (section 2.4.5, sub-section 6) that successful leaders will promote the achievement of learners by encouraging the support and commitment of all stakeholders. According to Joyner (2005:3) (section 2.4.5, sub-section 6), the SMT and the school staff have to share responsibilities and participate in decision-making in order to address the school's mission. If participative management is to be correctly understood, it would mean that the school management team should also involve their different teams in the management of the instructional programme, for example, involving educators in the different phases such as the foundation, the intermediate, and the senior phases, as well as the different learning area committees. Cross and Reitzug (1995:19), in section 2.4.5 sub-section 6, assert that in this way everybody at school forms part of a committee, working out the detail of what needs to happen in their respective phases, and everybody becomes involved in decisions at different levels. These sub-committees can be regarded as sub-structures in the instructional programme of the school and in which the SMT members are also serving as link between the SMT and the committees emphasizing their participation in the instructional programme. This answers the third research question in section 3.4.4.

With reference to the interview data, learning area committees can play an important role, even more in bigger schools. A SMT member at school C indicated that "…*a learning area committee can, for example, do much more than the learning area head to establish the results in the learning area*". This particular SMT member is of the opinion that in smaller schools the staff members are involved in so many committees that it would not make sense to co-opt them in yet another one: "*For some learning areas we have two or three educators in the learning area team, so they automatically form the committee. So in a bigger primary school and also in high schools it should definitely contribute to the improvement of the results*".

A very significant comment from a SMT member at school B was that when you work on a committee, there is a wealth of experience you can tap into, and it also facilitates consultation with other class groups within the phase. Another SMT member at school B is quoted as saying "…*I am of the view that when we speak about committees, it refers to committees formed for a specific task. When you operate as such, other people also contribute in the process. People can consult and help one another in the phase by articulating what is expected from grade one, two or three, for example*". Fullan in (Carter & McDonald (2002 cited in section 2.4.5 sub-section 6) confirms this approach as it would facilitate sustainability in leadership and also addressed the matter of the participation of all members of the SMT (sections 1.4 and section 3.4.4).

In view of the afore-mentioned it was found that the principal would be sure to empower his or her staff to continue with their excellent work, even if he or she is absent from school or has been promoted. It was also found that by empowering the staff, it would also result in a leader creating leaders who will be in a position to improve their own market value in terms of being appointed as SMT members or even principals at other schools. This is also in line with the third aim dealing with the involvement of SMT members in different sub-committees. Of even greater significance is the fact that 'cross pollination' will take place between experienced and less experienced educators, and any principal, in this researcher's view, cannot ask for a better working ethos than this. In this way greater participation as well as the involvement of all the SMT members participate are ensurd as contemplated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4.

As can be derived from the above the following findings were evident:

- The SMT fully understood the concept of instructional leadership, thus demonstrating their knowledge of the extend of the involvement of all the members of the SMT.

- In order to facilitate transparent decision-making, the input of the entire SMT should be considered.

- Given the complexity of the principal's task, he or she should use the expertise of the rest of the SMT in managing the instructional programme, by assigning particular duties to them.

- By involving the rest of the SMT the management of the instructional programme would be more effective.

- By sharing the work-load the SMT members become involved and by participating in decision-making processes, the SMT would be more effective in performing their respective duties.

- Consultation reduces the risk of conflict and it also gives meaning to team work.

- The appreciation demonstrated by a principal with regard to their contributions towards the management of the instructional programme, will assure enthusiastic participation of his or her SMT members.

- Principals have to provide SMT members with opportunities to manage staff development workshops. In this way he of she demonstrates that they trust the SMT members.

- The SMT needs to play a more significant role if schools want to improve their academic results.

- By involving the SMT members, it also led to growth in terms of their professional development.

- The HODs need to accept the responsibility for their phases, and that they must be held accountable for curriculum delivery

- If the principal acknowledges the SMTs' professionalism, SMT members will also be acute in terms of their attitude towards him or her.

- It makes sense to work together as a team in pursuit of equipping learners to achieve academic results.

- The principal needs to empower his or her staff to continue with their excellent work, even if he or she is absent from school or has been promoted.

- By empowering the staff, the principal would be creating leaders and in doing so, enhance their market value in terms of being appointed as SMT members or even principals at other schools.

4.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter the research findings in respect of the research questions postulated in chapter one were discussed. Furthermore, categories were formulated from the interview data gathered at the selected schools. The categories identified are the task of the instructional leader, the involvement of the SMT, interaction and coherence, contributions of SMT members, and sub-committees. The inter-relatedness of these categories and how they impact on the functioning of the SMT were also discussed.

In the next chapter the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study will be presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa, being a young democracy, faces a myriad of challenges of which curriculum delivery is one. The lack of effective curriculum delivery at some schools could be ascribed to the lack of involvement of the SMT in managing the instructional programme (section 1.1). In order to find a solution to this problem, all relevant role-players need to be engaged in taking the school to the next level of achievement. However, democracy in education is either misunderstood or ignored in certain schools. It has consequently become necessary to have a closer look at the participation of the SMT members in the management of the instructional programme. The schools that participated in this study are schools where the principles of participative managed have been applied to serve as a model for others to copy. It is also important for SMT members themselves to gain a better understanding of participative management in order for them to lead their schools more effectively.

In this chapter a summary of the study is presented. Also the conclusions reached and the recommendations made, based on the findings, to enhance the management of the instructional programmes at schools. Suggestions for further research will be provided.

5.2 SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to investigate the involvement of the SMT in the management and leading of the instructional programme. Sub -questions were formulated to

- establish the extent of the involvement of the SMT;
- determine how the principles of participative management ensure that the members of the SMT are involved in instructional leadership;

- determine to what extent the members of different sub-committees in the school, *i.e.* the foundation phase, the intermediate and senior phases, and the learning area committees, can be involved in instructional matters; and
- consider how the principal should go about mobilizing his or her school management team to improve the academic results of the school (section.1.3).

The paragraphs below provide a summary of the contents and findings (where applicable).

Chapter 1 presented the foundation for the study. Section 1.1 outlined the introduction and the motivation for the study, focusing on the segregated education system characterized by inequality: racially, regionally and in terms of gender; and the effect of the revolt against the system of Apartheid and how this impacted on teaching and learning in some schools. The background to the study was briefly outlined in section 1.2, with special reference to the involvement of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme. After consulting various primary and secondary sources, a research question was formulated in par.1.3, and the aims of the research were formulated in section 1.4.

An overview of the study, which followed a qualitative approach, was presented in section 1.5. Relevant definitions utilized in this study were clarified in section 1.6. Lastly, the outline of the dissertation in terms of chapter divisions was indicated in section 1.8.

In chapter 2 a literature review on school management teams, participative management and instructional leadership was given. In order to understand the origin of school management teams, the researcher deemed it necessary to give a brief overview of the origin of school management teams (section 2.2.1). To fully understand the concept of school management teams, and how it manifests itself in the school environment, the following aspects were briefly discussed: the structure of the SMT (section 2.2.2), the roles and responsibilities of the SMT (section 2.2.3), teamwork (section 2.2.4), the empowerment of the SMT (section 2.2.5), and the organisational culture of the school (section 2.2.5).

Since the emphasis was on the utilization of participative principles in the management of the instructional programme, the researcher briefly discussed the collaborative approach. Various authors agreed that participative leadership has become the acceptable *modus operandi* of the 21st century (section 2.3.1). Furthermore, since participative leadership

forms the basis of a successful SMT, it was necessary to look at various definitions thereof. As this different approach requires a paradigm shift, it was necessary to indicate the move from central power to a more empowering process. The importance of involving the entire SMT in respect of decision-making and ensuring that specific responsibilities are allocated to them, were also highlighted (section 2.3.2).

Since the literature indicated that participative management as a means of managing a school has more advantages than a school with an autocratic management style, the advantages of a group of professionals working together as a team were listed. It was also pointed out that SMT members will take ownership of the instructional programme if their opinions are considered (section 2.3.3). The involvement of the SMT and the subsequent acceptance of ownership formed the basis of the empowerment of the SMT (section 2.3.4). In order for the school to meet its expectations, it is necessary to have a shared vision. This shared vision can only be realised if there exists an alignment between the vision of the SMT and that of the sub-committees (section 2.3.5).

After establishing the importance of SMTs, as well as the relevance of adopting the principles of participative management in managing the instructional programme, chapter 2 continued with the instructional leadership role of the SMT. A literature review was done on instructional leadership (section 2.4), with special reference to effective schools and a strong organisational culture (section 2.4.1). With the SMT as the backbone of a school in terms of both managing the school and the instructional programme, the link between effective schools, a strong organisational culture, teamwork and good academic performance was highlighted (sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2). Various authors hold different views on instructional leadership, but all were in agreement that the principal's management style has an effect on teaching and learning (section 2.4.2). This section was followed by a discussion of teamwork, the conduct of the educators when teaching and learning take place, as well as the responsibility of the principal in terms of curriculum delivery (section 2.4.2). This discussion further led to an explanation of the necessity of involving the members of the SMT in managing the instructional progamme (section 2.4.3).

Since the democratization of the country in 1994, the principal's tasks have compounded, which led to greater responsibilities in managing the school. With this increase in duties it has become most important for the principal to involve the SMT in managing the instructional programme (section 2.4.3). A discussion followed on the reasons why it is

very difficult for principals to manage the instructional programme on their own. The responsibilities need to be shared with the rest of the SMT, and the principal should be supported in this respect, or conversely, the principal should allow the SMT to assist him or her (section 2.4.3). Their various roles and responsibilities could include the following, namely assisting with the formulation of the mission, goals, objectives, instructional policy and planning, coordinating the curriculum, supervising teaching, dealing with learner assessment, promoting an instructional climate, and involving colleagues on committees (section 2.4.3).

The importance of having a shared vision was highlighted in section 2.4.4. The literature confirmed that there needs to be a change in culture with regard to the management of the instructional programme. This change was indicated in section 2.4.4 (figure 2.6), followed by a discussion of the importance of involving the SMT, allowing the HODs to manage their phases, and proving that the principal can trust the SMT with certain instructional leadership tasks (section 2.4.5). These tasks of the SMT were briefly discussed, namely the formulation of the school's mission, goals, objectives, instructional policy and planning (section 2.4.5, sub-section 1), the coordination of the curriculum (section 2.4.5, sub-section 2), supervising teaching (section 2.4.5, sub-section 3), learner assessment (section 2.4.5, sub-section 4), the promotion of an instructional climate (section 2.4.5, sub-section 5), and instructional committees (section 2.4.5, sub-section 6). This was then followed by concluding remarks.

Chapter 3 highlighted the elements of qualitative methodology (section 3.1), followed by a discussion of the research aims (section 3.2). The research design (section 3.3) and methods(section 3.4) were briefly explained.   Thereafter the research approach was elaborated upon (section 3.3). The considerations for using a qualitative approach were indicated to justify the utilization of this approach where participants are observed in their particular contexts (section 3.3). In this study, purposeful sampling was done, as it was considered to be the best option (section 3.4.1).

The data collection strategies were explained in section 3.4.2. As the interview was one of the data collection methods, the kind of interview used was briefly explained, as well as the features of the interview (section 3.4.2.1). This particular method enabled the researcher to obtain information on the management of the instructional programme. Next

followed an explanation of how the interview was conducted and recorded, using a tape recorder as a means to secure the precise information, as well as a description of how the interview was transcribed (section 3.4.2.1). This was followed by the interview schedule, covering the most important aspects. Hereafter a short literature review was done on the following, namely observation (section 3.4.2.2), field notes (section 3.4.2.3), and details on the types of documents the researcher used as part of triangulation (section 3.4.2.4). An explanation of administrative matters followed in section 3.4.3. In section 3.4.4 the data analysis was briefly discussed. An inductive analysis was followed, more specifically Tesch's approach to data analysis (section 3.4.4).

The researcher made use of Guba's strategies of trustworthiness (section 3.5), which included truth value, applicability and transferability, dependability, and neutrality and confirmability. These strategies were briefly discussed (section 3.5.).

Finally, to ensure the confidentiality of the information, the following ethical considerations(section 3.6) to be adhered to were discussed, namely informed consent (section 3.6.1), deception, privacy and empowerment (section 3.6.2), and confidentiality and anonymity (section 3.6.3). In terms of the dissemination of the research findings, the principle of confidentiality would be upheld, and each school would be provided with a copy of the research results (section 3.6.4). In section 3.7 a summary was given.

In chapter 4 an empirical report was provided of the research done at three selected primary schools in Circuit 1 in the Metropole North Education District of the Western Cape. Three SMTs, consisting of eight males and ten females, were interviewed, a total of 18 participants (section 4.2). This chapter also recorded emerging categories and sub-categories presented in the study through careful analysis and interpretation of the data.

The first category reflected upon focused on the task of the instructional leader (section 4.3.3.1) of which effective instruction as key management responsibility, was the first sub-category (sub-section 1). As teaching and learning are the core business of a school, the responsibility of managing the instructional programme does not lie with the principal alone. The participants indicated that the principal cannot manage the instructional programme on his or her own, and that it is indeed a shared responsibility. The second sub-category focused on the principal as the leader and not the sole decision-maker of the

SMT (sub-section 2). He or she should consider the input of the entire SMT to ensure participative decision-making.

With reference to the reasons for involving SMT members, another category dealt with the involvement of the SMT (section 4.3.3.2). The following findings became apparent in the sub-categories, namely with regard to the complexity of the principal's responsibilities, the interviewees indicated that in the light of the principals' huge responsibilities and prescribed duties, the SMT should be utilized to a greater extent in the management of the instructional progamme (sub-section 1). The next sub-category examined the necessity to involve the SMT. It was found that SMT members would like to co-operate, if given the opportunity to do so. Some reasons cited for the lack of involvement of the SMT, were the power hunger of some principals, and politically motivated reasons (sub-section 2). This section was followed by an explanation of the principal's various responsibilities, including a number of instructional leadership tasks. It was indicated that the principal should take advantage of the positive attitude of his or her SMT by drawing from their experience and expertise in their respective areas of specialization. The fact that the load is shared, would reduce the stress levels of the principal considerably (sub-section 3).

Interaction and coherence was the next category, discussed in section 4.3.3.3. The first sub- category described shared decision-making as a form of educational leadership. It was found that consultation is inevitable if the school management is to function as a team (sub-section 1). The importance of involving other educators was highlighted with a view to accepting ownership and collective responsibility (section 2.4.5, sub-section 1).

The participants agreed that the chances of the staff buying into the instructional programme will be enhanced when consulting with them about related matters (sub-section 2).

Another sub-category elaborated upon was the importance of being valued as a member of the SMT (sub-section 3). The interviewees all agreed that the opinion of the principal concerning their contributions is most important in terms of the value he/she attaches to their input. The principal has to be a person of high emotional intelligence and he or she must be willing to listen to the SMT from time to time (sub-section 3).

Section 4.3.3.5, the fourth category, considered the contributions of SMT members. The involvement of the SMT in staff development was cited by the participants as a demonstration of trust in them by the principal. Over and above the enhancement of their self-esteem, the SMT members would also be considered to be competent by their colleagues (sub-section 1). With reference to academic results, it was found that for schools to improve their academic performance, the SMT needs to play a more significant role. Furthermore, the HOD's need to motivate their colleagues to come to school well prepared to teach (sub-section 2).

The final category dealt with sub-committees (section 4.3.3.5). Sub-section 1 reviewed the HODs' heading of their respective phases, namely the foundation phase, the intermediate, and the senior phases. It was found that the involvement of SMT members also led to growth in terms of their professional development. The second sub-category addressed the importance of responsibility and accountability (sub-section 2). The discussions illuminated the fact that the HOD's are not merely responsible for the delivery of the curriculum; they are also accountable for it. This section was followed by a discussion of the involvement of post level 1 educators in duties generally allocated to senior educators (sub-section 3). It was concluded that it is commendable that these post level 1 educators are willing to form part of an SMT without being paid for the additional responsibilities. The value of educators demonstrating such zeal should be nurtured as they form the backbone of the teaching profession. Finally, learning area committees were deliberated on in sub-section 4. All the interviewees agreed that the interaction between experienced and less experienced educators contributes towards 'cross-pollination', which ultimately leads to the empowerment of the staff.

In chapter 5 a summary of the chapters were made available (section 5.2). In section 5.3 conclusions have been discussed in respect of the literature review, and in section 5.3.1 the conclusions, as they emerged from the empirical study. Subsequent to the aforementioned, the researcher made recommendations based on the findings arrived at in chapter 4, section 4.3. Recommendations for further research were recorded in section 5.5, and the concluding remarks of the research have been offered in section 5.6.
Next to follow are the conclusions.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The following research conclusions are derived from the initial research aims (see section 1.4). The latter are congruent with the research questions.

5.3.1 Conclusions from the literature

5.3.1.1 The lack of participation of school management teams in the management of the instructional programme

The first aim of this research was to determine the extent of the involvement of the members of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme (section1.4). Since SMTs in some South African schools are not operating as they should be, the academic standards in certain schools have declined. In section 1.1 the rationale for this phenomenon was highlighted. Prior to 1994 the management was in the hands of the principal alone (section 1.1). Everything evolved around him or her. Good results were equated to excellent leadership on the part of the principal (Department of Education 2000a:1). With the dawning of democracy in 1994, the school system would also be affected in terms of the management thereof. It was now expected from school principals to also involve other educators in the management of the school, including in the instructional programme (section 1.1). Several reasons were given for the lack of involvement of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme (section 2.1), which includes the provision of instructional leadership, and a discussion of the curriculum at the beginning of the year when it is decided who should teach which learning areas, and then again at the end of the year when the results of the learners are discussed. The rejection of the system of Apartheid had as consequence the fact that many schools became the sites of a struggle against Apartheid, and the subsequent demise of a culture of teaching and learning (Department of Education 2000a:1).

Given the above it can thus be concluded that in order to address this situation, it is necessary for the principal to involve his or her staff by utilizing the expertise of the SMT, most importantly, to find common ground to what they perceive as quality (section 2.1). Moving away from a system of control to a more participative model would require a

paradigm shift (section 2.3.2). By doing this the first research aim as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4 has been answered.

5.3.1.2 School Management Teams: past and present

As mentioned in section 2.2.1, schools used to be managed autocratically - the principals managed the schools. The result of this management style was that SMT members did not grow professionally and that these educators, when they became principals, merely copied the example known to them. Since the evolvement of the concept of school management teams in 1996, the management style of principals has changed from autocratic to consultative (section 2.2.1). With the official introduction of SMTs in South Africa in 1998 (section 2.2.1) schools were instructed, through the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996:11), that the management of the school be shared with other roleplayers, such as educators and the School Governing Body(section 1.4). Because of this new approach, responsibilities could be shared, leading to greater teamwork (section 2.2.4). Other prominent aspects were the structure of the SMT (section 2.2.2), the roles and responsibilities of the SMT (section 2.2.3), the empowerment of the SMT (section 2.2.5), and the organisational culture of the school (section 2.2.6).

Of great importance is the move away from the 'big individual' concept towards a team–led model (Senge et al 1999:435). This gave rise to the empowerment of personnel and a subsequent sense of professionalism, effectiveness and co-operation (section 2.2.6).

It can thus be concluded that the SMT should be entrusted with more responsibilities to ensure the delivery of quality teaching and learning, including the active participation of the rest of the staff in matters pertaining to the instructional programme. This answers the second research aim and research question as formulated in sections 1.4 and section 3.4.4).

5.3.1.3 Shared instructional leadership

The second aim of this study was to determine how the principles of participative management can contribute to the involvement of all the members of the SMT in structional leadership (section 1.4). In section 2.3.1 a collaborative approach, as a means of enhancing improved academic performance, was highlighted. Marks and Printy

(2003b:371) assert that shared instructional leadership involves the active collaboration of the principal and educators on instructional matters such as the curriculum, instruction, and assessment (section 2.2.4). These aspects are the responsibility of both the principal and the rest of the SMT. Various authors agree that collaborative strategies are fundamental in the management of teams. In section 2.3.2 various definitions were provided of participative management, whilst the advantages of participative management were discussed in section 2.3.4. It has become imperative that the SMT be consulted in matters pertaining to the management of the instructional programme. As was mentioned in section 5.3.1.2, the SMT now plays a major role in curriculum delivery. In section 2.3.4 the SMT is referred to as the 'think-tank', in terms of the management of the school, and this practice ought ultimately to lead to a higher morale among members of the personnel. In section 2.3.4 participative management was emphasized as a tool to empower the SMT. Since a shared vision is required to determine what the school needs, the SMT has to be be consulted. According to Gravells and Wallace (2007:52), the SMT should ensure that its vision is aligned to the corporate vision of the school.

It can thus be concluded that all the responsibilities may be shared, bearing in mind that the principal remains the final accountable party (section 2.3.5). This approach further acknowledges the expertise of the staff members, and the role they can play in enhancing the instructional programme. By sharing the responsibillties among the SMT members, the second research aim and question is answered as formulated in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4

5.3.1.4 Instructional leadership as an integral part of the school culture

The third aim was to determine to what extend the different sub-committees in the school can be involved in instructional leadership (section 1.4). The literature indicates that an effective school mirrors the leadership capabilities of the principal (section 2.4.1). Regarding this aspect of school leadership, the literature indicated the characteristics of effective schools and of schools with a strong organisational culture (section 2.4.1). Opportunities need to be provided for SMT members to manage the instructional programme as well. This involvement of all members of the SMT should become part of the culture of the school. By involving the HOD's to accept greater responsibility for the management of their respective phases, greater participation in the instructional programme is enhanced. In this regard in section 2.4.2 different explanations of

instructional leadership were provided, with teaching and learning as the essence thereof. The effectiveness of a school is, to a certain extent, influenced by the socio-economic circumstances in which it operates. What is important, however, is that the schools must be properly managed.

Teamwork is important in terms of staff development, curriculum development, democratic leadership, the monitoring of learner progress and the use of constructs such as participative leadership and decentralized decision-making. In this respect it is the responsibility of the SMT to create synergy among all these aspects to ensure academic performance. This, in turn, magnifies the responsibility of the principal in terms of curriculum delivery. The quality of curriculum delivery is closely linked to the school culture (section 2.4.1). The proper structuring of the SMTs, involving the members in decision-making, and the more effective management of the instructional programme of the school, may contribute to improving the academic performance of the learners (section 2.4.2).

The researcher concludes that the SMT has to insist that teaching and learning take precedence over everything else in the school, as it is the academic performance of the learners that determines whether the school has fulfilled it mandate.

5.3.1.5 The necessity of involving members of the SMT in the management of the instructional programme

The second aim poses the question on the extent of the involvement of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional progamme. Since the responsibilities of the principal have compounded with the democratization of South Africa in 1994, the principal needs the support of his or her SMT more than ever before (section 2.4.3). Given the magnitude of the instructional tasks, it is evident that they need to be done by a team of people, as opposed to by one person only (section 2.4.3). By creating opportunities for the SMT to become involved as suggested in the literature, the second aim is once again being addressed.

It can thus be concluded that the SMT will have to operate as a unit in the management of the instructional programme to ensure excellent academic performance (section 2.4.3).

5.3.1.6 Instructional leadership tasks

In section 2.4.5 the various instructional leadership tasks were highlighted, such as defining and communicating a mission, managing the curriculum and instruction, supervising teaching, monitoring learner progress, analyzing data, promoting an instructional climate and instructional committees. This section also addresses the third aim of the study (section1.4). According to Kruger (2003:207), the interrelatedness of the various school management tasks, as well as the necessity to effectively involve the SMT in the execution of these tasks, is demonstrated (section 2.4.5). This increased responsibility on the part of the principal in terms of the execution of the instructional leadership tasks, further emphasizes the necessity to involve the SMT to ensure that the instructional programme is properly managed. Section 2.4.5 illustrated that certain instructional leadership tasks are formulated in policy, the so-called formal tasks, and is subsequently non-negotiable. The informal aspects of instructional leadership were also addressed, which are crucial to ensure that the formal tasks are executed. This change in culture is graphically illustrated in figure 2.6 in section 2.4.4. The following instructional leadership tasks were discussed at length in section 2.4.5, and suggestions were made of how the SMT could become involved in the process:

(1) the formulation of the mission, goals, objectives, instructional policy, and planning;
(2) the coordination of the curriculum;
(3) supervising teaching;
(4) learner assessment;
(5) the promotion of a climate of instruction; and
(6) instructional committees

In conclusion, the literature supports the notion that there need to be greater participation in the management of the instructional programme. In order for the school to improve the academic performance of the learners, the principal should utilize the expertise of his or her SMT members. This can be achieved by empowering the SMT to perform this role by providing them with opportunities to manage and to lead the instructional programme. It is also important to observe that teaching and learning must take precedence over everything else in the school. The proper structuring of the SMTs, involving them in

decision-making, and the more effective management of the instructional programme of the school will contribute to improving the academic performance of the learners.

As can be derived from the above the following can be concluded:

- In order to address this situation, the principal needs to involve his or her staff by utilizing their expertise to the advantage of the learners and, most importantly, to find common ground to what they perceive as quality.
- The SMT should be entrusted with more responsibilities to ensure the delivery of quality teaching and learning, including the active participation of the rest of the staff in matters pertaining to the instructional programme.
- All the responsibilities should be shared, bearing in mind that the principal remains the final accountable party.
- The SMT should insist that teaching and learning take precedence over everything else in the school, as it is the academic performance of the learners that determines whether the school has fulfilled it mandate.
- It is important for the SMT to operate as a unit in the management of the instructional programme to ensure excellent academic performance

In summary the literature confirms that it would make more sense to uitilize the expertise of a group of professsional educators as opposed to the principal on his or her own to improve the academic performance of the learners.

5.3.2   Empirical Conclusions

The following conclusions were made, emanating from the interview data as supported by the analyses of relevant documents and the observations of SMT meetings (section 4.4 and 4.5):

5.3.2.1 Focusing on effective instruction as an important management responsibility

The first aim of this research was to determine the extent of the involvement of the SMT in the management and leading of the instructional programme (section 1.4). All the interviewees agreed that the responsibility of managing the instructional programme of the

school is a 'shared' responsibility, as alluded to in chapter 4 section 4.6.1.1. This finding is also supported in the literature, as indicated in section 2.3.1. The interviewees stated that the success of a school depends on effective instruction, and that this important function determines whether the school has fulfilled its mandate (section 4.6.1.1). A very important observation was the fact that the role of the principal was never in doubt. It was clearly stated that the principal remains the *leader,* supported by professionally qualified educators willing to avail their expertise in the interest of the child and of the school (section 4.6.1.1).

With reference the above it can be concluded that the management of the instructional programme is a shared responsibility.

5.3.2.2   The principal as member of the SMT

The interviewees were of the opinion that the principal is the leader of leaders and not necessarily the decision-maker. This point of view derived from the fact that the principal works with professional educators who should be consulted about matters which affect them (section 1.2). The members of the SMT felt very strongly about them being consulted in respect of the management of the instructional programme (section 4.6.1.2). The whole SMTs input should be considered to ensure transparent decision-making, thus addressing the second aim and research question as mentioned in sections 1.4 and 3.4.4. The interviewees generally prefer to be acknowledged, seeing that they form part of the management team of the school (section 4.6.1.2).

It is more advantagous for the principal to consult the rest of the SMT on maters pertaining to the instructional programme as it would reaffirm their status as members of the SMT. management team.

5.3.2.3 Involving the SMT in managing and leading the instructional
programme

The second aim of this study was to determine how the practice of participative management can contribute to the involvement of the members of the SMT in instructional leadership (section 1.4). The interview data provided reasons for involving the SMT

(section 4.6.2). The responses of the participants corresponded with what was found in the literature, as well as the documentation of the particular staff members (section 2.4.3 and section 4.6.2). In section 4.6.2.1 the complexity of the principal's task in managing the instructional programme was highlighted. The principal needs to involve his or her SMT to the utmost. Another important aspect in terms of the management of the instructional programme is that the education department expects the SMTs to perform certain duties (section 4.6.2.1). Added to this is the pressure that the democratization of schools has put on principals to fulfill their mandate in terms of delivering the curriculum (section 4.6.2.2). In section 4.6.2.3 the reasons for distributing the various instructional leadership tasks were indicated.

In conclusion, SMTs want to share the workload, provided they are afforded the opportunity to do so.

5.3.2.4 The importance of interaction and coherence

It is the responsibility of both the SMT and the principal to manage the instructional programme in order to ensure academic performance (section 4.6.3.1). According to the interview data, this interaction is inevitable, as communication has to take place. This interaction is also conducive to coherence, as each SMT member's contribution is valued (section 4.6.3.1). .

The participants were furthermore of the opinion that consultation, albeit in a very small way, will ensure that any project or assignment will be successfully concluded. Finally, consultation which implies interaction was indicated as the biggest countermove to conflict.

The acceptance of ownership of the instructional programme by the SMT is greatly enhanced when consulting one another (section 4.6.3.2). The participating SMT members emphasized the importance of being informed about matters pertaining to management issues. In summary, in being transparent about management-related matters, the buy-in of personnel is immensely enhanced (section 4.6.3.2). In section 4.6.3.3 the importance of being valued as a SMT member was discussed.The interviewees all agreed that their input and contributions need to be acknowledged, as it would encourage them to walk the proverbial extra mile. In this way the second aim as alluded to in section 1.4 and 3.4.4

have been accounted for viz to determine how the practice of participative management can contribute to the involvement of the SMT members in instructional leadership.

With reference to the above it is apparent that interaction and communication among SMT members lead to greater commitment and acceptance of ownership.

5.3.2.5 Encouraging SMT members to contribute

By encouraging the SMT members to contribute to the instructional programme, the second aim is once again addressed (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4).

During the interviews the participants mentioned that the development of staff members that will take the school to its desired outcome is very important (section 4.6.4.1). The SMT members realized that there existed a link between a well-equipped staff and the academic performance of the school. At one of the schools the principal revealed the importance of demonstrating to the SMT members that he trusted them to do staff development. Likewise, it is the principal's responsibility to provide SMT members with the opportunity to manage staff development workshops (section 4.6.4.1).

A school should be managed successfully in order to achieve excellent results (section 4.6.4.2). The interviewees agreed that educators should improve their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve the academic results of the school (section 4.6.4.2). A principal asserted that the academic results should be discussed by the SMT as a whole, as it is the responsibility of the SMT to analyze the results of the school. The interviewees confirmed that the SMT should maintain a particular standard in terms of what the school wants to achieve. Provision should be made for differentiation, as learners exhibit different levels of competencies.

In conclusion, the SMT must become more involved in the organisational structure of the school in order to improve the academic results (section 4.6.4.2). The SMT has the responsibility to motivate staff members in their respective departments to do their best in the interest of the school.

5.3.2.6 The formation of sub-committees

The third aim of this research was to determine to what extent the members of different sub-committees in the school, as the foundation, the intermediate, and the senior phases,

and the learning area committees, can be involved in instructional leadership. The interviewees indicated that the HOD's should play a more significant role in managing his or her particular department (section 4.6.5.1). The participants agreed that the HOD's should manage their phases. An interviewee asserted that the instructional programme should be managed by the other members of the SMT as well, and not only by the principal. Another interviewee asserted that by allowing SMT members to manage their own responsibilities and by involving the HOD's in the management of their phases, they will grow as leaders and as individuals (section 4.6.5.1).

In terms of accountability and responsibility (section 4.6.5.2), all the interviewees agreed that as much as the principal, the SMT members are just as much accountable and responsible for the instructional programme (section 4.6.5.2).

With reference to the involvement of post level 1 educators, the interview data confirmed that the SMTs at the identified schools did not have a problem with post level 1 educators serving on the SMT (section 4.6.5.3). This practice assists in breaking down the barriers between post levels at school. A principal at one of the schools mentioned that it makes sense to draw from the experience of others (section 4.6.5.3). In conclusion, SMTs should keep the end in mind - the end being improved teamwork leading to improved academic performance (section 4.6.5.3).

The conclusions derived from this study will afford the opportunity to make recommendations to provide principals with some ideas on how to involve their SMT in the management of the instructional programme.

The above conclusions addressed the research questions and aims in the following way:
- The first aim of this research was to determine the extent of the involvement of the SMT in the management and leading of the instructional programme (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4). Based on the interviews conducted at the three primary schools it came to the fore that SMTs want to become involved in managing the instructional programme, as it is not just the responsibility of the principal alone to manage the instructional programme (section 4.3.3.1; sub sections 1 and 2). The management of the instructional programme is indeed a shared responsibility of all the members of the SMT.

- The purpose of the second aim of this research was to determine how the practice of participative management could contribute to the involvement of the SMT members in instructional leadership (sections 1.4 and 3.4.4). Given the complexity of the principal's task he or she cannot manage the instructional programme on his or her own (section 4.3.3.2, sub-section 1). In order for the instructional programme to be managed more effectively, he or she must apply the principles of participative management as discussed in section 4.3.3.2, sub-section 2). It has further been highlighted that the various instructional leadership tasks need to be shared among all the SMT members as they are experts in their respective areas of specialization (section 4.3.3.2, sub-section 3). In section 4.3.3.3, sub-section 1 the importance of consultation was discussed. Section 4.3.3.3, sub-section 2 alluded to the fact that all the SMT members have to become involved with a view on accepting ownership and collective responsibility. In section 4.3.3.4, sub-section 1 the principle of participative management was further discussed where it came to the fore that SMT members must be empowered to improve the academic performance of the school. Section 4.3.3.4, sub -section 2 alluded to the fact that instructional programme should be managed with a view on the improvement of the academic performance. It has been concluded that SMT members want to contribute if provided the opportunity to do so. Principals also need to demonstrate to their SMTs that they trust them by allowing them to perform certain staff development workshops.
  It can therefore be concluded that the application of participative management will in fact lead to the effective involvement of all SMT members in the management of the instructional programme.

- The third aim of this research was to establish to what extend members of different sub-committees of the school i.e the foundation, intermediate and senior phases, and learning area-comittees can be involved in instructional leadership. In section 4.3.3.4, sub-section 1, the responsibility of the HODs managing their phases was deemed important as it confirmed the sharing of the responsibillty of managing the instructional programme. According to the interviewees this would ensure that the HODs could be held accountable and responsible for their phases (section 4.3.3.4, sub-section 2). In section 4.3.3.4, sub-section 3 the necessity of involving post level 1 educators in managing the instructional programme was explained. Section 4.3.3.4 sub-section 4 alluded to the fact that successful leaders will promote the achievement of learners by encouraging the support and commitment of all stake-

holders. This approach would in fact facilitate sustainability in leadership. It has finally been concluded that the management of the instructional programme is indeed a team effort, SMT members regard themselves as professional educators and that empowerment of the staff would result in the leader creating leaders.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Notwithstanding the empirical findings and the analysis of the relevant documentation confirming that the participating schools functioned effectively, there still exists room for improvement. The recommendations are based on the research aims (section 1.4) and the research conclusions.

5.4.1 Involving the SMT in instructional leadership

Seeing that instructional leadership is the most important management task, it is recommended that principals utilize the expertise of their SMTs to the utmost. The educators at school are professionals in their respective fields, and ought to be allowed to demonstrate their competencies in the interest of the learners and the school. The SMT members should be given more responsibilities in respect of the management of the instructional programme. By involving the SMT the principal would be 'freeing' himself or herself to perform optimally as regards the management of the school. The principal would then be able to keep an eye on the instructional programme while performing his day-to-day tasks. Cognisance needs to be taken of the fact that SMT members have specific duties to perform, and these duties were formulated for the very reason of sharing the responsibilities of the management of the instructional programme.

Since SMT members are part of the school management, it is also recommended that principals should involve them in staff development sessions as is expected in the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), and this should form part of the job description of every member of the SMT.

5.4.2 Applying the principles of participative management

What some principals need to realize is that the management of the instructional programme is a shared responsibility. SMT members need to participate in decision-making, as this will reduce conflict considerably. As effective instructional leadership is not common practice at some schools, principals should develop a plan together with their SMTs to take their schools to a higher level of competence. This study revealed that it is to a principal's advantage to involve other role-players in decision-making. A participative approach will ensure that the personnel buy into a particular project and accept ownership thereof. Principals should therefore apply the principles of participative management to effectively involve all members of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme of the school.

5.4.3 Involving members of sub-committees in the school in instructional leadership

 Because SMT members need to become more involved in the management of the instructional programme, they should be provided with the opportunity to operate in sub-committees. This study revealed that sub-committees are of particular significance in larger primary schools.   HODs have to manage their respective phases and be accountable for them. They could, however, only be held accountable for their phases if they had been given the opportunity to manage them. The involvement of post level 1 educators on the SMT was indicated as to the benefit of schools, and educators can learn from one another. Principals should ensure that post level 1 educators form part of the SMT especially in smaller schools. Furthermore, it was indicated by means of this research, that participation in learning area-committees enhances the concept of participative management. Members of the personnel become empowered in this way, which will ensure that they grow both professionally and individually. Learning area specialists should be given the opportunity to take charge of their fields of expertise.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.5.1 Broadening the base of a study of this nature

This study was limited to three primary schools. Additional research could be done at more schools, especially those schools where SMTs are not fully operational. They could benefit from such an investigation by learning from one another in terms of their level of involvement in the instructional programme.

5.5.2 Involving post level 1 educators as members of the SMT

An in-depth study should be done, focusing on how post level 1 educators view themselves in terms of the management of the instructional programme. In this study the main focus was the involvement of the members of the SMT, and how they perceive involving post level 1 educators in the management of the instructional programme.

5.5.3 The effect a shared approach has on the principal

A study could be done on how a shared approach of this nature impacts on the role of the principal. Since decision-making is extended to the broader SMT, it might well be that certain SMT members cannot deal with this additional power and may want to overrule the principal, who is ultimately accountable.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this study the participation of the members of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme was investigated. Of particular significance was the fact that the socio-economic context does have an effect on how a school is managed. The lack of payment of school fees is one aspect that affects the management of the school. SMTs also indicated their eagerness to participate in the management of the school, of which the instructional programme was one component. It was also established that SMT members consider themselves as professional individuals who possess the skills to deliver what is expected from them. Furthermore, it was indicated that the decision-making process should be more inclusive. The principal as part of the team has to consult with his or her

fellow SMT members on matters pertaining to the instructional programme, amongst others.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the improvement of the academic performance of schools by virtue of what has been highlighted as a reason for the poor performance of some schools, namely the lack of involvement of all the SMT members in the management of the instructional programme.

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APPENDIXES

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Verwysing
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ISalathiso   *20091006-0027*

APPENDIX A

Mr Kevin Du Plooy
51 Highbury Road
KUILSRIVER
7580

Dear Mr K. Du Plooy

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: INVESTIGATING THE PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educator's programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **6th October 2009 to 30th October 2009**.
6. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.

7. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the District Office and principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
8. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
9. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
10. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
11.

> **The Director: Research Services**
> **Western Cape Education Department**
> **Private Bag X9114**
> **CAPE TOWN**
> **8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: **6th October 2009**
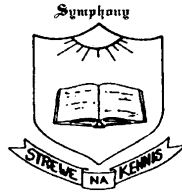
APPENDIX B (Example of the letter sent to the three primary schools)

The Principal
School C

Dear Principal

REQUEST FOR PERMISSON TO DO RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I am currently registered for a M.Ed. degree at Unisa and I am doing a mini-dissertation in Educational Management.

The title of my dissertation is: *Investigating the involvement of School Management Teams in managing the instructional programme: a case study.*

My student number is: 458 236 5.

The name of my promoter is Prof. A.G.Kruger.

His telephone number is 012 429 4593 (Office hours).

In order for me to complete the ethnographic interviews pertaining to this study, I am approaching you for assistance. My request for assistance consists of the following:

- an interview with your SMT;
- permission to observe at least one full SMT meeting; and
- permission to access documents such as the following, pertaining to this study:

i) minutes of SMT meetings;

ii) the school's mission statement;

iii) school and instructional policy;

v) learner- centred classrooms; and

vi) minutes, etc. of learning area meetings.

iv) assessment strategies;

The questions may be answered in the language of your choice.

Research problem:

- How can the application of participative management principles ensure the effective involvement of all members of the SMT in managing and leading the instructional programme of the school?

The aims of the research are as follows

1. To what extent are the members of the SMT involved in the management and leading of the instructional programme?
2. How can the practice of participative management ensure that the members of the SMT are involved in instructional leadership?
3. To what extent can the members of different sub-committees in the school, *i.e.* foundation phase, intermediate and senior phases, and learning area committees be involved in instructional leadership?
4. How should the principal go about mobilizing his or her school management team to improve the academic results of the school?

AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

In terms of the research questions formulated above, the aims of the study are

1. to determine the extent of the involvement of the members of the SMT in the management and leading of the instructional programme;
2. to determine how the practice of participative management can contribute to the involvement of the members of the SMT in instructional leadership;
3. to determine to what extent the members of different sub-committees in the school *i.e.* the foundation phase, the intermediate and senior phases, and learning area committees, can be involved in instructional leadership; and
4. to provide recommendations and guidelines that will enable the principal to mobilize his or her SMT to improve the academic results of the school.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Given the sensitive nature of school matters you are assured that no information will be disclosed to anybody else. Neither the school's name nor the names of staff members will be mentioned in the research.

In view of the above you are kindly requested to complete the reply note that is included. This note needs to be forwarded to my promoter as proof of your consent.

I thank you in anticipation.

Yours truly.

…………………………………
Kevin J. du Plooy
(Principal)
2009.09.07

APPENDIX C
(Example of the interview schedule used at the three primary schools)

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1.   How do you perceive the task or responsibility of instructional leadership at the school?
     (What is your view on the role of the principal as well as all members of the SMT in this regard?)

2.   Do you think there is a need to actively involve all the members of the SMT in the management of instructional programme or should this task only be in the hands of the principal or another member of the SMT?

3.   Why should consultation with the SMT on matters pertaining to the management of the instructional programme take place?

4.   How could members of the SMT become involved in the various responsibilities regarded as instructional leadership or instructional management responsibilities such as
     • the formulation of the mission, goals and instructional policy of the school
     • the management of the school's curriculum, etc.?

5.   To what extent are the SMT (HODs etc.) involved in staff development sessions?

6.   How can the members of the SMT contribute to the improvement of the academic results of the school?

7.   Do you feel valued as a member of the SMT?

8.   Is there any merit in allowing the HODs to manage their phases?

9.   To what extent are contributions of other staff members (other than the members of the SMT) considered in terms of the management of the instructional programme?

10   How can a system of sub-committees in the school, for example phase and learning area-committees, contribute to the improvement of the academic results?

(Appendix D is an example of the interview transcripts of the three participating primary schools).

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED AT SCHOOL C

1. How do you perceive the task or responsibility of instructional leadership at your school? (What is your view on the role of the principal as well as all the members of the SMT in this regard?)

SMT Member: The role the principal has always had two major dimensions viz. that of instructional leader and school manager. As the easiest way for a principal to exercise instructional leadership is through the managerial tasks engaged in everyday we cannot distinguish between the two major dimensions that I mentioned. Since the success of school depends on effective instruction the learners receive the management of the instructional programme of the school is the most important managerial of the principal's task. Because the principal's task is so complex he cannot always be available to give individual teachers intensive assistance with their teaching tasks. Fortunately he is the leader of people who are professionally qualified for their job and can therefore utilize their expertise to contribute to the improvement of teaching and staff in-service training.

Onderhoudvoerder: So u stem saam dat die kernbesigheid van die skool onderrig en professionele bestuur is?

SBS lid: Ja, inderdaad.

SBS lid: Die leierskap lê hoofsaaklik by die hoof en almal lewer 'n bydrae. Almal is deels verantwoordelik, maar die persoon wat die leiding neem-die voorsitter van die skoolbestuurspan is die hoof, maar ons ander wat saam met hom verantwoordelikheid neem, speel 'n ewe belangrike rol.

SBS lid: Uhm….Alles van die skool, alle aspekte , enige besluitneming word eers hier bespreek en elkeen van ons het die reg om 'n inset te lewer .Uhm…alles word bespreek en uhm … die prinsipaal by die skool maak nie net besluite op sy eie nie.

SBS lid: Ek kan maar net beaam wat almal tot dusver gesê het. Die skoolhoof kry die inligting wat hy wil bespreek van waar dit ookal kom –die department, van watter afdeling ookal- hy bring dit na ons toe- hy gooi dit vir ons oop op die tafel en ons bespreek dit en besluit wat is belangrik en wat wil ons doen en dan neem ons dit na die personeel toe.

Onderhoudvoerder: So u voel u word in alle besluit betrek en voel u lewer almal 'n bydrae nè?

Almal knik instemmend.

2. Do you think there is a need to actively involve all the members of the   SMT in the management of the instructional programme or should this task be in the hands of only the principal or another member of the SMT?

SBS lid: Soos ek reeds gesê het is dit onmoontlik vir die skoolhoof om dit op sy eie te doen Die bestuur van die onderrigprogram is te kompleks vir een mens. So daarom sou ek ook sê die samestelling van die bestuurspan is baie belangrik.   In ons geval werk dit nou net per toeval so dat ons twee departementshoofde en posvlak een onderwysers het wat hier op die bestuurspan is- amper soos die departementshoofde se assistente. So ons neem dit en omdat ons ons eie departemente bestuur uhm…. neem ons eintlik die verantwoordelikheid vir die onderrigprogram in ons department. En uhm..dit is onmoontlik vir 'n skoolhoof om dit alles op sy eie te doen. Hy dra kennis daarvan. Hy weet presies wat aangaan in ons departemente en ons is verantwoordelik vir die bestuur daarvan.

SBS lid: Nie net is almal deel daarvan nie en dit sal onmoontlik wees vir die skoolhoof om alleen dit te bestuur, maar bestuur is ook meer effektief as daar meer partye betrokke is en as meer partye hul insette gee. Dan het 'n mens 'n duideliker of 'n volledige besluit as meer partye betrokke is.   So, ja. Dit is nie net die taak van 'n enkele SBS lid of die skoolhoof om die onderrigprogram te bestuur nie.

SBS lid: Ek glo ook dat alle lede moet betrokke wees behalwe net die   skoolhoof.   Alle take kan nie net in sy hande wees nie.

 SBS lid: Ja ek beaam wat die ander sê. Die hoof weet van alles wat aangaan.   Hy weet van alles wat in die onderskeie departemente aangaan.

Onderhoudvoerder; So u sal met my saamstem as ek sê dat die kommunikasie tussen die skoolhoof en die departementshoofde van kardinale belang is? Dat   die hoof ingelig is en dat hy nie onkant gevang word indien amptenare van die department hier sou opdaag nie?

SBS lid: Ons woon ook verskillende werkswinkels en vergadering by die   OBOS by. Ons bring eers die verslae na hom toe, sodat hy kan weet wat aangaan.

Prinsipaal: Miskien moet 'n mens net dit noem. 'n Mens kan delegeer. 'n Mens kan take delegeer maar nie verantwoordelikheid nie. Die hoof bly verantwoordbaar. Wat belangrik is dat wanneer 'n mens take delegeer moet jy jou mense genoeg vertrou om die taak te doen en dan wanneer daar 'n probleem kom dat 'n mens dan sulke sake sal beskerm as dit nodig is. Die kort en die lank van die saak is "onderrigleiding" is ons taak en in 'n skool kurrikulumontwikkeling, en jy kan nie aan iemand delegeer as jy hulle nie vertrou en hulle nie ondersteun in dit wat hulle moet doen nie.

3. **Why should consultation with the SMT on matters pertaining to the management of the instructional programme take place?**

SBS lid: Since the HOD's are responsible for managing the phases and serve on the SMT consultation is inevitable, because it will be brought to the table. Uhm…..   as a management team of the school operating as a body we are responsible for the instructional programme. So consultation will have to take place.

SBS lid: Sodat mense eienaarskap sal neem van wat ookal hier op die tafel kom. As dit bespreek is, dan neem almal saam verantwoordelikheid daarvoor.

Onderhoudvoerder; U was gevra hoe u oor die saak voel nè?

SBS lid: Ja.

SBS lid: Uhm…… so that everyone knows what is happening. Hier is dit die Bestuurspan wat bespreek en nie net een persoon wat besluite neem en sy wil afdwing nie.

SBS lid: Ja, ons bespreek alles saam en maak seker dat die regte boodskap uitgaan.

4. How could members of the SMT become involved in the various responsibilities regarded as instructional leadership or instructional management responsibilities such as:
  - **the formulation of the mission, goals and instructional policy of the school,**
  - **the management of the school's curriculum, etc.?**

SBS lid: Because of the extensiveness of the school's instructional programme the principal is compelled to delegate elements of the programme to the vice-principal or the heads of department. The management team should be included in the selection of the aims and objectives, Teachers should also be invited to share in the formulation of goals, because then they tend to make it their own and implement voluntarily. Uhm….. the SMT is responsible for the strategic and operational planning. The HOD's are responsible for implementing the curriculum in their respective phases, but the SMT manage the school's broad curriculum in other words the curricular and extra curricular activities.

SBS lid: Wanneer ons besig is met strategiese beplanning, dan delegeer ons take aan persone. Deels delegeer ons take, omdat ons reken die persoon is die beste persoon vir daardie taak of ons delegeer take bloot aan departementshoofde omdat dit hul posisie of hul verantwoordelikheid is. So, met dit is daar nog steeds geleentheid vir persone om te sê dat hulle kans sien of nie kans sien vir 'n betrokke taak nie. So uuh... hoe ons betrokke raak is, ons kry 'n taaktoewysing ja, maar ons het nog steeds geleentheid om kommentaar daarop te lewer.

SBS lid: Wanneer daar beleide opgestel word, is almal deel daarvan –selfs ook buite die bestuurspan en as ons die taak kry, by ons portefeuljes, dan is jy daarvoor verantwoordelik. So jy moet dan nou pa staan vir dit wat aan jou opgedra is.

5. To what extent are the SMT (HOD's etc.)involved in staff   development sessions?

SBS lid: To a very large extend. Once performance measurement of educators has been completed, the personal growth plans are drafted with the assistance of the DSG's the developmental needs of the educators are prioritized to compile a staff development and support programme. Staff development sessions are provided by the HOD's and other staff members who   have the necessary expertise and knowledge.

Onderhoudvoerder: And how do you feel about the fact that you are so involved in the development of staff?

SBS lid: Uhm...how do I feel about my involvement in staff development?

Onderhoudvoerder: Yes.

SBS lid: I see it as a very important part of my job. It's to develop the staff,   because that will lead to the development of our school and to ensure, you know, effective teaching and learning in our school. Because, if the staff doesn't develop then the school won't grow.

Onderhoudvoerder: And of course your own aspirations as an individual?   Should you become a principal one day you take all this experience with you and manage your school in the same way?

SBS lid: That's right.

SBS lid: Ja, personeelontwikkeling is 'n noodsaaklike verantwoordelikheid van die departementshoof.   Maar soos die vorige SBS lid vroeër gesê het, die posvlak een opvoeder wat in die SBS dien, tree dikwels op as hulp en in daardie opsig gee die SBS lid

vir hulle baie geleentheid om leiding te neem. Die personeel op, posvlak 1 word ookal betrek.

Onderhoudvoerder: Enigiemand anders wat wil kommentaar lewer?

SBS lid: Ja, ek is daarvoor dat ons sake oopgooi, sodat almal hul insette kan lewer en dan besluit ons as 'n span wat die beste is in belang van die skool en in belang van die kinders.

6.   **How can the members of the SMT contribute to the improvement of the academic results of the school?**

SBS lid: The SMT formulates the objectives as part of the instructional planning. Through the development of educators which should include the improvement of their knowledge, skills and attitudes, the academic results of the school should also improve. Implementing rewards and incentives for educators would also improve the team spirit and motivate the staff to achieve the objective of improving the academic results of the school.

Onderhoudvoerder: Do you think the systemic results we receive from the department make sense?

SBS lid: Oh no. You talk about the grade six's'? Because somebody called me [saying] that it is not called systemic evaluation anymore, I don't know what it is called now. Uhm …..but the 2007 results received for grade six I personally re-calculated and found a few mathematical errors made there. And I am actually wondering how they could then evaluate our children if they can't do the calculations themselves.   Uhm ……..so personally I am not in favour of the manner it was exercised. I am not in favour of that. They take the whole class , ogeag of die kinders die taal magtig is of nie en ek stem nie daarmee saam nie, want dit is nie 'n beeld van wat in ons skool aangaan nie en die vermoë van die meerderheid kinders in ons skool nie.

SBS lid: Ook is daar kinders wat spesiale klas tipe kinders is, maar wat met die stroom moet aangaan in die sisteem 'inklusiewe' onderrig . En hierdie kinders word as deel van

jou klas getel en die punte-gemiddelde word dan uitgewerk wat hierdie kinders insluit – en dis vir my onaanvaarbaar.

SBS lid: Party klasse sal byvoorbeeld miskien een of twee van hierdie kinders hê, terwyl ander klasse van graad vier tot vyf ses sulke kinders het en dit het 'n baie groter invloed op die uitslag.

SBS lid: Hulle moet eintlik daardie kinders wat kan lees en skryf en moontlik op dieselfde vlak vorder as die res van die eintlik apart toets sou ek sê.

SBS lid: Kinders wat volgens ouderdom vorder wat maar net daar sit, omdat hy volgens die sisteem moet aangaan.

Onderhoudvoerder: Ja, Dis net regverdig teenoor die onderwyser, teenoor die skool, teenoor die kind.

SBS lid: Ja, want ek meen dit bring jou skool se persentasie af en dit is buite jou vermoë om iets daaraan te kan doen.

SBS lid: Nou skep dit die indruk dat daar in die skool self daar nie iets aan gedoen word nie. In die tussentyd, soos hierdie jaar, het ons 'n aksieplan saamgestel oor hoe om geletterdheid en gesyferdheid te bevorder en my kollega het die verantwoordelikheid daarvoor geneem om dit saam te stel en aan te bied aan die personeel en uhm….allerhande wenke deur te gee en vir die personeel op te lei om dit te verbeter in ons skool. En wag ek nou met hoë verwagtinge vir die graad ses toetsinge wat nou in November gehou gaan word.   As dit daarop neerkom en hulle vat al die kinders kan ek nou al sê waar die uitvalle gaan wees en wat die redes gaan wees daarvoor, maar jy mag glad nie eens met daardie mense kommunikeer nie. Hulle mag glad nie met jou praat nie. So, dit is mos nie die FBI of die KGB nie.   Hoekom moet daar nou so geheimsinnig opgetree word?

SBS lid: Ek dink die oorsprong van een van ons probleme t.o.v die akademiese vordering in die skole is dat ons kurrikulum se assesseringstandaarde oop is vir interpretasie en dan

het verskillende skole en verskillende opvoeders [die] reg om verskillende interpretasies daaraan te heg.bv die assesseringstaandaarde vir graad een, leeruitkoms een in wiskunde, is daar meer as een van hulle wat nie 'n getalgebied aan gekoppel is nie. Al wat daar staan is dat die leerders die besondere bewerking met 'n twee-syfer getal moet kan doen. Nou party mense sal dit aanleer as 11 en ander sal dit interpreteer as 99.   So, daar is al klaar jou interpretasie van jou assesseringstandaarde   wat verskil van die ooste tot die weste in die Wes-kaap.   Daarom dink ek sal dit baie moeilik wees om een gestandaardiseerde toets vir graad een leerders saam te stel want, sommige leerders sal glad nie daarby gekom het nie en ander sou al ver bo dit gevorder het. En die tweede ding is daar is 'n beduidende verskil in ons uitslae- ons nasionale assesseringstoetse en die wat die provinsie doen. So as jou kinders 'n 80% gemiddeld op die een doen en 'n 30% gemiddeld op die volgende toets dan moet jy jouself nou afvra watter een is 'n ware refleksie van wat ons leerders kan doen.

7. Do you feel valued as a SMT member?

SBS lid: I personally feel valued as a member of the SMT, because I have the opportunity to be involved in the management of an institution of which I am extremely proud. Continued acknowledgement of my input and gratitude shown by the principal motivate me to give even more than is expected.

SBS lid: Ek voel baie gewaardeerd as 'n lid van die SBS, omdat ons voorsitter geen opinie minag nie, en almal 'n gelykwaardige kans gee om sy saak te stel.

SBS lid: My siening word gerespekteer en my insette word waardeer.

SBS lid: As ek na myself kyk…. ek praat nie van wat ander kan sien nie, maar in myself weet ek dat ek gegroei het. Wat kan ek vermag het in wat ek nie kon gedoen het nie. En daarvoor moet ek my hoof bedank.

8. Do you think there is any merit in allowing the HODs to manage their phases?

SBS lid: Being the instructional leaders in their phases I think it is a privilege to manage their own responsibilities.

Onderhoudvoerder: Can they also be held accountable for whatever happens in their phase?

SBS lid: Yes and as the principal says, the buck stops right over there. So if he trusts me to be part of the instructional programme uhm….   then I would do my utmost best not to disappoint him, but yes….. because I know at the back of my mind he will be held accountable [for it]. That he in a sense also holds me accountable for what I do…uhm…I mean I can't just do whatever I want to keep him responsible.

Onderhoudvoerder: So it is responsibility and accountability?
SBS lid: Yes.

SBS lid: Ja ek dink beslis [dat] 'n fase sonder 'n leier sal "going nowhere slowly" want iemand moet daar die leiding neem, maar soos [die vorige] SBS-lid sê daar is altyd 'n hiërargie boontoe-'n adjunkhoof en 'n skoolhoof wat saam met die departementshoof verantwoordelkheid dra uhm…,ja ..daar moet beslis 'n leier wees.

9. To what extent are contributions of other staff members (other than the members of the SMT) considered in terms of the management of the instructional programme?

SBS lid: As HOD of the intermediate and senior phases, I am compelled to rely on senior educators to assist in the management of the instructional programme. They act as heads of learning areas and are responsible for checking and moderating the assessment planning and evidence of learner performance, to chair meetings, to compile learning area reports, policies etc. They are also involved in the evaluation of educators as members of the DSG.

Onderhoudvoerder: So you are also involving post level one educators as I have gathered now.

SBS lid: Yes, on the DSG.

SBS lid: Ja, by die kurrikulumvergaderings kan ons ook posvlak een opvoeders betrek en die personeel kry ook die notules van hierdie vergaderings. Niks hier is 'n geheim nie.

SBS lid: Ja en die hoof kry die notules van die kurrikulumvergaderings en ons hou ons beheerliggaam op hoogte van wat aangaan in ons program.

10. How can a system of sub-committees in the school, for example phase committees and learning area committees, contribute to improving the academic results?

SBS lid: Committees could assist in monitoring the functioning of the school. A learning area committee can for example do much more than the learning area head to establish the results in the learning area. In our school, however, we do not have enough learning area teams to make up committees. For some learning areas we have two or three educators in the learning area team, so they automatically form the committee. So, in a bigger primary school and also definitely in high schools, it should definitely contribute to the improvement of the results. Hoe meer koppe, hoe beter gaan ons anderkant uitkom. Dit hang af van wat in die koppe is. 'n Mens kan 'n klomp mense hê wat betrokke is en dan kom hulle nie anderkant uit nie. Maar ek kry altyd die idee dat jy op die hoogte kan kom van 'n leerarea as jy nou 'n leerarea-span het. Kom ons vat maar wetenskap en jy het nou tien verskillende mense wat in daardie leerarea werksaam is, en jy sit almal se idees en onderrigstrategieë bymekaar, sal 'n mens ver kom.

SBS lid 2: Ek wil ook maar net gesê het dat in vergelyking met baie ander skole is ons personeel relatief klein. Ons is net sewe persone in die grondslagfase. So, die hele idee sal wees soos ['n vorige] SBS lid gesê het 'Dis nie regtig altyd haalbaar nie, omdat so baie mense op so baie ander terreine betrokke is.' Aan die anderkant gee dit 'n mens baie meer geleentheid om self te bestuur en self leierskap te neem. En daar is nie regtig vier of

vyf ander persone op wie 'n mens kan staatmaak nie. Jy moet jouself bekwaam as jy verantwoordelikheid vir iets wil neem.

SBS lid: Ek wil net noem, omdat ons net twee in 'n graad is, is daar nouer samewerking tussen die twee leerkragte.

Onderhoudvoerder: So wat u eintlik sê hierdie konsep sal miskien beter werk in 'n groter skool?

SBS lid: Dis absoluut essensieel in 'n groter skool sou ek sê om beheer uit te oefen.

Onderhoudvoerder: Goed, dankie Kollegas vir u insette. Dit word opreg waardeer.