

**THE IMPACT OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ON THE
FUNCTIONING OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN JOHANNESBURG SOUTH**

By

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DECLARATION

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I hereby declare that the dissertation titled **THE IMPACT OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ON THE FUNCTIONING OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN JOHANNESBURG SOUTH, SOUTH AFRICA** is my own work. I also declare that all references used or quoted are acknowledged in full by means of complete references.

.....

Signature

(Sharita Singh)

.....

Date

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the researcher explored the prevalence of distributed leadership practices in schools in Johannesburg South in order to illustrate how the principals in effective schools collaborated with different members of staff to ensure the school's success. To this end, a literature study was undertaken on relevant theories and on the results of previous research on the issue. The study explored literature from local and international perspectives on distributed leadership to understand how this form of leadership impacted the functioning of primary schools in Johannesburg South.

This was followed by an empirical investigation using judgemental and purposive sampling methods to select participants. A mixed methods research design was employed to elicit both quantitative and qualitative data from a single, structured questionnaire. Participants included 86 respondents from 9 primary schools. Throughout the research study, ethical considerations like keeping confidentiality of information provided and anonymity of research participants were upheld. Data analysis involved a mix of quantitative data analysis and content analysis. Based on the findings, recommendations were made to the GDE and school principals on support needed by teachers if distributed leadership is to ensure school effectiveness.

The study found that distributed leadership not only motivated teachers, but compelled them to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses, and contribute to school leadership by taking on roles that interest them. Schools in Johannesburg South have created a culture in which distributed leadership tends to flourish. Distributed leadership ensures that a myriad of well-developed teachers exist at all ranks of the school, who have the capacity to fill vacant positions when a need arises to ensure the smooth functioning of schools.

Key Terms

Capacity building, extra mural programme, learners, mentoring, primary school, school effectiveness, school improvement, school management team (SMT), quintile.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
ANA	Annual National Assessments
DoE	Department of Education
EEA	Employment of Teachers Act
ELRC	Education and Labour Relations Council
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management Systems
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
PMDS	Performance Management Development System
SACE	South African Council of Educator
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SASA	South African Schools Act
SAT	School Assessment Team
SBST	School Based Support Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

Referencing abbreviations

et al. *et alii* meaning "and others".

ibid. *ibidem* meaning "The same as the previous reference".

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South African schools are complex organisations that demand highly skilled individuals as leaders. The roles and functions of teachers employed at schools are multifaceted and demanding. A typical school management team (SMT) is made up of four or five teachers who have a range of demanding functions to perform within a single school day. School management teams have to lead and manage the school, teach and manage classrooms, and perform extra-mural, co-curricular and administrative duties, amongst others. The demands placed on school management teams warrant that power should be distributed down the echelons to all teachers to ensure that a school meets the demands placed on it by the Department of Education (DoE). It is imperative that leadership is distributed across and down the ranks in schools to ensure smooth functioning and success of a school.

South African schools today can be described as melting pots of diversity. In 1994, the government inherited 17 racially differentiated systems and bureaucracies from the apartheid government primarily distinguished by huge disparity in the resources allocated to them (Fleish, 2002:2). Since 1994 when the new democratic government was elected, the South African government has progressively laid the foundations of democracy and developed a schooling system in which racial inequality, segregation and a fragmented schooling system gave way to a uniform system aimed at making the constitutional right to education a reality for all (Barry, 2006:7). Many teachers in South African schools today have emerged from separate education systems designed only to benefit one race group into a unified education system that caters for all South Africans.

The 2000 Dakar Framework for Action sets out six Education for All (EFA) goals. Goal 6 of the Education for All, Country Report-South Africa (2010:9) is:

Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence for all, so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all – especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The transformation or reform of any education system is intended to bring about sustainable school improvement. However, the quality of school improvement depends on the quality of its leadership as well as the quality of teachers it employs.

The Department of Education advocates that the principals should be accountable for the leadership and management of the schools they are assigned to. Schools are, however, complex organisations, and it would be futile to expect one individual to have the expertise or the time to lead every department of the school successfully. Therefore, there is need for principals to share leadership roles with teachers. The key characteristic of leadership today, is the ability to mobilize and influence others to achieve an organisation's or group's goal (Thompson, 2008:174). Spillane and Healey (2010:256) see leadership as critical to innovation in schools. It is generally acknowledged that a good school is steered by a good leader who creates a conducive environment where learners realize their potential, utilize their strengths and maximize their opportunities. Spillane and Healey (2010:256) further argue that focusing exclusively on the principal is limiting as other formally-designated leaders play critical roles in leading and managing schools.

A distributed leadership perspective recognises that there are multiple leaders in schools and that leadership activities are widely shared within and between organisations (Harris & Spillane, 2008:31). According to Spillane (2005:145), a distributed view of leadership incorporates the activities of multiple individuals in a school who work at mobilising and guiding school staff towards a desired change. They focus on leadership practices as they are distributed among appointed, formal leaders as well as unofficial leaders within schools.

Leaders are dependent on the followers they lead. The principal, though the appointed head of the school, is supported by multiple role players in the form of the school management team (SMT), teachers, administrative staff, support staff and the School Governing Body (SGB), which is constituted mainly of the elected parent representatives of the school and other stakeholders. All these role players contribute to a school's success or failure in one way or another. The principal must support the best quality teaching and learning at school through the distribution of roles down the hierarchy to all members of the staff.

The principal, together with the SMT, is obliged to build a professional learning community within the school through the proper guidance and support of teachers whom they lead (Day, 2000:22). Having a clear vision of what he wants for his school is perhaps the single most important contribution that a leader can make for future success of his school, because it creates direction and purpose. According to Day (2000:22), effective leaders aim to build 'learning enriched' schools for staff as well as pupils through participative leadership. The contribution of more than one individual is necessary to

ensure that a school succeeds in its core purpose of teaching and learning, and the holistic development of the children it serves. Furthermore, there is increasing research evidence that distributed leadership makes a positive difference to organisational outcomes and student learning (Harris & Spillane, 2008:32).

Before entering the teaching profession, a teacher must register with the South African Council of Educators (SACE), and therefore must abide by the Council's Code of Professional Ethics which requires that a teacher:

7.3 Keeps abreast of educational trends and developments;

7.4 Promotes the on-going development of teaching as a profession;

7.5 Accepts that he or she has a professional obligation towards the education and induction into the profession of new members of the teaching profession (Barry, 2006:403).

Teachers need development, support and monitoring, and at the same time, these teachers are responsible for the holistic development of the child. According to SACE code of Professional Ethics, teachers who are registered or provisionally registered with SACE are expected to:

2.2 Acknowledge that the attitude, dedication, self-discipline, ideals, training and conduct of the teaching profession determine the quality of education in this country (Barry 2006:401).

The Constitution of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) stipulates that its main aim is to eradicate all forms of discrimination in education, and to strive towards a free and democratic system of education in South Africa. Furthermore, Objective 6.9 of the Constitution pledges to encourage the development of the aesthetic aspects of the learner's life and to help promote his or her educational, spiritual and physical development (SADTU, 2010:7).

The National Professional Teacher Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) advertises its professional development programme each term on its website by stating that the teacher is the single-most important factor in achieving quality teaching and learning in school. Furthermore, NAPTOSA asserts that if we are serious about improving education in this country, continued professional development is critical (NAPTOSA, 2014: n.p.). The professionalism of teachers is further encouraged through SADTU's code of conduct which states, 'The teacher shall act responsibly in the discharge of professional, organizational and

administrative duties'. (SADTU, 2014: n.p). The principal therefore has to ensure that genuine opportunities for shared leadership are encouraged and supported, that teamwork is encouraged, and that there is participation in decision making so that every staff member takes ownership of the tasks on hand, and is empowered to take on the required responsibilities.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

When acknowledging the multiple roles the school principal has to undertake within a school day, it is imperative that he has the support of the staff. A study of distributed leadership practices in schools will illustrate how the principal in effective schools can collaborate with different members of the staff to ensure school effectiveness. High income schools are financially capable of employing additional personnel to provide relief to state-employed teachers while low income schools are expected to meet the same demands placed on them by the department of education without additional staff. Distributed leadership allows for the capacity building of teachers and ensures that a myriad of informal leaders exists at all ranks within the school, with the necessary skills to enhance school performance and the ability to step into vacant roles to ensure school sustainability.

Effective schools operate through a number of synchronised, smaller committees with structures to ensure their success. A comparison of distributed leadership practices of schools in Johannesburg South will provide principals with insight into the types of leadership roles that are distributed as well as the existence of capacity building opportunities for teachers. This study will shed light on how different schools lead and manage various committees and how performance is monitored to ensure that each area of the school functions at an acceptable standard (Clark, 2007:4).

This study will shed light on development opportunities available to teachers as well as their needs. The results of this study could be used: by school principals to improve the way leadership is practised at their schools; by teachers who want to explore their leadership potential; and by the Department of Education when planning in-service training (INSET) to cater for teacher needs. Teachers who are capacitated will enhance the quality of teaching and learning and provide much needed support to the principal and SMT. The Human Resource Department in each district can plan more effectively together with the school management teams so that the needs of teachers are met.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As a deputy principal who previously held the position of acting principal, the researcher has gained in-depth knowledge and experience on the vast number of roles and responsibilities that the principal is accountable for. The principal alone cannot be expected to lead every area of the school and therefore requires the collaboration and involvement of the SMT and every member of staff to varying degrees for the school to succeed. The principal thus enlists the support of teachers on the staff to lead certain committees. The researcher's years of teaching experience through the various ranks within the school as well as her experience in different schools has created an awareness of the neglect of certain areas of the school as teachers entrusted in leadership positions fail to perform adequately. This motivated the researcher to conduct this study.

The researcher believes that an investigation into current leadership practices at schools will find that distributed leadership is the preferred style of school leadership in Johannesburg South. Principals of effective schools delegate work to teachers who have the capacity and commitment to lead areas of the school while they retain accountability for school performance. The overlapping of roles and responsibilities of teachers are multifold and the daily pressures placed on them can be overwhelming if roles are not distributed appropriately. This results in poor performance in core areas of the school.

The study highlights the issues faced by teachers as they immerse themselves in their roles as teachers and school leaders within the school day and beyond into their personal time. The study highlights issues faced by teachers like staff turnover, the availability of leadership positions, training needs, staff shortages, and financial and time constraints that hinder the successful practice of distributed leadership.

Recommendations would be forwarded to school principals and the Department of Education (DoE) on areas where current leadership practices can be adapted to ensure that every area of the school functions optimally. Optimal functionality of the school involves the utilisation of the abundance of skills and expertise that exists amongst the staff as well as monitoring, mentoring and support provided by the SMT and Department of Education(DoE) to newly qualified teachers and those appointed in promotion posts. Staff turnover is a major stumbling block for school development as well-trained competent staff members are replaced by new inexperienced staff.

The study will also shed light on problems that schools encounter that hampers the practice of a leadership style that will ensure its success. By distributing leadership roles down the echelons of the school, the principal ensures that professional development becomes an integral part of the day-to-day leadership practices of a school and that a pool of competent leaders are developed throughout the school.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following main research question:

To what extent is distributed leadership practised in schools in the Johannesburg South District?

Questions that were asked in order to answer the main question were:

- What particular types of school leadership roles are distributed at school?
- Have staff members received sufficient training to lead the various areas of the school, and by whom has this training been provided?
- How is time allocated to accomplish the assigned leadership tasks?
- Are systems put in place to monitor standards once roles are distributed and how and when is this done?
- What are the possibilities and limitations of distributed leadership as perceived by the staff and how are these addressed?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to gain expert knowledge on the distributed leadership practices of schools in the Johannesburg South District and the role of monitoring and support in ensuring a school's sustainable improvement.

The current study has the following objectives:

- To explore the extent distributed leadership is practised at schools in Johannesburg South;
- To explore what types of leadership roles are distributed to the SMT and teachers;
- To establish whether teachers have received training for the work they do on a daily basis;
- To gain an understanding of teacher willingness to be part of the leadership structures at school; and
- To establish how time constraints affect leadership practices.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review serves to highlight international as well as local studies conducted on distributed leadership. It encompasses theories of leadership and focuses on the merits and limitations of distributed leadership practices.

1.5.1 Distributed leadership and other forms of school leadership

Leadership in organisations is no longer vested in a single individual but in a larger collective such as teams, or team systems (Avolio, 2011:91). Schools are complex organisations that have to ensure the holistic development of every child as well as the professional development of the teachers they employ. Teachers do not simply engage in planning, teaching, marking and reporting on learners' work. They are involved in a variety of school related activities during the time they spend at school and beyond into their personal time.

Post-heroic leadership is central to the belief that managing is the responsibility of everybody in the unit, not just the designated leader (Bradford & Cohen, 1998:3). Leadership in schools is no longer positional or individual but instead, it is a group process and every staff member is responsible for leadership to some degree. Teaching staff at various levels within the organisation, have the opportunity to lead although power is distributed among the staff along some form of a hierarchy.

Models of shared leadership conceptualize leadership as a set of practices that can be enacted by people at all levels rather than the people located at the top (Pearce & Conger, 2003:22). While teachers retain responsibility for their own daily activities, they must also become a partner in a leader's team. Each teacher has a number of 'hats' to be worn (Bradford & Cohen, 1998:50) thus they realise that their roles change from time to time within the school day.

1.5.2 Studies on the implementation of distributed leadership at schools

Leadership appears in two forms, namely formal leadership, which is exerted by persons appointed or elected to positions of formal authority in organisations, and informal leadership which is exerted by people who become influential because they have special skills that meet the needs of others (Schermerhorn, *et al.*, 2012:292). Distributed leadership acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice, whether or not they are formally designated or informal leaders.

The possibility of distributed leadership in any school will depend on whether the head and the leadership team relinquish power, and the extent to which staff embrace the opportunity to lead (Harris, 2005:18). One perspective is that leaders do not do the work themselves but they depend on followers to actually do the work. The follower's training, motivation, maturity, development and overall satisfaction are critical to the organisation's effectiveness (Van Wart, 2011:21). To be developmentally ready, one has to have some motivation to lead and to learn, and such a person would ideally have more energy for wanting to influence others toward a particular goal. Those that are willing to lead would want to learn how to go about influencing others. Goal-oriented people are more developmentally ready to lead because they are committed to the goals of the organisation (Van Wart, 2011:21).

There is an increasing number of studies that highlight a powerful relationship between distributed forms of leadership and positive organisational change (Harris & Spillane, 2008:32). Most recently, research has shown that the patterns of leadership distribution matter within an organisation and that distributed leadership practice is more likely to equate with improved organisational performance and outcomes within the school (Harris & Spillane, 2008:32).

1.5.3 The multidimensional role played by the school principal

The principal must provide professional leadership within the school amongst a range of other duties (Education Labour Relations Council [ELRC], 1998:C64). The job of the principal has never been more demanding than it is today because of the expansion of leadership tasks and responsibilities. The school principal has to ensure that every area of the school runs smoothly. The principal may not have the time or expertise to manage and lead every area of the school. The principal often delegates responsibilities like school finances, discipline, school safety, extra-murals, curriculum delivery and development, staff development, and staff social committees to other more competent members of the staff while he or she often addresses issues like human resource management and public relations of the school.

A distributed perspective does not negate or undermine the role of the school principal, but rather shows how leading and managing involve more than the actions of the school principals. School leadership and management do not reside exclusively in the actions of

the school principal or in the actions of other formally designated leadership positions that are commonplace in schools (Spillane, Camburn & Pareja, 2007:107).

Managing alone cannot solve all the complex problems and address all the challenging situations in a school. Every teacher contributes to the performance of the school (Schermerhorn, *et al.*, 2012:14). Avolio (2011:12) states that the core of being a leader is developing and helping people grow to their full potential where they can lead themselves effectively. According to Bradford and Cohen (1998:19), sharing leadership responsibilities has substantial payoffs in the following ways: leadership exists at every level, the organisation taps into the knowledge and energy of everyone, people from different units can tackle issues as a team and not as warring parties, the burdens of responsibility are shared broadly and the full talents of every employee is engaged.

1.5.4 The role of teachers in school leadership

Staff development and training are critical to school improvement (DoE, 2002:4). According to the Department of Education (2010:59), the professional development of teachers includes the usual certification of unqualified teachers, the upgrading of teachers, the preparation of teachers for their new roles and curriculum-related changes, and lifelong learning. This has been delivered in the form of workshops, seminars, conferences or courses but has been criticised by researchers for being brief, fragmented, incoherent and isolated from real classroom situations (DoE, 2010:59). Research further demonstrated that traditional approaches to the professional development of teachers result in the improvement of teaching.

SACE (DoE, 2000:E17) acknowledges that the noble calling of a teacher is to teach and train the learners of our country and that the attitude, dedication, self-discipline, ideals, training and conduct of teachers determine the quality of education in this country.

Schools are led by the principal, and departments are led by the heads of departments (HODs) who are responsible for defining the goals of their departments and processes involved. The team or Level One teachers are only responsible for the actual execution of their assigned work. The school principal, deputy principal, and the HODs are responsible for monitoring and managing performance processes, overseeing their design, interviewing and selecting personnel and interacting with the organisation (Thompson, 2008:155).

According to Harris (2005:19), distributed leadership provides exciting possibilities as it promotes the development of collegial norms amongst teachers which contribute to school effectiveness. This provides teachers with a legitimate source of authority, and at the same time, challenges the existing nature of leadership, the context in which it occurs, and the relationship between power, authority and influence.

1.5.5 Factors affecting the distribution of leadership roles in schools

School leaders face a challenging and complicated job trying to manage and lead a school (Schermerhorn, *et al.*, 2012:12). Continuous teacher attrition compounds the work of school leaders as it results in the replacement of highly skilled, experienced teachers with younger, inexperienced teachers. A formal induction and mentoring programme for new and beginner teachers is a critical element in the development of a competent and committed teaching staff (Clark, 2007:128). Competent and committed teachers ensure that a conducive teaching atmosphere prevails where high standards of teaching and learning occur.

Principals in successful schools use the school improvement plan (SIP) to develop a coherent plan aimed at addressing the areas of a school that need improvement. They understand that fragmentation, overload and incoherence are endemic problems (Fullan, 1999:36) that are detrimental to the effectiveness of a school. The principal is responsible for articulating what is desired and developing a script, teachers come to understand and believe in over time (Avolio, 2011:99). The principal should thus distribute roles down the echelons of the school to competent individuals but ensure that there is continuous mentoring, support and monitoring.

According to the ELRC (1998:C63),

Duties are specified and allocated by the principal after consultation with the teacher staff.

Teachers will be expected to perform the core duties, as outlined in paragraph 3.1(b), both within and outside the formal school day, and with the understanding that none of these may diminish the overall amount of scheduled teaching time or negatively impact upon the curriculum.

HODs and subject heads have an increasingly important role to play in managing the teaching and learning of their subject teams. They need support in developing their leadership skills and time to put these to practice. Departments led by efficient SMT members and grade heads set the goals and outline the work to be done. If the team is low on the learning curve, a

hands-on manager can provide guidance and direction and forestall problems (Thompson, 2008:155).

It is thus the responsibility of the SMT to ensure that their individual departments function successfully and that procedures are in place to develop each member of staff to a specific level of competence. According to Clark (2007:136), the best and most effective workshops are those that are in-house, where individual teachers with significant expertise share ideas and good practice with younger, inexperienced teachers. Distributed leadership is expected to yield positive results in schools where teachers are supported in their various roles and where the formal leadership structures of the school remain accountable for the school's performance.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to conduct research in order to gain a deeper understanding of how distributed leadership is practised in selected Johannesburg South schools from the perspective of teachers. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (1996:37) assert that a balanced research project should consist of a detailed study set within, and linked to, an understanding of the broader context of the subject field. Researchers should make use of everyday skills for the collection, selection, analysis and presentation of data (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2006:53). Blaxter, *et al.* (1996:57) describe a variety of methods available for designing, carrying out and analysing the results of the research.

Qualitative and quantitative research differ in terms of the methods of data collection, data processing and analysis, and on how the findings are communicated (Kumar, 2005:6). Quantitative research is based on predetermined plans and therefore its results can be more readily analysed and interpreted in terms of numbers (Best & Kahn, 1989: 90). It uses a 'narrow angle lens' because the focus is only on one or a few causal factors at a time (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:35). It attempts to hold constant the factors that are studied. Measurements are reduced to numbers (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:37)

Qualitative researchers do not usually collect data in the form of numbers. They conduct observations, in-depth interviews and surveys, and data collected is usually in the form of words (Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Shaw, 1998:13). A wide and deep-angle lens is used to examine behaviour as it occurs naturalistically and holistically (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:35). Qualitative data is more open and responsive to its subjects as it describes

phenomena scientifically without the use of numerical data (Best & Kahn, 1989:90). Samples are smaller and data is more detailed as it aims to achieve ‘depth’ rather than ‘breadth’ (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996:60).

Quantitative and qualitative research is not mutually exclusive as a single study can include both methods (Best & Kahn, 1989: 90). Mixed methods researchers see positive value in both qualitative and quantitative research and view a single method as limiting and incomplete for their research problem (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:35). A mixed method approach was used in this study. The researcher used a questionnaire to elicit information from participants on their views and experiences of distributed leadership in the schools where they teach. Survey research in education involves the collection of information from teachers, which is then analysed to illuminate important educational issues (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996:71). The questionnaire comprised both closed and open-ended questions. Questionnaires are often used to conduct surveys due to its simplicity, versatility and low cost (Breakwell, *et al.*, 1998:174). Furthermore, questionnaires are well understood amongst teachers and information can be gathered easily using pencil and paper without making personal contact with the respondents.

Results from questionnaires can be received in a fairly short period of time making it possible to draw conclusions from the results fairly quickly. This method of data collection has certain disadvantages since data is susceptible to the time of measurement effects. To limit time of measurement effects, the research was conducted during the middle of the second term of school. During this time, teachers are settled in their various roles and it was expected that the data would, therefore, be more authentic.

1.6.1 Research Schools and participants

A researcher’s ability to collect data is critically dependent on the cooperation of certain ‘gatekeepers’ (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002: 154). Permission from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) was sought first. Background information on the planned study was forwarded to the Knowledge Management and Research Directorate of the GDE and permission to conduct the research at selected schools were received. (See attached Appendix 2). Once this was granted, the district directors from Johannesburg South District and Johannesburg Central District were notified of the impending research as the participating schools fall under both districts although they are situated in the Johannesburg

South area. Letters of permission and acknowledgement were granted by both district directors (See Annexure 3 and 4).

The GDE grants researchers approval to conduct research at GDE institutions from the second week of February each year up to the end of September (GDE 2012:2). The researcher approached 10 school principals to seek permission to conduct research at their schools. The school principals advised on a suitable time to drop off and collect the completed questionnaires. Schools run according to set schedules, so the researcher had to take this into consideration when handing out the questionnaires. Although permission to conduct the research was granted by all 10 principals, only 9 schools returned their questionnaires. One school principal indicated that her staff was unable to complete the questionnaires due to their heavy workloads.

The researcher explained the aim of the study to each participating school principal and how the results of the study could benefit schools. A better understanding of distributed leadership practices at schools could impact on school improvement. The results could enable SMTs to improve their systems for distributing leadership roles, plan better monitoring structures, diagnose teacher support needs, and plan intervention strategies to ensure school improvement. The results of the study could also be used by the Department of Education to improve their INSET programmes for newly appointment teachers and SMTs and gain a deeper understanding of the vast amount of work expected of a school principal, SMT and teachers.

1.6.2 Sample required for the research

Table 1.1 Proposed minimum sample size

Participants	Post Level	Numbers
Principals	4	10
Deputy Principal	3	10
Heads of Department	2	20
Grade Head	1	30
Teachers	1	50
Total		120

1.6.3 Consumable items required for the research

The research was conducted using a questionnaire, and therefore the cost was reasonably low (Breakwell, *et al.*, 1998:174). The researcher possesses good computer literacy skills which enabled her to develop a professional questionnaire and complete the data analysis herself. The researcher had to bear the cost for: printing the questionnaires, telephone calls to the school principals, and, the delivery and collection of the questionnaires.

1.6.4 Validity and reliability

Validity refers to the degree to which what was observed or measured is the same as what was purported to be observed and measured (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996:417). It refers to whether measurements measure what they claim to measure. Data collected was carefully analysed to make certain judgements about distributed leadership practices at schools in Johannesburg South, Gauteng.

Reliability is the extent to which observations or measures are consistent or stable (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996: 413). It was anticipated that the questionnaire would be reliable as the same questionnaire was completed by teachers in selected schools. It was expected to yield the same results with the same participants over a short period of time.

1.6.5 Ethical issues

The principle of informed consent and voluntary participation was upheld during the research. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage of the research (Breakwell, *et al.*, 1998:30). Research ethics involves getting the informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from. It involves reaching agreements about the use of data, how its analysis will be reported and disseminated and about keeping to such agreements after they have been reached (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996:146). All participants and their schools were kept anonymous, and all the information provided was kept confidential.

1.7 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 1 introduces the study, gives background information and current trends in distributed leadership, and states the research problem of the study.

Chapter 2 critically reviews literature related to distributed leadership in schools.

Chapter 3 explains the methodologies undergirding research, research designs, techniques and data collection instruments that will be used in the study.

In Chapter 4 raw data is analysed, interpreted and discussed.

In Chapter 5, the final chapter, conclusions are drawn on the research findings, and recommendations proposed.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.8.1 Capacity building

Training to develop certain competencies to increase the capabilities of individual leaders and leadership teams such as the School Management Team (SMT), School Based Support Team (SBST), School Assessment Team (SAT).

1.8.2 Department of Education (DoE)

This is a government department or ministry responsible for the management of the entire education system in South Africa.

1.8.3 District

This is the organisational structure that provides support and services to the School Management Teams, and School Governing Bodies in a designated area. It employs personnel who have the responsibility to provide advice and guidance to school managers. Personnel at District Offices include the Senior Education Specialists (SES) at the bottom of the hierarchy, Deputy Chief Education Specialists (DCES), the Chief Education Specialists (CES) and the District Director who heads the district.

1.8.4 Teacher

Any person who teaches, educates or trains learners at a (primary or secondary) school, and whose conditions of employment are regulated by the Employment of Teachers Act, No. 76 of 1998 (Department of Education, 1998:4)

1.8.5 Leadership

The capability and capacity of the principal and his or her management team to lead and guide the school to achieve the goals set by the school governing body in achieving the

vision and mission of the school through strategic planning. The school has to be steered strategically to ensure a culture of high expectations, continuous development and accountability by all stakeholders.

1.8.6 Management

The function of the School Management Team including the principal to plan, operationalize and monitor all areas of the school to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of each area department within a school. This also refers to a function of leadership that must be carried out.

1.8.7 Staff

Persons employed at a public education and training institution

1.8.8 School Management Team (SMT)

This team usually comprises the principal who is the head of the school, the deputy principal and the heads of departments (HODs). They are responsible for the professional management and leadership of various areas of the school.

1.8.9 School

This is a pre-primary, primary or secondary educational institution that caters for educational needs of the child.

1.8.10 South African Schools Act

This refers to the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996);

1.8.11 Team

A group of inter-dependent people working towards a shared goal.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided an introductory orientation to the research study. The main and specific research questions as well as the aim and objectives of the study have been expressed. The aim of this study was to gain expert knowledge on distributed leadership practices in the Johannesburg South schools, focusing on time constraints associated with school leadership and the role of monitoring and support in ensuring a schools sustainability and growth. A

description of the research design and methodology was clarified and brief outlines of the chapters were given. Key concepts were defined. The next chapter will present the literature review relevant to the study.

CHAPTER 2

DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP DISCOURSE, THEORY AND PRACTICE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, the researcher discussed the introduction to the study, the significance of the study, the statement of the problem, the main research question and specific questions that this research hopes to answer, and the research design and methodology used in the study. The researcher then briefly outlined the aims of the research, data management and analysis and the ethical issues that need to be taken into consideration when conducting research. Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive review of literature on school leadership with special reference to distributed leadership and school reform in South Africa since 1994.

2.2 RATIONALE

For hundreds of years, people have been fascinated with leadership and have been preoccupied with the ‘heroes’ of leadership (Barnes, Camburn, Kim & Rowan 2004:2). Current school reform reveals a shift from school leadership as being the sole realm of the principal, to notions of shared leadership among principals and teachers in their quest for school improvement (Barnes, *et al.*, 2004:2). Leadership has been redefined to include the processes amongst everyone in an organisation rather than focussing on the dispositions and traits of a single leader at the top of the helm (Lambert, 2003: 424). The underpinning view is that leadership in schools is not individual or positional but it is a group process.

Research conducted by Grant and Singh (2009: 290) reveal that many principals are unable to shift from the patriarchal and hierarchical ways of thinking and this poses a threat to teacher leadership. Naicker and Mestry (2013:12) suggest that this may be due to the demands for accountability placed on principals by higher authorities. Harris (2005:11) emphasises that the nature, type and form of leadership practised in schools makes a difference in their ability to develop and improve. The fact that schools across South Africa are so diverse in their ability to offer quality education is partly due to their internal capacities to develop, grow and innovate.

The researcher endeavours to show how workplace priorities demand interdependence among staff members, and looks at the role of the school principal and the SMT in distributed leadership. It is widely acknowledged that leadership in an organisation cannot be the

exclusive preserve of a single person and that it should be team-based and thus collaborative (Marishane & Botha, 2011:9). Post-apartheid South African schools have moved towards a policy of participation and collaboration in school leadership (Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley & Samaroo, 2010:401). The researcher emphasises that schools that make use of knowledge and expertise found amongst their staff to develop and empower other staff, are more likely to sustain school improvement than schools that rely on the leadership of a single individual at the top of the hierarchy. Harris (2005:11) emphasises that the wider the spread of leadership patterns amongst the staff, the greater the potential for organisational change and development. Barth, as cited in Grant, *et al.* (2010:402), suggests that the greater the participation of staff members in decision-making, the greater the productivity, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment they demonstrate.

The researcher explores whether leadership in schools has indeed become more participatory and inclusive. In doing so, the researcher attempts to determine how far down the ranks of a school's hierarchy leadership roles are distributed, and what the necessary conditions are for distributed leadership to succeed. It was anticipated that this research would provide some insightful ideas on how best to manage and lead the various sections of a school in an attempt to realise school improvement. The literature review endeavours to obtain clarity on the merits of distributed leadership as a preferred leadership model in schools in South Africa, and demonstrate the processes involved in its practice. In doing so, the researcher endeavours to show how other models of leadership in conjunction with distributed leadership support school improvement. It is hoped that this background knowledge will provide the researcher with adequate information to justify why distributed leadership is the favoured approach, and consider how the school principal and the SMT might need to switch between different approaches when necessary in their quest for school improvement.

In selecting and compiling information for this literature review, relevant sources were located by searching various library databases, educational abstracts, educational websites, educational journals and books by international and South African authors. The researcher has also used the Department of Education's website extensively to view their reports, circulars and plans. Since the study was conducted in the southern suburbs of Johannesburg, the Gauteng Department of Education's website was extensively searched for old as well as current relevant material.

2.3 SCHOOL REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA SINCE 1994

The first non-racial democratic elections in South Africa in 1994 ushered in a new government and marked a turning point in the restructuring of education. The challenge faced by the new government was to build a just and equitable system of education for all South Africans (Mothata, 2000:2). Soon thereafter, the transformation of the existing education system was officially announced (Geysler, 2000:22). The apartheid legacy remained the most limiting and debilitating factor in integrated schooling in South Africa (Mda, 2000:51), and schools experienced general problems of reconciliation and interaction between diverse cultural and linguistic groups, after years of separation.

During the apartheid era, the education system was designed in a manner that restricted wide participation and ensured political control by the top echelons of the education departments (African National Congress Education Department, 1994:20). Decision-making was the responsibility of the principal who allowed minimal participation from the teachers and parents (Ngcongco & Chetty, 2000:64). The leadership style of school principals was rigid and domineering with constant control over teachers and school activities. This autocratic style with its top-down approach impeded the aspirations of many teachers in fulfilling their potential as leaders (Williams, 2011:190).

The South African Schools Act (SASA) No 84 of 1996 has led to an enhanced practice of leadership in schools by including teachers, parents and learners in school governing bodies. This Act opened up a space for the emergence of teacher leadership (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:402) and instilled the notion that leadership and management are the prerogative of many, if not all, stakeholders in education (Department of Education, 1996:19). Management in schools is no longer limited only to principals, but regards practitioners at all levels of the school organisation as ‘managers’ in their own right (Ngcongco & Chetty, 2000:64). While all the constituent parts of the school management team (SMT) have specific leadership roles, the difference lies in the level at which each operates. The school management team must work collaboratively with all stakeholders to reach school goals and ensure school effectiveness. Teachers are expected to lead in one way or another in their quest for school improvement. The impact they have on each area of the school cannot be ignored in the South African quest for quality education for all its children.

2.4 DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Schermerhorn, Osborn, Uhl-bien and Hunt (2011:292) view leadership as the process of influencing others. They note that leadership appears in two forms, that is, formal leadership, which is exerted by persons appointed or elected to positions of formal authority in organisations, and informal leadership which is exerted by people who become influential because they have special skills that meet the needs of others. This description fits well with the common scenarios played out in most post-apartheid schools in South Africa.

A central element in many definitions of leadership is that there is a process of influence (Bush 2011:5). Hogg (2011: 85) supports Bush's claim by describing leadership as a process of influence that enlists and mobilises the involvement of others in the attainment of collective goals without the use of coercive power. Bush (2011:6) asserts that leadership involves bending the motivations and actions of others to achieving certain goals; it implies taking initiatives and risks. He refers to three main characteristics of leadership, namely influence, values and power.

Bush (2008: 277) summarises the element of influence as follows:

- Influence rather than authority. Authority resides in formal positions, while influence can be exercised by anyone in the school.
- Those who seek to exercise influence, do so intentionally in order to achieve certain purposes.
- Influence can be exercised by groups as well as individuals.

According to Barker (2011: 99), leadership refers to any activity or relationship associated with persons occupying top positions in a hierarchy. Fletcher (2004) in Collinson, Grint, and Jackson (2011:396), states that leadership depends less on the heroic actions of a few individuals at the top and more on the collaborative leadership practices that are distributed throughout an organisation. Gronn (2011:185) attributes leadership to all organisational members though the duration of the attributed influence may differ. Hogg (2011: 68) asserts that leadership is a relational property within groups. People see the value of the leader's ideas and suggestions and agree to go along with them (Schermerhorn, *et al.*, 2012: 14).

Watson (2009:4) defines distributed leadership as an organisational process rather than a set of qualities possessed by an individual or group. Spillane (2006:3) contends that distributed leadership means more than shared leadership; it implies that multiple individuals take

responsibility for leadership. Leadership is shifted from the school principal to other formal and informal leaders. Spillane's description encapsulates current thinking on leadership that multiple individuals usually perform leadership work. In schools, people are grouped together in orderly, hierarchical structures of authority in order to attain a common objective, namely educative teaching (Van der Westhuizen, 2007:116).

2.5 A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF LEADERSHIP

Theory serves to provide a rationale for decision-making (Bush, 2011:25). Day (2003:46) cautions that 'many principals mistakenly rely mainly upon experience and intuition to guide them through their careers'. Bush (2011:25) stresses that managers have much to learn from an appreciation of theory as it provides a framework for interpreting events when operating in a different context. There is less likelihood of mistakes occurring while experience is being acquired. Continuing professional development for principals contributes to a change in their styles of leadership and improves relationships with all stakeholders in a school (Singh & Mestry, 2007: 490).

Bush (2011:205) suggests that it is rare for a single theory of leadership to capture the reality of leadership or management in any particular school. The great man theories of leadership stress that "great leaders are born, not made", and that the capacity for leadership is an inherent trait (Baron & Byrne, 1997:463). Leaders are portrayed as men who are heroic, mythic and destined to rise to leadership when needed.

The trait leadership perspective suggests that inherent traits separate leaders from non-leaders (Schermerhorn, 2012:293). It assumes that people inherit certain qualities and traits like ambition, emotional maturity, extraversion, self-confidence and courage that are better suited to leadership positions (*ibid.*). These traits are often linked to great leaders but the argument is that many people possess them but are not good leaders.

Contingency theories acknowledge that schools operate in diverse contexts and that leadership styles need to fit the contexts in which each school operates (Bush, 2011: 204), rather than adopting a 'one-size-fits-all' stance. It focuses on environmental variables like leadership style, the followers and the situation.

Situational theories propose that the course of action chosen by the leader should be based upon certain situational variables. Leadership is based on the demands of the situation and the readiness of the subordinates (Thompson, 2008:189). Behavioural theories of leadership are

based upon the belief that great leaders are made, not born. It focuses on the assumption that people can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation.

Participative theories of leadership are manifested in collective decision making and are effective in increasing the commitment of participants and the development of team-work (Bush, 2011:203). The formal leader remains accountable for decisions reached and retains the right to allow the input of others. Traditionally, the school principal's role was clearly focussed on management responsibilities. Myers and Murphy (1995) cited in Bush, (2011:60) identified four management responsibilities of principals that are 'hierarchical':

- Supervision;
- Input control (e.g. teacher transfers);
- Behaviour controls (e.g. job descriptions); and
- Output controls (e.g. student testing).

The Department of Education (2008:48) suggests that different leadership styles are needed in South African schools, as the contexts in which each school operates are very different, that is, from rural to urban, from small farm schools to schools with an enrolment of over 3000 learners. School leadership is an evolving and changing function, which is influenced by people, the context and broad economic circumstances each school is located in. It is assumed that schools in the Johannesburg South District will benefit from a thorough understanding of the various theories on leadership in order to deal effectively with their own unique challenges.

2.6 MODELS OF LEADERSHIP RELATED TO A VISION OF EXCELLENCE

Different leadership styles impact on schools during different stages of a school's development. The school principal is expected to adjust his or her leadership style to suit the needs of the school in its current context. New schools demand more direction and support from the principal while schools that are more established and where teachers are more empowered may take on more responsibility. Table 2.1 shows a gradual shift in leadership practices and how they impact the principal and the teachers in a school.

The DoE (2008:50) encourages school principals to move from being autocratic leaders to leaders who allow high involvement of all members of the staff through support and collaboration. On reaching the empowering stage, the staff should feel capacitated to take on

leadership roles with the principal in a supportive role, still accountable for decisions but having delegated the responsibility for action to competent staff. Many principals get stuck at the participative stage and cannot make that ultimate move to hand over responsibility to others.

Table 2.1 Leadership impact

STYLE OF LEADERSHIP	IMPACT ON SCHOOL
Autocratic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal in charge of all decisions; • Teachers follow and do not question.
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal in charge of all decisions; • Teachers cluster around principal and give suggestions but principal's word is final.
Transitional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal is central to all decision making processes but allows some key members of staff to take decisions and have control in specified areas. • Teachers cluster around principal for most decisions. Small team that works with principal is formed.
Partnering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal allows the group to make decisions and partners with key staff members so that policy and vision are followed according to plan; • Teachers are able to take control and work as a team. • Principal works with one or two others in a collegial fashion
Empowering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal acts as mentor to the staff who have decision making power although accountability lies with principal; • Teachers work as empowered and self-led teams.

Source: Department of Education (2008:50)

The school management team and the teachers who take on leadership roles must acquire a wide range of possible leadership skills and strategies when faced with the different contexts of South African schools. Tsvara (2013:3) argues that management strategies of school principals may have a direct or indirect, but powerful, influence on the effectiveness of teachers, which in turn, can enhance teachers' job satisfaction levels. The rationale for the interest in alternative forms of leadership is the recognition of the limitations of heroic, charismatic leaders in securing sustainable change in organisations (Harris, 2005:4). Watson (2009:2) contends that instructional, transformational and distributed forms of leadership appear the most resilient and are preferred in the democratic, post-apartheid school system.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher has elaborated on instructional leadership, shared leadership, and transactional leadership as well as two collegial models of leadership, that is, transformational leadership and distributed leadership as the researcher believed that they closely resemble common democratic practices in South African schools.

2.6.1 Instructional leadership

The instructional school principal is someone whose approach to curricula and instructional development displays strong and directive behaviour that is focused on control, co-ordination, and supervision of all teaching and learning activities (Marishane & Botha, 2011:7). There is a focus on the direction of influence, learning and teaching, rather than the nature of the influence process (Bush, 2011:37). Naidoo and Botha (2012:9221) equate instructional leadership to a top-down leadership style, where the leader is supposed to know the best form of instruction and closely monitor teachers and learners' work. They see this as problematic since great administrators are not always great classroom leaders and vice versa.

Botha (2004:140) characterises the instructional school principal as a visionary, who leads effective teaching and curricular strategies and supports teachers in their efforts to do their jobs. Blase and Blase (2004:11) confirmed a positive and strong relationship between effective instructional leadership behaviours exhibited by principals and teacher commitment, professional involvement and innovativeness. They list a number of behaviours performed by principals that lead to development, namely: communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, promoting professional development and providing incentives for learning.

This narrow view is limited to the focus of teacher behaviours that contribute to learning while the broader view includes variables like school culture, leadership and teacher behaviour (Evans-Pierce, 2009:2). Through the distribution of roles to the deputy principal and the HODs, the principal shares the role of 'instructional leader'. It is the responsibility of the deputy principal and the HODs who are the 'experts' in their fields, to lead and manage their departments in most schools in the Johannesburg South District.

2.6.2 Shared leadership

Thompson (2008:190) believes shared leadership relies on a dynamic exchange of lateral influence among peers rather than on vertical, downward influence by an appointed leader,

while Botha (2004:140) contends that shared leadership involves the genuine use of everyone's abilities through empowerment, vision, planning, evaluation and improvement. Cox, Pearce and Perry (2003:53-58) agree that shared leadership reaches beyond the limits of individual leader's capabilities. Although vertical leadership is supplemented, important responsibilities remain that of the leader. According to Avolio (2011:120), each person in a team is unique as they bring along with them what they have learnt in their life courses.

The work of the school principal and the SMT is too intensive for a few people to undertake and expect to achieve noteworthy results. Cox, *et al.* (2003:48) believe that, shared leadership may contribute substantially to the experience of work and to team performance in environments where members are knowledgeable and have high skill levels. School effectiveness requires that every staff member be given an opportunity to take on some of the leadership load. Shared leadership involves maximizing the human resources in an organisation by empowering individuals and giving them an opportunity to take leadership positions in their areas of expertise (Thompson, 2008:190).

Schermerhorn, *et al.* (2012:324) identified five characteristics for the success of a specific effort when sharing leadership:

- Efficient goal-directed effort: The team leader plays a crucial role in coordinating the efforts of individual members with those of the team, as well as team efforts with those of the organisation. The leader of each committee needs to coordinate their goals with those of the school in order to ensure that the school's vision and mission are achieved.
- Adequate resources: Teams rely on their leaders to obtain enough resources to carry out the team's goals. Without the necessary resources, a leader may not be able to carry out allocated tasks efficiently.
- Competent, motivated performance: Team members must possess the appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities and motivation to perform collective tasks well. It is the leader's task to influence the composition of teams so as to enhance shared efficacy and performance.
- A productive supportive climate: Cohesiveness, mutual trust and cooperation should form part of a team's 'personal climate'. Team leaders contribute to this climate through modelling the appropriate practices and supporting each other.

- A commitment to continuous improvement: Successful team should be able to adapt to changing conditions. Teams recognise that a failure to strive for improvement actually results in a deterioration of performance.

2.6.3 African perspectives on shared leadership

According to Avolio (2011:120), we can never take the hierarchy out of human interactions, but we can accommodate and adapt it to be highly collaborative. 'Ubuntu', is a way of thinking in which individuals derive their sense of meaning and self through their relationships with others (Avolio, 2011:120). The Sesotho word *lekgotla*, which means a 'meeting circle' or 'tribal management' is founded on the African concept of 'Ubuntu' - meaning 'I am because we exist' (DoE, 2008:54).

The steps or principles of a *lekgotla* meeting (de Liefde, 2003 as cited in DoE, 2008:54) are as follows:

- Everyone has the right to attend the *lekgotla*;
- Everyone's voice counts;
- There is trust in dialogue;
- There is respect for others;
- Stories are a means of communicating with others;
- Everyone shares the truth;
- People listen observantly; and
- A decision is always taken unanimously.

In a *lekgotla*, everyone sits in a circle with the Chief in the centre as he occupies the highest position and takes the final decision at the end of the deliberations (de Liefde, 2003, as cited in DoE, 2008: 54). Sharing the truth and one's sincerity is at the heart of the *lekgotla* system. There are no negative consequences, fear of losing face or pointing of fingers while collective energy and human passion is developed. In this way, the often paralysing functioning of a hierarchical structure is changed (de Liefde, 2003, as cited in DoE, 2008: 54). Shared leadership does not mean that every member of the team makes an equal contribution. There are at least two sources of leadership influence in a team, one source is the team leader and the second powerful source is the team itself (Cox, *et al.* 2003:48). This approach describes a team that collectively exerts influence.

In schools, shared leadership is evident in the distribution of management roles from the principal to the various SMT members. The deputy principal shares in a number of leadership roles, like being responsible for the school's prefects, managing assessment; that is, being the coordinator of the school assessment team (SAT), the coordinator of the performance management development system (PMDS), and so on. The Foundation Phase, head of department (HOD) takes charge of all areas in the phase she is appointed in, for example, monitoring the performance of teachers, class visits, book control, and so on. The same applies to the distribution of roles to the rest of the HODs. Teachers share in leadership roles by acting as mentor teachers, grade heads and learning area heads, and so on.

2.6.4 Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership involves leader/follower exchanges necessary for achieving routine performance agreed upon between leaders and followers (Schermerhorn, *et al*, 2012:309; Bush, 2011:203). Transactional leaders motivate their subordinates by exchanging rewards for high performance and noticing and reprimanding subordinates for mistakes and substandard performance (Thompson, 2008:188). This rarely improves commitment or motivation.

In South African schools, the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) can be seen as a form of transactional leadership mechanism. IQMS is an appraisal system whose aim is to understand the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers and to draw up programmes for their development. Proper implementation of the IQMS supports effective teaching and improves the level of accountability within a school (DoE, 2012:91). The leader and the follower agree on goals and objectives and the achievement of the goals is motivated by reward (Marishane & Botha, 2011: 7). Teachers are rewarded with a one percent increment if their professional performance is rated as satisfactory ((DoE, 2012:91). Avolio (2011:32) stresses that the transactional leader should have a moral compass and a high set of standards as transactional leadership is about the process of influence and building relationships that can include anyone, at any level, and in any organisation.

2.6.5 Transformational leadership

Since 1994, South African education has undergone huge changes (Hayward, 2008:28). In South Africa, transformational leadership has a special meaning, linked to a need to convert the previous stratified education system into a new framework that stresses equity and redress

(Bush, 2008:397). Schools in South Africa need transformational leaders who can turn ordinary schools into schools of excellence. This type of leadership is seen to be sensitive to organisation building, developing a shared vision, distributing leadership and building a school culture necessary for current restructuring efforts in schools (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2004 as cited in Naidoo & Botha, 2012:2919). But Naidoo and Botha (2012:2919) warn that transformational leadership practice works in theory, but it is challenging for principals to implement as it focuses on developing the organisation's capacity, rather than focusing specifically on direct coordination, control, and supervision of the curriculum and instruction.

Effective principals in today's school system assume that change is inevitable and necessary, and in order to lead transformation, principals should act as agents of change, act as managers, and ensure that there is inclusive education for a diverse school community (Naidoo and Botha 2012:2992). Transformational leadership occurs when leaders broaden and elevate their followers' interests, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the group's purposes and mission, and when they stir their followers to look beyond their own interests to the good of others (Schermerhorn, *et al.*, 2012:294). As a transformational leader, the principal has to focus on teaching and learning, but also be future-orientated. These leaders motivate, inspire and unite teachers on common goals. They emphasise vision as the central dimension of leadership (Bush, 2011:201). Through the actions of the principal, teachers are persuaded to join the vision and share the ideals of the organisation. The principal engages with staff and other stakeholders to produce higher levels of commitment in order to achieve its vision. There is a focus on the commitment and capacities of all organisational members. Productivity is thus achieved through the actions of others (Botha, 2004:140).

Transformational leaders rely on intrinsic motivation. They base their performance on personal values as they act as coaches and mentors who are trusted, admired and respected by their followers (Cook, 2007:6). A conscious goal of transformational leadership is that leaders develop followers into leaders (Avolio, 2011:51) because they serve as role models of the expectations they have of others. This results in commitment, trust, loyalty and performance from the teachers. The transformational leader fosters teacher development and helps teachers solve problems more effectively as they genuinely believe that the teachers as a group could develop better solutions than the principal could alone (Naidoo & Botha, 2012: 2992). The transformational school principal should help staff maintain a collaborative, professional school culture, by talking, observing, critiquing and planning together. Avolio

(2011:50) believes that leaders who can balance transactional and transformational leadership across time, situation and challenges are the most successful.

2.6.6 Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership arose in reaction to understandings of leadership that emphasised heroic individual behaviour (Gronn, 2008:141). It challenges the autocratic leadership styles of the past and seems to be a good fit with the educational entities of the 21st Century as it expands leadership to multiple players (Engel-Silva, 2009:2). Williams (2011:192) submits that distributed leadership should be seriously considered as a means of addressing the leadership crisis in many South African schools. Social and cultural change requires that educational leaders keep up with current leadership practices (Cook, 2007:6). The distributed leadership approach has emerged as an alternative democratic style of leadership. It challenges the autocratic leadership styles of the past and fits in with the educational entities of the 21st Century (Engel-Silva, 2009:2).

Gronn (2011:181) asserts that “A distributed understanding is well aligned with the processes through which work is currently articulated as part of an emerging and ever changing division of labour, due to task differentiation and reintegration.” He explains how workplace constraints create interdependence between organisational personnel and how these have ‘stimulated the adoption of distributed modes of work coordination’ (*ibid.*,181).

2.6.6.1 Distributed Leadership in the South African context

After 1994, there was a major shift in how leadership was practised in South African schools. The South African Schools Act, No 96 of 1996 (SASA) emphasised more participation and collaboration in school leadership. It emphasised, ‘participation, democratic management, collegiality and collaboration, schools as open systems and leading organisations, and site based management’ (Van der Mescht, 2008:14).

Gronn (2011:184) asserts that schools are known to rely increasingly on teams in order to cope with the intensification of the school administrator’s work. School efficiency lies in the hands of the principal, SMT and the teachers in the classroom. Traditionally, leadership was the work of someone at the top of the hierarchy. According to Hayward (2008:23), all schools have a leadership hierarchy with the principal at the top of the pyramid. Immediately below, is the deputy principal followed by the heads of department. The

lowest level of the pyramid is the Level One teacher in the South African context. Each potential school leader takes on his/her role when the time is right. Teachers take on leadership responsibilities such as mentoring peers, coordinating the extra-mural programme of the school, serving as grade heads and subject heads and providing professional development in order to improve the school efficiency. Without the support of the SMT and the diligent classroom teacher, learners would fall by the wayside. Teachers are indeed the nation's critical human capital, and every endeavour needs to be made to ensure that they are well motivated for their work and experience job satisfaction (Dehaloo, 2011:10).

2.6.6.2 Participants in distributed leadership

Central to the model of post-heroic leadership, is the belief that managing is the responsibility of everybody in the unit, not just the designated leader. Grant, *et al.*(2010:401) explain distributed leadership as leadership that is not located in the position of the principal, but is stretched over a range of people who work at different levels of a school. A distributed leadership perspective attempts to acknowledge and incorporate the work of all individuals who have a hand in leadership practice.

Bush (2011:88) and Harris (2004:13) indicate that distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organisation rather than seeking this only through a formal position or role. Distributed leadership is characterised as a form of collective leadership that involves both vertical and lateral dimensions of leadership practice (*ibid.*). It is about more than accounting for all the leaders in a school and counting up their various actions to arrive at a comprehensive account of leadership (Spillane, 2006:2). Moving beyond the principal to include other potential leaders is just the tip of the iceberg, from a distributed leadership perspective, (*ibid.*). Principals play a major role in establishing the conditions required for teacher leadership to thrive but long-standing hierarchical structures prevent the support of leadership that emphasises shared decision making and collaboration (James-Wilson and Hancock, 2011:26). Schools, teachers and administrators need to change the way they think. Principals who embrace distributed leadership create the conditions for teacher empowerment.

Gronn (2011:70) cautions that distributed leadership does not mean any reduction in the scope of the principal's role while Bradford and Cohen (1998:104) stress that leaders have always been held accountable for results even if the group decision is not sound.

2.6.6.3 Distributed leadership and group responsibility

Distributed leadership practices play a huge role in the success of school level improvement strategies as it requires the cooperation and involvement of all members of the school. Yukl (1999:292-293) emphasises that distributed leadership does not require an individual who can perform all the essential leadership functions within an organisation, but a set of people who can collectively perform them. Some leadership functions may be shared by several members of the group. In a school, the school management team may share functions that require more accountability, but other leadership functions may be allocated to individual members of the staff who have the expertise to carry out these functions effectively. There is also a possibility that a particular leadership function may be performed by different people at different times. Yukl (1999: 293) asserts that the leadership actions of any individual leader are much less important than the collective leadership provided by members of the organisation.

Through collaborative leadership practices, teachers are asked to engage as leaders (Richardson, 2003:202). The distributed leadership perspective promises to meet the demands of school leaders, identify hidden leaders, contribute to classroom achievement, and positively affect overall school reform (Engel-Silva, 2009:10). From a distributed leadership perspective, leadership rests on expertise rather than position, which is only possible in a climate of trust and mutual support. Such a climate blurs the distinction between 'leaders' and 'followers' (Bennett, Wise, Woods & Harvey, 2003:9).

Bennett, *et al.*(2003:7) describe the nature of distributed leadership in three points that follow. Firstly, distributed leadership defines leadership as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals. It allows people to work together to pool their initiative and expertise, resulting in an outcome that is greater than the sum of individual actions. Secondly, distributed leadership suggests an openness of the boundaries of leadership. The conventional net of leaders is widened and other individuals are seen as contributing to leadership. In the school situation, this openness is not limited to the school management team but includes the grade heads, teachers, administrative staff, general assistants, extra-curricular coordinators and coordinators of other school committees. The roles of all members of the school community need to be considered. Thirdly, distributed leadership acknowledges that a variety of expertise is distributed across many people within an organisation and is not confined to the few at the top.

2.6.6.4 Distributed leadership – decentralised decision making and empowerment

When considering what forms of leadership best suit the world of schooling, distributed leadership is centre stage (Harris, 2005:6). Distributed leadership has become the normative preferred leadership model in the twenty-first century because it focuses on the collective rather than singular leadership (Bush, 2011:203). It is not an individual process but a process that emerges through relationships. Harris (2005:6) defines distributed leadership as ‘engaging many people in leadership activity’. Distributed leadership is collective rather than a singular entity which implies that the practice of leadership is shared, and realised within extended groups and networks, some of which are formal, while others are informal. Teachers, parents, students, governing body members and support staff work together to solve problems, thus engaging in a form of leadership practice.

Implicit in distributed leadership, is the prerequisite that other leaders can take on the responsibility for a wide range of leadership functions (Harris, 2005:10). Acknowledging that leadership practice extends beyond the school principal in no way undermines the vital role of the principal in school leadership, but instead shows that leadership is often a collective rather than an individual endeavour (Spillane, 2006:4). Gronn (2002:201) refers to a normative switch ‘from heroics to distribution’ but cautions that distributed leadership does not mean any reduction in the scope of the principal’s role. A dynamic, reciprocal form of leadership requires high levels of participation and skill, so tasks can be distributed and responsibilities shared (Cook, 2007:6). Cook asserts further that it also allows for different people to take on different responsibilities at different times.

The distributed perspective of leadership is framed in a very particular way, as a product of the joint interactions of school leaders, followers and aspects of the situation such as tools and routines (Spillane, 2006:3). Principals cannot do the whole leadership task by themselves, and so successful principals develop and count on contributions from many others in their organisations. Principals typically count on key teachers for such leadership, along with their local administrative colleagues (Leithwood, *et al.*, 2004:3). Distributed leadership thought has emerged from debates around democracy and devolved management practices in schools and fits in with ideas around African models of leadership (DoE, 2008:60). The distribution of tasks and responsibilities creates a sense of ownership and acknowledgement of each other. This practice is evident in schools where there is good leadership both at principal and SMT levels, and where there are happy staff members (DoE,

2008:60). The principal is the gate-keeper to distributed leadership practice in the school, and there is a powerful relationship between him and the other managers of the school. It is the principal's ability to trust others to make the right decisions and to lead; that is key to the school's success. Certainly, the principle of *ubuntu* will be present when distributed leadership is working well (DoE, 2008:60). It is imperative that all members of the staff cooperate and support each other in various ways, despite their formal ranks within a school, in order to ensure a school's success.

2.7 Merits of distributed leadership

During the apartheid era in South Africa, teacher leadership was autocratic and involved the process of delegation which allowed little opportunity for consultation and negotiation (Grant & Singh, 2009:29). This top-down hierarchical structure had many limitations for school leadership and management as the 'heroic' or 'charismatic' leader's success was often short-lived and sporadic, and ended as soon as the school principal resigned or left the school (Meschtl & Tyalall, 2008:222). Furthermore, constant staff turnover posed another threat to school stability and progress.

Harris (2005:3) elucidates why distributed leadership is essential for school improvement; the loss of the school principal through resignation, retirement or dismissal, results in a quick loss of the improvements gained 'simply because of an overreliance on the leadership capability of one person'. Poor succession planning and over-reliance on the leadership of the principal alone can be detrimental to continued school improvement. The workload of the school principal has also become unmanageable for one person to fulfil. Fullan (2005:30) as cited in Harris (2005:3) suggests that a 'critical mass of leaders' is needed at all levels of the system. He recommends that leaders should be developing leaders beyond themselves to ensure continued school improvement.

As schools gradually shift from vertical to lateral forms of leadership, more examples of distributed leadership are observed. Distributed leadership necessitates the emergence of a range of leaders from all ranks of the school hierarchy who are emotionally intelligent, courageous risk takers who thrive to secure school improvement (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:403). Meschtl and Tyalall (2008:222) recognise that there has been a world-wide move towards site-based management simply because it reflects the social values of democratic participation. It allows for quick and flexible responses to contextual challenges while it stresses group and team leadership in favour of the individual leader. Spillane (2010:256)

stresses that focusing exclusively on the work of the school principal is limiting, as other formal and informally designated leaders play critical roles in leading and managing schools. The leader-plus aspect espoused by Harris (2005:10), recognises that leading and managing schools involve multiple individuals.

Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004:29) discuss a number of individual and organisational benefits associated with distributed leadership:

- a) Distributed leadership more accurately reflects the division of labour experienced on a daily basis.
- b) It affords members an opportunity to capitalize on a range of individual strengths and learn from one another.
- c) Increased participation in decision making allows for greater commitment to organisational goals and development of new strategies.
- d) Self-determination arising from distributed leadership may improve members' experience of work.

The leader-plus perspective, as suggested by Spillane and Camburn (2006:3), emphasises that the work of leading and managing schools should involve multiple people in varying degrees. Formally designated leadership or management positions, such as the principal, deputy principal and HODs, as well as informal positions such as the subject heads and grade heads, all have a hand in leadership. Distributed leadership involves 'finding and enhancing the sources of formal and informal leadership expertise within and outside the organisation' (Harris 2005:8). School leaders tackle various issues that are necessary for school improvement such as learner discipline, extra-mural activities, assessment, school safety, and maintenance. Tackling any issue necessitates the collaboration of teachers, parents and students. A distributed leadership perspective sees leadership not as a set of skills or competences, but as an organisational resource that can be maximised (Harris, 2005:8).

Across schools in Johannesburg South, distributed leadership is already taking place to some degree. The principal has to ensure higher levels of teacher involvement by utilising a wide variety of expertise, knowledge and skills found amongst the staff (Williams 2011:193). These selected individuals act as 'coordinators' of the various committees within a school. The core purpose of schooling is teaching and learning, which has its own challenges like lesson planning, assessing, marking, record keeping and support. Managing various other areas of the school poses a problem if time is not allocated for these functions to be carried

out successfully. A school cannot function without the dedicated contribution of all members of the staff, from the post level one teacher who becomes the instructional leader in his or her class, to the support staff who maintain the cleanliness of the school. Harris (2005:7) affirms that distributed leadership means ‘finding and enhancing’ sources of both formal and informal leadership expertise where it exists within the school. The question is: does this practice take place in all schools in the Johannesburg South district? And, how do other schools deal with work overload while ensuring accountability and school improvement?

School leaders are often ill-prepared for their demanding jobs as they operate in an environment of ever-shifting priorities. This high-accountability environment demands that principals focus on other formal and informal leaders. The execution of leadership tasks is often distributed among multiple formal leaders in the classroom, school and community. Distributed leadership practice expects a degree of competence from every member of the staff for it to be successfully implemented.

Several questions are, therefore, asked about ensuring the competency of all teachers in a school.

- Where do the teachers learn the skills necessary for leadership?
- Who helps them understand the nature of leadership?
- Are teachers adequately prepared to provide effective leadership?

Answers to the above questions are vital in ensuring the effectiveness of distributing leadership roles down the echelons of the school system.

Prospective school principals engage in some sort of formal training during which they gain a deeper knowledge of the context in which schools operate as organisations. Continuing professional development for principals contributes to a change in their styles of leadership and improves relationships with all stakeholders in a school (Singh & Mestry, 2007: 490). They assert that the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) builds leadership and management capacity and should be mandatory for principals. Training enables principals to hone their communication skills, problem solving skills, and develop and refine their attitudes necessary for effective leadership (Richardson, 2003: 202). On the other hand, teacher leadership is not preceded by any such training. Large numbers of teachers, however, do complete leadership programmes, such as the ACE, but do not take up any leadership position. However, they provide a valuable resource to the schools in which they teach.

2.7.1 Demands placed on the school principal

Spillane (2006:6) acknowledges that leadership practice extends beyond the school principal, but stresses that this acknowledgement in no way undermines the vital role of the principal in school leadership. It merely illustrates that leadership is often a collective rather than an individual endeavour. According to Chirichello (2004:119), the expectations we have of school principals are overwhelming. He believes that we may be searching for individuals who do not exist; that the myth of the super principal is just an illusion. He proposes that principals should not try to be heroes and should give some serious thought to restructuring their jobs (Chirichello 2004:120). Spillane (2006: 88) aptly describes the demands placed upon a school principal as follows:

A distributed perspective makes it possible for the work of leadership to be manageable as there is too much involved in leading a school. It is too much to expect one person to know everything about leading complex organisations like schools. The knowledge a principal is expected to master is extensive while the core business of schooling is leading the improvement of teaching and learning.

Spillane (2006:88) provides a quick inventory of the demands on school leaders: they need to have expertise in content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, curricular knowledge, knowledge about students and knowledge about adult learning. This is necessary in order to make the right choices when hiring teachers, facilitating the selection of curricular material, observing instruction, and making informed judgements about its quality. This is too much for one person or even two or three to grasp and master. The ultimate challenge for all school leaders is to make improvements in the classroom where it matters most. Regrettably, the day-to-day work of school principals often revolves around dealing with discipline referrals, parental complaints and bureaucratic paperwork (Blase & Blasé, 2004: ix). Schermerhorn, *et al.* (2012:14) acknowledge that the job of the manager has never been more demanding than in today's dynamic and hypercompetitive work environments. Managing alone cannot solve all the complex problems and address all the challenging situations schools are faced with. In the new world of management, managers are not the only leaders, and part of every manager's success is based on how well he or she mobilizes leadership contributions by others.

The school principal cannot single-handedly turn a school around. Administrators, subject specialists and classroom teachers with tools and routines are critical to a school's success.

Subject specialists and classroom teachers need to take a pivotal role in leading efforts to improve instruction and transform school cultures. Spillane (2006:22) asserts that leaders depend on followers to lead, and so the followers are an essential constituting element in defining leadership activity. He provides evidence that the school principal does not have a monopoly on school leadership; indeed teachers, administrators and other professionals also play important leadership roles (Spillane, 2006:21).

2.7.2 Distributed leadership and the changing role of the principal and the school management team

According to Spillane (2006:31), multiple individuals usually perform leadership work. In addition to the principal and assistant principal, other formally designated leaders and teachers take responsibility for leadership routines and functions. If distributed leadership is the most talked about way to lead schools, what does it mean for the principal? At this juncture, it should be noted that redistributing power to level one teachers and the SMT, does not make the role of the principal redundant. On the contrary, by virtue of their appointment and position, the principals remain accountable for all aspects of the school. The principal thus becomes the ‘leader of leaders’ (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:403). Distributed leadership is grounded in the activity rather than the position or role one occupies in a school (Harris, 2005:17). This does not mean that the principal is removed from his role as the simplistic interpretation of distributed leadership might suggest, or that his role is now redundant.

The principal plays a critical role in distributed leadership as he or she must ensure that the teachers are empowered to lead, and they can provide the much-needed energy for change and development (Harris, 2005:17). Harris (2005:18) suggests that when the head ‘fails to build positive relationships amongst his staff and attend to the emotional life of the organisation, nothing will work as well as it could or should’.

Spillane (2006:22) contends that distributed leadership poses some critical questions for the school principal:

- How is leadership distributed in my school?
- Is this pattern of distribution optimum?
- How is distributed leadership practice developed and enhanced?
- How do we extend leadership distribution to parents, students and the wider community?
- What difference is distributed leadership making?

Finding appropriate answers to these questions will assist the principal in enabling distributed leadership to succeed.

The 'top-down' leadership model that dominates many schools poses a barrier to distributed leadership. The success of distributed leadership depends on whether the principal and the SMT are willing to relinquish power, and the extent to which staff embrace the opportunity to lead (Harris, 2005:18). Gunter as cited by Grant and Singh (2009:296) warns that inviting teachers to engage in unfamiliar work, leads to the creation of more work for them. The principal remains central in creating the conditions in which distributed leadership can flourish (Harris, 2005:18). The principal has to become a leader of leaders, and to strive to develop a relationship of trust with his staff.

The school principal should distribute leadership roles to members of the staff down the ranks in order to allow every department of the school to function optimally. However, it is noted that distributing responsibilities to incompetent members of the staff is a clear threat to school effectiveness. Leadership therefore, becomes letting the right people do the right things right (Marishane & Botha, 2011:6). But leadership is also about professional and human resource development which requires collaboration between the teachers and the SMT. Staff development is a critical element for success, but few schools devote significant time or resources to the professional development of their teaching staff. Professional development must become an integral part of a teacher's professional life in order to maintain sustained improvement in teaching and learning (Clark, 2007: 131). Harris (2005:18) suggests that teachers must be provided with opportunities to develop their leadership skills. The principal must set aside time for teachers to perform their leadership work such as, professional development, team planning, classroom visits, and, support. There should also be ample opportunities for the development of teachers' skills and knowledge that will improve their leadership skills, such as leading groups, conducting workshops, and mentoring and coaching. Time is of the essence and the principal must ensure that this is available.

The researcher is of the opinion that once teachers have developed the necessary expertise, drive and passion to function in a manner that will ensure school improvement, only then will distributed leadership be effective. Teachers must themselves be ready and willing to take on various leadership roles within the school and have the drive and passion to commit to school improvement. Research conducted by Grant and Singh (2009:296) found that many teachers

considered the extra leadership duties a form of ‘passing the buck’. This perception prompts the question: how keen and competent are the teachers in Johannesburg South to lead?

Members of the school management team have a great number of decisions to make on a daily basis, for example, how a department or administration will work, moderation of the work of teachers in a department, class visits, own personal teaching and marking, the extra-mural programme, timetabling and most importantly, how one works as a team. A teacher is responsible for making these decisions and for their consequences. A teacher is also accountable to the principal for the work that she does and the way she does it (DoE 2008:42). Distributed leadership demands a culture of trust and accountability from everyone in the school. If this trust is not honoured, the principal is inevitably left accountable for tasks poorly done (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:403). Thus, mutual trust becomes a non-negotiable challenge for the school principal and the SMT. The researcher is aware that tasks are often distributed to members without understanding their level of expertise or their willingness to do the work. This often results in unsatisfactory or incomplete work. Very often, this work needs to be redone which becomes time-consuming and frustrating to those in management positions. The challenge is for the principal and SMT to find areas of expertise in colleagues, as trust and respect are earned through expertise (Grant, *et al.* 2010:403).

Hayward (2008: 26) stresses that the school leader must avoid catching the ‘willing horse flogged to death’ illness and take on too much responsibility. This type of leader becomes overwhelmed by the demands of the job, which results in burnout. Distributed leadership ensures a fair distribution of the workload with additional opportunities for skills development and reduced stress levels for all members of the team. Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1992:7) argue that not many principals attribute vest authority in their positions because they have to build teacher leadership into a more powerful source in future schools. Educational leadership needs to be capable of building capacity in schools that are ever more complex (Cook, 2007:6). Cook describes leadership capacity as a dynamic of participation and skill, and asserts that leadership is not just a role and position; it leads to constructive change, and as such, everyone can be a leader since it is a shared endeavour, which demands the redistribution of power and authority.

In a study by Camburn, Rowan and Taylor (2003:5), it was found that responsibility for leadership functions was typically distributed across three to seven formally designated leadership positions per school. Such positions include the principals, assistant principals,

programme co-ordinators, programme coordinators, subject area co-ordinators, mentors, master teachers, teacher consultants and other auxiliary staff. The role of the school principal has certainly changed since 1994 in South Africa, and so have the roles of all other members of the staff.

2.7.3 Distributed leadership and the changing role of teachers

Dehaloo (2011:1) states that the key issues to school improvement lie in the hands of school management teams (SMTs) and teachers who are the nation's human capital. Therefore, every endeavour needs to be made to ensure that teachers are well motivated for their work, and experience high job satisfaction. So the question is: what factors lead to teachers' job satisfaction? Motivated and happy employees generally strive for enhanced performance from their learners (*ibid.*). The core purpose of schooling is the education of the children, and schools are rated according to learner performance. Since the class teacher is responsible directly for learner performance, how does the SMT lead them to perform at their peak?

According to Naidu, Joubert, Mosoge, and Ngcobo (2008:23), the school principal and the SMT are appointed to their positions on the basis of their professional and managerial expertise and broad knowledge of the educational field. Their core role is to manage their departments, provide assistance, support and advice to teachers in order to promote professional growth and development of teachers. They perform these functions in a time allocated to them according to their workloads. The SMT is expected to facilitate the work rather than to dictate what teachers should accomplish. They need to develop collegial relationships that will make teachers feel safe and supported (Bush, 2008:76). This can be done by allowing teachers to decide the most suitable time for classroom observation and the monitoring of books, lesson plans and record files. A clear management plan must be drawn up in advance and teachers must be guided through it to ensure that it is understood by everyone. It is the function of the SMT to ensure that once a management plan is drawn up, it is followed. Genuine feedback to teachers is vital in ensuring a school's success. Continuous feedback to teachers regarding their performance must be given promptly if it is to make a difference to their work. Praise must be given when due, whilst also drawing attention to areas where improvement is necessary in a non-threatening manner (Naidu, *et al.*, 2008:26). Distributed leadership recognises the skills and expertise of people in an organisation and empowers them to develop their areas of specialisation.

The SMT must serve as a role model for good practice and lead from the front by being visible and accessible for constant advice and support. The quality of the SMT's work must be exemplary and they should not hesitate to disclose this to teachers in order to encourage transparency (Naidu, *et al.*, 2008:26). In doing this, the school principal and the SMT will empower their staff so that the vision of excellence they have set for the school can be accomplished (*ibid.*). The school principal should build teams, get everyone to pull together, develop a vision, inspire extra effort, seize opportunities, encourage openness and do other wonderful things (Bradford & Cohen, 1998:3). Avolio (2011:41) states that exemplary leadership is a process whereby we continuously develop ourselves and others to our full potential. Promoting personal mastery will help teachers to be independent and to work confidently. Personal mastery will lead to competence, maturity and a more positive work attitude (Naidu, *et al.*, 2008:27).

In schools, distributed leadership applies to how teaching and learning and other school-related matters are led. It is less about leaders and more about creating a leadership work ethic in all staff by empowering teachers and thereby optimising their talents and expertise. Teachers take their work more seriously when they are involved in the decision-making process. They become stakeholders in the implementation of decisions and work towards their success. Teachers' expertise varies according to their interests and experience, and distributed leadership allows them to flourish in what they do well. Recognising the expertise of the teacher improves morale and empowerment. Increased morale leads to better classroom performance, and thus better learner results and sustainable school improvement (Naidu, *et al.*, 2008:27).

Inherent within the distributed leadership perspective, is the leadership practice of teachers (Lambert, 2003:44). Teachers are experts in their classrooms where they spend the majority of their time. They take on leadership roles when development and innovation are necessary. Teachers who possess certain skills are chosen to develop and support their peers. They focus on improving learning through collaboration, development and growth (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:401).

It is common practice in most schools in the Johannesburg South District to select the most experienced teachers in each grade as grade heads, and the most experienced in the subject as the subject head. These positions have specific responsibilities allocated to them to ensure each department functions optimally. These are not formal positions and neither the school

nor the department offers these grade heads any incentive to perform their duties besides the title and the acknowledgement the position receives. Although these roles are not officially recognised, they are crucial and demand a high level of expertise. The mentoring and development of post level one teachers for the roles of grade heads, subject heads and so on, provides the school with possible candidates for the formal leadership positions when the need arises. The grade heads and subject heads play a vital role in ensuring school improvement as it involves smaller, more focused teams and specialised groups of people who share a common interest.

The integration of new teachers into schools is a critical aspect of leadership development and sustainability (Lambert, 2003:428). Currently, the researcher is unaware of any plans by the DoE to mentor and support newly appointed teachers who enter their employment for the first time. The appointment of new teachers who replace the older more experienced teachers, could affect the school's improvement plans. By supporting these new teachers, their teaching skills and leadership capabilities are developed. The researcher is aware that it is not the school principal who guides, supports and mentors these new teachers. A mentor teacher, often the subject head, is assigned to the new teacher. The role of the mentor is an important professional leadership role performed by a teacher with more experience. The mentor accepts the shared responsibility for school improvement. This mentorship role emerges naturally from the subject teacher.

Teacher induction within schools illustrates the need for veteran teachers to take on the leadership role of mentoring new teachers who begin their careers. Leadership becomes everyone's work in an organisation. Teacher efficacy derived from effective mentoring contributes to keeping alive the passion and commitment that accompany most new teachers into the profession (Lambert, 2003: 428). Mentoring is performed in addition to the core business of schooling, which is, teaching and learning.

Harris (2005:8) contends that teachers offer the greatest, but often untapped, leadership potential in the school. Teachers are paramount to distributed leadership as they are the instructional leaders, who lead the curriculum and discipline within their classrooms. Teachers, however, equate leadership with formal roles and responsibilities rather than their individual capabilities and capacity (Harris, 2005:8). They do not see themselves as leaders unless they occupy formal leadership positions. Teachers engage in 'shared decision making and collective action' (Harris, 2005:9) during grade meetings when teamwork is practised.

Grant, *et al.* (2010:403) emphasise that the redistribution of power that distributed leadership advocates, results in ‘the release of the latent, creative power of teachers’. Distributed leadership could exist within a department or a grade where teachers work collaboratively. It is expected that the teachers in a grade plan their lessons and worksheets together. It is expected that the grade head leads the team in selecting suitable material for the weekly lesson plans and worksheets. The grade head is accountable for the success of the school at grade level. Within the phase, there are subject heads who address issues around the various subjects. Distributed leadership is not simply about giving others tasks or responsibilities, but it encourages interaction among teachers that results in development and improvement (Harris, 2005:9). Teachers possess varying degrees of expertise and experience. Through teamwork, this expertise and experience is displayed amongst the staff.

In schools, distributed leadership goes beyond the teachers to include learners on the RCL as well as parents who head various portfolios in the SGB. Learners perform their roles as school leaders by maintaining order and control on the school field during the school lunch breaks. They also assist with class discipline when necessary. This clearly illustrates that teachers, learners and parents are leaders in the school and that leadership practice necessitates the involvement of leaders, followers in the various positions at school (Harris 2005:170).

Distributed leadership allows for the flow of influence in organisations (Grant & Singh, 2009: 291). According to Gunter (2005:56) as cited in Grant and Singh, 2009:291), distributed leadership is characterised as authorised, dispersed and democratic leadership. This is explained as follows:

- Authorised distributed leadership takes place when the principal distributes work. This is also referred to as ‘delegated leadership’. This type of leadership is evident when there are teams, informal work groups, committees and so on, in a hierarchical structure. Work is accepted as a means of empowerment.
- Dispersed distributed leadership takes place when work is carried out without the formal workings of a hierarchy. This form of leadership is described as autonomous, bottom-up and emergent as it is based on the knowledge, skills and personal attributes of members who do not hold formal leadership positions.
- Democratic distributed leadership has the potential for coercive action as the leaders themselves engage with the organisation’s values and goals.

It is essential that the principal takes into account the teachers' expertise, interests and experience and distributed leadership along these lines. The formal leadership of the school must serve as role models by being visible and accessible to the teachers and assist in their growth and development. This creates a constant pool of experience that sustains school improvement even after the school principal leaves the school.

2.7.4 Distributed leadership and capacity building

Capacity building relates to the school's active involvement in self-improvement activities, aimed at enhancing the quality of its performance (Marishane & Botha, 2011:19). It includes *inter alia*, acquiring the professional knowledge and skills needed for school transformation and the effective use of resources. Teacher development has been central to school improvement, education reform, and the attainment of high levels of student achievement (Blase &Blase, 2004:196).

According to Avolio (2011:12), the core of being a leader is developing and helping people grow to their full potential where they can lead themselves effectively. Despite the fact that teachers of a school are the most critical element of its success, few schools devote significant time or resources to their professional development. An effective programme of staff development is a critical element in good teaching and good learning, and schools are unlikely to maintain sustained improvement in teaching and learning if professional development does not become an integral part of teachers' professional lives (Clark, 2007:131).

Van Wart (2011:21) emphasises that leaders are expected to get things done by providing the resources and training, maintaining efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring that technical problems are handled correctly, and coordinating functional operations. But he acknowledges that leaders cannot do all the work, they depend on followers to actually do the work. Van Wart (2011:21) stresses that the followers' training, motivation, maturation, continued development, and overall satisfaction are critical to production and organisational effectiveness. Each individual's strength, contributes to the leadership capacity of the group, so the leader must use his communication skills, creativity and high personal capacity to build trust and inspire courage and commitment (Cook, 2007:7).

For the staff of a school to participate actively and effectively in carrying out the whole range of responsibilities devolved to the school, they need capacity in the form of knowledge and

skills (Marishane & Botha, 2011:64). The devolution of responsibility down the echelons of the school, as well as the accompanying accountability, requires capacity in the form of knowledge and skills. The onus is on the principal as an influential capacity builder to develop capacity for those holding key responsibilities of governance, management and teaching (Marishane & Botha, 2011:64). Mentoring has become one of the widely used strategies in schools to enhance school effectiveness. The mentor should act as a role model of positive attitudes, beliefs and values. Teachers at all levels of management at school could be mentored for the enhancement of their performance. Any teacher who possesses the relevant skills and experience can be a leader and in a good school, this is the case. Angelle (2002, cited in Mokoelle, 2011:79) affirms that mentoring newly-appointed teachers could influence their work positively, and consequently have a bearing on school effectiveness.

Distributed leadership creates an environment in which all teachers are instrumental in improving student outcomes, as it allows them to utilize their individual strengths and capacities (Engel-Silva, 2009:13). Chirichello (2004:121) proclaims that principals must be able to lead, follow or get out of the way by fading in and out of their roles. They must build a vision in which the school becomes a community of leaders and learners by providing time for teachers to develop their skills and be willing to be teachers and collaborators. Distributed leadership is frequently talked about as a cure-all for schools, and Spillane (2006:9) sees it as the way leadership ought to be carried out. The practice of distributed leadership will ensure the presence of a wide range of school leaders who would lead each department in a school and ensure a certain level of accountability for its success.

Leithwood, *et al.*, (1992:4) contends that schools need competent management to establish and maintain the daily routines that make individual people in the organisation indispensable. Schools need people who allow the basic purposes of the school to be achieved, although members of the school inevitably change. The distributed perspective suggests that there are multiple leaders in a school and each one's contribution is vital to school efficiency. One way to promote teacher professionalism is to ensure that the physical working environment of teachers is appropriate for their status as professionals and ensure they have the necessary tools and equipment to perform their work in a conducive environment (Clark, 2007:133-134).

The SMT of a school has a huge responsibility to ensure that all areas of a school are effective. The SMT is often too limited in its members to ensure that whole school

effectiveness is possible and needs the involvement of other members of staff to lead other areas of the school. According to Harris (2005, cited in Williams, 2011:193), distributed leadership provides exciting possibilities for school effectiveness as it promotes the development of collegial norms amongst teachers, who in turn, contribute to school effectiveness. He cautions that distributed leadership can only be effective once teachers have been empowered and the organisational conditions are conducive to democratic deliberation.

The SMT has to ensure that they are experts in their positions and that every teacher is an expert in areas that are assigned to them. Every teacher at the school must have the knowledge, skills and capacity to lead one another. Empowerment of all teachers is a must if distributed leadership practices are to flourish. Williams (2011:195) contends that a lack of appropriate leadership development opportunities for school principals and teachers can be seen as a major inhibiting factor in the success of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership requires a well-structured organisation which is characterised by shared values and beliefs and a common purpose that is understood by all.

2.7.5 Distributed leadership and the school context

South African schools involve a devolved management system whereby the authority for the management of the school is vested not just in the principal but, in the broader-based SMT and to a lesser extent in the SGB (DoE, 2008:42). A devolved management style has the potential to impact on schools if the principal fosters a conducive climate for its implementation (Harris, 2004:16). The principal has to distribute responsibility to teachers by establishing internal networks of teacher-led teams that perform specific tasks but ultimately interact with one another to achieve a common goal (Marishane & Botha, 2011:68). This collaborative approach is seen as critical, because leaders are held accountable to various stakeholders for school improvement.

By offering teachers leadership roles within a school, power is distributed throughout the school, but this does not make the position of the principal or the formally appointed management staff redundant. The principal continues to hold a key position in the organisation, by holding ‘the pieces of the organisation together in a productive way’ (Harris & Muijs, 2005 cited in Grant & Singh, 2010:403). The principal remains accountable for all areas of the school. The principal has to determine, in line with legislation, what can and cannot be distributed taking into consideration the unique culture of the school (Grant & Singh, 2010:403).

There are certain aspects of school management that remain the prerogative of the principal and management alone. Distributed leadership is also dependent to a large extent, on the unique culture and the context in which each school operates. Spillane (2004:22) stresses that teacher leadership varies according to the socio-cultural context in which it operates. This depends on the historical, cultural and institutional setting in which it is situated. Grant and Singh (2010: 404) acknowledge that the apartheid legacy with its dysfunctional schooling system did not disappear with the new government but continues to determine the performance of children at school.

Grant and Singh (2010: 404) argue that in order to understand teacher leadership from a South African perspective, research should accommodate these vastly differing school contexts. Taking this into consideration, the researcher has concentrated on a number of schools in the Johannesburg South district that vary in their socio-economic status as per their quintile level and years in existence for the purpose of understanding how distributed leadership impacts on these schools. The selected schools are mostly well established schools, but their challenges may rest with the problem of staff turnover and the need to constantly mentor and support new staff members. Grant and Singh (2010:404) suggest that research into teacher leadership takes into account the culture and contexts of schools. Many schools in the Johannesburg South area have a lengthy history of providing quality education to their communities. However, a large number of these schools have recently become Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) schools. These are schools that have been underperforming in the annual national assessments (ANA) and are closely monitored by the Department of Education to ensure they improve their academic results.

The role of the principal is crucial in developing a conducive school culture where teachers are nurtured and developed to keep abreast of the ever-changing education policies (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:404). Once teachers acquire the necessary expertise, they will be able to lead new initiatives in pursuit of school improvement. Teachers require the support of the principal and SMT, and from other professional development initiatives both inside and outside the school (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:404) to develop into the leaders of the future.

Not all areas of school leadership can be distributed down the ranks of the school hierarchy. The principal must determine in line with legislation which tasks can be distributed and which cannot, and who has the right expertise and skills to carry out a particular function

successfully. The principal remains accountable and must ensure that when leadership is distributed, it is done in the best interest of the school.

2.8 Factors that affect the implementation of distributed leadership

To achieve the vision and mission of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), school leaders must focus on establishing a task-relevant context and creating the environment in which learners can best achieve their potential. Quality improvement starts with a real commitment from school leaders. Van der Westhuizen (2007:316) emphasises that unless the staff see a genuine commitment to quality in the behaviour of the top team, improvement is unlikely to be implemented from below. Leaders are dependent on the followers they lead, and while leaders draw on their positional authority to support their beliefs and actions, followers influence leaders by drawing on their personal characteristics, access to information or special knowledge and expertise (Bacharach & Lawler, 1980:31). Van der Westhuizen (2007:316) contends that a lack of involvement or a sense of indifference on the part of management is what results in failure, and proposes that managers must ‘walk the talk’ and realise that quality cannot and must not be delegated to others.

Distributed leadership is about creating networks of support and collaboration which can only occur when the principal has empowered his staff to take responsibility for their own decisions and actions (DoE, 2008:62). Skills and talents are found in certain teachers and an effective leader will encourage teachers to reveal these skills and use them when needed (Marishane & Botha, 2011:64).

Having progressed through the ranks from being a level one teacher to the position of deputy principal, the researcher has first-hand experience of the changes that have taken place in education since 1994 as well as the workload of being a member of the SMT and a teacher. The researcher is aware of the constant staff turnover schools face each time the Department of Education publishes a vacancy gazette, and the impact this has on the performance of a school. Constant staff turnover results in the filling of vacancies with new teachers who need to be mentored and supported in their roles. Besides grappling with the continuous curriculum changes that have taken place since the establishment of a single education department in South Africa, constant staff turnover has further increased the workload of the school principal and the school management team. The distribution of leadership roles down the echelons of the school management to the teachers is a common practice in schools today. The roles and responsibilities of all school personnel, as indicated in the Personnel

Administrative Management (PAM), are overwhelming and demand that all members of staff spend many more hours at school than the seven formal hours stipulated (ELRC 1998:C63), if the work must get done. It is, therefore, vital that all teachers, regardless of their rank be part of the leadership of the school.

Williams (2011:194) lists a number of factors that have militated against distributed leadership becoming actualised, such as context, people and practice. Those in power, however, may be reluctant to share leadership (Chirichello, 2004:122). Grant and Singh (2006:525) believe that South African principals still exhibit an authoritarian mentality due to a fear of loss of power. A prerequisite for the successful implementation of distributed leadership is the existence of a corps of teachers who can actively contribute towards leadership (*ibid*), and a school principal who can provide the structural framework which is characterised by shared values and beliefs and a common purpose without feeling threatened by the perceived loss of status and power (Williams, 2011:194).

While great leaders can make a great difference, Van Wart (2011:24) stresses that, when a leader has inherited or created an organisation with good training, a highly competent workforce, clear task structures with feedback flowing directly from the task, innately satisfying work, group cohesiveness, and well-functioning rules, the need for strong leadership is minimised.

Since 1994, the South African education system has been transformed in many respects, with teachers increasingly being expected to contribute towards transforming their schools into democratic, professional and collaborative learning and working environments (Williams, 2011:193). Spillane (2006:21) cautions that relatively little is known about how leadership practice is stretched over formal leaders and teacher leaders in a school, and this opens up a field of research that needs particular answers. Bush (2011:88) stresses that a key issue in assessing the practice of distributed leadership is to consider how it is distributed. Hence, this prompts the following questions: Does the principal cede some formal authority to others in a process analogous to delegation? Does he invite colleagues to adopt leadership roles or behaviours? And do staff members take their own initiative in taking responsibility for leadership? These are the type of questions that the researcher hopes to answer to some extent.

The principal as an effective leader, must know what skills and talents the staff possesses and encourage them to expose these skills and use them when needed (Marishane and Botha

2011:64). The principal and the SMT must ‘walk the talk’ by setting strong work ethics and high standards because quality cannot be delegated to others. Leadership roles should be distributed to teachers who meet the high standards set by the principal, if the school is to meet its goal of school improvement.

2.9 School leadership and quality education

According to Avolio (2011:30), effective leadership should not be limited to the heads of organisations or to one best way of leading. Schools require effective leaders and managers as well as trained and committed teachers, if they are to provide the best possible education for our learners (Bush, 2008:391). So, this raises this question: how does school leadership affect the quality of education? Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004:3) answer this question as follows:

Effective education leadership makes a difference in improving learning. There’s nothing new or especially controversial about that idea. What’s far less clear, even after several decades of school renewal efforts, is just how leadership matters, how important those effects are in promoting the learning of all children, and what the essential ingredients of successful leadership are.

The quality of leadership has a direct impact on school and student outcomes (Bush, 2007: 391). Leadership not only matters, but it is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning (Leithwood, *et al.*, 2004:3). But the question is: is the successful implementation of distributed leadership possible in ensuring the effectiveness of schools in South Africa?

The school principals are responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of their schools, but distributing responsibilities to incompetent team members is a threat to the effectiveness of schools because they cannot perform to the required standard and deliver the expected results. Leadership is also about professional and human resource development. So this begs the question: who exactly is responsible for teacher development in a school?

South African schools have experienced a high rate of teacher turnover which has led to greater school instability, disruption of curricular cohesiveness and a continual need to hire experienced and inexperienced teachers, who may be typically less effective, as replacements for teachers who leave. Unfortunately, principals of schools lack organisational capacity to provide the necessary

management strategies that can enhance teachers' job satisfaction (Tsvara, 2013: v).

The above extract outlines the educational challenges faced by the South African education system, and points to a need for a more updated management style for schools that would ensure overall school improvement. All current school reform efforts aim to improve teaching and learning, and their success depends on the motivations and capacities of school leadership (Leithwood, *et al.*, 2004:3). People in both formal and informal roles need to take responsibility for leadership activities in a school to ensure school effectiveness (Spillane, 2006:13). Spillane further asserts that state-mandated policy changes may be good at ensuring the distribution of resources and setting ambitious standards, but cannot directly impact on the daily functions of teachers and learners in the classroom. This has to be the responsibility of everyone employed in the school.

Fullan (1999:39) emphasises that fragmentation and overload are the biggest problems facing schools today and that unwanted and uncoordinated departmental policies result in schools that are turbulent and uncertain. Schools struggle to meet the needs of their children and adjust to a world of accountability and growing competition, while educational leaders face unprecedented challenges. Researchers in the field of leadership indicate that there is a debate on different types of leadership styles best suited to meet those needs (Engel-Silva, 2009:1). Engel-Silva proposes that a solution to the turbulence and uncertainty that beset schools is collaborative leadership. Fleish (2002:95) believes that without external pressure, school-based improvement projects often do not have the right mix of incentives and sanctions to translate support into practice. He stresses that a genuine change in teacher practice and improvement of student learning requires both state-mandated policy reforms and school level improvement initiatives.

2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

There is a growing awareness that the task of the school principal has changed irrevocably. The South African school principal requires certain characteristics and skills in order to respond to the ever-changing school context and constant curriculum upgrades. Distributed leadership can be a powerful means of bringing about school change if carefully considered and applied. Teacher leadership is an important component of leadership in schools and through distributed leadership, the expertise, time and experience of all members of staff can be used optimally to ensure school improvement. Teachers should be nurtured and their

expertise must be tapped into as the work of the principal becomes impossible to manage alone. The constant development of teachers for their new roles ensures a steady supply of leaders for the future.

It must be borne in mind that distributed leadership is not a panacea for school improvement, as much depends on the school's developmental stage, and context in which the school finds itself (Harris, 2005:25). Distributed leadership allows for a reflection on leadership practices in new and challenging ways. It is bound to bring tensions and anxieties as boundaries are crossed and barriers are broken, in a quest for the best way to lead schools in the 21st century and beyond. However, if sustainable school improvement is what we are looking for, then, surely this is a risk worth taking.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The review of literature in Chapter 2 revealed a myriad of factors that affect the impact of distributed leadership practices at schools. It provided an in-depth literature review on distributed leadership practices in schools and focused on defining leadership, discussing leadership models, styles, traits, skills and behaviours, and briefly examined the changing role of the principal, school management team (SMT) and teachers in the current South African context. Chapter 3 provides the rationale for empirical research and reflects on the positivist and interpretivist paradigms. This is followed by a discussion on the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies as well as the mixed methods methodology, data collection methods, sampling procedures and ethical measures that will be applied during the empirical study, data analysis and interpretation of the results. The researcher hopes to provide insight into the actual practice of leadership in the post-apartheid school structures, through carrying out this plan successfully.

3.2 THE RATIONALE FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Kumar (2005:6) suggests that research is a way to find answers to questions. He describes a research design as a procedural plan that the researcher adopts to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically (Kumar, 2005:84). Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (1996:15) describe research as a social activity that is powerfully affected by the researcher's own motivations and values. In this study, the researcher uses her own experience of the insurmountable workload of the principal and the SMT as a starting point for this study.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Kothari (2004:33), a good research design is flexible, appropriate, efficient and economical, among others. It minimises bias and maximises the reliability of the data collected and analysed (Kothari, 2004:33). The researcher will use everyday skills for the collection, selection, analysis and presentation of data as suggested by Blaxter, *et al.* (1996:53). Kumar (2005:8) suggests that research must be controlled, rigorous, systematic, valid and verifiable, empirical and critical as described in the paragraphs below.

Control implies minimising the effects of outside factors that may affect the relationship that you want to research. To ensure that outside factors did not affect this research, the researcher followed the procedures for conducting research as prescribed by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE, 2012a:1). Researchers are expected to provide ‘high quality, internationally competitive research and dissemination of ground-breaking knowledge in pursuit of excellence’ (GDE, 2012a:1). The research should also have value to education if it is to be conducted at the Gauteng Department of Education schools. The Gauteng Department of Education does not permit teachers, learners and officials to be involved in any research activity in January when the schools open and during the last quarter of the year (GDE 2012b:4). The researcher took this into consideration as teachers must be settled in their school roles and not be overwhelmed by work overload during the time the research is conducted. This also enables participants to use their own, authentic experiences when participating in the research. “Rigorous” implies that procedures selected to answer questions are relevant, appropriate and justifiable.

Systematic research involves ensuring that the procedures adopted to undertake an investigation follow a certain logical sequence. Teachers at schools are settled in their roles by February each year. They have a clear understanding of their various roles, as teachers, grade heads, subject heads, HODs, the committees they are part of, and the work they are expected to do. The appropriate time to conduct the study was between March and September when all school committees were fully functional. This would result in valid, verifiable data.

Valid and verifiable research implies that conclusions based on your findings are correct and can be verified by yourself and others. “Empirical” means that the conclusions are drawn from hard evidence gathered from information collected. “Critical” implies that the process adopted and the procedures followed are able to withstand critical scrutiny.

Teachers as professionals can be trusted to provide accurate information regarding their personal opinions about leadership without the assistance of their co-workers. Selecting an appropriate research design is crucial in enabling the researcher to arrive at valid findings, comparisons and conclusions, and should thus be workable and manageable (Kumar, 2005:84). The researcher opted to use a mixed methods approach within an interpretive paradigm as it seemed most relevant for gathering data for this study. The choice of paradigms is guided by what the researcher seeks to achieve. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006:9) put forward three paradigms that undergird research, that is, the positivist,

interpretive and constructivist paradigms. This study leans more towards the interpretivist paradigm as the subsequent discussion elucidates.

3.3.1 Research paradigms

Research paradigms provide different ways of making connections between the social experiences of people and the world within which social life occurs (Blaikie, 2007:3). It influences the way knowledge is studied and interpreted and sets down the intent, motivation and expectations for the research (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006:194). Bogdan and Biklen (1998:22) define the term 'paradigm' as "a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research". Paradigms define enquiry along three dimensions: ontology, epistemology and methodology (Terreblanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:6).

Mack (2010:5) contends that the ontological assumptions of the researcher inform the epistemological assumptions, which in turn informs the methodology of the research. This gives rise to the methods that will be employed in data collection (Mack, 2010:6). A methodology refers to a model to conduct research within the context of a particular paradigm (Wahyuni, 2012:71). Positivism and interpretivism are considered as two of the most important means of seeking knowledge in the social sciences (Ozanne & Hudson, 1989:1).

3.3.1.1 The positivist paradigm

The positivist paradigm is considered to be scientific in the sense that it intends to prove or disprove a hypothesis (Mack, 2010:6). Positivism emphasises adherence to the proper scientific protocol as it allows one to produce accurate, repeatable results. It emphasises the scientific method and the use of statistical analysis to reveal relationships that can be generalized to other contexts (Ozanne & Hudson, 1989:2). Positivist research usually has a control and experimental group and a pre/test post method (Mack, 2010:6). The researcher and the subjects are separated so that the researcher does not influence the results, and the research environment is controlled to minimise extraneous sources of variance (Ozanne & Hudson, 1989:2).

Ontologically, positivists view social reality as external and objective (Wahyuni, 2012:71). They seek to explain and predict. They assume that a single, unalterable social reality exists.

Behaviour is viewed as being determined by internal states and/or external forces. Positivism maintains that the scientist is the observer of an objective reality (Mack, 2010:6).

Epistemologically, positivists advocate the use of a scientific approach by developing numeric measures to generate acceptable knowledge (Wahyuni, 2012:71). Positivists believe that the methodology of the natural sciences should be employed to study social reality (Mack, 2010:6). They generally seek to obtain law-like generalisations termed ‘nomothetic knowledge’; they assume that real causes exist, and adopt a stance of separation between the researcher and subject (Ozanne & Hudson, 1989:3). They maintain that different researchers observing the same factual problem will generate a similar result by carefully using statistical tests and applying a similar research process (Wahyuni, 2012:71). They further believe that truth can be attained because knowledge rests on a set of ‘firm, unquestionable, indisputable truths’ from which our beliefs are deduced. This knowledge is objective and deduced from a theory or hypothesis (Mack, 2010:6). Axiologically, positivists maintain the separation of the researcher from the researched by taking the outsider perspective (Wahyuni, 2012:71).

3.3.1.2 The interpretivist paradigm

Interpretivism is heavily influenced by hermeneutics, the study and interpretation of historical texts, and phenomenology, the “need to consider human beings’ subjective interpretations” (Ernest, 1994:25). Schools in Johannesburg South have their own unique practices linked to their personal challenges or good practices in leadership. The central goal of interpretivism is understanding, thus the researcher must work cooperatively with the schools being studied in order to understand each participant’s subjective experiences with distributed leadership. Though an interpretivist may state his or her current understanding, understanding is viewed as a never-ending hermeneutical circle that is continuously influenced by future interpretations (Ozanne & Hudson, 1989:2).

According to interpretivism, social reality is viewed by multiple people with multiple perspectives of reality (Mack, 2010: 7). The role of the researcher in the interpretivist’s paradigm is to “understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:19). The ‘varying backgrounds, assumptions and experiences of the participants’, form the crux of this study (Wahyuni, 2012:71) and highlight the impact of distributed leadership on each school.

Data gathered about the direct experiences of teachers in school leadership positions, their qualifications, training, years of experience, the roles they engage in, and so on, will allow the researcher to ‘understand, explain and demystify’ leadership in these schools. Epistemologically, interpretivists favour dialogue with the studied participants and prefer working with qualitative data because it provides rich descriptions of social constructs (Wahyuni, 2012:71). Knowledge arises from personal experiences and is not reducible to simplistic interpretation (Mack, 2010:8). Interpretivists believe that reality must be studied holistically and not in isolation from its natural setting or context in which it occurs (Ozanne & Hudson, 1989:2). In terms of axiology, interpretivists take the stance of an insider’s perspective because they study the social reality from the perspective of the people themselves (Wahyuni, 2012:71). Interpretivists view the research-informant relationship as interactive and cooperative (Ozanne & Hudson, 1989:3), but they take an objective stance when analysing the data they collect.

A limitation of interpretive research is that it abandons scientific procedures of verification, thus results cannot be generalised to other situations. The study may not yield the same results if conducted in the future as schools are unique, dynamic institutions that transform continuously. This study is aimed at understanding the current impact of distributed leadership on the functioning of schools and takes a look at current issues affecting the smooth functioning of leadership in schools.

3.3.1.3 Ontology

Ontological assumptions are concerned with what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other (Blaikie, 2007:3). It is a representation of vocabulary, often specialized to some domain or subject matter that conceptualizes what the vocabulary is intended to capture (Chandrasekaran, Josephson & Benjamins, 1999: 20). The ontology of this research focuses on leadership practices that exist within schools in Johannesburg South. It focuses on specific terminology associated with school leadership such as the school management team (SMT) and their role in distributed leadership. It focuses on the role played by the teachers on teams such as the school assessment team (SAT), school based support team (SBST), learner, teacher support team (LTSM) and so on. The focus is on the reality of leadership that exists in South African schools and highlights the multiple players involved in school leadership.

3.3.1.4 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what can be known, whereas methodology refers to how the researcher plans to go about practically studying what they believe to be known (Terreblanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006: 6). Epistemology can thus be defined as the relationship between the researcher and the reality. It is concerned with the nature and scope of human knowledge, with what kind of knowledge is possible, with the criteria for judging the adequacy of knowledge and for distinguishing between scientific and non-scientific knowledge (Blaikie, 2007:4).

When trying to generate new knowledge, the researcher has to decide on what kind of relationship she will have with the research participants and what role they will play. A key question is whether the researcher should stand back from the social phenomena being investigated and act as an outsider, or should she be thoroughly immersed in the social situation as an insider. The choice is between maintaining a 'professional distance' or totally immersing oneself in the personal world of the research participants (*ibid.*, 11). In this study, the researcher is a teacher herself in Johannesburg South, and as such, she kept a professional distance from the research participants by only interacting with the school principal. The researcher investigated the practice of distributed leadership as an outsider as the personal practices of each participant were valuable to the authenticity of this study. The researcher was, however, available to answer any questions the participants had regarding the study.

The researcher also needs to choose between being an expert or a learner. As an expert, the researcher is armed with existing relevant knowledge in the form of theories, concepts and previous research findings. In the role of the learner, the researcher aims to set aside relevant existing knowledge and help the research participants reveal how they understand the social world of interest to the researcher (Blaikie, 2007:11). The researcher acted as an outsider studying the phenomena of how distributed leadership impacts on the functioning of selected schools. Although the researcher has some knowledge of this practice in one school, it is not sufficient to draw any conclusions about other schools in Johannesburg South.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Research methods refer to all the methods the researcher uses during the course of studying the research problem (Kothari, 2004:7). There are two basic approaches to research, that is, quantitative research and the qualitative research.

3.4.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research uses a ‘narrow angle lens’ because the focus is on only one or a few causal factors at a time (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:36). The researcher’s aim is to understand to what extent distributed leadership is practised at schools in the Johannesburg South district by taking into account factors like age, gender, race, teaching experience, number of years teaching at a current school, rank, qualifications, and leadership roles within schools. These questions should yield some of the data that are required.

In quantitative studies, attempts are made to hold constant, the factors that are studied. The quantitative researcher must remain as neutral as possible to avoid bias. The quantitative researcher studies what is of interest ‘from a distance’ using standardised questionnaires and other quantitative measuring tools. Quantitative research as the name suggests, is concerned with the analysis of data in numerical form (Johnson and Christensen, 2012:37). Data obtained is more readily analysed and interpreted. It tends to emphasise relatively large-scale and representative sets of data, and is presented as the gathering of ‘facts’ (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996:60).

The researcher structured a simple questionnaire that could be completed within 30 minutes by teachers engaged in the normal day-to-day practices expected of teachers. Section A of the questionnaire was focused on gathering quantitative data.

3.4.2 Qualitative research

The major objective of qualitative research is exploration or discovery (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002: 64). Qualitative research implies a direct concern with experience as it is ‘lived’, ‘felt’ or ‘undergone’ (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002: 64). The qualitative researcher generally studies a phenomenon in an open-ended way, without prior expectations (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:376). The hypotheses and theoretical explanations are based on interpretations of what is observed naturally without manipulation (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:376). Qualitative research is concerned with collecting and analysing information in as many forms as possible, chiefly non-numeric information (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996: 60). It tends to focus on exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples which are interesting or illuminating, and aims to achieve ‘depth’ rather than ‘breadth’ (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996:60).

While observing, qualitative researchers do not draw attention to themselves, but try to be unobtrusive so that they do not influence the naturally occurring behaviour being studied.

Human behaviour is viewed as dynamic and changing. Phenomenon is studied in depth over time. The product of qualitative research is usually a narrative report with rich description, rather than a statistical report (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:376).

The qualitative researcher uses a wide- and deep-angle lens, examining human choice and behaviour as it occurs naturalistically and holistically. Research reports are more interpretive as the researcher tries to understand and portray the lives, experiences and language of the research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:38). Findings, however, do not generalise beyond particular people who are studied (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:35). They describe what was found from an insider perspective of the people or groups being studied. Qualitative research would yield valuable, in-depth data for this research study. Section B, C and D of the questionnaire were aimed at producing qualitative data as research participants were encouraged to answer a few open ended questions. Data collected for this study could thus be regarded as quantitative with limited qualitative elements.

3.4.3 Mixed methods research

Both qualitative and quantitative data are valid and useful and are not mutually exclusive. It is possible for a single study to use both of them (Best & Kahn, 1989: 89-90). A mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analysing, and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative research in a single study (Creswell: 2012:3). Quantitative and qualitative research can be distinguished by different views on human behaviour. In quantitative research, it is assumed that cognition and behaviour are highly predictable and explainable (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:33), whereas qualitative researchers view human behaviour as fluid, dynamic and capable of change over time and place.

A mixed method study is conducted when both quantitative and qualitative data together, provide a better understanding of the specific research problem (Creswell, 2012:535). Four basic types of mixed methods designs exist:

- the convergent design which includes the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, with the purpose of merging or integrating the data;
- the explanatory design which begins with quantitative data collection and analysis followed by qualitative data collection and analysis;
- the exploratory design which begins with gathering qualitative data and builds on it using quantitative data and; and lastly,

- the embedded design which includes collecting both the primary form of data and the secondary form of data simultaneously (Creswell 2012:22).

Data collected by questionnaires may, of course, be either qualitative or quantitative (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2006:193). On questionnaires, you may ask some questions that are closed-ended and some that are open-ended. Open-ended questions allow the participants more options for responding to questions and allow the researcher an opportunity to explore reasons for the answers to the closed-ended questions (Creswell, 2012:218).

Blaxter, *et al.* (2002:66) summarises the similarities between qualitative and quantitative research methods in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.1 Similarities between qualitative and quantitative research

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While qualitative research may be mostly used for testing theory, it can also be used for exploring an area and generating hypotheses and theory. • Qualitative research can be used for testing hypotheses and theories, even though it is mostly used for theory generalisation. • Qualitative data often includes quantification (e.g. statements such as more than, less than, most as well as specific numbers). • Quantitative approaches (e.g. large scale surveys) can collect qualitative (non-numeric) data through open-ended questions. • The underlying philosophical positions are not necessary as distinct as the stereotypes suggests.

Source: Blaxter, *et al.*, (2002:66)

Blaxter, *et al.* (2002:66) summarise the main differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.2 The difference between qualitative and quantitative forms of research

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative paradigm • Concerned with understanding behaviour from the actor's own frame of reference • Naturalistic and uncontrolled observation • Subjective • Close to the data-the insider perspective • Grounded, discovery-orientated, exploratory, expansionist, descriptive, inductive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative paradigm • Seek the facts/causes of social phenomena • Obtrusive and controlled measurement • Objective • Removed from data: the outsider perspective • Ungrounded, verification orientated
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process orientated • Valid, real, rich, deep data • Ungeneralisable; single case studies • Holistic • Assume a dynamic reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable: hard and replicable data • Generalisable: multiple case studies • Particularistic • Assume a stable reality
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Source adapted from: Oakley (1999:156)

The mixed methods approach was selected as the most appropriate method to collect data for this study. The research participants were studied ‘from a distance’, using a standardised questionnaire. Data collected was quantitative in nature with limited qualitative elements as questions were planned to yield both qualitative and quantitative data. Participants were qualified teachers who, it was assumed, would-be able to complete the questionnaires independently. The type of data required did not require in-depth descriptions of the participants or their situation. Each question led on to the next to gather as much qualitative data within a short period of time as possible.

The researcher in this study has considerable experience as a teacher, HOD, deputy principal and acting principal. Furthermore, the researcher’s background in primary school education spans a period of 27 years of which the latter 22 years were spent teaching in various parts of the Johannesburg South District. This experience will enable the researcher to understand and empathise with the participants. This tacit knowledge will contribute depth and meaning to the research, data collection and interpretation. The researcher will thus be in a position to identify with the research participants with an ‘insider’s view”. The experience, values and attitudes of the researcher are valid elements of the research process.

3.5 SELECTING A METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

There are several methods of collecting primary data. The appropriate method depends on the purpose of the study, the resources available and the skills of the researcher (Kumar, 2005:119). The quality of the data depends on the way the purpose and relevance of the study are explained to potential respondents (Kumar, 2005:119).

3.5.1 Data gathering instruments

Anything that becomes a means of collecting information for your study is called a ‘research tool’ or a ‘research instrument’. Observation forms, interview schedules, questionnaires and interview guides are all classified as research tools (Kumar, 2005:22).

The researcher made use of the survey questionnaire to elicit information from the research participants. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions in a definite order on a form (Kothari, 2004:100). The respondents must clearly understand the purpose and the relevance of the study, especially when a questionnaire is used to collect data.

3.5.2 The survey questionnaire

A questionnaire is the most widely used social research technique, and an obvious strategy for finding the answers to the questions that interest you. But Blaxter, *et al.* (2006: 159) caution that it is not as simple as it might seem. A questionnaire is a self-report data-collection instrument that each participant fills out as part of a research study. Researchers use questionnaires so that they can measure many different kinds of characteristics, such as feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, and so on (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:162).

A questionnaire is a list of questions which informants answer themselves – a self-completion instrument (Sapsford, 2007:47). Survey research allows the researcher to collect information by asking a set of pre-formulated questions. These questions are set in a predetermined sequence in a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is completed by a sample of individuals drawn to represent a defined population (Hutton, 1990, in Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996: 60). The researcher often wishes to generalise the results obtained from the samples to the populations from which the samples are drawn (Rosier, 1998, in Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996:71).

In education, survey research involves the collection of information from members of a group of students, teachers, or other persons associated with the education process. The analysis of this information is used to illuminate important educational issues (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996: 71). The survey questionnaire for this study hoped to elicit data that would provide information on how leadership roles are distributed down the lines of the echelons within a school. It would provide personal data on gender, age, race, experience, rank and qualifications of the research participants. This would enable the researcher to draw certain connections between the personal details of teachers and the types of leadership roles that are distributed to them. Leadership roles that are distributed within schools in the Johannesburg South district include

subject-related leadership roles and extra-mural leadership roles. Other roles that are distributed are curriculum management roles, administrative management roles, health and safety roles and social committee roles. The survey questionnaire also included questions on training received by teachers for their leadership roles and whether time is made available for the practice of these roles. The questionnaire ended with some open-ended questions to elicit a few personal views on leadership from the participants.

3.5.3 Principles of questionnaire construction

Johnson and Christensen (2012:163) emphasise that the content and organisation of the questionnaire must correspond with the researcher’s research objectives as the goal of the questionnaire is to tap into and understand the opinions of the participants about variables related to the research objectives. A questionnaire is a written list of questions, to which answers are recorded by participants. In a questionnaire, respondents read the questions, interpret what is expected and then write down the answers (Kumar, 2005: 126). Questions should be clear and easy to understand. The layout of a questionnaire should be pleasant to the eye and the sequence of questions should be easy to follow. Johnson and Christensen (2012:163) suggest some principles that researchers should bear in mind when constructing a questionnaire as noted in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.3 Principles of questionnaire construction

Principle 1	Make sure the questionnaire items match your research objectives.
Principle 2	Understand your research participants.
Principle 3	Use natural and familiar language.
Principle 4	Write items that are clear, precise and relatively short.
Principle 5	Do not use “leading” or “loaded” questions.
Principle 6	Avoid double-barrelled questions.
Principle 7	Avoid double-negatives
Principle 8	Determine whether an open-ended or closed-ended question is required.
Principle 9	Use mutually exclusive and exhaustive response categories for closed-ended questions.

Principle 10	Consider the different types of response categories available for closed questionnaire items.
Principle 11	Use multiple items to measure abstract constructs.
Principle 12	Consider using multiple methods when measuring abstract constructs.
Principle 13	Use caution if you reverse the wording in some of the items to prevent response sets in multi-item scales.
Principle 14	Develop a questionnaire that is properly organised and easy for the participants to use.
Principle 15	Always pilot test your questionnaire.

Johnson and Christensen (2012:163)

3.5.4 Administering a questionnaire

Blaxter, *et al.* (2006:160) suggests three ways in which questionnaires can be administered: they can be posted to the intended respondents who are then expected to complete and return them themselves; they can be administered over the telephone; or they can be administered face-to-face. Administering questionnaires face-to-face can be time-consuming and expensive. For the purposes of this study, questionnaires were administered through collective administration as the principals of the selected schools were approached with the purpose of involving the staff in the study. The researcher was able to explain the purpose, relevance and importance of the study to the principal and clarify any questions respondents might have. The professionalism and ethics of the school principals cannot be disputed due to the position they hold at their schools. This ensured a high response rate. The details of the researcher were made available to all the participants, and she was available to answer any queries that participants may have about the study.

3.5.5 Advantages of the questionnaire

Advantages of surveys are listed below (Hutton, 1990, in Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996: 71).

- Questions are designed so that answers from individual interviews can be added together to produce results which apply to the whole sample;
- The research is based on interviews with a representative sample of respondents;
- The questions are designed to be unbiased;

- Surveys lend themselves to future replication; and
- Large surveys can often be broken down.

The greatest advantage of the questionnaire is its economy and the saving of the researcher's time, allowing for much larger samples (Sapsford 2007:109). Rosnow and Rosenthal (1996:112) concur that questionnaires are convenient to use because they can be administered to large numbers of people concurrently; they are economical as travel time and costs are eliminated and they provide a certain degree of anonymity to the participants. Kumar (2005:130) elaborates on the advantages of the questionnaire thus:

- It is less expensive and convenient – as you do not interview respondents, you save time, and human and financial resources.
- It offers greater anonymity – as there is no face-to-face interaction between respondents and the interviewer. It helps in obtaining accurate information especially when sensitive information is asked. The school principal handed out the questionnaires and collected them. This ensured anonymity between the researcher and the research participants in this case.
- Another advantage of the questionnaire is that it is an entirely standardised measuring instrument as the questions are phrased in exactly the same way for all respondents (Sapsford, 2012:110). Administering questionnaires personally to groups allows the researcher an opportunity to establish rapport, explain the purpose of the study, and explain the meaning of items that may not be clear (Best & Kahn, 1989:181). Best and Kahn emphasise that the availability of a number of participants in one place makes possible an economy of time and expenses, and also provides a high proportion of usable responses. It is very likely that a principal would get completed usable responses from teachers at schools. Teachers are also very capable of completing questionnaires quickly and correctly.

All the schools selected for this study can be found in the Johannesburg South district. They are all in close proximity to each other. The researcher met with the school principal after obtaining permission from the Gauteng Department of Education and the relevant district offices. The researcher made an appointment with each school principal and explained briefly what the research was about and what information was needed. Most sections of the questionnaire were self-explanatory. The researcher entrusted the school principal, as a professional, knowledgeable person of integrity to hand out the questionnaires to the teachers

and briefly explain the research study and the questionnaire. The researcher was available should the principal require her to explain the questionnaires and the research study to the teachers. If teachers needed further details they were able to call the researcher whenever necessary. The researcher was available to address any queries that might have arisen as the researcher's contact details were made available to the participants on the questionnaire. The completed questionnaires were collected within a week.

3.5.6 Disadvantages of a questionnaire

According to Sapsford (2012:110), a major disadvantage of questionnaires, is that there is no one to explain and help respondents if they experience difficulty understanding the questions in the case of self-administered questionnaires. This was not the case with this study as the researcher was available to answer any questions the participants might have had. The danger was that the sample size could be reduced if teachers did not hand in their questionnaires. As much as possible, the researcher guarded against these disadvantages affecting the validity of this study. Any issue that was found to affect the study was reported in the findings.

3.5.7 The Structure of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was structured as follows:

- Section A asked for biographical data as the researcher wanted to establish if age, experience and qualifications of teachers had any bearing on distributed leadership.
- Section B dealt with the distribution of leadership roles within the school. Section B tied in with the first specific question the researcher set out to answer, that is, what particular types of school leadership roles are distributed at school?
- Section C of the questionnaire elicited information on the training received, willingness to be part of the leadership structures of the school and the time allocated to perform these functions. Section C tied in with the following next three specific questions: (1) Have staff members received sufficient training to lead the various areas of the school, and by whom has this training been provided? (2) How is time allocated to accomplish the assigned leadership tasks? (3) Are systems put in place to monitor standards once roles are distributed and how and when is this done?
- Section D elicited information on the following four open-ended questions:
 - As a teacher, what are your personal views of distributed leadership?
 - In your opinion, do you feel that you are given enough opportunities to take on leadership roles?

- List two leadership roles you feel you are able to manage effectively but have not been given the opportunity to assume.
- Do you have enough time within the school day to work effectively in your leadership role?

Open-ended question 1 was linked to this question: What are the possibilities and limitations of distributed leadership as perceived by the staff and how are these addressed? Open-ended questions 2, 3 and 4 provided more depth to the discussion on specific question 1. These answers were presented and analysed as part of the qualitative study. Data was presented in groups according to the respondents' responses to the questions. Cohen, *et al.*, (2007:467) explains that this method automatically groups data and enables themes, patterns and similarities to be seen at a glance.

3.6 PILOT TESTING A QUESTIONNAIRE

A feasibility or pilot study is carried out when the researcher wants to explore areas about which he or she has little or no knowledge to decide whether the study is worth carrying out as a detailed investigation. The researcher piloted the questionnaire using teachers at the school where the researcher teaches. The pilot study was used to determine whether the respondents understood the instructions and how much time the test actually took.

These exploratory studies are also conducted to develop, refine, and test measurement tools and procedures (Kumar, 2005:10). In developing a questionnaire, pilot testing is absolutely essential (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996:110). Pilot testing allows the researcher an opportunity to determine if the items are properly worded and to fine-tune the data collection instruments and procedures. A pilot study to try out the methods of the questionnaire before conducting the full-scale study is extremely useful and will determine if the research is feasible (Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Shaw, 1998:27).

3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaire designers rarely deal consciously with the degree of validity or reliability of their instruments. The concept of reliability has to do with how well you carry out your research project. If another researcher conducts the same research in the same setting, would they come up with essentially the same results? If so, then your work might be judged as reliable (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002:221). Validity refers to whether your methods, approaches and techniques actually relate to, or measures the issues that you have been exploring (*ibid.*).

3.7.1 Validity

Best and Kahn (1989:193) describe questionnaires as ‘A one-time gathering device with a very short life’. Basic to the validity of questionnaires is asking the right questions, phrased in the least ambiguous way. The researcher used her experience of leading various sections of the school at various ranks to carefully design the research questionnaire.

Validity has to do with whether the methods, approaches and techniques you used actually relate to, or measure, the issues you have been exploring (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2006:199). According to Kerlinger (1986 in Kumar 2005:153), ‘the commonest definition of validity is exemplified by the question: ‘Are we measuring what we think we are measuring?’ Validity refers to the degree to which what was observed or measured is the same as what was purported to be observed and measured (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996:417). According to Kumar (2005: 154), there are three types of validity:

- Face and content validity;
- Concurrent and predictive validity; and
- Construct validity.

In order for this study to be regarded as valid, the researcher had to ensure that the research instrument has both face and content validity.

3.7.2 Face and content validity

The ability of an instrument to measure what it is supposed to is based on the logical link between the questions and the objectives of the study. This type of validity is easy to apply if each question or item on the scale has a logical link with an objective of the research. Establishment of this link is called face validity (Kumar, 2005:154). Kumar further emphasises that in order for a questionnaire to have content validity, the items and questions must cover the full range of the issue being measured. The researcher must bear in mind that different people may have different opinions about the face and the content validity of an instrument. The questionnaire covered a range of questions that are of importance to the study. It took into account, personal details of the participants, thus gathering information on areas like age, experience, qualifications, rank, and so on. This was juxtaposed with the leadership roles the participants are given within the school. The questionnaire also gathered data on training and time management factors that impact on the quality of the leadership practised.

The researcher has often found that teachers are not always placed as leaders in areas where their strengths lie. A few personal open-ended questions were asked in this regard. This was included to ensure that the questionnaire had both face and content validity.

3.7.3 Reliability

Reliability has to do with how well the researcher has carried out the research project. Has the research been carried out in such a way that if another researcher were to look into the same question in the same setting, she would come up with essentially the same results (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2006:199). Reliability is the extent to which observations or measures are consistent or stable (Rosnow, *et al.*, 1996:413). It refers to consistency and stability. Reliability of questionnaires can be inferred by a second administration of the instrument, comparing the responses to those of the first. Reliability may also be estimated by comparing responses of an alternate form with the original form (Best & Kahn, 1989:194). The reliability of the questionnaire was tested through a pilot study that was carried out at the school where the researcher is currently employed. Shortcomings found in the pilot study were addressed before the final questionnaire was drawn up and distributed to the participating schools.

The questionnaire should yield the same results from the same participants over a short period of time. South African schools are dynamic institutions that are expected to change over time. Teachers are expected to develop and take on different leadership roles. Research instruments that measure what they purport to measure consistently over time, are regarded as reliable. Moser and Klaton (1989, cited in Kumar 2005:156) emphasise that ‘a scale or test is reliable to the extent that repeat measurements made by it under constant conditions will give the same results’. The research questionnaire used in this study was expected to yield data specific to the time the research was conducted.

3.7.4 Factors affecting the reliability of a research instrument

Kumar (2005:157) maintains that it is impossible to develop a research tool which is 100% accurate because it is impossible to control the factors affecting reliability. Reliability is affected by factors such as:

- The wording of questions;
- The physical setting;
- The respondent’s mood;

- The nature of interaction; and
- The regression effect of an instrument.

A slight ambiguity in the wording of questions can affect the reliability of a research instrument as respondents may interpret the questions differently at different times, resulting in different responses. The researcher must be aware of these factors and guard against them.

The participants in this study were professionally qualified teachers employed at schools in the Johannesburg South District. As such, they were capable of completing a questionnaire dealing with leadership practices within their schools. The researcher took into account that some participants might not be comfortable in expressing their opinions in a questionnaire. They were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of the information they provided and the value they would add to the research findings.

3.8 THE RESEARCH SETTING

The research setting can be seen as the physical, social and cultural site in which the study is conducted. The research setting for this study was 10 selected primary schools in Johannesburg South, South Africa.

3.8.1 Criteria for selection of schools for empirical investigation

Schools in the Johannesburg South district vary in their socio-economic status as per the quintiles they are categorised by. Quintile 5 institutions are seen as wealthy and successful while Quintile 1 to 4 schools are seen as poor, underperforming institutions (DoE, 2012:2). Schools selected for this study, vary in their quintiles and thus how they operate. Wealthier schools are in a position to employ additional staff and to spread the workload. They offer teachers free time in the form of administration periods to perform additional tasks. They practise leadership in a way that enhances their unique school circumstances. Poor schools have to contend with limited staff, heavy workloads and few or no administrative periods. The leadership practised in these schools will have to be different to fit their unique needs. How leadership is distributed in these selected schools will affect its performance in various ways. The challenge was to identify why and how this occurs.

3.8.2 Subjects required for the research

The researcher must think about the issue of subject availability (Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Shaw, 1998:23) and ask the questions: What type of subjects, with what type of

characteristics will the research require? Will the subjects need to be in a particular location, situation or context for the research to take place? How many subjects are needed for the research? The last question is whether such subjects are available. Furthermore, the researcher needs to ask if the subjects themselves are willing to participate in the research.

3.8.3 Sampling procedures

The primary purpose of research is to discover principles that have universal application and sampling makes it possible to draw valid inferences or generalisations on the basis of careful observation of variables within a relatively small proportion of a population (Best & Kahn, 1989: 10). By observing the characteristics of the sample, one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn (Best and Kahn, 1989:11). Kumar (2005:23) suggests that the accuracy of the findings largely depends on the way the researcher selects the sample. The underlying premise is that if a relatively small number of units are selected, it can provide a high degree of probability, and a fairly true reflection of the sampling population that is being studied. The type of sampling strategy used, determines the ability to generalise from the sample to the total population and the type of statistical tests performed on the data (Kumar 2005:23).

Sampling and selection are an integral part of whatever research approach you take as you will not be able to observe everybody of interest all the time. There is a wide variety of sampling strategies available for use. They are divided into two groups: probability and non-probability sampling (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996:142). Kumar (2005:169) further categorises sampling strategies as follows:

- Random/probability sampling designs;
- Non-random/non-probability sampling designs; and
- ‘Mixed’ sampling designs.

There are four non-random designs, each based on different considerations, which are commonly used in qualitative and quantitative research (Kumar 2005:169). Focus on the sampling methods that you will use.

- Quota sampling;
- Accidental sampling;
- Judgemental or purpose sampling; and

- Snowball sampling.

Judgemental or purpose sampling was employed in selecting a sample for this study. The primary consideration in purposive sampling is the judgement of the researcher as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study (Kumar, 2005:169). The researcher selected only those people who were likely to have the required information and be willing to share it. In the case of this research, teachers at various pre-selected schools in the Johannesburg South District were selected to participate in the study. Kumar (2005:169) suggests that this type of sampling is extremely useful when you want to construct a historical reality, describe a phenomenon or develop something about which only a little is known. The researcher was not aware of any other studies conducted among teachers in the Johannesburg South District that had provided information on the impact of distributed leadership on their schools.

Sampling is possible with the absence of a sampling frame of individuals as when their geographical location and distribution is known, even though their identities are concealed (Sapsford, 2007: 83).

The principal at each school was required to use accidental sampling, also known as convenience sampling, or opportunity sampling (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007:114) when selecting the participants, that is, the teachers from the various ranks within the school. Accidental sampling is a type of non-probability sampling that is based on convenience in assessing the sampling population (Kumar, 2005:169). It involves a sample being drawn from that part of the population which is close at hand, that is easily accessible, readily available and convenient. The researcher cannot scientifically make generalisations about the total population of schools in South Africa from this study but will be able to make generalisations about the population of schools in Johannesburg South.

3.8.4 Size of sample

The size of sample should neither be excessively large, nor too small. It should be optimum so that it fulfils the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility (Kothari, 2004:56). The calculation of sample size is determined by the level of accuracy required in the results. Kothari (2004:56) also suggests that budgetary constraints should be taken into consideration when deciding on the sample size. The researcher's skills in selecting a sample, within the constraints of the budget, lie in the way she selects the

elements so that they effectively and adequately represent the sampling population (Kumar, 205:181). Furthermore, the researcher must take into account the issue of non-response, attrition and respondent mortality (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007:105). Certain participants will fail to return questionnaires or return incomplete or spoiled questionnaires and thus, Cohen, *et al.* (2007:105) advise that the researcher should overestimate rather than underestimate the size of the sample.

Ten schools in the Johannesburg South district were selected on the basis of convenience to participate in the research. In selecting these sites, the researcher used ‘purposive sampling’ based on the researcher’s judgement of their potential to provide worthwhile and comprehensive data. The participants included 10 principals, 10 deputy principals, 20 heads of department, 30 grade heads and 50 teachers. These 120 participants worked at different schools, each with its own unique circumstances and challenges. It was expected that the data participants would provide reliable information for making judgements about distributed leadership practices in Johannesburg South.

Breakwell, *et al.*, (1998:24) suggest some points to consider as a precaution against subject attrition and non-compliance. As suggested by Breakwell, *et al.*, (1998:24) the researcher ensured that

- the planned sample was large enough to allow for possible attrition and non-compliance;
- the study sounded as interesting as possible;
- the potential subjects were assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity; and
- the subjects were informed that they would be advised of the eventual outcome of the research.

3.9 ACCESS

Access and ethics are two key issues that need to be examined as they are of concern throughout the data collection process and beyond (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002: 154). Access is a factor that must be guaranteed early on in the research. Access must not only be permitted, but must also be practicable (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007:110). There are a number of reasons that may prevent access to the sample that the researchers cannot afford to neglect (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007:110). One such reason may be the heavy teaching workload of potential participants.

'Gatekeepers' are people who control the researcher's access to the target participants (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007:110). Recruitment of participants depends on these key individuals, whose permission is necessary for the target subjects to be used (Breakwell, *et al.*, 1998:24). Cohen, *et al.*, (2007: 123), stress that access crucially depends on establishing interpersonal trust with the 'gatekeeper'. For the school staff, the gatekeeper was the school principal. The school principal, however, could not grant permission to anyone to conduct research in a GDE school without the approval of the director of the Knowledge Management and Research Unit of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE).

For the purposes of this research, it was essential to get the permission of the Department of Education and of the principals of the selected schools. The progress of the research, the way it is envisaged, and the researcher's ability to collect the data, are critical to the cooperation of these 'gatekeepers' (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002: 154). The feasibility of the research thus depends upon winning over their cooperation. The researcher must be able to answer any questions the 'gatekeepers' that is; the GDE and the school principal may have regarding the research. To avoid the 'gatekeepers' selecting subjects for participation which could affect the research, the researcher should plan a systematic method of selecting the research participants.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All professions are guided by a code of ethics that has evolved over the years to accommodate the changing ethos, values, needs and expectations of those who hold a stake in the profession (Kumar, 2005:210). In any profession, certain behaviours in research are considered unethical, such as causing harm to individuals, breaching confidentiality, using information improperly and introducing bias.

The conduct of ethically informed research should be the goal of all social research (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002: 158) 'because you owe a duty to yourself, other researchers and the subjects and audiences of your research to exercise responsibility in the process of data collection, analysis and dissemination.' Kumar (2005:212) suggests that there are ethical issues to be considered when collecting information. If the research is likely to help society directly or indirectly, it is acceptable to ask questions once you get the respondents' informed consent. The researcher should consider the relevance and usefulness of the research she is undertaking and be able to convince others of this. It is unethical to waste your respondent's time. Teachers play a vital

role in the management of many areas of the school. Identifying their vital roles and the impact they make on the school was an important part of this study.

- Seeking consent – It is unethical to collect information without the knowledge and willingness of the participants and their informed consent. Subjects must be made aware of what type of information the researcher wants from them, why the information is sought, what purpose it will be put to, how they are expected to participate in the study, and how it will directly or indirectly affect them. Consent should be voluntary and without pressure of any kind. The researcher included these details in the introduction of the questionnaire and explained this to the principal of each participating school.
- Providing incentives – Giving a small gift after having obtained information, as a token of appreciation, is not unethical but offering an incentive before data collection is unethical (Kumar, 2005: 213). No incentives were offered either before or after, the research was conducted.
- Seeking sensitive information –It is unethical to ask respondents sensitive questions provided that they are given sufficient time to decide if they want to participate, without major inducement. No sensitive information was required for the purposes of this study.
- The possibility of causing harm to participants – The researcher is expected to take steps to prevent any anxiety and harassment towards respondents. The research was to gather facts about each school's unique leadership practices and not about personal issues. The researcher acknowledges that each school has its own unique historical and current socio-economic issues to deal with. There was no possibility of harm to any research participants.
- Maintaining confidentiality – Kumar (2005:214) stresses that sharing information about a respondent with others for purposes other than research is unethical. The researcher ensured that information provided by respondents was kept anonymous and that after the information was collected, its source could be determined.

Research ethics involves being clear about the nature of agreements you have entered into with your research subjects or contacts. It involves getting the informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from (Blaxter, *et al.*, 1996: 142). It involves reaching agreements about the use of data; how its analysis will be reported and disseminated, and keeping to such agreements after it has been reached. The principle of informed consent and voluntary participation was observed and the participants were

informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage of the research (Breakwell, *et al.*, 1998:30). In this regard, they were informed of all aspects of the research that could possibly inhibit their willingness to participate in the research (Breakwell, *et al.*, 1998:29). All participants and their schools were kept anonymous, and all the information that they provided was kept confidential to protect their privacy.

Blaxter, *et al.* (1996:148) consider a number of common ethical issues that must be taken into account when conducting research:

- Confidentiality – It can be extremely tempting to use confidential material. Even if the researcher may think it is unimportant, or that it will never be detected, it should be kept confidential. Using confidential material could threaten the sources and undermine the whole research project.
- Anonymity – If individuals or organisations have been assured that they will not be identifiable in the report or thesis, careful consideration must be given to how they will be disguised.
- Legality – It is the duty of the researcher to report any illegal activities of which he becomes aware in the course of his research. It is an obligation shared by all citizens.
- Professionalism – Researchers are professionals, and therefore, certain standards of conduct are imposed on their professional life. These may overlap with their research work, especially if they are conducting research among fellow professionals. The onus is on them to decide what to do if they encounter unprofessional conduct during the course of their search.

Blaxter, *et al.* (1996:149) list four ethical principles that must be observed when conducting research:

- Subjects' identities must be protected so that the information the researcher collects does not embarrass or in other ways harm them.
- Subjects should be treated with respect.
- In negotiating permission to do a study, the researcher should make it clear what the terms of the agreement are, and should abide by that contract.
- The researcher must tell the truth when he or she writes up and reports on the findings.

Ethical issues do not solely relate to protecting the rights and privacy of individuals, but also to the methodological principles underpinning the research design (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2002:161). The researcher's values, positions and notions of truth are also integral to ethical concerns.

Kumar (2005:212) stresses that it is unethical to collect information without the knowledge of the participants and their expressed willingness and informed consent. The research participants must be aware of the type of information the researcher wants from them, why the information is being sought, what purpose it will be put to, how they are expected to participate in the study, and how it will directly or indirectly affect them (Kumar, 2005:212). The consent of the research participants in this study was voluntary and without pressure of any kind. Although the researcher had gained the permission of the Department of Education to proceed with the research, this did not mean that every school principal and teacher selected to participate in the research would be forced to. School principals were able to decide if it was feasible to conduct the study at their schools before accepting the questionnaires.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Once data is collected from the research participants, it must be organised into credible evidence by analysing and interpreting it.

Data collected through questionnaires may be either qualitative or quantitative (Blaxter, *et al.*, 2006:193). However, questionnaires lend themselves more to quantitative forms of analysis partly because they are designed to collect discrete items of information, either numbers or words which can be coded and represented as numbers (*ibid*). Blaxter, *et al.*, (2006:193) reiterate that the larger scale of many questionnaire surveys, encourage a numerical or quasi-numerical summary of results.

In qualitative research, the analysis is inevitably interpretive, so data analysis is more of a reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the decontextualized data (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007: 469). The researcher divided the qualitative data into different themes that corresponded with the main and specific research questions of this study. In order to do this, the researcher made notes of participant's answers to the open ended questions. Data was then studied to draw conclusions about each research question. Cohen explains that researchers bring their own preconceptions, interests, biases, preferences, biography, background and agenda to the data. Caution and self-awareness must be exercised by the

researcher to ensure that this is not the case. The researcher used the exact words of research participants to ensure that no information was lost due to the researcher's own biases and background knowledge on distributed leadership.

Quantitative analysis may be used at a number of levels. Many small-scale research studies make use of descriptive statistics and explore the interrelationships between pairs of variables. This type of analysis will make wide use of proportions and percentages and of the various measures of central tendency (averages) and of dispersion (ranges). The researcher may wish to go beyond this and make use of inferential or multivariate methods of analysis (Blaxter *et al.*, 2006: 199). According to Cresswell (2012: 173), the first step to organize data for analysis consists of, 'Scoring the data and creating a codebook, determining the types of scores to use, selecting a computer program, inputting the data into the program for analysis, and clearing the data.' The researcher prepared an excel spreadsheet using all the items from the questionnaire. Data was transferred from the research instruments (questionnaires) directly onto the spreadsheet. The data was scored according to the scales indicated on the questionnaires. Certain areas of the questionnaire were not completed by all respondents. The researcher indicated this lack of responses on the relevant tables.

3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed research paradigms, positivism and interpretivism and has shown why this study leans towards interpretivism. Qualitative, quantitative as well as mixed methods designs of research were compared and discussed. The qualitative and quantitative methodologies do not adequately address what the researcher hopes to accomplish on their own, thus the mixed methods design was selected. A survey questionnaire was chosen as the data gathering tool. Addressing all ethical issues before conducting the research is vital to the authenticity of the data. The researcher highlighted the strict rules and ethical requirements that apply to conducting research in Gauteng Department of Education institutions and endeavoured to abide by them.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, a description of the research design and methodology used to collect data for this study was given. The researcher made use of a questionnaire to elicit information on distributed leadership practices in schools in Johannesburg South. The main research question of this study, ‘To what extent is distributed leadership practised in schools in the Johannesburg South District?’ employed a mixed methods design as it elicited both quantitative and qualitative data. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (1996:193) suggest that data collected by questionnaires may be either qualitative or quantitative.

In this chapter, the results of the empirical investigation are analysed, interpreted and discussed. Blaxter, *et al.* (1996:193) suggest that small scale research studies use descriptive statistics and explore the interrelationships between pairs of variables. Such an analysis will make use of proportions and percentages and of the various measures of central tendency (averages) and of dispersion (ranges).

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

Ten schools in Johannesburg South under the Gauteng Department of Education were sampled and a total of 120 questionnaires were distributed. However, only nine schools responded to the study and 86 questionnaires were returned.

4.3 THE QUESTIONNAIRE – QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

The personal questions from Section A of the questionnaire generated biographical data, which have been presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed first using Blaxter’s suggestions. This is followed by an analysis of Section B of the questionnaire, which dealt with the distribution of leadership roles within the school. Section C of the questionnaire elicited information on the training received, willingness to be part of the leadership structures of the school and the time allocated to perform these functions. Sections A, B and C have been summarised in tables. Kumar (2005:244) suggests that coded data can be analysed manually if the number of respondents is reasonably small, and the researcher is only interested in calculating frequencies and simple cross tabulations. The raw data from the questionnaire was coded and captured onto a Microsoft Office Excel spreadsheet with headings representing each question. Tables are the most common method of presenting analysed numerical data. Hence, a large amount of detailed information can be presented in a

small space (Kumar 2005:246). The researcher opted to use tables to present each set of data collected and follow this with an analysis of the information.

As is customary, in quantitative research, the tables are followed by a critical discussion of the questionnaire results as well as a discussion of the qualitative data. The qualitative analysis focused on the open-ended questions asked in Section D. The researcher used the respondents' exact words when quoting answers to these questions.

4.3.1 Biographical data

Section A of the questionnaire dealt with gender, age, race, years of teaching experience, years at current school, rank within the school and the highest qualification of the research participant. This biographical data gives an indication of how stable a school is with regards to the staff. The researcher assumes that schools with older, more stable staff would lead more stable schools. This would provide a more conducive environment for distributed leadership to be practised. The race of the respondents would provide an indication of how integrated and transformed schools in Johannesburg South have become since 1994 as the schools researched were former Model C schools. The qualifications of the respondents give an indication of their readiness to provide quality education to the children of Johannesburg South. For the purposes of analysis, Section A of the questionnaire which dealt with the biographical data of the respondents, was divided into two sections, namely personal questions and, qualifications and experience.

4.3.1.1 Personal questions

The aim of the personal questions was to gain an overview of the respondents with regards to gender, age and racial group.

Table 4.1 Personal questions – Biographical data

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	17	20
Female	69	80
Age as at 30 March 2014		
25 years and younger	6	8
26 – 35 years	16	19
36 – 45 years	28	33
46 – 55 years	27	31

55 years and older	9	10
Racial group		
Black	23	27
Coloured	15	17
Indian	10	12
White	38	44

Table 4.1 shows that 86 participants took part in the study and that the majority of the respondents (80%) were female with only 20% being male. The researcher believes that this ratio of 4:1 is the general trend in primary schools in Johannesburg South. The respondents ranged from younger than 25 years to over 55 years of age. A majority of the respondents were between the ages of 36 – 55 years old (64%). This indicates that a large mass of experience exists amongst the teachers in Johannesburg South for the creation of a favourable atmosphere in which distributed leadership would thrive. With regard to race, a majority of respondents (44%) were White, followed by Black (27%), Coloured (17%) and Indian (12%). This data provides some insight into the transformation of schools with regards to staffing in Johannesburg South.

4.3.1.2 Qualifications and experience

Table 4.2 Personal questions –experience and qualifications

Years of teaching experience (GDE AND SGB)	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 5 years	13	15
6-10 years	18	21
10 – 15 years	11	13
15 – 20 years	17	20
20 years and more	27	31
Years at your current school		
1 – 5 years	40	46.5
6-10 years	20	23
10 – 15 years	12	14
15 – 20 years	4	4.5
20 years and more	10	12
Current rank within the school		

Post level-one: teacher	47	55
Grade head	10	12
Post level 2: head of department	13	15
Post level 3: deputy principal	7	8
Post level 4: principal	9	10
Highest qualification		
Teaching certificate	2	2
Teaching diploma	24	28
Bachelor's degree	23	27
Advanced certificate in education (ACE)	8	9
Post graduate certificate in education (PGCE)	8	9
Honours degree	17	20
Master's degree	4	5
Doctoral degree	0	0

Table 4.2 shows the wealth of teaching experience and qualifications that teachers possess in schools in Johannesburg South. Harris (2005:7) suggests that the success of distributed leadership is 'finding and enhancing' expertise wherever it exists within the school.

With regard to teaching experience, the distribution of the respondents was relatively even. The majority (31%) of respondents had over 20 years teaching experience while only 15% had less than 5 years' experience. This indicates that the capacity exists amongst the respondents for providing quality education and leadership should a need arise.

Distributed leadership acknowledges and incorporates the work of all individuals who have a hand in leadership practice and is not located in the position of the principal alone (Grant, 2010: 401). Data indicates that 55% of respondents were post level-one teachers, 12% grade heads, 15% heads of department, 8% deputy principals and 10% principals. Grade head positions are not formally recognised or paid leadership positions within schools but they exist in the schools researched. These positions highlight the distribution of leadership roles in schools in Johannesburg South to some extent.

The majority of respondents (28%) in this study hold teaching diplomas, 27% hold bachelor's degrees, 20% hold honour's degrees, 9% hold the advanced certificate in education (ACE), 9% hold the post graduate certificate in education (PGCE), and 5% hold master's degrees.

None of the respondents held doctoral degrees. Only 2% of respondents were under-qualified as they held teaching certificates. Teacher qualifications provide some evidence that teachers in Johannesburg South are capable of participating in school leadership and providing quality education to the children who attend their schools.

Table 4.3 reveals the years of experience of school principals who participated in the study. Eight school principals had more than 25 years of teaching experience while 5 principals had been teaching at the same school for more than 25 years. Two principals have been employed at the same school for 16-20 years. Only 2 principals had been appointed in the past 5 years. This shows that in terms of staff turnover, Johannesburg South schools are very stable. Data also suggests that teachers were developed within their own schools for promotional posts. It is also evident from the data that principals who spent more than 25 years at their current schools moved up the ranks within their own schools. Spillane (2006:37) suggests that the type of leadership style most suitable for a school depends on a school's development stage. It could be deduced from the findings that, overall, schools in Johannesburg South are well established with principals who possess valuable years of experience, thus they are in a strong position to practice distributed leadership.

Table 4.3 Years of experience of school principals

Rank in school	Years at current school	Years of teaching experience
Principal 1	25+ years	25+ years
Principal 2	25+ years	25+ years
Principal 3	25+ years	25+ years
Principal 4	25+ years	25+ years
Principal 5	1-5 years	25+ years
Principal 6	25+ years	25+ years
Principal 7	16-20 years	25+ years
Principal 8	1-5 years	11-15 years
Principal 9	16-20 years	25+ Years

4.4 LEADERSHIP ROLES WITHIN THE SCHOOL

There are a number of leadership roles teachers could manage to ensure the effective and smooth functioning of the school. Distributed leadership allows for all teachers to be engaged in school leadership if they are able and willing to do the extra work. Table 4.4 indicates the distribution of subject related leadership roles.

4.4.1 Subject related leadership roles

Public primary schools in South Africa cater for learners from Grade R-7 where a number of school subjects that must be taught; four in the Foundation Phase, six in the Intermediate Phase and nine in the Senior Phase (DBE 2011:6, 7). Managing the curriculum forms the core of the work schools do. The principal and SMT alone cannot perform all the tasks that would ensure the smooth delivery of the curriculum. It is common practice in schools to make use of subject and grade heads that provide leadership to smaller departments. Table 4.4 gives an analysis of data collected on subject-related leadership roles.

Table 4.4 Subject related leadership roles

Item	Frequency and percentages (in bracket)		
	PL1	SMT	TOTAL
Subject related leadership roles			
Are you a grade head?	16 (80)	4 (20)	20 (100)
Are you a subject head?	10 (42)	14 (58)	24 (100)
Do you mentor and support colleagues/ new teachers?	31 (53)	27 (47)	58 (100)
Do you manage the curriculum for your class or subject?	47 (66)	24 (34)	71 (100)

As Table 4.4 reflects, 80% of the respondents who indicated that they were grade heads were Post level-one teachers. Post level-one teachers accounted for 42% of the subject heads who participated in the study. The core function of the HODs is to manage the curriculum for their phases together with other SMT members, but this task is far too vast for a small SMT. Post level-one teachers who are capable and willing, provide valuable support to the SMT.

Post level-one teachers (53% of respondents) reported that they provided support to less experienced teachers, while 66% of them also indicated that they managed the curriculum for their classes. The above data provides evidence that teachers at all ranks within the school are involved in curriculum management to some degree.

Table 4.5 provides data on training respondents received for their subject-related leadership roles.

Table 4.5 Training for subject-related leadership roles

ITEM	Frequency and percentages (in bracket)		
	YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
Training for subject related leadership roles.			
Have you been adequately trained for the above roles?	60 (70)	19 (22)	7 (8)
Have you received training for the above role from the district?	38 (44)	40 (47)	8 (9)
Have you received training for the above role from an SMT member?	45 (52)	33 (38)	8 (9)
Have you received training for the above role from a level one teacher?	24 (28)	56 (65)	6 (7)
Is your performance monitored by any member of the SMT?	72 (84)	8 (9)	6 (7)

Curriculum delivery is a core purpose of schooling. In order to deliver the curriculum successfully, teachers must be well trained. The frequency includes both post level-one teachers and SMT members. A majority, 70%, of the respondents indicated that they had received training for their subject-related leadership roles while 22% indicated that they had not. Only 8% of respondents did not respond to this question. Forty-four percent of all respondents indicated that training for their subject-related leadership role was received from the district, while 47% indicated that this was not the case. This is a cause for concern and will be dealt with later in the chapter.

It is significant to note that 52% of respondents indicated that training was received from the SMT while 38% indicated that they did not receive such training. What is interesting to note, is that 28% of the respondents indicated that they received training from post level-one

teachers. Furthermore, Table 4.5 indicates that 84% of all the respondents have their performance monitored by the SMT while a minority (8%) of respondents indicated that this is not the case.

This data clearly indicates that distributed leadership practices are a norm in schools in Johannesburg South. Roles are distributed through all ranks within schools and mentoring and support are being provided by any teacher who is capable and willing to do so regardless of their rank.

4.4.2 Leadership in extramural activities

Extramural activities form part of the curriculum offered to learners in Johannesburg South. The extramural programme is conducted after the normal school day for learners. Schools offer a variety of sports codes. School sports teams in the Johannesburg South district often meet after hours to practise or play matches against each other.

Table 4.6 Extramural leadership roles

Item	Frequency and percentages (in bracket)		
	PL1	SMT	Total
Extramural leadership roles			
Are you involved in the extramural programme of your school?	46 (72)	18 (28)	64 (100)
Are you the head of the extramural programme at your school?	9 (69)	4 (31)	13 (100)
Are you the head of any sport at your school? For example, netball, soccer, volleyball, cricket, art club, etc.	10 (63)	6 (37)	16 (100)

Table 4.6 shows that, of the 64 respondents who indicated that they were involved in the extramural programme of the school, 46 (72%) were post level-one teachers while only 18 (28%) were members of the SMT.

Furthermore, only 4 of the 13 (31%) respondents who indicated that they headed the extramural programme of the school were SMT members. Six of the 16 (37%) SMT members indicated that they headed a specific sport at their schools. Once again, data provides evidence that there is indeed a distribution of leadership roles to teachers in all ranks

of the school. Data indicated that a greater percentage of post level-one teachers headed the extramural programme and specific codes of sport than subject-related leadership roles.

Table 4.7 Training for extramural related leadership roles

Item	Frequency and percentages (in bracket)		
	Yes	No	No response
Training for extramural related leadership roles			
Have you been adequately trained for the extramural leadership role you are involved in?	45 (52)	22 (26)	19 (22)
Have you received training for the extramural leadership role you are involved in from the district?	13 (15)	52 (61)	21 (24)
Have you received training for the extramural leadership role you are involved in from an SMT member?	21 (24)	46 (54)	19 (22)
Have you received training for the extramural leadership role you are involved in from a Level One teacher?	17 (20)	50 (58)	19 (22)
Is your performance in the extramural programme of the school monitored by any member of the SMT?	34 (4)	33 (38)	19 (22)

Table 4.7 provides data on the training respondents received for their roles in the extramural programme of the school. Data indicates that 52% of respondents were adequately trained for their roles, while 22% of the respondents did not receive such training. Furthermore, data indicates that only 15% of respondents were trained by the Department of Education (DoE), while a large majority, 52% of respondents did not receive such training. Only 24% of respondents indicated that they were trained by a member of the SMT while a mere 17% of respondents indicated that they were trained by a level one teacher. Only 40% of respondents indicated that their involvement in the extramural programme of the school was monitored by the SMT.

The extramural programme of the school is an integral part of the school week and is aimed at the holistic development of the child. The results show a distinct decrease in the amount of training and monitoring from the district and SMT between subject-related roles (Table 4.5) and extramural roles (Table 4.7) of teachers in their schools. While 84% of the respondents indicated that their subject was monitored by the SMT, only 40% of the respondents agreed that their extramural roles were monitored by the SMT. The extramural programme of the

school, provides an opportunity to schools to experiment with distributed leadership. Principals can distribute small leadership roles to teachers who can mentor, support and monitor this area of the school.

4.4.3 Other leadership roles within the school

In order for schools to function optimally, a number of other leadership roles are distributed to teachers. This section discusses the data received from respondents on: Curriculum management, administrative management, health and safety, and social and functions committees.

4.4.3.1 Curriculum management

Table 4.8 Curriculum management

Item	Frequency			Percentage
	PL1	SMT	Total	
Curriculum management				
School Assessment Team (SAT)	2	13	15	17
School Based Support Team (SBST)	0	13	13	15
Annual National Assessments (ANA)	0	15	15	17
Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM)	2	14	16	19
Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)	1	13	14	16

Teaching and learning form the core purpose of schools therefore effective management of the curriculum is essential in ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place daily. Table 4.8 shows the number of post level-one teachers in correlation to the number of SMT members that head curriculum management aspects of the school. These functions are more frequently headed by members of the SMT than post level-one teachers due to the pressure of accountability placed on those in the formal management positions to ensure effective curriculum delivery. The academic success of a school is heavily reliant on sound practices within the SAT, SBST, ANA, LTSM and IQMS committees. The presence of post level-one teachers as heads of these committees suggests that distributed leadership is practised in all areas of certain schools. Botha (2014:1226) suggests that distributed leadership brings the school management team and other teachers in contact with the goals and values of the school and this leads to a collective responsibility for the school's wellbeing. Principals

should distribute leadership roles to the most suitably trained teachers to ensure that every department within the school functions optimally.

4.4.3.2 Administrative management

Table 4.9 Administrative management

Item	Frequency		
	PL1	SMT	Total
Administrative management			
Admissions Team	0	11	11
Finance Committee	1	11	12
School Governing Body	0	15	15

Schools necessitate the existence of a strong administrative management team to deal with administrative issues such as the admission of learners, school finance and governance. Table 4.9 shows the number of post level-one teachers in contrast to the number of SMT members who head administrative management positions at the participant schools. The data indicates that administrative management positions are more often headed by members of the SMT than post level-one teachers.

4.4.3.3 Health and safety

Schools should take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of teachers and children within its environment.

Table 4.10 Health and safety

Item	Frequency		
	PL1	SMT	Total
Health and safety			
Discipline Committee	4	18	22
Prefect Committee	5	5	10
Scholar Patrol	7	3	10
School Safety Committee	6	14	20
Maintenance Committee	3	9	12
Tuck-shop Committee	0	1	1
Performance Management Development System (PMDS)	1	10	11
Whole School Evaluation (WSE)	1	15	16

Schools in Johannesburg South do this through the establishment of a range of committees as indicated in Table 4.10. The principal ensures a high level of teacher involvement by utilising their expertise and knowledge (Williams 2011:193). Each committee has a separate purpose to ensure the smooth functioning of the school. The discipline committee deals with disciplinary issues, the prefect committee mentors young leaders in their roles, the scholar patrol committee trains and supports the scholar patrol team in their duties, the school safety committee ensures that safety plans are current and workable, the maintenance committee deals with school maintenance needs, the tuck shop committee ensures that food sold to children meets good health standards, the PMDS manages and develops the ground staff and the administrative staff, and the WSE ensures that all aspects of the school are evaluated on an ongoing basis and that plans are put in place for improvement. It is practically impossible for the principal and SMT to head all the above positions and therefore there is a need to harness the expertise of teachers at post level-one to take on some of these responsibilities.

Data from Table 4.10 indicates that committees responsible for discipline, school safety, maintenance, PMDS and WSE are more frequently headed by members of the SMT. The prefect committee is headed equally by post level-one teachers and SMT members, while the scholar patrol committee is more often headed by teachers on post level-one. It is clear from the above findings that distributed leadership is common practice in schools in Johannesburg South. School principals must implement effective strategies to ensure the continuous development of their staff and the improvement of their schools (Botha 2014:1229). Through the distribution of leadership roles, this two-fold task can be addressed.

4.4.3.4 Social and Functions Committees

Social and functions committees organise school events like fundraisers, staff social events, cultural events, and so on. Events such as these are staged to encourage community involvement in the school. The establishment of these committees provide opportunities for staff to hone their leadership and management skills for more formal leadership roles later in their careers. Table 4.11 indicates that both post level-one teachers (18) as well as members of the SMT (21), lead the social and functions committees.

Table 4.11 Social and functions committees

Item	Frequency		
	PL1	SMT	Total
Social and functions committees			
Fundraising Committee	5	9	14
Social events Committee	6	4	10
Cultural Committee	5	7	12
Other	2	1	3
Total	18	21	39

The fundraising committee is responsible for generating additional funds to supplement the GDE's financial allocation. The financial committee head holds a crucial responsibility as schools operate within strict financial regulations. Notwithstanding the seriousness of this role, post level-one teachers (5) as well as members of the SMT (9) in Johannesburg South head this position.

The social events and the cultural committees have a considerable role to play in ensuring the harmonious interaction of teachers and learners, that a team spirit prevails within the school and that a deeper understanding of South Africa's unique culture is developed. Although the cultural committee (7) is more often led by a member of the SMT, this function is often the responsibility of a post level-one teacher (5), as Table 4.11 indicates.

4.5 TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP ROLES

The South African Council of Educators (SACE) recognises that teachers must be involved in their own professional development. SACE aims to enhance the teaching profession by ensuring that all teachers are appropriately registered and professionally developed (SACE, 2013a:7). Table 4.12 provides data on the training and continuous development of teachers in Johannesburg South after they have been employed.

Table 4.12 Training for different leadership roles

Item	Frequency	
	Yes	No
Training for other leadership roles		
Have you been adequately trained for the above roles?	24	24
Have you received training for the above role from the district?	12	35
Have you received training for this role from an SMT member?	18	29

Have you received training for this role from a Level One teacher?	6	41
Is your performance monitored by any member of the SMT?	24	22

Table 4.12 indicates the training received for heading the various committees mentioned in Tables 4.8 to 4.11. Only respondents, who led one of the above mentioned teams, responded to this item.

An expectation of distributed leadership is that teachers lead various areas of their schools, but with little or no training, leading effectively can become problematic for the teacher concerned. The above table indicates that only 24 respondents were adequately trained for the positions they led, while a further 24 respondents indicated that they were not adequately trained. Ngcongco and Chetty (2000 cited in Mda & Mothata, 2000:78) suggest that the type of training provided, must be role and task-related and must lead to relationship building in schools. Data from the above table indicates a lack of training opportunities for a large number of teachers to whom leadership positions are distributed. This lack of training could result in the lowering of standards in schools while teachers find ways to develop themselves.

Data from Table 4.12 indicates only 12 respondents received training for their roles from the DoE, 18 respondents received training from the SMT, while 6 respondents received training from post level-one teachers. The training teachers received from the SMT was significantly higher than training received from the district (GDE). Post level-one teachers played a significant role in teacher training. Table 4.12 provides evidence of the presence of distributed leadership practices in schools but it also shows a serious lack of training for leadership roles which is imperative if this form of leadership is to result in schools of excellence.

Data in Table 4.12 indicates that the SMT monitors the performance of teachers to whom roles are distributed to some extent. Twenty-four teachers indicated that their performance was being monitored by the SMT, while, significantly, 22 teachers indicated that they were not monitored by the SMT. Ngcongco and Chetty (2000, cited in Mda and Mothata 2000:84) stress that it is imperative that all levels of school management and governance develop strategies to drive schools towards excellence. Distributing leadership to teachers without monitoring their performance may have major implications for schools that want to achieve excellence in all areas of their work. Through monitoring, weaknesses and strengths of teachers can be identified and suitable plans can be crafted for future growth. What is

significant from the above data is that the DoE's role in teacher training is not adequate and needs to be improved. Marishane and Botha (2011:18) state that the DoE is mandated to carry out capacity building for effective school-based structures, and further to ensure through sustained monitoring and support that systems operate efficiently.

4.5.1 Additional questions on subject related leadership roles

Section C of the questionnaire required the respondents to indicate the appropriate responses to the statements given. These statements are linked to the open-ended questions in Section D of the questionnaire.

4.5.1.1 Subject related leadership roles

A number of statements on the subject related leadership roles were put to the respondents in order to probe their views on their preparedness for the tasks associated with teaching and learning. A qualification alone cannot adequately prepare teachers for the multiplicity of tasks that await them at school. Schools elicit the help of grade heads, subject heads and HODs to induct teachers in their new roles at schools. According to Vakalisa (2000) in Mda & Mothata 2000:174), 'a vision of life-long learning is one of the forces motivating the restructuring of the South African education system from entrance to exit'. This quotation suggests that teachers must remain lifelong learners in order for education to be restructured and for all schools to grow and develop. Lifelong learning does not imply the acquisition of formal qualifications only. Teachers are trained throughout their careers, through workshops, short courses, monitoring and support from a senior teacher and through trial and error in their own classrooms which results in a wealth of experience.

4.5.1.2 Teacher preparedness and induction

Wong (2004:42) defines induction as a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process to train and support new teachers. Each school is unique and has different processes, and as such teacher preparedness and induction are critical for teacher performance. Table 4.13 provides data on teacher preparedness and induction.

Table 4.13 Teacher preparedness and induction

Item	Frequency and Percentage (in brackets)					No of respondents
	SA	A	U	D	SD	
My degree/diploma/ certificate adequately prepared me for my role as a teacher.	34 (39.5)	42 (49)	6 (7)	4 (4.5)	0 (0)	86
I teach the subject I was trained to teach.	40 (46)	27 (32)	6 (7)	3 (3)	10 (12)	86
I was inducted in my role when I first came to this school by the GDE.	5 (6)	16 (19)	23 (27)	12 (14)	30 (35)	86
I was inducted in my role when I first came to this school by the SMT.	22 (25.5)	34 (39.5)	17 (20)	4 (5)	9 (10)	86
I fitted into my new position easily.	30 (35)	34 (40)	17 (20)	3 (3)	2 (2)	86

As depicted in Table 4.13, an overwhelming majority (88.5%) of respondents indicated that their qualifications had adequately prepared them for their roles as teachers, with 39.5% indicating that they strongly agreed and 49% agreed. Only 7% of the respondents were uncertain and 4.5% disagreed with the statement. This data indicates that the vast majority of teachers in Johannesburg South are confident in their roles as teachers. Data also indicates that the participants overwhelmingly agreed (78% [46% strongly agreed and 32% agreed]) that they taught the subject/s they were trained to teach; only a minority (15%) disagreed with the statement.

On the question of whether the district (GDE) played a role in their induction, only 25% of respondents agreed with the statement while 49% (14% disagreed and 35% strongly disagreed) of the respondents indicated that the district played no role in their induction. Induction is a plan to support and guide novice teachers in the early stages of their careers or when they are promoted so that they gain the tools necessary to cope with their new duties and workload. Induction from the district would ensure that all teachers receive the same high quality training necessary to 'fit' into GDE schools and create uniformity amongst schools. Districts that depend on schools to induct teachers will have to accept the individualised, differentiated induction programmes unique to each school.

Data also indicates that the SMTs of participating schools play a significant role in the induction of teachers at their schools. Altogether, 65 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement, ‘I was inducted in my role when I first came to this school by the SMT.’ A cause for concern is that 15% of respondents did not agree with the statement, implying a lack of training received from their SMTs.

Sixty-nine percent of respondents agreed with the statement, ‘I fitted into my new role easily’ while only 5% disagreed with the statement. Teachers’ confidence with how they fitted into schools correlated positively with the induction received from the SMT, and to a lesser degree to that given by the district.

4.5.1.3 Mentoring support and development

Table 4.14 Mentoring support and development

ITEM	Frequency and Percentage (in brackets)					No of respondents
	SA	A	U	D	SD	
Mentoring support and development						
My work is monitored by a senior on a regular basis.	49 (57)	33 (38.5)	1 (1)	2 (2.5)	1 (1)	86
When I am monitored, I receive prompt and utilizable feedback.	42 (49)	34 (40)	1 (1)	8 (9)	1 (1)	86
I am mentored and supported on areas where I need development.	36 (42)	28 (32.5)	14 (16.5)	7 (8)	1 (1)	86
My mentors have the necessary knowledge and skills to mentor me.	41 (48)	26 (31)	14 (16)	3 (4)	1 (1)	86
I am encouraged to attend workshops and courses to continuously develop and grow.	51 (59)	30 (35)	3 (3.5)	2 (2.5)	0 (0)	86
I am continuously growing and developing my skills and consider myself a lifelong learner.	58 (67.5)	27 (31.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	86
I feel that there are too few members on the staff who are adequately prepared for their roles.	11 (13)	13 (15)	26 (30)	24 (28)	12 (14)	86

According to Table 4.13, the majority of respondents, 95.5% (57% strongly agreed and 38.5% agreed) agreed that their work is monitored by a senior staff member on a regular basis. Only 3.5% disagreed with the statement, and this was made up of 2.5% who disagreed and 1% who strongly disagreed. Monitoring of teachers alone serves no purpose unless it is accompanied by prompt and usable feedback that would further enhance teaching and

learning. Respondents (89% [49% strongly agreed and 40% agreed]) overwhelmingly agreed with the statement: ‘When I am monitored, I receive prompt and utilizable feedback’. Ten percent of respondents did not agree with this statement. This lack of feedback poses a problem for teacher development and must be addressed.

When responding to the statement, ‘I am mentored and supported in areas where I need development,’ 74.5% (42% strongly agreed and 32.5% agreed) of respondents agreed that they are mentored and supported in areas where they need development. Only 9% (8% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed) of respondents disagreed with the statement. Most respondents, 79% (48% strongly agreed and 31% agreed) indicated that their mentors had the necessary skills to mentor them while only 5% (4% strongly agreed and 1% agreed) indicated that this was not the case.

Blase and Blase (2004:83) noted that successful principals provided formal staff development opportunities to address teacher instructional needs, and this has a powerful effect on the teacher. In order to continuously grow and develop their professional knowledge and skills, teachers are encouraged to attend workshops and courses. An overwhelming majority of respondents (94% – [59% strongly agreed/ 35% agreed]) agreed that they were encouraged to attend workshops and courses, while only 2.5% of respondents disagreed with the statement. This bodes well for the future of the teaching profession as well-trained teachers will have a positive effect on learner outcomes.

4.5.1.4 Teacher involvement in leadership

Blase and Blase (2004:196) stress that teacher development is central to school improvement, education reform and learner achievement, and suggest that teacher expertise and teacher leadership must be utilised at all educational levels. Principals should select teachers for leadership roles who possess the necessary skills the school needs, to promote school effectiveness (Pearce & Conger, 2003:278).

Table 4.15 reflects the scope of teacher involvement in leadership roles in the participant schools. Seventy one percent of respondents (40.5% strongly agreed and 30% agreed), registered their willingness to be involved in leadership and management roles in their schools while only 9.5% (2.5% disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed) of respondents disagreed with the statement. SMTs should utilize this drive in their teachers and find ways to involve more of their staff in leadership roles.

Table 4.15 Teacher involvement in school leadership

ITEM	Frequency and Percentage (in brackets)					No of respondents
	SA	A	U	D	SD	
Teacher involvement in school leadership						
I would like to be involved in a leadership role at school.	34 (40.5)	25 (30)	17 (20)	2 (2.5)	6 (7)	84
I am well-trained and I usually mentor less experienced teachers.	26 (30)	35 (41)	14 (16)	8 (9)	3 (3.5)	86
I have the necessary skills to contribute to school leadership but I am not given the opportunity to lead any team.	12 (14)	6 (7)	21 (25)	14 (17)	31 (37)	84
I have not got the skills to lead any team but I would like to be developed to do this.	4 (5)	15 (18)	18 (21)	12 (14)	35 (42)	84
I believe that more leaders can develop their skills if given the opportunity.	42 (49)	37 (43)	3 (3.5)	0 (0)	4 (4.5)	86
I feel that the best teachers are not given the opportunity to lead.	14 (16)	17 (20)	20 (23)	16 (19)	19 (22)	86
The method used to select leaders of the various committees is unfair.	7 (5)	4 (8)	26 (30)	21 (24)	28 (33)	86
I feel that the SMT must do the work of management themselves and not involve the Level 1 teachers.	4 (6)	6 (7)	15 (17)	21 (24)	40 (46)	86

Note: Some frequencies are missing.

Seventy-one percent (30% strongly agreed and 41% agreed) of respondents believed that they were well-trained for their roles, and therefore, mentored less experienced teachers. However 21% (14% strongly agreed and 7% agreed) of respondents believed that although they possessed the necessary skills to lead, they were not given the opportunity to do so. Pearce and Conger (2003: 254) suggest that consideration should be given to the following when sharing roles: how roles originate, how individual's skills complement each other, the emotional orientations of individuals, how they work together, and how they involve others. Principals should take note of the willingness of teachers to lead certain areas of schools and find ways of utilising this drive to enhance school improvement strategies.

Fifty-six percent (14% disagree and 42% strongly disagree) of respondents, however, acknowledged that they did not possess the skills to lead, but would like to be developed,

while 92% (49% strongly agree and 43% agree) of respondents acknowledged that more leaders can develop their skills if given the opportunity. This strongly suggests that teachers in Johannesburg South are pro-teacher development and display a willingness to be part of the leadership structures of the school. Although 36% of respondents indicated that it was not always the best teachers who were given the opportunity to lead, only 12% believed that the methods used to select leaders for the various committees was unfair. It can be gauged from this data, that teachers generally perceive the SMT as following fair practices when selecting leaders for the various committees.

The final statement, 'I feel that the SMT must do the work of management themselves and not involve the Level 1 teachers', provides further evidence (70% [24% disagreed and 46% strongly disagreed]) that teachers in Johannesburg South concur with leadership not being the prerogative of those in formal management positions alone. This enthusiasm must be harnessed by management and used to enhance school improvement initiatives. This bodes well for distributed leadership to be practised at schools where there is a willingness to participate and skills to perform the tasks

4.5.2 Time

With the massive workload of the principal, SMTs and teachers, time becomes an indispensable asset. The PAM document (DoE, 1999:C64-C86) lists and explains the intensive workload expected of all teachers employed in public schools. These include teaching, extra and co-curricular activities, administrative duties, communication with stakeholders, and so on. In order to fulfil his or her duties, the teacher must sacrifice some time during the school day or after school hours to get the work done. Teachers are expected to be at school for a minimum of seven hours per day (DoE, 1999:C70). The time allocated for teaching in respect of different post levels differs as Table 4.16 indicates. The challenge is for teachers to perform all the work allocated to them to ensure their school's sustainability and effectiveness.

Table 4.16 Teaching Time allocations per Post Level

Post Level	Teaching time allocations
Teacher PL1	85% - 92%
HOD PL2	85% - 90%
Deputy Principal PL3	60%
Principal PL4	10% - 92%

Table 4.17 Time

ITEM	Frequency and Percentage (in brackets)					No of respondents
	SA	A	U	SD	D	
Time						
I have the skills to lead a team but there is too little time to do the work of leadership and management.	14 (16.5)	22 (26)	28 (33)	13 (15)	8 (9.5)	85
I do most of the work of leading and managing after school in my own personal time.	13 (15)	21 (25)	23 (27)	17 (20)	11 (13)	85
I have enough administrative time (Free periods) at school to complete all the work involved in leading and managing.	7 (8)	15 (18)	12 (14)	21 (25)	30 (35)	85
My timetable allows for 'free periods' for me to complete my administrative work.	12 (14)	29 (34)	9 (11)	11 (13)	24 (28)	85
My timetable allows for 'free time' to do class visits, book control, etc. or to mentor my peers.	7 (8)	24 (28)	17 (20)	11 (13)	26 (30.5)	85
I take home a large amount of administrative work, like marking, recording, completing assessments, etc.	47 (55)	27 (31)	4 (5)	3 (3.5)	4 (5)	85
Our team is unable to meet due to a heavy workload and no free time at school.	20 (24)	20 (24)	14 (16.5)	17 (20)	14 (16.5)	85
I usually cannot cope with my own personal work due to a tight schedule of work.	11 (13)	29 (34)	15 (18)	14 (16.5)	16 (19)	85
I find that I neglect my personal life due to a heavy school workload.	32 (38)	18 (21)	10 (12)	9 (11)	17 (20)	86
I don't mind spending personal time on schoolwork as this is the 'life of a teacher' that I chose.	15 (18)	29 (34)	8 (9.5)	11 (13)	22 (26)	85

Please note some respondents did not answer all questions.

Table 4.17 reflects how the issue of time is dealt with in the participant schools. Data revealed that 42.5% (16.5% strongly agreed and 26% agreed) of respondents had the skills to lead but time constraints inhibited their performance. Due to time constraints, 40% (15% strongly agreed and 25% agreed) of teachers indicated that they did most of the work of leading and managing in their own personal time. Only 26% (8% strongly agreed and 18% agreed) of respondents indicated that they have enough administrative time at school to perform their leadership and management functions. This could be the result of having administrative time (free periods) additional to those recommended by the Department of Education or the effectiveness and efficiency of the teachers involved.

Although 48% (14% strongly agreed and 34% agreed) of respondents acknowledged having sufficient 'free periods' to complete administrative work at school, only 36% (8% strongly agreed and 28% agreed) of respondents agreed that they had enough time to do class visits, book control and mentoring at school, which forms part of the work assigned to the SMT. This lack of time places pressure on the SMT who are also subject and class teachers. The performance of certain 'duties' of the SMT can only be done within the school day. The unavailability of time to effectively carry out leadership functions, can impact heavily on the growth and development of teachers and the effectiveness of the school.

Eighty-six percent (55% strongly agreed and 31% agreed) of respondents further indicated that they took home large amounts of work like marking, recording and completing assessments. For teams to function adequately, teachers must have the time to meet and discuss issues of concern. This is, however, not the case as 48% (24% strongly agreed and 24% agreed) of respondents indicated that they were unable to meet due to their heavy workloads. This heavy workload and limited time during 'office hours,' flow over into the respondents' personal time. Forty-eight percent (13% strongly agreed and 34% agreed) of respondents also agreed that their personal lives are impacted by their 'tight schedule' of work. Fifty-nine percent (38% strongly agreed and 21% agreed) of respondents agreed that they neglect their personal life due to their heavy workload. The data above paint a picture of the reality teachers face with their battle with time. The issue of time is not unique to schools in Johannesburg South, thus the Department of Education must conduct further research on this area to assist schools. Finally 52% (18% strongly agree and 34% agree) of respondents acknowledged that they did not mind spending their personal time on school work as this is the life they chose.

Table 4.18 Staff employed by schools in Johannesburg South

School	Quintile	Number of GDE teachers	Number of SGB teachers	Total
School A	5	24	12	36
School B	5	33	14	47
School C	5	30	6	36
School D	4	15	3	18
School E	5	22	16	38
School F	5	26	4	30
School G	4	17	4	21
School H	4	28	4	32
School I	4	16	3	19

Teachers in South African schools face differing situations at their place of employment, but all teachers are expected to accomplish the same outcomes at the end of the year. Time is of the essence when it comes to delivering quality education to the children of South Africa. The Department of Education would benefit from an understanding of each school's unique circumstances and adjusting their plans accordingly. The results above clearly indicate that a large percentage of teachers find it challenging to complete their work in the allotted time. Additional administrative time or free periods can only be possible if schools have the funds to employ SGB teachers. SGB teachers employed by schools differ as shown in Table 4.18 as a result of each school's unique financial situation. Wealthier Quintile 5 schools, employ up to 16 SGB teachers. This makes it possible to spread work evenly across more teachers, which creates a more conducive working environment.

4.6 QUALITATIVE DATA

Section D of the questionnaire consisted of four open-ended questions that elicited the personal views of the respondents in areas of distributed leadership practices. Data collected for this section was qualitative in nature. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:480) explain that qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation. It involves noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. Respondents' answers to the open-ended questions were organised into themes as discussed below.

4.6.1 Possibilities and limitations of distributed leadership

Respondent's answers for the question, 'What are the possibilities and limitations of distributed leadership as perceived by staff and how are these addressed?'" provided data for specific question 5.

The researcher used the 'direct phrases' of the respondents because they are often more 'illuminative and direct' as Cohen, *et al.* (2007:462) suggest. Eighty-three respondents responded to the question: 'As a teacher, what are your personal views of distributed leadership as practised at your school?' Three respondents indicated that this question was not applicable to them. The responses were divided into three categories for the question:

- Respondents who viewed distributed leadership as beneficial to the school in which they taught.
- Respondents who felt that distributed leadership could be practised when certain conditions were met.
- Respondent who viewed distributed leadership negatively.

4.6.1.1 Respondents who viewed distributed leadership as beneficial to the school

Distributed leadership recognises that leading schools requires multiple leaders (Spillane, 2006:13). Distributed leadership recognises that leadership is more than what individuals in formal leadership positions do. People in both formal and informal roles take responsibility for leadership activities often using their own initiative (Spillane, 2006:13).

Sixty-six of the 83 respondents (79.5%) were positive about the benefits of distributed leadership at their schools. From the responses, it can be deduced that, to a large extent, distributed leadership is being practised in schools in the Johannesburg South. The following response explains the benefit of distributed leadership if the principal leaves. One respondent acknowledged the growth and development associated with distributed leadership thus:

I think it works and gives others the opportunity to grow and develop. It's good because if the principal leaves, the school should not fall apart because everyone has a part to play in the running of the school.

Harris (2005:16) argues that 'successful heads recognise the limitations of a singular leadership approach' and adopt a form of leadership that is 'distributed through collaborative

and joint working.’ Harris (2005:14) explains that the ‘followers (post level-one teachers in this study) and the situation are part of a dynamic relationship that produces leadership practice.’ The following three responses from teachers at different ranks in different schools highlight the advantages of utilising individual skills.

- *It works well. The workload is shared and one does not become overburdened. People who have specific skills can be utilised.*
- *I think distributed leadership is a good idea as it allows the person with the best expertise or skills to lead in an area that is his/her forte. In this way, the teacher remains enthusiastic and involved, always pushing the boundaries to get to do their best.*
- *Distributed leadership is more effective. Not everyone is good at everything. Spread the talent. Distributed leadership leads to ‘buy in’ from the staff.*

Distributed leadership ensures more staff participation and collaboration as stated by one respondent.

- *It allows more teachers to experience responsibility without the principal losing accountability.*

The statements below articulate the impact of distributed leadership on schools in Johannesburg South.

- *Personally, I feel that distributed leadership is an effective way to administer and run a school. Reason being, it secures staff member’s full participation in the school’s decision making processes, and promotes collaboration and teacher productivity.*
- *As a principal, I’ve always been a proponent of distributed leadership. Not only does it provide excellent in-service training for both the teacher and mentor, it also shares the load (without losing accountability) and allows the teachers to experience the responsibility encountered by the leaders.*
- *The distributed leadership at our school is very successful. There are many leaders each in charge of a certain area with the principal at the head of all the committee as an overseer of what is happening.*

- *At our school, we have distributed leadership which helps a lot with support and assistance to many of the teachers in the school.*

Distributed leadership compels us to examine who does what, in the work of leadership (Spillane, 2006: 13). From the above statements, it is clear that more than one person does the work of leading and managing a school, and schools are more collaborative and collegial. Collegial principals acknowledge the expertise and skills of the teachers and harness these assets for the benefit of the children in their schools (Bush, 2011:83). The next statement reveals that even those respondents, who are not part of any leadership structure at school, would like to take a role in some form of leadership if the opportunity arises. One teacher briefly stated:

“I am okay with it because given the opportunity I would also like the experience.”

Distributed leadership results in more efficient schools as the following statements by respondents suggest:

- *It improves the running of the school because of shared responsibility. There is no monopoly.*
- *I think it is helpful. This enables the school to run smoothly. If and when one leader is absent, work still goes on. We can enquire from different people where we need assistance.*
- *Distributed leadership is very helpful as it lessens the load from all the departments involved in the school and also allows others to learn.*
- *I feel they make the heavy load less and this could lead to more work done. If there are many hands to help, work becomes manageable.*

Distributed leadership perspective attempts to acknowledge and incorporate the work of all individuals who have a hand in leadership practice (Spillane, 2006:13). Invariably, they have been appointed to leadership posts after a long period as successful practitioners. Their experience makes them sensitive to the needs and rights of teachers (Bush, 2011:83).

4.6.1.2 Respondents who felt that distributed leadership could be practised when certain conditions are met

Twelve out of 83 (14.5%) respondents agreed that distributed leadership has its merits but would only be successful if certain conditions were met. There are certain parts of the 'job' of the school principal or formal structures of leadership that are 'non-negotiable'. The school principal must retain an acute sense of personal accountability for school performance (Bush, 2011: 89). The following statements from respondents suggest that teachers in Johannesburg South grasped the merits of distributed leadership but also acknowledged that it came with an assortment of complexities. The following excerpts from teachers highlight the issue of accountability associated with distributed leadership.

- *I feel everyone has different leadership skills and this should be used, but the principal should always be included in all final decisions.*
- *Accountability. People enjoy the title but do not fully accept the responsibility at all times. Everybody seems to need to be checked upon.*
- *Distributed leadership is a good thing providing that those appointed in these positions do justice to that portfolio. They can be held accountable for the smooth running of that function.*

A following statement acknowledges that the availability of time poses difficulties for distributed leadership to succeed.

- *I strongly agree to the above-mentioned, but at our school we are understaffed and inundated with our own workload. Yet experience is the only way to get to the top and to be exposed to learning more.*

Respondents also suggested that work must be distributed to those who are willing to do the work.

- *If there are other people who want to assist, they should. I don't think it should be forced on them.*
- *I am strongly in favour of this provided there are sufficient staff members who are motivated and competent.*

4.6.1.3 Respondents who viewed distributed leadership negatively

Five out of 83 (6%) respondents highlighted some constraints associated with distributed leadership at their schools. Three respondents were concerned that distributed leadership may result in power struggles within the school.

- *We normally get confused as to whom to take authority from because there are so many leaders. Some of these leaders tend to do other leaders' roles.*
- *I think that will create power struggles in the school.*
- *The principal is sufficient as the school cannot be managed by many heads. This can lead to confusion.*

Another respondent highlighted training as a concern as teachers might not be adequately trained for certain positions within a school,

“Most teachers are given roles to fulfil for which they are not adequately trained”.

Another one found that decisions made by committees were overruled by management (SMT). In distributed leadership, the principal remains accountable for all decisions made. As one respondent put it:

“It works to some extent. Sometimes management/peers override the decisions made by committees”.

The views of the respondents above highlight what is perceived as the possibilities and limitations of distributed leadership. Sixty-six of the 83 respondents (79.5%) were positive about the benefits of distributed leadership at their schools, while 12 out of 83 (14.5%) respondents agreed that distributed leadership has its merits but would only be successful if certain conditions were met. A serious concern is that a small percentage of respondents believed that, primarily, the function of leadership should remain in the hands of the principal because distributed leadership results in role confusion. According to Barker (2011: 103), the ability to motivate subordinates is a key to leadership strength. School leaders are supposed to ‘motivate’ their subordinates to accomplish their school goals.

4.6.2 Opportunities to take on leadership roles

The following question was posed to respondents to gauge their opinions on the opportunities they had been given to participate in leadership roles: In your opinion, do you feel that you

are given enough opportunities to take on leadership roles? This open-ended question adds more information on the involvement of teachers in leadership roles within the school. Respondents' answers to this question were subdivided to look for certain trends in the data as follows:

- Respondents' opinions on whether they were given opportunities to take on leadership roles – Positive opinions
- Respondents' opinions on whether they were given opportunities to take on leadership roles – Negative opinions
- Respondents' opinions on whether they were given opportunities to take on leadership roles – Not enough opportunities.

4.6.2.1 Opportunities to take on leadership roles - Positive opinions

Spillane (2005:145) views leadership as a 'product of the interaction of school leaders, followers, and their situation.' He argues that every situation defines leadership practice in interaction with leaders and followers. Each participant school boasts its own unique strengths and acknowledges its weaknesses. The situation each school finds itself in, will determine the type of leadership practices that will be most effective, as well as the leadership opportunities that will be available.

Forty-eight out of 86 (56%) respondents were very positive about being involved in leadership roles at school. Most respondents viewed inclusion into leadership roles as a way to develop.

- *The school tries to make everyone grow in their potential.*
- *Yes, we are given ample opportunities to take on leadership but it is up to each individual as to how they make use of that opportunity.*
- *This will allow you to be involved and gain experience before taking on the full (leadership) role.*

The above statements show that schools in Johannesburg South were headed by principals who led schools by distributing leaderships down the ranks of the school. The type of leadership role distributed matched the capability of the teachers concerned. Principals did not simply distribute work but monitored and provided support when necessary as the next statement by one teacher respondent indicates.

‘As soon as someone is not coping with a specific role I will assume responsibility to ensure that all undertakings meet with success.’

Another respondent provided a reason as to why she was selected as a leader thus:

“Yes, I am a grade head and subject advisor and I think it is because of my time management skills and experience in this school.”

4.6.2.2 Opportunities to take on leadership roles – Negative opinions

Not every teacher is driven by a need to join the ranks of school leadership and some are content in their role as class teachers as the following data suggests. Six out of 86 (7%) respondents agreed that distributed leadership was practised in their schools, and they were given opportunities to lead but they did not want to be involved due to time constraints and a need for development as the next statement by a teacher respondent indicates.

“Yes. I am given opportunities but like I mentioned before, the time constraints are not in our favour as a school. The opportunities are there but between school work and our personal life, it’s just too much”.

Another teacher respondent noted her current lack of interest in participating in school leadership thus,

“Yes, the opportunities are there. However, personally, I want to first become an expert in my teaching subject, get a handle on discipline and mastering administrative side of teaching. I do not want to be a ‘Jack of all trades, master of none’”.

4.6.2.3 Lack of opportunities to take on leadership positions

It is unlikely that every teacher will get the opportunity to lead a section of the school because of limited leadership positions. Principals have to consider not just the willingness of teachers to lead but also the skills and capabilities of the staff to ensure school effectiveness. Partly because of limited leadership positions available, 32 out of 86 (37%) respondents felt they were not given enough opportunities to be involved in leadership roles.

Some respondents believed that leadership roles were already filled by competent teachers; hence everyone could not be accommodated as expressed in the following statements by two teacher respondents.

- *Considering the above limitations and the size of the staff, not all staff are accommodated in leadership roles. They are, however, exposed to leadership through mentoring.*
- *Leadership roles are already filled by people who do their tasks very well, therefore, they are kept in these roles to ensure that everything continues to run smoothly.*

A number of respondents believed that they did not get the opportunity to lead because they were still new in the teaching profession and did not have the necessary experience or skills, as the statements below explain.

- *No, I am currently a new teacher, but I also do not have enough time to take on leadership roles as the children come first.*
- *I am a new teacher. I still need more development.*
- *Being a first year teacher, leadership opportunities are still out of my grasp but still attainable once I've gained experience.*
- *I am a beginner teacher, never-mind my age. I am still finding my feet in my new environment. In due course, I should, and will be able to take a leading role. However, I still maintain, we are all leaders.*

It is imperative for the growth and effectiveness of schools that, teachers with the necessary skills, experience and willingness contribute to school leadership and be given responsibilities that will assist the SMT in leading the school forward. The following statements by respondents suggest that not all teachers who have the capacity to lead are given the opportunity.

- *We are not given opportunities. We are not given time to say anything. The SMT decides on their own and come and dictate to us.*
- *Wholeheartedly no. Reason being, they don't consider us. We are just getting decisions made without our consent.*
- *Teachers are not given enough chance for exercising what they are capable of. For everything, it is up to the principal and deputy principal.*

From the above responses, it can be said that distributed leadership has its challenges when teachers are motivated and willing to take on leadership roles but are not considered for positions or when certain positions do not exist. However, new teachers believe they will get

the opportunity to lead when they are more experienced and developed for their roles. The above statements provide evidence of the impact of distributed leadership at the participating schools. It also identifies time constraints as a barrier to engaging teachers in distributed leadership.

4.6.3 Leadership positions that respondents are equipped to lead

A variety of skills can be found amongst the staff of a school that must be identified and utilised. Spillane (2006:4) defines distributed leadership as being leadership practice and interaction and not simply roles and positions that need to be filled. Numerous positions at school need expert leadership, thus the principal and SMT cannot successfully lead all these areas. Respondents were asked to list two leadership roles they believed they could manage successfully but have not been given the opportunity to lead. This question was posed to gauge the extent to which schools made use of able and willing teachers in its various leadership positions. Of the 86 respondents, 33 (38.4%) stated at least one position that they would like to lead but were not given the opportunity to do so. Table 4.19 provides a list of the respondents' answers.

4.5.3.1 Leadership roles that respondents would like to take but were not given the opportunity

Table 4.19 List of leadership roles respondents would like to take

Leadership Role	No of respondents
SMT	8
District director/circuit manager	1
Head of Extra Murals /Sport	6
Grade head	7
Subject head	5
SAT	4
SBST	3
IQMS	4
LTSM	1
Discipline	5
Prefect committee (RCL)	2
Mentor for new and student teachers	2

Scholar counsellor committee	1
Social committee	4
Tuck shop committee	1

As Table 4.19 reflects, 8 respondents wanted to take on positions on the SMT, while one respondent wanted to take on a position as a district director or circuit manager. These are formal leadership positions that are paid for by the DoE who make the appointments. Schools may only recommend candidates in these positions. The principal of a school can, however, ‘appoint’ teachers in informal leadership positions to reduce the workload of the SMT members.

Table 4.19 also illustrates respondents’ personal preferences for leadership positions that are informal and unpaid. Respondents indicated that they would like to lead: extramural and sport (6), grade head positions (7), subject head positions (5), SAT (4), SBST (3), IQMS (4) and LSTM (1). Discipline is an integral part of schooling and a concern for most schools. Five respondents indicated that they would like to head the discipline committee while 2 indicated that they would like to head the prefect committee. Other committees suggested were: mentor to new teachers and student teachers (2), the scholar counsellor committee (1), social committee (4) and tuck-shop committee (1).

Table 4.20 Teacher leadership needs

	TEACHER LEADERSHIP NEEDS	MEAN	STANDARDS DEVIATION
1	I would like to be involved in a leadership role at school.	3.916666667	0.707106781
2	I am well-trained and I usually mentor less experienced teachers.	3.825581395	0.707106781
3	Have skills for school leadership / not given opportunity to lead	2.457831325	1.414213562
4	No skills to lead any team but would like to be developed.	2.273809524	0
5	More leaders can develop their skills if given the opportunity.	4.279069767	0.707106781
6	I feel that the best educators are not given the opportunity to lead.	2.941860465	1.414213562
7	Method used to select leaders of the various committees is unfair.	2.341176471	2.121320344
8	SMT must do management work themselves and not involve Level 1 teachers	1.988372093	0

Table 4.20 provides the quantitative data that emphasises the discussion on the qualitative data. A mean of 1.98 indicates that very few teachers believe that the SMT should do the work themselves and not involve post level one teachers. A mean of 4 indicates that most teachers would like to develop their leadership skills. A standard deviation close to 0 indicates that the data point is very close to the mean. Items 4 and 8 have a standard deviation of 0, which indicate that the average teacher seeks to be trained in leadership roles and do not believe that the SMT should lead every aspect of the school themselves. Items 1, 2 and 5 have a standard deviation of 0.7. This indicates that the average teacher wants to be involved in leadership roles, is well trained and can develop further if given the opportunity.

Principals should take note of this willingness amongst staff to be part of informal school leadership in order to lighten the heavy workload of the SMT and ensure that all areas of the school functions optimally. The above positions suggested by the respondents are all crucial to school improvement.

4.6.4 Time for the work of school leadership

Respondents were asked if they had enough time in a school day to complete the work of leadership that is assigned to them. Schools that possess the financial resources employ school governing body (SGB) teachers who are additional to the GDE staff. The employment of SGB teachers reduces the workload of the DoE teachers with regard to class sizes, marking, extramural activity duties, and so on. With additional teachers, a more achievable timetable can be constructed. Table 4.16 indicates the number of SGB teachers employed at the participating schools. SGB teachers range from 3 to 16 per school. This clearly indicates that teachers in Johannesburg South are not subjected to the same workload, and therefore, do not experience the same time constraints in their work.

4.6.4.1 Allocation of time within the school day for leadership roles

Only 26 out of 86 (30%) respondents agreed that they had enough time within the school day to work effectively in their leadership roles. The following views highlight the availability of 'free periods' to teachers who deal with leadership issues that are additional to their teaching workload.

- *Yes, as the deputy, I deal with discipline mainly and all this happens and is dealt with at school.*
- *Yes, I have enough free periods to be able to fulfil that role.*

- *Yes. I am not teaching so that enables me to deal with a lot of the queries, issues, problems, etc, experienced by staff, parents, district officials, etc, on a daily basis.*

Eight out of the 86 (9%) respondents indicated that this question was not applicable to them and therefore did not forward any comments.

An overwhelming majority, 52 of the 86 (61%) respondents indicated that they simply did not have the time within the school day to work effectively. School effectiveness is dependent upon the availability of administrative time for the completion of certain tasks. Administrative time must be made available to all teachers at all schools to narrow the disparities between schools in Quintile 1 to Quintile 5. It is unreasonable to expect every school to achieve the same outcome in performance, if teachers are overloaded with work and not given time to fulfil their job descriptions. The following comments by respondents from each rank in the school convey the dissatisfaction amongst teachers regarding the availability of time for school-related work.

- *Foundation Phase teacher: There is never enough time within a school day, especially the Foundation Phase where a teacher is full day occupied with your own class. The fact that there are forty learners per class doesn't help either. Take into account all the observation and individual assessments that need to be done in the Foundation Phase.*
- *Grade head: There are times when certain deadlines need to be met and because the entire grade's teachers have to fill in/do certain things, some are very slow to submit certain things, as a result it puts pressure on you as a grade head to submit deadlines within the given time frame.'*
- *Subject advisor: No, because sometimes, I have to take the work home, e.g. book control.*
- *HOD: Not always. I have a large phase to run. I try to manage my time wisely, using my management plan. I often take work home. It's part of the job.*
- *Deputy Principal: No. Having a huge teaching load leaves very little time for leadership functions. Further challenges are the weak academic performance of learners which requires immediate attention and time. Extra classes further compound the problem. Time becomes a scarce commodity. Being a quintile 4*

school, our budget is almost always very restrictive. Additional teachers cannot be employed to alleviate the workload of SMT.

- *Principal: Not really. Even having managers below me, I'm still expected to be involved and accountable for everything. I don't always have the time to start and finish one job without interruption.*

What is evident from the above responses is that distributed leadership is practised amidst the time constraint issues experienced by teachers. Post level-one teachers work together with the SMT to accomplish what they can in the time available to them. Distributed leadership practices continue to draw from the willingness, skills and personal time of all teachers. Work that cannot be accomplished in the formal working day carries over into the teacher's personal time as the following statements attest.

- *No. There are times when a lot of work is taken home or done during weekends. Most of our admin periods are used for substitution due to teachers being absent.*
- *I do not hold a leadership role, but I can't imagine how I would fit that kind of role into my current workload. As it is, I battle to manage to find time to do my teaching role.*
- *No, as I am currently working with a post level-one teaching load that has doubled since the introduction of CAPS curriculum. Extra free periods are not allocated to Grade Heads.*

Table 4.21 Time allocation

	TIME ALLOCATION	MEAN	STANDARDS DEVIATION
1	Have skills to lead a team but too little time to do the work.	3.247058824	0
2	Do leading and managing after school in my own personal time.	3.095238095	0.707106781
3	Have admin time at school to complete work involved in L/M	2.364705882	2.828427125
4	Timetable allows for 'free periods' for me to complete my admin.	2.951807229	1.414213562
5	Timetable allows for class visits, book control, mentoring, etc.	2.726190476	2.121320344
6	I take home a large amount of admin, like marking, recording, etc.	4.30952381	0.707106781
7	Team unable to meet due to workload and no free time at school.	3.273809524	0.707106781

8	Cannot cope with personal work due to a tight schedule of work.	3.082352941	0
9	I find that I neglect my personal life due to a heavy school workload.	3.453488372	2.828427125
10	I don't mind spending personal time on schoolwork as this is the 'life	2.952941176	2.828427125

Table 4.20 shows the mean and standard deviations of the quantitative data that was further analysed. Item 3, 4 and 5 deals with the availability and allocation of time to complete assigned work. Data shows a mean score below 3. This quantitative data emphasises the issues raised by teachers in the qualitative data. For item 6, a mean score above 4 indicates that most teachers are compelled to take home a large amount of work. A standard deviation close to 0 indicates that the data point is very close to the mean. Items 1 and 8 have a standard deviation of 0, which indicate that the average teacher has the skills to lead but not the time necessary to complete the work. Items 2, 6 and 7 have a standard deviation of 0.7. This indicates that the average teacher does most of the work of leading and managing in their own time. A serious issue of time availability needs to be addressed and distributed leadership can be seen as an answer to some of the problems experienced by teachers.

4.7 ANSWERING THE MAIN AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Data shows that distributed leadership permeated all areas of the school as teachers at all ranks of the school were involved in the leadership of the curriculum for the subjects they taught. Quantitative data in Table 4.4 indicates that 80% of grade heads and 42% of subject heads in the study were post level-one teachers. Furthermore, post level-one teachers accounted for the majority of teachers who mentor and support their colleagues.

Table 4.6 shows the extent to which post level-one teachers lead the extramural programme of the school. A majority of post level-one teachers (69%) indicated that they headed the extramural programme of the school while, 63% were the head of some code of sport.

Post level-one teachers were part of the administrative management of the school as well as the health and safety areas to a lesser extent. Both the administrative management and health and safety areas were dominated by the SMT. Post level-one teachers played a significant role in the social and functions committees of the school and worked in informal, unpaid positions that were established by schools in order to share and control the

quality of the curriculum and other areas of the school. Post level-one teachers who possessed expert knowledge and a willingness to develop their skills for future formal management positions were integrated into the informal leadership ranks of the school.

Qualitative data for this study was provided by 83 respondents. Eighty percent of respondents proclaimed the merits of distributed leadership by highlighting their personal experiences with this mode of leadership practice as indicated in the extracts below.

- *Leadership involves teamwork. A structured hierarchy is an essential part to the successful running of any school. SMT must present a balanced portfolio of responsibilities. SMT should involve grade heads as this is also the infrastructure of management.*
- *As a principal I've always been a proponent of distributed leadership. Not only does it provide excellent in-service training for both the teacher and mentor, it also shares the load (without losing accountability) and allows the teachers to experience the responsibility encountered by the leaders.*

Fourteen percent of respondents were not in favour of the additional work distributed leadership generated due to a lack of time and a reluctance to accept accountability. The following respondents articulated the issue of a heavy workload but affirmed the development opportunities embedded in distributed leadership.

- *I strongly agree to the above-mentioned but at our school we are understaffed and inundated with our own workload. Yet experience is the only way to get to the top and to be exposed to learning more.*
- *I feel some of the distribution is needed but at other times, I feel certain aspects are distributed that should have been management's responsibility.*

Only 6% of respondents rejected the merits of distributed leadership as leading to 'role confusion' and 'power struggles', poorly trained leaders, and the overriding of decisions by SMT. One respondent flatly rejected the benefits of distributed leadership in favour of a single leader thus:

'The principal is sufficient as the school cannot be managed by many heads. This can lead to confusion.'

The inclusion of post level-one teachers and the SMT in the diversity of school leadership roles is evident in the above discussion. Yukl (1999: 292) emphasised that distributed leadership requires a set of people who can collectively perform essential leadership functions and does not rely on the principal alone. Schools in Johannesburg South practise distributed leadership in a cautious, yet professional and practical manner. School principals must be commended on their careful selection of roles that can be distributed to post level-one teachers to ensure their development for more formal roles in the future. Thus distributed leadership is practised to a large extent in schools in Johannesburg South as teachers from all ranks within the school are included in its leadership.

4.7.1 Leadership roles are distributed at school

School principals ensure that formal leadership roles like curriculum matters, administrative matters and school development, remained under the control of the SMT. It is more prevalent for members of the SMT to head committees like the SAT, SBST, ANA, LTSM and IQMS (Table 4.8) due to the significance these roles hold in school effectiveness. Accountability for quality curriculum delivery remains that of the principal and the formal leadership structure (SMT) of the school. Only 7% of teachers who head the above committees were post level-one teachers. The administrative management of schools (Table 4.9) is more often an SMT function due to the fact that post level-one teachers have full teaching loads and few 'free' periods. Only 1 out of 38 (3%) respondents who held an administrative management position was a post level-one teacher.

The health and safety committees like discipline, prefects (RCL), scholar patrol, school safety, maintenance and tuck shop are areas of the school that are crucial for maintaining school safety and discipline and they constitute an effective way of introducing post level-one teachers to school leadership. Twenty-five (33%) post level-one respondents headed a health and safety committee (Table 4.10). Distributing such roles to teachers who have the expertise and skills, who are willing to be trained, and who are willing to take on the added responsibilities allow the SMT to focus on the core purpose of schooling, that is, curriculum management.

Data indicates that the programmes of performance management development system (PMDS) and Whole school evaluation (WSE) remain the domain of the SMT. Only 2 out of the 27 (7%) respondents who headed the PMDS or WSE were post level-one teachers. Eighteen out of 38 (47%) post level-one teachers headed the social and functions committee

like fundraising, social events and cultural committees (Table 4.10). These committees are vital to the social welfare of the school but they are not crucial to a school's core purpose of ensuring academic success of its learners. In the sampled schools, more post level-one teachers head these committees than any of the other committees mentioned above.

4.7.2 Training for leadership roles

Table 4.5 presents training respondents received for subject-related leadership roles. For schools to succeed, teachers must be well-trained in curriculum matters. Seventy percent of respondents indicated that they were adequately trained for their roles. The SMT (52%) plays a major role in teacher training as gathered from the data. Only 44% of respondents indicated that they received training from the district (DoE), while post level-one teachers (28%) played a significant role in teacher training. Eighty-four percent of respondents indicated that their performance was monitored by the SMT.

Table 4.6 shows the training respondents received for their extramural leadership roles. Fifty-two percent of respondents indicated that they were trained for their extramural leadership roles. Only 24% of respondents indicated that they received training from an SMT member while 20% of respondents indicated that they were trained by a level one teacher. A serious cause for concern is that only 13% of respondents received training from the district. The significant difference in training received between subject-related leadership roles and extramural leadership roles shows the focus placed on subject-related leadership roles on the one hand, and the neglect and decline of extramural activities at schools on the other hand.

4.7.3 Time allocated for leadership tasks

The qualitative data showed that only 48% of respondents agreed that they had enough time within the school day to complete administrative work, while only 36% indicated that they had the time to conduct class visits, book control and mentoring activities which form part of the duties of the SMT, and a few grade and subject heads. The unavailability of time to perform allocated tasks can impact heavily on the growth and development of teachers and the effectiveness of the school as the SMT with their full workloads have very little time to devote to leadership issues.

Eighty-six percent of teachers indicated that they take home large amounts of work due to limited time within the school day. Forty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they could not cope with their personal responsibilities due to a 'tight schedule' of work, and tend to neglect (38%) their personal life as a result. One way to allocate additional time to teachers is the employment of

additional teachers. The Teacher Labour Relations Council resolution 4 of 1996 (1996:2) determined that the learner-teacher ratio in schools be 40:1, so staffing is dependent on the number of learners a school admits. Schools that have the financial resources employ additional teachers to spread the workload of the GDE teachers. Table 4.20 indicates the number of SGB teachers schools employ in relation to its GDE teachers.

Table 4.22 Ratio of GDE: SGB teachers

School	GDE Teachers	SGB Teachers
School A	2	1
School B	2.4	1
School C	5	1
School D	5	1
School E	1.4	1
School F	6.5	1
School G	4	1
School H	7	1
School I	5	1

Key: GDE Gauteng Department of Education SGB School Governing Body

Table 4.20 reflects that for every 2 GDE teachers, School A employed 1 SGB teacher and that for 1.4 GDE teachers School E employed 1 SGB teacher. School H employed the least number of SGB teachers per GDE teacher while school E employed the most. The mean number of SGB staff employed by the participant schools was 6.976 while the median was 7.5. The standard deviation for the number of SGB staff employed at a school was 6.36. The mean number of GDE staff employed was 23.44 while the median was 20. The standard deviation for the GDE staff employed by the participant schools was 5.63.

The above data highlights the unequal staff distribution in schools. Schools with more SGB teachers can allocate more administration/free time to their staff to do their ‘work’ within the school day while schools with less SGB staff cannot. Distributed leadership promotes the sharing of the workload, gets everyone involved in roles and frees up the principal and SMT to focus on matters that are crucial to a school’s success, for example, curriculum matters.

Qualitative data on the issue of time was gathered through the following question: ‘Do you have enough time during the school day to work effectively in your leadership role?’ The following are responses received from teachers.

- *Not always as I do a lot of the grade planning over the holidays or in the evenings.*
- *No, not always. Teaching a full day timetable makes it challenging, but you do what you can in the time you have.*
- *Not really. Even having managers below me, I’m still expected to be involved and accountable for everything. I don’t always have the time to start and finish one job without interruption.*
- *Not always. I have a large phase to run. I try to manage my time wisely, using my management plan. I often take work home. It’s part of the job.*
- *I do not hold a leadership role but I can’t imagine how I would fit that kind of role into my current workload. As it is, I battle to manage to find time to do my teaching role.*

The results show that schools use whatever means they have to accomplish their assigned leadership tasks in the allotted time. The respondents highlighted the busy schedules and tight timeframes teachers deal with daily.

4.7.4 Systems to monitor standards once roles are distributed

As Tables 4.5, 4.7 and 4.12 indicate, 84% of respondents indicated that their performance on subject-related leadership roles is monitored by the SMT, while 40% of respondents indicated that their extramural leadership roles are monitored by the SMT. Only 28% of respondents indicated that their work in leadership roles like, curriculum management, administrative management, health and safety and social and functions committees is monitored by the SMT. This data shows that the SMT focuses most of their time and attention on subject-related leadership roles as this reflects school effectiveness as far as the DoE is concerned.

The benefits of monitoring and support by leaders cannot be overemphasised. Through monitoring and support, problems are identified early and feedback is provided for future growth and development. In distributed leadership, monitoring and support must be forthcoming from the principal and SMT who remain accountable for all areas of the school.

4.7.5 Addressing the possibilities and limitations of distributed leadership

In order for schools to practise distributed leadership, the researcher believes that the teacher must understand the merits and limitations of this method of leadership practice. Eighty percent of respondents grasped the possibilities of distributed leadership by formulating statements like:

- *Leaders are chosen and given responsibilities which develop them and prepare them for promotion posts.*
- *Distributed leadership is more effective. Not everyone is good at everything. Spread the talent. Distributed leadership leads to 'buy in' from the staff.*
- *In my opinion distributed leadership leads to shared responsibilities by staff and leads to an element of buying in, owning the processes going on in the school. I would say this system leads to a democratic decision culture in the school.*
- *It is much more practical to have many leaders, each in charge of a particular area of the school. One person at the top will not be able to do justice and give equal focus to each and every aspect of the school life.*
- *It improves the running of the school because of shared responsibility. There is no monopoly.*

The statements emphasise development and preparation for future leadership roles, the use of talent, sharing responsibility, practicality, and an end to a monopoly by an individual leader, and are all seen as positive and possible in schools in Johannesburg South.

The following statements provide 'food for thought' about distributed leadership and highlights the limitations of this form of leadership.

- *If there are other people who want to assist, they should. I don't think it should be forced on them.*
- *Accountability. People enjoy the title, but do not fully accept the responsibility at all times. Everybody seems to need to be checked upon.*
- *Distributed leadership might be helpful and easy, but it requires very strong coordination.*

Respondents highlighted issues like, providing opportunities for all teachers, not using coercion to get teachers to carry out roles, accountability from those who accept roles and the

skilful coordination of roles. Distributed leadership makes it possible to be actively involved in school matters and contribute to the direction the school is moving in.

The practice of distributed leadership has its challenges as can be identified by the following responses by teachers:

- *We normally get confused as to whom to take authority from because there are so many leaders. Some of these leaders tend to do other leaders' roles.*
- *The principal is sufficient as the school cannot be managed by many heads. This can lead to confusion.*
- *I think that will create power struggles in the school.*
- *Most teachers are given roles to fulfil for which they are not adequately trained for.*
- *It works to some extent. Sometimes management/peers override the decisions made by committees.*

Not every teacher recognises the benefits of distributed leadership as each South African school has its own internal issues to overcome. The merits of distributed leadership, if well-practised in an ideal environment, cannot be ignored.

4.8CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented data and discussed the findings in response to the research question: 'To what extent is distributed leadership practised in schools in the Johannesburg South District?' Quantitative data from the research questionnaire was captured onto an excel spreadsheet. Data was arranged into individual tables, analysed using percentages then discussed in narrative format. A description of each set of statistics was given individually and related to the questions the researcher posed in the research proposal. The qualitative data was separated into themes and analysed, then discussed. The final chapter will focus on the researcher's conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

A summary of the findings that emerged from the data that was collected is presented in this chapter. The purpose of this study was to explore and explain the impact of distributed leadership practices in schools in Johannesburg South. Ten Johannesburg South schools were selected to participate in the study but only nine returned questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed in selected schools in Johannesburg South to elicit information from teachers. Teachers employed at all the post levels within the schools participated in the study. The collected data was analysed and interpreted and reference was made to the relevant literature on the topic.

The study focused on how leadership roles are distributed down the ranks of schools in Johannesburg South in order to ascertain the impact of distributed leadership practices. It explored teacher perceptions of distributed leadership, the extent to which distributed leadership is practised in schools, the particular types of leadership roles distributed, training received, time allocated for leadership functions and monitoring and support.

Chapter 1 presented the significance of the study and the statement of the problem, the main and specific questions, the background, aims of the research, the research design and methodology, data management and analysis and the ethical issues that need to be taken into consideration when conducting the research.

The literature review, presented in Chapter 2, discussed change in school leadership structures over the past 20 years of South Africa's democracy and highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of distributed leadership practices in relation to school improvement. The research done in South Africa and elsewhere revealed the merits and limitations of distributed leadership practices.

Chapter 3 explained the research design and methodology used to investigate the research question. It detailed how the study was undertaken, how participant schools and research participants were selected, the data collection procedures and instruments used as well as the method of data analysis.

In Chapter 4 the collected data was presented and analysed in accordance with the procedures applicable to both qualitative and quantitative research. The data collected from the research questionnaire was presented in tables and discussed in detail.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions from the literature review and empirical study, recommendations on selecting teachers for leadership roles, training for the various leadership roles, training and development of all teachers, monitoring, mentoring and support of teachers, time allocation to complete various tasks, and recommendations for further study. The recommendations present suggestions and solutions found in the literature review and the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions are based on the literature review (Chapter 2) and the empirical research (Chapter 3 & 4).

5.2.1 Conclusions from the literature study

The literature review in Chapter 2 highlighted the change in the leadership practices of school principals and the involvement of all teachers in leadership roles in schools today. Research conducted by Grant and Singh (2009:290) (Section 2.1) revealed that the principals' inability to shift from their hierarchical ways of thinking impeded teacher leadership. Grant (2006:256) believes that some South African principals still exhibit an authoritarian mentality due to a fear of loss of power. This type of school leadership impedes teacher development and school effectiveness.

The role of the school principal has changed dramatically over the past few years (Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1992:11). From the inception of the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, school leadership is no longer limited to principals (Ngcongco & Chetty, 2000:67). Current school leadership is stretched over a range of people who work at different levels of the school. Bush (2011:88) and Harris (2004:13) contend that distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organisation rather than seeking this only through formal positions or roles. Teachers at all levels of the school are regarded as 'managers' in their own right (Ngcongco & Chetty, 2000:64) (Section 2.2).

Poor succession planning and over-reliance on the leadership of the principal alone can be detrimental to continued school improvement. The loss of the school principal and other

personnel in formal leadership positions through resignation, retirement or dismissal, results in a quick loss of the improvements gained ‘simply because of an overreliance on the leadership capability of one person’ (Harris 2005:3). Fullan (2005:30) as cited in Harris (2005:3) suggests that a ‘critical mass of leaders’ is needed at all levels of the system. He recommends that leaders should be developing leaders beyond themselves to ensure continued school improvement.

The success of distributed leadership depends on whether the principal is willing to relinquish power, and the extent to which staff embrace the opportunity to lead (Harris, 2005:18). Not all areas of school leadership can be distributed down the ranks of the school hierarchy so the principal must determine in line with legislation which tasks can be distributed and which cannot. There are certain non-negotiable aspects of distributed leadership that those in formal leadership positions must be aware of. The roles and responsibilities of all school personnel, as indicated in the Personnel Administrative Management (PAM), are overwhelming and demand that all members of staff spend many more hours at school than the seven formal hours stipulated (ELRC 1998:C63), if the work must get done. Thus, leadership functions requiring more accountability may be shared by those in formal leadership positions but other leadership functions may be allocated to those who have the expertise to carry out these functions effectively. Time is of the essence in the practice of distributed leadership and the principal must ensure that this is available when leadership roles are assigned. It is vital that all teachers, regardless of their rank be part of the leadership of the school to some extent.

The principal must ensure that the teachers to whom leadership roles are distributed have the right expertise and skills to carry out a particular function successfully. Gunter as cited by Grant and Singh (2009:296) warns that inviting teachers to engage in unfamiliar work, leads to the creation of more work for those in formal leadership positions. Distributing responsibilities to incompetent members of the staff is a clear threat to school effectiveness.

Teachers must themselves be ready and willing to take on various leadership roles. Distributed leadership demands a culture of trust and accountability from everyone in the school. If this trust is not honoured, the principal is inevitably left accountable for tasks poorly done (Grant, *et al.*, 2010:403). Thus, mutual trust becomes a non-negotiable challenge for the school principal and the SMT. The challenge is for the principal and SMT to find areas of expertise in colleagues, as trust and respect are earned through expertise (Grant, *et al.* 2010:403). Distributed leadership is about creating networks of support and collaboration

which can only occur when the principal has empowered his staff to take responsibility for their own decisions and actions (DoE, 2008:62). Skills and talents are found in certain teachers and an effective leader will encourage teachers to reveal these skills and use them when needed (Marishane & Botha, 2011:64).

Spillane (2004:22) stresses that teacher leadership varies according to the socio-cultural context in which it operates. This depends on the historical, cultural and institutional setting in which it is situated. This research concentrated on schools in Johannesburg South that vary in their socio-economic status as per their quintile level and years in existence. The selected schools are mostly well established schools in Quintile 4 and 5 but their challenges rest with the problem of staff turnover and the need to constantly mentor and support new staff members. Grant and Singh (2010: 404) argue that in order to understand teacher leadership from a South African perspective, research should accommodate these vastly differing school contexts.

In the participant schools in Johannesburg South, teachers are placed in various leadership positions because they possess the necessary skills for the job. Naicker (2013:12) suggests that the accountability issue may dissuade principals from involving staff in leadership positions but principals in Johannesburg South manage this threat through developing, supporting and monitoring their staff. Richardson (2003:202) stresses that principals and SMTs must function as staff developers so that teachers can develop leadership skills, attitudes and dispositions that will empower them to participate competently in school leadership (Section 2.5.6). This will ensure the availability of a 'supply' of competent leaders who can 'step in' when leadership roles become available. Recognising and developing teacher expertise, improves morale and empowerment which leads to better classroom performance, and thus better learner results and sustainable school improvement (Naidu, *et al*, 2008:27). Harris (2005:11) emphasised that when leadership is spread amongst the staff, there is a greater potential for change and development (Section 2.1).

This study revealed that the distribution of leadership roles, down the ranks of the school's hierarchy is a common practice in the schools researched in Johannesburg South. Teachers who are capable and willing are given opportunities to lead, and younger teachers believe this opportunity awaits them when they have the experience and necessary competencies.

5.2.2 Conclusions from the empirical investigation

5.2.2.1 Conclusions with regard to the main research question

The main research question that this study investigated is: ‘To what extent is distributed leadership practised in schools in the Johannesburg South?’ The findings of this study revealed that distributed leadership is practised to a large extent in schools in Johannesburg South. According to the qualitative data analysis, Fifty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they were given the opportunity to be involved in leadership at their schools (Section 4.6.2.1). These teachers embraced this opportunity and viewed it as the only way to move up into formal leadership positions. Opinions were positive as these respondents acknowledged the merits in distributing leadership roles down the ranks at schools. The merits identified by respondents (Section 4.6.1.1) included: the effective running of schools, opportunities for growth and development, leadership development, acknowledgement and utilisation of skills found amongst staff, unburdening those with heavy workloads, the creation of a team spirit amongst staff, the creation of structures and protocol, development of a sense of responsibility amongst the staff, and the sharing of responsibility that creates time to meet deadlines.

Limitations of distributed leadership as identified by respondents (Section 4.6.1.2-4.6.1.3) included: being coerced into leadership roles despite not having the desire to be involved in leadership positions, infringement on to their personal time, role confusion, power struggles, inadequate preparation for the roles and, their decisions being rejected by management.

Some teachers felt they were not given the opportunities to lead although they had the capacity to do so. These respondents acknowledged the merits of distributed leadership and were hopeful that it would succeed provided those in delegated leadership positions were knowledgeable and competent in their roles. Respondents acknowledged that distributed leadership provided the experience needed for formal leadership positions, but time constraints created by their heavy workloads acted as a deterrent to take on informal roles (Section 4.7.5).

While leadership is distributed both amongst formally designated leaders and informal leaders, it does not mean that everyone has a hand in every leadership function or routine. The subject matter, the type of school, school size, and the school or school leadership team’s

developmental stage (Spillane, 2006:33) must be taken into account when practising distributed leadership.

5.2.2.2 Conclusions with regard to specific research question 1

What particular types of school leadership roles are distributed at school?

Respondents were asked to indicate what particular types of school leadership roles were distributed at their schools. The responses to this question revealed that schools in Johannesburg South distributed a diversity of roles to teachers regardless of their rank. Roles distributed to teachers included: grade head, subject head, school assessment team (SAT) coordinator, school based support team (SBST) coordinator, annual national assessments (ANA) coordinator, learner teacher support material (LTSM) coordinator, integrated quality management system (IQMS) coordinator, admissions, finance, discipline, maintenance, tuck-shop, performance management development system (PMDS) coordinator, whole school evaluation (WSE) coordinator, fundraising, social and cultural committee coordinator (Section 4.4.1 – 4.4.3.4).

An analysis of data also reflected that school management teams were not the only leaders at schools in Johannesburg South. Fifty-six percent of the respondents indicated that they led some areas of their schools. Leadership roles were distributed to post level-one teachers, but those in areas such as the SAT, SBST, ANA, LTSM and IQMS which are curriculum-related were most often headed by members of the school management team (SMT) (Section 4.4.3.1). Post level-one teachers were seldom included in curriculum-related leadership roles. Post level-one teachers were more often placed in grade head positions, extra-mural positions, social committees, tuck-shop committees, and so on. This trend highlights accountability and the importance attached to the core purpose of schooling, that is, curriculum delivery. The presence of post level one teachers as the head of committees that are crucial to the effective functioning of the whole school, indicates that distributed leadership is being practised. Opportunities existed for post level one teachers to hone their leadership skills and prepare them for more formal leadership roles.

It is significant that schools researched in Johannesburg South actively involve teachers from all ranks in school leadership. Most teachers indicated that they were given an opportunity to lead an area of the school while a few indicated that, in terms of professional growth, they were not yet ready to take on a leadership role (Section 4.6.2.2). A significant number of

teachers indicated that they were not given opportunities to lead because these roles were not rotated, or there were too few positions and too many competent and capable individuals to take on these roles (Section 4.6.2.3).

From the above evidence, the researcher can conclude that distributed leadership is practised to a large extent in the schools that were researched in Johannesburg South. It is not possible for the principal to include every teacher in the formal and informal leadership positions at schools as these are limited positions. Teachers still lead in a variety of positions and most teachers lead the curriculum for their own classes. In order to develop leadership capacity within the school and create a wider pool of multi-level school leaders, it could help to make leadership roles rotational so that most or all teachers have a chance to lead.

5.2.2.3 Conclusions with regard to research question 2

Have staff members received sufficient training to lead the various areas of the school, and by whom has this training been provided?

The second question asked teacher respondents whether they had received sufficient training to lead the various areas of the school, and by whom such training had been provided. A majority who responded indicated that they had been adequately trained for their subject-related leadership roles (Section 4.5). The vast majority of respondents reported that their qualifications prepared them for their jobs and that they taught the subject they were trained to teach (Section 4.5.1.2). In schools, teachers lead in a wide variety of positions other than those they received formal training for. Simply appointing teachers to leadership positions and creating structures that enable them to assume leadership responsibilities is insufficient. Those with leadership potential must be identified and professional development opportunities must be made available to hone their skills, scaffolding their transitions into leadership positions (Spillane, 2006:96).

Induction of new teachers and those newly appointed into promotional posts is more often performed by the SMT than the district. Post level-one teachers play a significant role in the induction and development of their colleagues. Training for extra-mural leadership roles is more often performed by the SMT and post level-one teachers than the Department of Education (DoE). The SMT monitors curriculum-related leadership roles more often than the extra-mural programme of the school.

The development of teachers is perhaps the most important feature of successful schools. Professionally developed teachers enhance the achievement of the learners they teach. How well learners do in school, correlates with the quality of school managers and teachers. Continuous staff development through mentoring and support from the experienced post level-one teachers, the SMT and the DoE will enhance the quality of teaching and learning at schools. Teachers must be responsible for their own professional development to some extent to ensure that they are capable of leadership roles themselves.

5.2.2.4 Conclusions with regard to research question 3

How is time allocated to accomplish the assigned leadership tasks?

Data for this question revealed that time is not always made available during the school day to accomplish all the tasks expected of teachers. A vast majority of teachers at all ranks within the school indicated that this is indeed a fact. A few respondents agreed that they had enough time within the school day to fulfil the workload of their post level (Section 4.5.2). The allocation of additional time to teachers to accomplish their duties is possible due to the allocation of ‘administrative periods’ to teachers. This is a result of the employment of additional staff by some schools. The more SGB staff a school employs, the more administrative time is made available to teachers. The SGB staff can only be employed by schools that have the financial resources to do so. This is a problem for poorer schools that are prejudiced due to a lack of funds.

Data indicates that the vast majority of respondents battle to manage their teaching time (7 hours per day) effectively. Sixty-one percent of respondents indicated that time is a limited resource at schools where they taught and they simply did not have the time within the school day to work effectively and complete all their allocated tasks. Teachers in schools with none or a limited number of SGB staff had to contend with full timetables and heavy workloads.

Respondents noted their concerns regarding their full workloads, large class sizes of forty-plus learners, learner support needs that require immediate attention, the socioeconomically disadvantaged learners that require further attention, lack of parental involvement in the academic life of their children, individual assessments of learners that need to be done, marking of learners’ notebooks, assignments and scripts, deadlines that need to be met, substitution to cope with teacher absenteeism, and a single HOD in charge of a large phase of

teachers(Section 4.6.4.1). These are serious concerns that must be addressed to ensure that a level of equality exists in all schools if they are expected to achieve the same outcomes.

In order to cope with the endless demands placed on teachers, the already overburdened teacher has no alternative but to take work home. This affects the personal life of teachers as school work is often done over weekends and in the evenings.

Time management and the availability of time is an issue for all teachers at all ranks within the school. Teachers did the best they could coping with their numerous duties, according to the unique circumstances of their schools and the time constraints they experienced. The majority of teachers indicated that they did not mind taking work home as this is ‘the life of a teacher’ and it was to be expected.

5.2.2.5 Conclusions with regard to research question 4

Are systems put in place to monitor standards once roles are distributed and how and when is this done?

Data revealed that, teachers in Johannesburg South have an awareness of the merits of being monitored by a senior member of the staff and understand the benefits of being supported. The study revealed that 84% of respondents had their performance on subject related leadership roles monitored by the SMT. Data suggests that the SMT places a high level of importance on teacher performance thus monitoring takes place regularly during school time. 9% of teacher respondents however, indicated that they are not monitored (Section 4.4 – 4.5). This is a cause for concern and the reasons for this need to be investigated further. Most principal respondents felt this question did not apply to them and hence, ignored it. This implies that principals are rarely monitored by their seniors.

Only 40% of teacher respondents indicated that their extra-mural leadership roles were monitored by the SMT while 38% of respondents indicated that this was not the case. Data also revealed that many teachers (12%) in both formal management positions as well as post level-one teachers in Johannesburg South schools do not participate in the extramural programme of their schools.

Data revealed that not all teachers play roles in all areas of the school. Only 52% of teacher respondents indicated that their work in leadership roles like, administrative management, health and safety and social functions committees were monitored by the SMT. 48% of

respondents indicated that they were not monitored by the SMT. Data suggests that the SMT focuses most of their time and attention on subject-related leadership roles as this reflects school effectiveness as far as the DoE is concerned.

Respondents see distributed leadership as a means to develop themselves and this can only be done through monitoring and support by those in higher ranks within the school or the DoE. The sharing of knowledge and information must occur during the process of monitoring and support which takes place at school.

5.2.2.6 Conclusions with regard to research question 5

What are the possibilities and limitations of distributed leadership as perceived by the staff and how are these addressed?

A vast majority (80%) of teacher respondents grasped the possibilities of distributed leadership. Respondents acknowledged that distributed leadership allows for the spreading of talent, expertise and skills, the sharing of responsibilities, owning of processes, democratic decision making, and the ‘buy in’ from the staff. Respondents also acknowledged that distributed leadership allows for the development and preparation of staff for promotional posts.

Respondents saw distributed leadership as being a practical, effective, and fair form of school leadership with clear guidelines. Many leaders, each in charge of a particular area of the school allows for the spreading of talent development and utilisation. Respondents noted that distributed leadership enabled growth and development in the staff and the availability of multiple leaders who run the school. If the principal leaves, the school can rely on its own talent to proceed without hindrance.

The utilisation of the skills in the staff encourages teamwork and leads to more efficient schools. Distributed leadership encourages the distribution of responsibilities which creates time for the principal and SMT to deal with more pertinent school issues.

A school principal summed up the merits of distributed leadership as follows,

I've always been a proponent of distributed leadership. Not only does it provide excellent in-service training for both the teacher and mentor, it also shares the

load without losing accountability, and allows the teachers to experience the responsibility encountered by the leaders.

This statement emphasises the importance of development and preparation for future leadership roles, the use of talent, sharing responsibility, practicality and an end to a monopoly by an individual leader. Spillane (2006:96) suggests that management must act strategically in not just looking for good classroom teachers, but also those who have leadership potential and who could address some of the school's leadership needs. Distributed leadership is essential to the effective running of the school.

The limitations of distributed leadership as perceived by teachers in Johannesburg South (Section 4.6.1), provide some food for thought. Although respondents acknowledged that leadership is distributed, not all staff members who were able and willing, were given the opportunity to lead. A respondent suggested that all staff members should be given an opportunity to manage and lead in some small ways. Another respondent suggested that the willingness factor must be considered and positions must not be forced onto staff. Staff become attached to titles only, and ignore the assigned responsibilities. This creates the issue of accountability if work is not monitored.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

What follows are recommendations from the study to school principals and the DoE.

5.3.1 Recommendations for selecting teachers for leadership roles

It is recommended that principals should develop strategies that allow all teachers who are capable and willing to get an opportunity to lead certain areas of the school even if it is for shorter periods of time. The study found that there are more capable and willing teachers than the roles to be filled in some schools and this creates conflict. Principals could devise plans for the rotation of roles so that more teachers are given the opportunity to develop their leadership skills.

Formal leadership positions should remain constant but there are a number of other areas in a school that need good leaders. A few examples of such roles will be the head of extra-murals, heads of each code of sport such as soccer, netball, and cricket, head of school safety and discipline, head of the tuck shop, and head of social and cultural committees. The roles and responsibilities of these heads must be made clear by the principal who must monitor and

support these leaders. Principals should identify areas of the school that need improvement and plan accordingly. The rotation of teachers in roles may be taxing for management and may affect the continuity schools strive to maintain, but the opportunity may develop more competitive leaders. In order to get the full cooperation of the staff, roles must not be ‘dumped’ onto unwilling teachers. The principal thus has to know the strengths and weaknesses of his staff if this recommendation is to bear fruit.

5.3.2 Recommendations on training for the various leadership roles by the DoE

Induction and training of new teachers and SMT members should follow immediately after the appointment of teachers into new positions whether these are entry level teaching positions or promotional posts. The initial induction and training of GDE teachers should not be the sole responsibility of the SMT and teachers. The SGB only recommends the appointments of teachers into their various positions but it is the Department of Education (DoE) that makes the appointments. It is the DoE’s responsibility to ensure that newly-appointed incumbents are fully trained for their positions. A well-structured, intensive, high-quality training programme should be developed and offered to every teacher so that every school can function optimally. Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold (2003:118) assert that the district is the most appropriate level of government to initiate and sustain school reform, in the case of failing schools and to monitor and support the routine maintenance needs of well-functioning schools.

It must be said that training for newly appointed SMT members by the GDE is in place, however, it is a once-off affair conducted on a single day. The DoE must understand the unique circumstances of each school, and offer individualised support on an ongoing basis.

The DoE must organise frequent workshops, targeting newly-appointed teachers and SMTs on their roles and responsibilities. This will ensure that all those employed to teach and manage a school are on the right track. Taking into consideration the uniqueness of each school and having well-trained teachers will enhance the performance of each school considerably.

The DoE should look at all leadership roles at schools and offer support in the form of workshops and short courses and provide the CPTD (Continuing Professional Teacher Development) points that will soon be compulsory for all teachers (SACE, 2013b:33). Teachers are expected to develop their knowledge and skills throughout their careers (DBE,

2012:7), so it is imperative that the DoE plays its role in teacher development by providing high quality workshops and courses that will benefit all schools and teachers equally.

5.3.3 Recommendations for time allocation to complete various tasks

It is recommended that school principals should allocate additional administration periods to all teachers who take on leadership roles in their personal timetables when possible. It is also recommended that the DoE should conduct its own study on time allocated to teachers to perform their regular functions. The researcher believes that although the DoE has outlined the workload of teachers through the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document, it has not considered the time constraints teachers are placed under to complete their assigned work. The DoE must conduct a thorough study on the actual time teachers spend doing the work of teaching and learning, which includes aspects like, planning, marking, extra-murals, fundraising, staff development, and so on.

Schools function according to their own unique circumstances. The availability of finances is a prerequisite for the employment of additional staff, which in turn assists the workload of teachers. Large class sizes, full timetables as well as additional leadership responsibilities during breaks and after school impact on teacher morale and school efficiency. If teachers work additional hours every day, to get the work done, this must be acknowledged. Respondents in the study feared taking on leadership roles as they simply did not have the time. All schools are expected to achieve the same academic results regardless of the workload of their teachers, the financial circumstances of the school, its learner population and diverse learner needs. This is easier said than done. A study of this nature has provided insight into the unique challenges of individual teachers and schools.

5.3.4 Recommendations for monitoring and support

It is recommended that schools should monitor the work of all teachers regardless of the role they play. Distributing roles to teachers down the ranks of the school does take away the accountability factor. The formal leadership structures of the school remain accountable for the quality of work the school provides. Once roles are delegated to teachers, the SMT must play an active role in monitoring the quality of the work and provide support when necessary. The support given allows the individual teachers to improve and develop. Through monitoring, the principal will be constantly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of individual staff members and the performance of each section of the school. This knowledge

will be vital when devising strategies for improvement. Support could be provided by the SMT or staff themselves if they possess the capacity. Outside organisations or key stakeholders like teachers' unions and universities also provide courses on teacher development. The IQMS process is a means of identifying the needs of the staff. Through the IQMS process, the district must be made aware of the needs of teachers and plan development opportunities on an ongoing basis to support teachers.

It is also recommended that all aspects of the school, be it curriculum or extramural, be monitored equally and regularly to ensure competency among teachers in all their roles. The study revealed a lack of monitoring and support in extra-mural roles of teachers. The DoE should offer clear guidelines to teachers as far as their extra-mural roles are concerned and support the teachers in their developmental needs.

5.4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research into the impact of distributed leadership practices was characterized by simple challenges that the researcher does not believe hampered the outcome of the study. Both the DoE and district directors granted permission for the study timeously. Eight of the ten principals approached to participate in the study were willing to allow their schools to be involved in the study. One principal was on leave, so permission was received from the deputy principal. Only one school principal was not prepared to add an additional research questionnaire to the already heavy workload of the teachers on her staff. She, however, did not turn down being involved in the study, but the questionnaires were not returned. Principals handed out and collected the questionnaires in a short space of time. The researcher handed out 120 teacher questionnaires and received 86 questionnaires back. The researcher believes that the well completed questionnaires, as well as the high quality of responses received for the qualitative section of the questionnaire, portray the professionalism of the teachers involved in the study.

The study only included quintile 4 and 5 schools (fee-paying schools) and excluded (non-fee-paying school). The inclusion of non-fee paying schools in the study may have further highlighted the issues faced by schools with regard to the types of leadership roles that are distributed at school, training of teachers, time, monitoring and support, and how distributed leadership is perceived by the staff. The availability of time to perform all the functions associated with teaching and learning and the array of duties assigned to teachers can be seen as a cause for concern. The researcher is of the opinion that time would be serious challenge

in schools that do not possess the financial resources to employ SGB staff. Teachers in these schools would have to contend with full workloads, and no 'free periods' to perform the numerous tasks expected in a leadership position. Teachers in non-fee paying schools may have additional challenges and duties to contend with, for example, heading the school feeding scheme.

The researcher believes that it is possible to draw conclusions from this study that would make a significant contribution to the growing body of knowledge on distributed leadership practices at schools. This study should serve as an impetus for further investigation into the practice of distributed leadership in all schools in order that all schools benefit from the merits of this approach to school leadership. Further studies would allow for more in-depth recommendations to be made to the significant education authorities.

5.5 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP MODELS

Overall, the study revealed that distributed leadership is practised in all schools in Johannesburg South with most respondents acknowledging the link between distributed leadership and school effectiveness. Distributed leadership involves the careful selection of leaders from the various ranks. Careful selection involves identifying those who are able and willing to lead and rotating positions, so that no teacher can feel 'sidelined'. Having a 'willing' teacher 'in charge' produces an array of benefits for the school. More leaders would signify the constant availability of an empowered workforce, able and willing to deal with teacher attrition. The principal and SMT must recognise that accountability lies with those in formal leadership positions, so monitoring and support must be forthcoming. This should be a compulsory, non-negotiable component of the job-description of those in formal leadership positions.

Developing school leaders throughout the school is one of the most promising avenues for addressing the challenges schools face (Leithwood, *et al.*, 1992:6). Teacher attrition is a major challenge to a school's stability, and therefore, well-trained teachers at all levels of a school are crucial in ensuring that no single teacher is indispensable. Having well-developed teachers at all ranks in a school, allows the basic objectives of the school to be accomplished even when school leadership inevitably changes. For change to result in improvement, schools require expert leadership (Leithwood, *et al.*, 1992: 4). Below is a model of both formal and informal positions that can be distributed to teachers.

Figure 5.1 Model of distributed leadership – Formal leadership structure

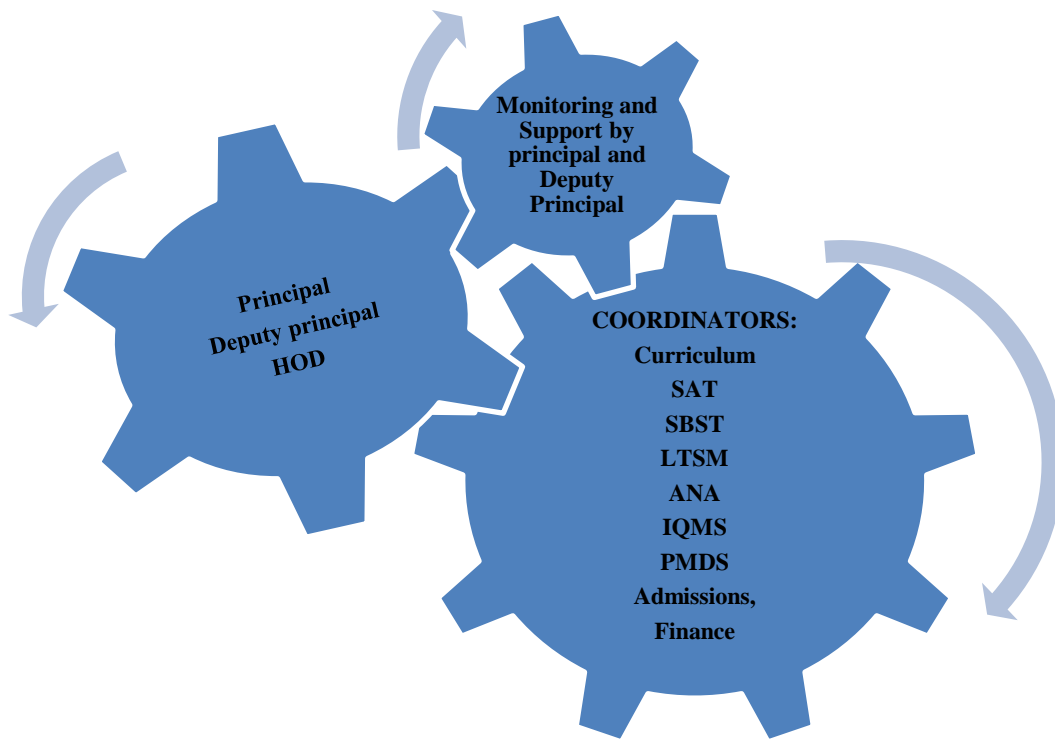


Figure 5.1 shows the leadership roles that are more often headed by members of the SMT: The principal, deputy principal and HOD. These roles require higher levels of accountability as they are monitored by the Department of Education. Monitoring and support is provided by the immediate senior before submissions are made to the DoE

Figure 5.2 Model of distributed leadership – Informal leadership structure

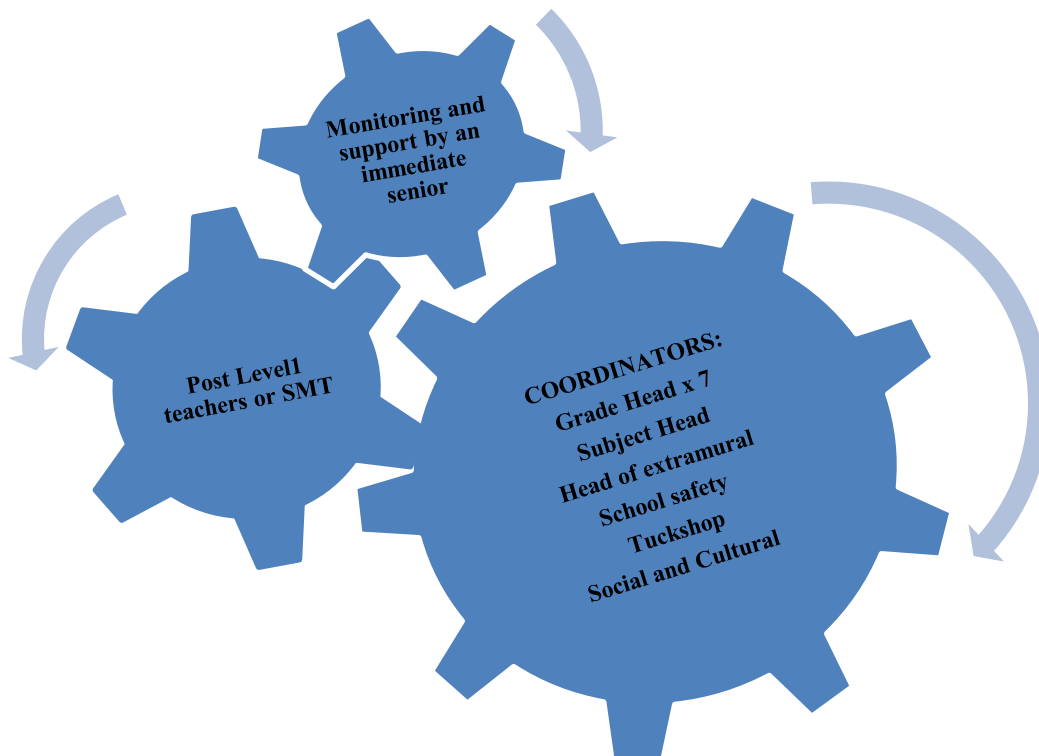


Figure 5.2 shows a model of an informal leadership structure. Informal positions like grade head, subject head, head of extramural, school safety and so on are more often headed by post level one teachers but members of the SMT fill these positions when a need arises. For distributed leadership to be effective monitoring and support by the SMT or teachers in leadership positions must be ongoing.

The principal must bear in mind that monitoring and support is a crucial component for this model to succeed. The researcher suggests that areas that cover the core purpose of schooling and require high levels of accountability should be delegated to those in formal leadership positions while those that enhance the functioning of the school but require lower levels of accountability be delegated to post-level-one teachers.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of the study was to gain an understanding of the impact of distributed leadership practices in schools in Johannesburg South, South Africa. The study took place in schools in Johannesburg South. A mixed methods research design elicited both quantitative and qualitative data from research respondents. The data was analysed using tables and this was followed by a discussion of the findings. The findings and recommendations in respect of the aim of the study have been discussed, and the benefits of distributing roles to teachers down

the ranks of the school have been highlighted. The types of roles that were distributed and training for such leadership roles were investigated. The provider for teacher development, monitoring and support was identified. An understanding of different leadership approaches, as well as that of the merits and limitations of distributed leadership is an important area for school principals to understand. School principals have the responsibility to ensure obligatory school improvement and development.

Distributed leadership not only motivates teachers, but forces them to understand their strengths and weaknesses, take on roles, see that tasks are accomplished successfully and contribute to school leadership. Schools in Johannesburg South have created a culture in which distributed leadership will flourish. Distributed leadership ensures that a myriad of well-developed teachers exists, who are available to step into vacant positions when a need arises to ensure the smooth functioning of schools.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The study investigating the impact of distributed leadership practices on schools in Johannesburg South only involved schools in the Johannesburg South district. The participating schools are clustered closely together and are fully integrated with regards to race, gender, age and so on, and therefore, the findings may not be generalized to other South African schools. A more in-depth study could be conducted on non-fee paying schools to study the impact distributed leadership would have on such schools.

It is recommended that a comprehensive study on distributed leadership practices be conducted on non-fee paying schools, township schools and rural schools in order to gain insight into the challenges faced by these schools with regards to the sharing of leadership, succession planning, distributing roles, mentoring and support, and time management challenges. Furthermore, longitudinal case studies on individual teacher involvement in distributed leadership can be conducted to track whether their involvement in informal leadership roles early in their careers leads to formal leadership appointments in the future. Further research could involve a comparative study on school leadership practices in other countries to gain insight on school leadership practices that may enhance school improvement in South Africa further.

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Appendix 1: Research Ethics Clearance certificate



Research Ethics Clearance Certificate

This is to certify that the application for ethical clearance submitted by

S Singh [5808634]

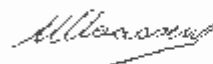
for a M Ed study entitled

**The impact of distributive leadership practices on the functioning of Primary
Schools in Johannesburg South, South Africa**

has met the ethical requirements as specified by the University of South Africa
College of Education Research Ethics Committee. This certificate is valid for two
years from the date of issue.



Prof KP Dzvimbob
Executive Dean : CEDU



Dr M Claassens
CEDU REC (Chairperson)
mcdtc@netactive.co.za

Reference number: 2014 MARCH/5808634/MC

28 March 2014

Appendix 2: GDE Research Approval letter



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no: D2015 / 054

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	9 May 2014
Validity of Research Approval:	9 May 2014 to 3 October 2014
Name of Researcher:	Singh S.
Address of Researcher:	P.O. Box 175 Linmeyer Johannesburg 2105
Telephone Number:	011 435 9329; 082 325 0232
Fax Number:	011 432 3288
Email address:	deputy@mulbartonprimary.co.za
Research Topic:	The impact of distributive leadership practices on the functioning of primary schools in Johannesburg South, South Africa
Number and type of schools:	FIFTEEN PRIMARY Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg Central and Johannesburg South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the

*K. Makhado
2014/05/12*

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

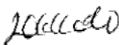
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0508
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards


.....
Dr David Makhado
Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 2014/05/12
.....

2

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Annexure 3: Approval letter from D11 District Director

14 Sep 29 09:14a

SUDHISH SINGH

0114359329

p. 1



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEMO

Enquiries: Seabata Makume
Directorate: JS, Office of the District Director
Tel: +27 (0)11 247 5709
Fax: +27 (0)11 247 5827
Ref: Research05/2014

TO : THE PRINCIPAL
FROM : MS C.M. MAKHUBELA
DISTRICT DIRECTOR: JHB SOUTH DISTRICT
DATE : 19 MAY 2014
SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Dear Sir

Please be advised that GDE Head Office (*Knowledge Management & Research unit*) has granted permission to **Ms Sharita Singh** to conduct Academic Research at your school/Institution.

We therefore humbly request you to welcome and support her in this important undertaking.

See the attached **GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER** for you reference.

Kind Regards

Ms. C.M Makhubela
District Director

Date: 19/05/2014

Making education a societal priority

Office of the District Director: Johannesburg South
Block C, 2nd Floor, 100 Northern Parkway Drive, Crown Wood Office Park, Ormonde.
Tel: (011) 247-5700 Fax: (011) 247-5827
e-mail: Mosibudi.Makhubela@gauteng.gov.za
www.education.gpg.gov.za

Annexure 4: Approval letter from D14 District Director

14 Sep 29 09:14a

SUDHISH SINGH

011 4359329

p. 2



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Mashooda Ismail
Tel: 011 983 2170
Mashooda.Ismail@gauteng.gov.za
REF: EOS/PP 05/14/06

To: Mrs S. Singh
From: Ms B. L. T. Seate
District Director
Johannesburg Central District
Date: 19 May 2014
Subject: **Permission to Conduct Research**

Dear Mrs Singh

Correspondence received from you titled: Request for *Permission to Conduct Research at Schools in Johannesburg South* is acknowledged and has reference.

Thank you for informing the Johannesburg Central District Office of your intended research on; *"The impact of distributive leadership practices on the functioning of primary schools in Johannesburg South, South Africa"*, at fifteen primary schools of which only four are in the Johannesburg Central District.

The Johannesburg Central District listed schools are:

- Park Senior Primary School
- Park Junior Primary School
- Progress Primary School
- Winchester Ridge Primary School

The following attachments are acknowledged and received:

1. GDE Research Approval letter from the Knowledge Management and Research Directorate at GDE Head Office.
2. Copy of the UNISA Ethical Clearance Certificate.

Kindly submit your Research Proposal to the Policy and Planning Unit at Johannesburg Central at your earliest convenience.

You are welcome to proceed with your research however, in the execution thereof; you are reminded to heed the President's non-negotiable and be mindful of protecting contact time.

The District Office wishes you great success with your research and reminds you to comply with the terms and conditions against which approval has been granted by the Knowledge Management and Research Directorate.

Kind regards

Ms B. L. T. Seate
District Director
Johannesburg Central District

DISTRICT: JOHANNESBURG CENTRAL
Tel: (011) 983 2308, Cell: 071 474 6051, Fax: (011) 933 5429 | Email: Tshepo.Seate@gauteng.gov.za
Corner Marola & Chris Hani Roads, Pinville, Soweto, 1809, P.O. Box 90084, Bertsiam, 2013
www.education.gpg.gov.za | Call Centre: 0800 005 175

Appendix 5: Letter to school principal

LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS REQUESTING PERMISSION FOR TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A MASTERS OF EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT

I hereby grant permission to **SHARITA SINGH**, student no: 580 863 4 at the University of South Africa (UNISA), to involve teachers from my school in the following study:

The impact of distributed leadership practices on schools in the Johannesburg South District.

I understand that the research is for study purposes only, and the identities of all participants, the school, as well as the information supplied will be kept in strictest of confidence, and will not be divulged to anyone.

I understand also that participants agree to participate voluntarily, and may withdraw participation from the research at any time without prejudice or penalty.

Research participants required will be:

1 school principal

1 deputy principal

2 HODs

3 grade heads

5 teachers

I understand further that I will not receive any cash for involving my teachers in the study, but I will have access to the findings, upon request. I am also free to contact the researcher to clarify any issues that may arise from the study. *SHARITA SINGH* may be reached on 082 325 0232 or deputy@mulbartonprimary.co.za.

.....

Name of School

.....

District

.....

Principal's signature

.....

Date

.....

Witness

.....

Date

Appendix 6: Informed consent letter to research participants

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Research Participant

My name is Sharita Singh. I am currently a master's student at the University of South Africa (UNISA). I am in the process of conducting research as a requirement for my Masters in Education Degree. The topic I am researching is:

'The impact of distributive leadership practices on the functioning of primary schools in Johannesburg South, South Africa'.

AIMS OF MY STUDY

The aim of this study is to gain expert knowledge on the distributed leadership practices of schools in the Johannesburg South District and the role played by monitoring and support in ensuring a school's sustainable improvement.

Since I am currently a teacher and SMT member in the Johannesburg South district, I am personally interested in understanding your experiences and views on distributed leadership. I believe that the data from this research will be beneficial to the SMT in determining what works best when distributing leadership roles down the ranks of the echelons of the school. Your views could enable the SMT to successfully use the skills found amongst the staff to distribute leadership in a way that enhances teaching and learning and ensures your schools sustainability.

You will be asked to complete one questionnaire that will require between 30 and 45 minutes of your valuable time. There will be approximately 100 participants from the various ranks within schools in the Johannesburg South District involved in this research study. The researcher has used judgemental and purpose sampling to select schools for this study as it will be set in the Johannesburg South District. Convenient sampling will be used within your school to select individual participants. The information you provide will be treated with confidentiality. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may terminate your participation at any time with no penalty. There are no foreseeable risks or discomfort anticipated to any participants.

The findings of the research will be shared with you and your school. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at deputy@mulbartonprimary.co.za or 082325 0232.

This research will only be conducted after it has been approved by the UNISA RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE, and then the Gauteng Department of Education.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

.....
Consent

I _____ have read and understood the information provided above. I willingly agree to/ do not agree to participate in this research project.

.....
Participant's signature

.....
Date

.....
Researcher's signature

.....
Date

Appendix 7: The research questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. The researcher values your professional opinion and your time and has thus structured the questionnaire so that it can easily be completed within 20 -30 minutes.

The title of this study is: **The impact of distributed leadership practices on the functioning of primary schools in Johannesburg South, South Africa.**

This questionnaire seeks information on the distributed leadership practices at your school in order to successfully research this topic.

The data gathered from this questionnaire is for research purposes only. Information supplied will be treated with strict confidentiality as the questionnaire is answered anonymously.

An appeal is made to you to please follow the instructions carefully and respond to **all** the questions.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any queries regarding the questionnaire.

Thank you for your valuable support

Sharita Singh

Student number: 5808634

Cell: 082 325 0232

Please complete the questionnaire as accurately as possible.

SECTION A		
PERSONAL QUESTIONS		
01	GENDER	Please circle the correct response
	Male	1
	Female	2
02	AGE AS AT 30 MARCH 2014	
	25 years and younger	1
	26 – 35 years	2
	36 – 45 years	3
	46 – 55 years	4
	55 years and older	5
03	RACIAL GROUP	
	Black	1
	Coloured	2
	Indian	3
	White	4
	Other: Please state	5
04	YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE (GDE AND SGB)	
	1 – 5 years	1
	6-10 years	2
	10 – 15 years	3
	15 – 20 years	4
	20 years and more	5
05	YEARS AT YOUR CURRENT SCHOOL	
	1 – 5 years	1
	6-10 years	2
	10 – 15 years	3
	15 – 20 years	4
	20 years and more	5
06	CURRENT RANK WITHIN THE SCHOOL	
	Post level 1: Teacher	1
	Grade Head	2

	Post level 2: Head of Department	3
	Post level 3: Deputy Principal	4
	Post level 4: Principal	5
06	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	
	Teaching certificate	1
	Teaching Diploma	2
	Bachelor's Degree	3
	Advanced certificate in education (ACE)	4
	Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)	5
	Honours Degree	6
	Master's Degree	7
	Doctoral Degree	8

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING YES OR NO

District refers to anyone employed at the district, for example, the senior education specialist. SMT refers to the principal, deputy principal and head of department. Post level one teacher is any teacher employed at your school who does not hold a management position.

The questions below hopes to elicit information on what particular types of school leadership roles are distributed at schools.

SECTION B			
LEADERSHIP ROLES IN YOUR SCHOOL			
01	SUBJECT RELATED LEADERSHIP ROLES	YES	NO
	Are you a grade head?	Yes	No
	Are you a subject head?	Yes	No
	Do you mentor and support colleagues/ new teachers?	Yes	No
	Do you manage the curriculum for your class or subject?	Yes	No
If you have answered yes to any of the above, please complete the following.			
	Have you been adequately trained for the above roles?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for the above role from the district?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for the above role from an SMT member?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for the above role from a Level One teacher?	Yes	No
	Is your performance monitored by any member of the SMT?	Yes	No

02	EXTRA- MURAL LEADERSHIP ROLES	Yes	No
	Are you involved in the extra-mural programme of your school?	Yes	No
	Are you the head of the extra-mural programme at your school?	Yes	No
	Are you the head of any sport at your school? For example, netball, soccer, volleyball, cricket, art club, etc.	Yes	No
If you have answered yes to any of the above, please complete the following.			
	Have you been adequately trained for the above roles?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for the above role from the district?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for this role from an SMT member?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for this role from a Level One teacher?	Yes	No
	Is your performance monitored by any member of the SMT?	Yes	No
03	OTHER LEADERSHIP ROLES PLEASE INDICATE BY CIRLING YES/ NO IF YOU ARE THE HEAD OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL IF YOUR SCHOOL DOES NOT HAVE ANY OF THE COMMITTEES PLEASE IGNORE THAT PARTICULAR LINE.	YES	NO
CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT			
	School Assessment Team (SAT)	Yes	No
	School Based Support Team (SBST)	Yes	No
	Annual National Assessments (ANA)	Yes	No
	Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM)	Yes	No
	Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)	Yes	No
ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT			
	Admissions Team	Yes	No
	Finance Committee	Yes	No
	School Governing Body	Yes	No
HEALTH AND SAFETY			
	Discipline Committee	Yes	No
	Prefect Committee	Yes	No
	Scholar Patrol	Yes	No
	School Safety Committee	Yes	No
	Maintenance Committee	Yes	No
	Tuck-shop Committee	Yes	No
	Performance Management Development System (PMDS)	Yes	No
	Whole School Evaluation (WSE)	Yes	No

SOCIAL AND FUNCTIONS COMMITTEES			
	Fundraising Committee	Yes	No
	Social events Committee	Yes	No
	Cultural Committee	Yes	No
	Other (Please indicate below if there are any other committees at your school that I have neglected to mention. Please also indicate by means of a 'yes' or 'no' if you are the leader of any of these committees.		
If you have answered yes to any of the above, please complete the following			
	Have you been adequately trained for any of the above roles?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for the above role from the district?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for this role from an SMT member?	Yes	No
	Have you received training for this role from a Level One teacher?	Yes	No
	Is your performance monitored by any member of the SMT?	Yes	No

SECTION C

The questions below hopes to elicit information on the training you receive for the work you do on a daily basis (Teaching curriculum/extra-murals/administration); your willingness to be part of the leadership structures at your school and the time allocated for you to perform these functions.

Please complete the section by placing a cross in the block of your correct response.

SUBJECT RELATED LEADERSHIP ROLES						
	<i>Please select your response by placing a cross in the correct block.</i>	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNCERTAI N	DISAGREE	STRONGL Y DISAGRE E
1	My degree/diploma/ certificate adequately prepared me for my role as an teacher.					
2	I teach the subject I was trained to teach.					
3	I was inducted in my role when I first came to this school by the GDE.					
4	I was inducted in my role when I first came to this school by the SMT.					
5	I fitted into my new position easily.					
	<i>Please select your response by placing a cross in the correct block.</i>	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNCERTAI N	DISAGREE	STRONGL Y DISAGRE E
6	My work is monitored by a senior on a regular basis.					

7	When I am monitored, I receive prompt and utilizable feedback.					
8	I am mentored and supported on areas where I need development.					
9	My mentors have the necessary knowledge and skills to mentor me.					
10	I am encouraged to attend workshops and courses to continuously develop and grow.					
11	I am continuously growing and developing my skills and consider myself a lifelong learner.					
12	I feel that there are too few members on the staff who are adequately prepared for their roles.					
13	I would like to be involved in a leadership role at school.					
14	I am well-trained and I usually mentor less experienced teachers.					
15	I have the necessary skills to contribute to school leadership but I am not given the opportunity to lead any team.					
16	I have not got the skills to lead any team but I would like to be developed to do this.					
17	I believe that more leaders can develop their skills if given the opportunity.					
18	I feel that the best teachers are not given the opportunity to lead.					
19	The method used to select leaders of the various committees is unfair.					
20	I feel that the SMT must do the work of management themselves and not involve the Level 1 teachers.					

TIME

	<i>Please select your response by placing a cross in the correct block.</i>	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNCERTAI N	DISAGREE	STRONGL Y DISAGRE E
1	I have the skills to lead a team but there is too little time to do the work of leadership and management.					
2	I do most of the work of leading and managing after school in my own personal time.					
3	I have enough administrative time (Free periods) at school to complete all the work involved in leading and managing.					

4	My timetable allows for 'free periods' for me to complete my administrative work.					
5	My timetable allows for 'free time' to do class visits, book control, etc. or to mentor my peers.					
6	I take home a large amount of administrative work, like marking, recording, completing assessments, etc.					
7	Our team is unable to meet due to a heavy workload and no free time at school.					
8	I usually cannot cope with my own personal work due to a tight schedule of work.					
	<i>Please select your response by placing a cross in the correct block.</i>	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNCERTAI N	DISAGREE	STRONGL Y DISAGRE E
9	I find that I neglect my personal life due to a heavy school workload.					
10	I don't mind spending personal time on schoolwork as this is the 'life of a teacher' that I chose.					

SECTION D

Please answer the following questions briefly:

1. As a teacher, what are your personal views of distributed leadership (*Having many leaders, each in charge of an area of the school, like: Subject heads, head of extra-murals, instead of the principal at the top of the hierarchy*) as practised at your school? _____

2. In your opinion, do you feel that you are given enough opportunities to take on leadership roles? What may be the reasons for this?

3. List two leadership roles you feel you are able to manage effectively but have not been given the opportunity to take it on.

4. Do you have enough time within the school day to work effectively within your leadership role.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT MAY AFFECT THE STUDY

Please complete

QUINTILE OF SCHOOL	
NUMBER OF SGB TEACHERS EMPLOYED AT THE SCHOOL	
NUMBER OF GDE TEACHERS EMPLOYED AT THE SCHOOL	

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT.

YOUR PROFESSIONAL OPINION IS VALUED!

Sharita Singh