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An Investigation of Teacher Participation in Decision-making, Curriculum and Management issues: A Case Study of Four Secondary Schools in the Fort Beaufort District, Eastern Cape Province.

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare this is wholly a product of my own research and or has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is provided.

Latsha X.N

Date

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ABSTRACT

The birth of democracy in 1994 in South Africa moved away from the authoritarian leadership style of the Apartheid era to a democratic style where accountability, democracy, transformational and distributed leadership style was encouraged at school. Leadership was not deemed to be the duty of the principal alone but leadership is shared among all the stakeholders at school.

The above assertion prompted the researcher to engage in this study whose purpose was to investigate the extent of teacher participation in decision making in curriculum and management issues at schools. The study sought to assess: (i) To identify the categories of teachers who participated in decision making at school level (ii) To find out the areas in which teachers are involved in decision making at school (iii) To identify the strategies used by principals/ school management in involving the teachers in decision making (iv) To find out the views of principals and teachers regarding their involvement regarding their participation in decision making in curriculum and management issues.

To achieve these objectives the researcher opted for the qualitative approach which is embedded in the interpretivist paradigm. The qualitative approach typically studies people by interacting and observing the participants in their natural setting and focusing on their meanings and interpretations. This methodology was relevant because it produced the desired results and gathered information directly from the respondents through interviews, observation, and document analysis. This methodology assisted the researcher to find out the extent of teacher participation in decision making.

The data revealed that all teachers are expected to be involved in decision making but that depends on the nature of the issue. The study revealed that all teachers were involved in decisions concerning disciplinary, curriculum, sport as major school activities but some teachers were not involved in financial matters. The data also found out that male teachers feel that there is imbalance of contribution in staff meetings since female

teachers are more than male teachers. Furthermore , the study showed that school principals used various strategies to involve teachers in decision making such as consultation on individual basis, group or at committee level.

The study also revealed that the principals and teachers felt that when they work together as the school community all organizational goals and objectives will be achieved and owned by all teachers. Teachers also viewed non involvement as what resulted in the negative impact of the activities including high teacher absenteeism and demotivation.

ACRONONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACE- Advanced Certificate in Education

AD- Actual Performance

DP- Desired participation

BA- Bachelor of Arts

BPed- Bachelor of Pedagogics

BEEd- Bachelor of Education

FET- Further Education And Training

GET- General Education And Training

HED- Higher Education Diploma

HOD- Head of Department

NCS- National Curriculum Statement

RSA- Republic of South Africa

SADTU- South African Democratic Teacher's Union

SASA- South African School Act

SBM- School Based Management

SGB- School Governing Body

SMT- School Management Team

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1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The birth of democracy in 1994 led to a shift from authoritarian to democratic rule in South Africa (Jansen & Sayed, 2001). It also introduced a new Constitution which pledged commitment to representative and participatory democracy, accountability, transparency and public involvement. In this case participatory democracy does not mean the right to elect representatives only, but also translates to the right to influence decisions (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:102). In the education sector functions and decision making powers were devolved to different levels, namely national, provincial and school levels to ensure participation by all stakeholders (Jansen & Sayed, 2001). Consequently, the national Department of Education is responsible for higher education, development of norms and standards and the conditions of employment and service of teachers in schools and colleges. Provincial Departments of Education in turn have full responsibility of General and Further Education and Training (Pampallis, 2002). In addition to constitutional allocation of powers to the provinces, powers and authority were decentralized to the school level through the South African Schools Act (SASA) (Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996). Thus, SASA makes provision for, amongst others, the establishment of the School Governing Body (SGB) at every public school. Teachers are allowed representation on the SGB, thereby affording them the opportunity to participate in school governance (RSA, 1996).

SASA further emphasizes collaboration and collective decision making among school stakeholders (RSA, 1996). Hence, there has been a move towards site-based management in order to enhance participation at that level (Pampallis, 2001). Site-based management is a movement away from the traditional bureaucratic system of management where the running of schools rests on the hands of the principals only (Mosoge & Van der Westhuizen 1998:75). Site based management places more authority on individual schools through the adoption of a more democratic decision

making process, where emphasis is on participation by all stakeholders, team work and collaborative management (Pampallis, 2002; Lewis & Naidoo, 2004). Studies have observed that some of the education policies specifically put emphasis on school management and leadership as a shared responsibility by principals and all teaching staff. This is reflected in policy documents like the SASA, the new Framework for Educational Management Development and Draft Policy Framework: Education Leadership Management Development (Pampallis, 2002; Lewis & Naidoo, 2004; van der Mescht & Tyala, 2008). Williams (2008) however observes that in the new dispensation all teaching staff are regarded as leaders with varying responsibilities depending on their capabilities and hierarchical position in the school, as well as specific task that has to be fulfilled. Hence, shared responsibility among all members of the school community is essential.

There are many advantages of teacher participation in decision making at school level and these have been advanced by a number of studies (Romme, 2004; Maitlis & Ozcelik, 2004). According to Kumar & Scuderi (2002:2) “participation enables teachers to become active participants in school management processes and it leads to a meaningful commitment in curriculum and management issues”. A study conducted by Poppleton & Williamson, (2004:289) on the effects of teacher participation in decision making at school level shows that, the more teachers participate in responsible and initiating roles in school change, the more positive they feel about the change, and the more willing they are to seriously engage in future change. Shared decision-making therefore makes decisions more likely to be acceptable and more likely to be implemented because they reflect and serve the interest of the people responsible for putting them in action (van Hover & Yeager, E, 2007; Jha, 2004; Booher-Jennings, 2005). Wall & Rinehart (1999:50) observes that since teachers work closely with learners and have first-hand knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses, they are the most invaluable people to develop and implement policies. These scholars thus emphasise the importance teacher participation in decision-making at the school level.

Although policies have been put in place to democratize the decision making process, many teachers have raised concerns that the entrenched bureaucratic and hierarchical management practices that existed before 1994 still permeate at the school level. According the SADTU newsletter of January 2009, principals do not create proper environment or climate for participation despite the rhetoric of teamwork and stakeholder participation (Botha, 2007; Carl, 2005; Harris, 2004; Gronn, 2000). Some teachers have also voiced concerns in professional training workshops that many principals discourage teacher interactions and collaborations in implementing the new curriculum. Authoritarian ethos that persists in many South African schools has led to a lack of establishment of the free space in which creative interaction and deliberate exchange among teachers are encouraged (Williams, 2008; van der Mescht et.al. 2008; McLennan & Thurlow, 2003).

The SADTU president also observed in a paper presented in a conference that the culture of participation and consultation that existed after 1994 has been abandoned since 1999 and there has been more dependence on consultants (Nxesi, 2001). He added that teachers have been excluded from the curriculum review process of 2001 and from the development of the whole school. That did not go well with the teachers (Goldstein, 2003; Manthosi, 2001; Harber, 2001; Jansen & Sayed, 2001). Moreover, the National Union of Educators (2002) noted that inability to implement education policies particularly at the school level result partly from lack of teachers' input. Whilst the National Union places blame squarely on the shoulders of the teachers, Grant (2006) is of the view that authoritarian mentality, lack of capacity and fear to lose power has led to principals not to involve teachers in decision-making on issues that are of great concern to them, for example curriculum issues. Many studies align themselves with this view and they advocate for expanded leadership roles for teachers as they are best suited to make critical decisions about curricular and instructional issues on the basis of their daily contact with the learners (Williams, 2008; van der Mescht & Tyala, 2008; Bush, 2007; Lewis & Naidoo, 2004). Botha (2007:28) claims that, in spite of the widespread implementation of school-based management, decentralization has received only moderate attention locally in terms of the participation of stake holders, and the impact of stakeholder values on the school-based management process.

For the past ten years it has been anticipated amongst that participation and site based management will be among the factors that will enhance learner performance as teachers will be given power to make critical decisions on curriculum and instructional issues, given the fact that they have daily contact with the learners. However, this has failed to materialize and this has urged the media to attribute poor performance in matriculation in some schools in 2009 and even in earlier years to lack of participation and involvement of teachers in decision making in curriculum and management related issue (Sunday Times 03 January 2010; City Press 03 January 2010; McLennan & Thurlow, 2003; Stott & Walker, 1999). Authoritarian top down leadership style and lack of teacher involvement in curriculum and management issues therefore have been identified as some of the factors which lead to under performance in schools (Williams, 2008; Harber & Muthukrishna, 2000).

Additionally, teachers themselves argue that they are deprived of the right to contribute their full range of talents to the accomplishment of school goals, as they are only involved in making decisions which deal with minor issues. Van der Westhuizen, (1997); Stott & Walker, (1999); Grant, (2006) add that in some cases principals opt to consult in issues that are not contentious and those that would not lead to challenging their authority. Teachers thus are not involved in major curriculum and other management issues so as to stretch their skills and talents. As a result, many teachers are demotivated and do not perform their work well. Van der Westhuizen (1997) clarifies that if teachers are not actually given opportunities to participate in management activities such as budgeting, making school policy, teacher evaluation, staff development and learner orientation, they become demotivated in contributing towards school improvement and they do not commit themselves in curriculum and management issues.

It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate the involvement of teachers in decision making, curriculum and management issues. The study was conducted in four rural secondary schools in Fort Beaufort district. The rationale for selecting rural schools is that many studies on teacher participation in South Africa have focused on schools in urban areas leaving a gap on whether teachers in rural

schools participate in decision-making, curriculum and management or not. The researcher hopes to fill this gap by carrying out this study. However, this study will not investigate teacher participation in SGBs.

1.2 Statement of problem

After 1994, there was a shift towards participation and site based management with more emphasis on team work and collaborative leadership and management (RSA, 1996; Pampallis, 2002; Lewis & Naidoo, 2004; Williams, 2008). However, teachers have raised concerns that the entrenched bureaucratic and hierarchical management practices that existed before 1994 still permeate at school level where principals do not involve them in major curriculum and management issues (Williams, 2008; Botha, 2007; Carl, 2005; Harris, 2004; Gronn, 2000). They feel that principals only involve them in making decisions which deal with minor issues and those which are not contentious do not lead to challenging their authority (Van der Westhuizen, 1997; Stott & Walker, 1999; Grant, 2006). However, as stated earlier, poor performance in matriculation results and underperformance in some schools in 2009 and in the previous years has been attributed to lack of participation and involvement of teachers in decision making in curriculum and management related issue (Sunday Times 03 January 2010; City Press 03 January 2010; (Williams, 2008; Harber & Muthukrishna, 2000 McLennan & Thurlow, 2003; Stott & Walker, 1999). Authoritarian top down leadership style and lack of teacher involvement in curriculum and management issues have been identified in some of the schools as among the factors which lead to demotivation of teachers and under performance in schools (Williams, 2008; Harber & Muthukrishna, 2000; Van der Westhuizen (1997). In the light of this information, this study investigates teacher participation in curriculum and management issues in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort district and the main question is; to what extent do teachers participate in decision making, curriculum and management related issues at school level?

1.3 Sub-research questions

The sub questions of the study are:

- 1.2.1. In which areas are teachers involved in decision making at school level?
- 1.2.2. Which categories of teachers do principals/school management involve in decision making at school level?
- 1.2.3. Which strategies do principals/school management use to involve teachers in decision making?
- 1.2.4 What are the views of principals/school management and teachers regarding teacher participation in curriculum and management issues?

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the extent to which teachers participate in decision making, curriculum and management related issues in schools.

The specific objectives of the study are:

- 1.3.1 To find out areas in which teachers participate in decision making at the school level.
- 1.3.2 To identify strategies which are used by principals/school management to ensure teacher participation in decision making, curriculum and management related issues.
- 1.3.3 To identify the positions of teachers involved in decision making, curriculum and management related issues at school level.
- 1.3.4 To find out the views of principals/school management and teachers regarding teacher participation in curriculum and management issues.

1.5 Assumptions

The study assumes that:

- 1.4.1 Teachers are only consulted but all final decisions on curriculum and management related issues rest with the school management team.
- 1.4.2 Principals often make crucial curriculum and financial decisions without consulting most teachers. The only times they involve teachers is when minor operational issues are decided on.
- 1.4.3 Inadequate participation of teachers in decision making has led to poor morale and lack of commitment by teachers.

1.6 Significance/ Rationale of the study

Democratization of institutions has become a global concern. Teacher involvement is seen as one aspect of the democratization process. It is important to investigate how principals have attempted to apply this in their institutions. This is because a school as an organization needs to make use of all the skills at its disposal, failure of which may lead to demoralizing of staff. The findings of this study might be of value to policy makers and implementers of school decisions at micro and macro level of the education system as these might provide them with information on how teacher participation could be enhanced thus ensuring teacher motivation and improving learner performance. The study will also contribute to the improvement of curriculum in the training of teachers and education administrators as through participation in decision making they might be able to give their views as they implement the curriculum and are able to identify what is taking place on the ground.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

The study is limited to four secondary schools in the Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. The participants are teachers, members of the school management, that is, HOD's and the principals. The study is limited to the various areas in which teachers are involved in decision making on curriculum and school management issues.

1.8 Definition of terms

1.8.1 Teacher participation

Participation is the mental and emotional involvement of a person that encourages the individual to contribute to group goals and to share responsibility for them (Owens 2001). This means participation is the involvement of a particular person in giving and sharing ideas in an activity in order to achieve the desired results.

Teacher participation has been viewed as a system of involving teachers in work that has traditionally been done by principals (Mosoge & Van der Westhuizen 1997) Mecher cited (in Taylor et al 1995: 51), has a different view from Mosoge et al, (1997) when he refers to teacher participation as the extent to which subordinates or other groups who are affected by decisions are consulted and involved in the making of decisions. VanderVen, E. (2005). argues that participation is not only about taking part in decision-making processes but it is also about being valued, teachers feel rewarded when they are part of the decision. In the light of the various definitions given above, the study defines 'teacher participation', as the involvement and consultation of teachers in the making of decisions that have traditionally been made by principals.

1.8.2 School based management

School-based management (SBM) is a strategy to improve education by transferring significant decision-making authority from state and district offices to individual schools. SBM provides principals, teachers, students, and parents greater control over the education process by giving them responsibility for decisions about budget, personnel, and the curriculum. Through the involvement of teachers, parents, and other community members in these key decisions, SBM can create more effective learning environments for children Lubienski (2003).

1.8.3 School based decision-making

School based decision-making is a concept based on the fundamental principle that individuals who are affected by the decision; possess expertise regarding the decision, and are responsible for implementing the decision, should be involved in making the decision. This concept often is attached to the broader school system reform efforts of decentralization and school-based management (SBM) where decision-making authority is shifted from the district to the local school level. In general, the goal of school-based decision-making is to “empower school staff by providing authority, flexibility, and resources to solve the educational problems particular to their schools” (David:52)

1.9 Chapter Outline

CHAPTER 1 :

The chapter discusses the background of the study where the extent of teacher participation in decision making is investigated in Fort Beaufort District secondary schools. This section further discusses the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and also the research questions. The objectives, assumptions, significance and limitations of the study are also discussed in this section.

CHAPTER 2 :

This chapter discusses collegial model, human relations model, three dimensional model and distributed leadership model used in this study. It also discusses literature on issues such as curriculum related issues, disciplinary, sport and financial issues.

CHAPTER 3 :

This chapter presents and justifies the research methodology used in the study. It also discusses the philosophical assumption underlying various methodologies and the

interpretivist paradigm on which the study is placed. The research design, population and sampling procedures, research instruments used to collect data and ethical considerations are discussed also.

CHAPTER 4 :

In this chapter, the researcher presents and analyses all the data collected through interviews, observations as well as document analysis.

CHAPTER 5 :

This chapter discusses the findings of the research. The discussion includes the comparison of the findings with data found in the literature. The objective of this chapter is to bring the findings into the fold of the existing knowledge in the extent of teacher participation in decision making at school level.

CHAPTER 6 :

This chapter gives the summary of the findings in relation to the problem, the methods used to reach the findings and how they relate to the research questions. Conclusions and recommendations reached and their implications for the policy makers and further research required in the area will conclude the chapter.

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature in the field of teacher participation, focusing on decision making, curriculum and management related issues. Furthermore it discusses the theoretical framework which will be used to explain collected data. In this chapter, literature will be reviewed in order to reveal what other researchers have written on the concept of decision making and teacher participation at school level. Consequently this chapter will examine areas in which teachers participate in decision making, the types of teachers that participate in decision making and also the views of the teachers and principals regarding decision making. The theoretical frameworks which guide this study are the human relations model, the collegial model and the site based decision model. Following is a review of the Human relations model

2.2 Human relations model

According to Maluako, Mukasa and Judy (2009), the human relations model gives attention to social and egoistic needs. It recognizes that teachers feel that fair treatment and pay are vital. On the other hand managers emphasize controlling, which implies preventive steps are taken to obtain the desired contribution of organizational members. This means that the school heads must guide or groom their subordinates so that they are in line with school issues. At the school level, Griffin (1994) suggests that any school head that wants to succeed must avoid falling victim to the sheep syndrome in which teachers are seen as a faceless herd to be led, directed and instructed without any creativity and knowledge to contribute to the success of the school. Dimmock (1985) concurs with this view by clarifying that effective schools adopt collegial and professional rather than hierarchical stances in making decisions and problem solving where the input of the expert is sought. Although this model emphasizes the importance of teacher participation in decision-making, Wanjiku (1985) and Mwangi (1986) cited in Maluako et al. (2009) point out that head-teachers do not involve teachers in running

their schools. This observation justifies the need to carry out the current research so as to determine the extent to which teachers are involved in decision-making.

According to the human relations model by Follet Mayo, the task of the school executives is to make subordinates know that they are useful and important members of the team, to explain his/her decision and to discuss subordinates objections to his/her plans Maluako et al. (2009). Subordinates are: to share information with the managers and involve them in school decision making to help satisfy their basic needs for belonging and individual recognition. This model stresses the need to consider expertise, experience, creativity, willingness and all positive aspects of subordinates in an organization, hence the need to consider teachers as able and willing to participate constructively in decision making in schools.

Follet Mayo (1880-1949) lists four basic characteristics of this model namely: decentralization of responsibilities, democratization, delegation and de-bureaucratization. In this case teachers are given responsibilities in the running of the school, classes or their departments. Heads facilitate teachers' cooperation in the attainment of school goals. Teachers are provided with opportunities to enhance their personal growth and development. There is real concern for teachers and their needs and the recognition of workers and social psychological human beings. The human relations model therefore accepts the fact that people share a set of needs: to belong, to be liked and be respected

This model is relevant to the study because it calls for the need to obtain organizational members' contributions in achieving organizational goals and it urges managers to allow subordinates to participate fully in organizational matters because these are their expectations. Educators may exercise responsible self-direction and self control in the accomplishment of worthwhile objectives that they understand and have helped establish.

Furthermore, this model is relevant to the study as people tend to comply with goals if the needs to belong and liked are fulfilled (Maluako, 2009). This is because, if educators are involved in decision making, they will be motivated and participate fully in the

learning and teaching situation. This model will assist the researcher to find out whether teachers are given a chance to participate in decision making. In addition, the researcher will be in a position to find out whether teachers are given opportunities to expose their creativity and whether their willingness to participate in decision is considered. The next model to be discussed is the site based decision model.

2.3 The Collegial Model

The Collegial model emphasize that power and decision-making should be shared among some or all members of the organization (Bush; 2003). The Collegial models assume that organizations determine policy and make decisions through a process of discussion, leading to consensus. Power is shared among some or all members of organization who are thought to have a shared understanding about the aims of the institution Bush (2003:64). Brundett (1998:305) says that “collegiality can broadly be defined as teachers conferring and collaborating with other teachers”. Little (1990:166) explains that ‘the reason to pursue the study and practice of collegiality is that, presumably, something is gained when teachers work together and something is lost when they do not’.

Collegial models seem to be particularly appropriate for organizations such as schools and colleges that have a significant numbers of professional staff. Teachers have an authority of expertise that contrasts with the positional authority associated with formal models (Bush, 2003). Formal models are still bureaucratic and autocratic in nature so they do not cater for sharing of power by the people within the organization and in most instances, it is only the school heads that are involved in decision making at school. Also they do not encourage working collaboratively with stakeholders. These models assume that professionals also have a right to share in the wider decision-making process. Shared decisions are likely to be better informed and are also much more likely to be implemented effectively.

The Collegial model explains that members of the same organization share a common set of values. These common values guide the managerial activities of the organisation

and are thought to lead to shared educational objectives. The common values of professionals form part of the justification for the optimistic assumption that it is always possible to reach agreement about goals and policies (Bush, 2003). Brundett (1998:307) emphasizes the importance of 'shared vision' as a basis for collegial decision-making. The collegial model deals with building in the assumption that teachers have formal representation within the various decision-making bodies. The democratic element of formal representation rests on the allegiance owned by participants to their constituencies. (Bush, 2003: 67). Considering the views of different authorities, it is clear that there is a need for school principals to involve teachers in decision making.

Additionally, the collegial model assumes that decisions are reached by consensus. The belief that there are common values and shared objectives leads to the view that, it is both desirable and possible to resolve problems by agreement. However, the decision-making process may be elongated by the search for a compromise, but this is regarded as an acceptable price to pay to maintain the aura of shared values and beliefs. The case for consensual decision-making rests in part on the ethical dimension of collegiality. Imposing decisions on staff is considered morally repugnant, and inconsistent with the notion of consent (Bush, 2003:65-67).

Although the Collegial model has many strengths, it is important to note that has its own limitations which include Firstly, the fact that decision-making tends to be slow and cumbersome. When policy proposals require the approval of a series of committees, the process is often tortuous and time consuming. Participants may have to endure many lengthy meetings before issues are resolved. This requires patience and a considerable investment of time (Rowan & Miller, 2007). Secondly, the effectiveness of a collegial system depends in part on the attitudes of staff. If they support participation then it may succeed. (Grossman & Thompson, 2004) argues that teachers may not welcome collegiality because they are disinclined to accept any authority intermediate between themselves and the principal. This means that teachers may develop a negative attitude towards any one like the head of department who will act as a mediator between

teachers and the school principal as teachers may fear misrepresented by the head of department.

Thirdly, the collegial process in the school depends even more on the attitudes of principals than on the support of teachers. Participative machinery can be established only with the support of the principal, who has the legal authority to manage change. Hoyle (1986) concludes that its dependency on the principal's support limits the validity of the collegiality model. However, despite these limitations the researcher is of the view that this model is relevant for this study because, it is particularly appropriate for organizations such as schools that have a significant numbers of professional staff. Teachers have an authority of expertise that contrasts with the positional authority associated with formal models. Furthermore the model assumes that professionals also have the a right to share in the wider decision-making process because shared decisions are likely to be better informed and are also more likely to be implemented. The subsequent section discusses the Three dimensional model.

2.4 A Three dimensional Model

According to(Baum &Wally (2003) decision making is as a process in which “awareness of a problematic state of a system, influenced by information and values, is reduced to competing alternatives among which a choice is made, based on perceived outcome states of the system. Three dimensions may be identified in the decision making process as (1) decision stage-when decisions are made: (2) decision content-what a decision deals with, and (3) decision involvement-who participates in making decision.

2.4.1 Involvement Patterns

Even though teacher participation in decision making is often perceived as important in current school reforms, in order to bring about ownership, commitment, and effectiveness during implementation, decision-making should be contingent on a number of conditions. These include the relevance of the decision, teacher's

psychological and technical readiness, availability of time, as well as social norms. Under some situations, there is a “zone of indifference” in each individual teacher within which orders are accepted without conscious questioning of their authority (Barnard (1968). In other words, participation in decision making may not be as important if the issue appears irrelevant to teachers. They may accept the outcomes or orders from the decision without resistance or objection. The terms “zone of acceptance” and “zone of indifference,” are often used interchangeably in the literature of decision making (Simon (1947). From Hoy and Tarter (1993), the concept of “zone of acceptance” may be advanced into two positions in school settings: (1) as teachers are involved in decision making located in their zone of acceptance, participation will be less effective, and (2) as teachers are involved in making decision clearly outside their zone of acceptance, participation will be more effective. From the concept zone of acceptance, it is important to know whether teachers are concerned with the decision issues at hand and are interested in participation in decision making, if better results are expected from decision making.

Some teachers may desire more participation than they now enjoy, while others may desire less or no change. Therefore, when investigating the patterns of participative decision making, the discrepancy between teacher’s actual participation (AP) and desired participation (DP) are important areas for discussion in this research.

Alutto and Belasco (1973) explored how often an individual or a group is involved in the decision making process by using an Index of Discrepancy Measure(AP- DP). According to this index, there are three patterns of participation in decision making:

- Deprivation represents actual participation less than desired participation
($AP - DP < 0$),
- Equilibrium represents actual participation equal to desired
($AP - DP = 0$)
- Saturation represents actual participation greater than desired

(AP-DP>0).

It is assumed that deprivation in decision making may potentially lead to dissatisfaction of the teacher, equilibrium represents the most optimal situation in participative decision making, and saturation or over-saturation in participation may potentially become a burden to teachers.

- **DECISION DOMAIN**

The nature of decision contents within the school can be categorised into technical or managerial domains Mohrman, Cooke, Mohrman (1978):

- Technical domain includes decisions relating to technical (professional) tasks of the school such as teaching, evaluation, student guidance, and
- Managerial domain includes decisions regarding the managerial support functions of the school such as personnel, maintenance, and student transportation.

2.4.2 Levels of Decision Issue

Arnold and Feldman (1986) discuss organizational behaviour from a number of different levels. In the first level, an organization can be viewed as consisting of individuals working on tasks in pursuit of the organization's goals (Individual Level). The second level focuses on the interaction among organization members as teams, groups or departments (Group Level). The final organizational behaviour is analyzed from the perspective of the organization as a whole (Organizational Level). Teacher participation in decision making can be considered from three different levels too:

- Participation at individual level – The decision area includes those issues closely relating to individual teacher performance within the classroom such as choice of teaching materials, teaching materials, teaching schedule and student assessment,

- Participation at group level - The decision area includes those issues mainly relating to functions of groups such as subject panels, co-curricular activity groups, and discipline groups, and
- Participation at school level- The decision area includes issues at the whole school level such as school goals, school budget, admission policy, personnel management and development planning.

2.4.3 The Distributed leadership model

The distributed model of leadership focuses upon the interactions, rather than actions, of those in formal and informal leadership roles. A distributed perspective recognises that there are multiple leaders and that leadership activities are widely shared within and between organisations Harris (2007). The key element in the development of leadership “is the notion of learning together and the construction of meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively. Such leadership allows opportunities to surface and it mediates perceptions, values, beliefs, information and assumptions through continuous conversations” Lambert (2003). It is primarily concerned with whether leadership acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice, whether or not they are formally designated or defined leaders. Distributed leadership is also central to system reconfiguration and organisational redesign which necessitates lateral decision making processes (Hargreaves 2007). According to Harris and Spillane (2008:3) distributed models of leadership focus upon the interactions rather than the actions of those in formal and informal leadership roles. Parts of this leadership theory reflect the role of teacher leadership. Spillane (2006) criticizes heroic leadership which tends to equate leadership with school principals and their valiant actions.

According to, Gunter, 2005, Grant, 2005, 2006, Spillane, 2006, and Grant 2007, 2008, leadership needs to be distributed among all stakeholders involved and it should revolve around the theory of distributed leadership. Gronn (2002:333) posits that distributed leadership is a “collective phenomenon where leadership is present in the flow of

activities in which a set of organization members find themselves enmeshed. Mayoretz (2008) explores the analysis of distributed leadership at a pragmatic sense. That is to say, he has considered its usefulness, pointing up four usages: as a theoretical lens for looking at the activity of leadership, as a means of furthering democracy within a school, distributed leadership may be regarded as a means of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, and a means of enabling human capacity- building. One of Mayoretz (2008)'s possible "usages" of distributed leadership in schools is that of furthering "democracy". This means decision- making bodies are all the schools' stakeholders. The democratisation of education therefore includes the idea that all stakeholders should be able to participate in the activities of the school. These activities include decision-making, governance and resource allocation (Hartshorne 1992:343). Bottery (1992: 165) distinguishes three levels of participation namely:

Pseudo-participation (where no real decision- making is allowed),

Partial participation (where equality of decision-making is not allowed but influence is)

Full participation (where there is equality of decision making).

Bottery further suggest that members of any organisation need to participate fully in taking decisions that will affect all stakeholders. Full participation will make the stakeholders own these decisions and abide by them. By doing so, people adopt an "all sink or all swim" approach in that they will enjoy the successes together and accept their failures gracefully. Participation happens in many ways i.e. direct(personal) or indirect (through representatives or institutions) and of intensities, i.e., ranging from minimal to comprehensive, by which individuals, groups, collectives secure their interest or contribute to the choice process through self- determined choices Heler, Pusic, and Wilpert (1998:42).

A review of the educational literature demonstrates a positive link between participative decision making (PDM) and teacher job satisfaction (Taylor & Tashakkori 1997). In research on job enrichment, leading scholars have view PDM as functional for schools and their members. The magnitude of the motivating potential inherent in job enrichment is commonly regarded as a motivator rather than a stressor. Xie & Johns

(1995). According to Aryee & Chen, 2006, Avolio, Zhu, Koh, & Bhatia, 2004, Carless, 2004, Probst, 2005, Slate & Vogel, 1997, argue that participation can also serve to increase control by changing the meaning of stressors that cannot be eliminated. PDM has been found to influence stress in studies considering perceptions of influence and actual participation and empowerment. However, very few studies have examined the possibility that participation can generate stress when present in high levels. For example, Haimovich (2006) found that teachers who evaluated PDM as threatening showed deterioration in their well being and health, whereas teachers who perceived PDM as challenging evidenced improvement in theirs.

2.4.3.1 Areas in which teachers participate in decision making

Teacher participation in decision making has also been found to be important for the successful implementation of large scale educational innovations by teachers (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996, Rice & Scheineider, 1994, Rinehart, Short, Short, & Eckley, 1998; Rowan, 1995; Smylie, Lazarus, & Brownlee- Conyers, 1996), cite that teacher participation in decision making has been found to be important for the successful implementation of large-scale educational innovations by teachers. It is assumed that “lasting school improvement will occur when teachers become more involved in professional decision making at the school site”, Rice & Scheineder (1994:43). In the studies conducted by Saaty (2006) the author found that teachers considered participation as the process whereby school heads engage them in all areas of the school administration where they have a personal stake in the outcome of the decision. For example, this may relate to school-based promotion, choice of curriculum, ordering of textbooks, organising fund- raising activities, selection of prefects, formulation of school discipline policies.

Studies conducted by Giesel (1994) indicate that in innovative capacities of schools, results show greater bottom-up influence and greater decision making during (formal) team meetings; in high–innovation as opposed to low–innovation schools. They further argue that in low- innovation schools, one can speak of little participation and little

agreement on the part of teachers with respect to important decisions. According to Slegers (1991), it is useful to involve increased participation in those areas where teachers desire greater participation. Conley, (1991); Kelly, (1988); Malen, (1992); Malen et al. adds that most schools grant teachers greater responsibility for completing certain task e.g. preparation of school improvement plans, organization of in-service sessions and implementing policy decisions made in other arenas e.g. development of plans to accommodate budget crunches or to institute state/ district initiatives. But few appear to grant teachers greater formal authority to initiate and formulate policy in the central domains of budget, personnel and program. Perhaps this is why in some settings, the majority of teachers report they have insufficient “wiggle room” to make major changes at the school site, curricular changes are “largely central office dictates rather than school initiated efforts” DeLacy (1990:6, 30) clarifies that school councils function more as forums to rally support for /reduce resistance to policies made elsewhere than as forums to forge policies for schools in schools (Hanson, 1991, McLeese, 1992).

Duke, (1980); O’ Donoghue and Dimmock, (1996) and Weiss, (1993), reveal teachers wish to participate in those management decisions that set parameters for financial decision making in the technical domain. This is corroborated by Mohrman (1978) who says that teachers reported a high level of actual and desired involvement in the financial technical domain than in managerial domain. It can be argued that teachers desired level of participation in the first-order financial management decision making is likely to depend, to some extent, on their financial expertise Somech (2002).

Although most theorists are advocating for increased teacher participation in decision-making, reality has it that schools are more bureaucratic than organic organizations, namely, strategic decisions may lie outside teachers’ arena of participation. Rice & Schneider, (1994); Somech, (2002) concur that as part of the norms of school, managerial issues of school operations and administration fall outside teacher purview while technical issues students and instruction fall within it. In a “test of relevance” (Rice & Schneider, 1994) state that most teachers internalized this bureaucratic perspective and showed greater interest in areas related to in-class issues, of

immediate relevance to the teachers own classroom, than in areas related to school as a whole Duke & Gansneder (1994).

2.4.3.2 The categories of teachers that participate in decision making

An ideal situation is whereby the decision making process begins with the people and is designed for people (Harris 1998). Such an arrangement may call for greater participation and involvement of teachers. Decision making should therefore be people centred, and it can only be so if every stakeholder is involved in the decision- making process. This view is supported by Hopkins (1994), who states that if one does too much alone, nothing gets done properly, and one may quickly get exhausted and then what was going on well may gradually deteriorate.

Taylor and Tashakkori (1997) identify four types of teachers namely, (1) empowered: those who want to participate; (2) disenfranchised: those who want to participate but do not, (3) involved: those who do not participate but do, and (4) disengaged: those who do not want to participate and do not. Krishnaveni & Anitha (2007) argues that it came to fore that newly appointed teachers were only involved in certain areas in which they possessed the required expertise. This was done in order to blend new ideas with the old ideas of seasoned teachers. Convey (1992) elaborates that managers sometimes see decision making as their central job because they must constantly choose what is to be done, who is to do it, and how it will be done. Hoy and Miskel (2005) postulates that, expertise and experience must be considered in deciding who should be involved in reaching a decision. This confirms Dimmock's (1993) findings that teachers with the most experience were more active in the existing avenues of participation than their colleagues. In his study Dimmock found that heads preferred consulting experienced members of staff to those who have just graduated. His findings also indicate that teaching experience was an accurate indicator of participation in decision-making in schools. Although these scholars argue in favour of consulting experienced teachers during decision-making, the researcher posits a contrary view that it is imperative that new teachers that are coming from the college be consulted on important curriculum

and management issues because they are fully trained in the new curriculum, National Curriculum Statement (NCS). In addition, there are so many changes to the old syllabus, thus experienced teachers will be confronted with many challenges with NCS as it is learner-centred. It is possible therefore that experienced teachers will learn new ideas from the new teachers. Nonetheless, heads of schools should not overuse new teachers in decision-making at the expense of their pedagogical duties, as they are still in a learning curve.

- **DECISION MAKING**

The decision-making process is a complex phenomenon. As stated earlier, Lipham (1974:84) cited in Kin defines decision making as a process in which “ awareness of a problematic state of a system, influenced by information and values, is reduced to competing alternatives among which a choice is made, based on perceived outcomes states of the system”. Knoop, (1991) in turn defines decision-making as an act with others in the organization in order to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Whilst Conway (1984) views it as any process wherein one or more individuals determine a particular choice, whereas participation refers to the sharing by two or more individuals in some action or matter. In educational settings, the concept involves two major clusters of personnel, the administrators with teachers and/ or students, and the administrators with the citizenry of the community. Hallinger (2005:10) explains that the new arena for decision making

“brings the responsibility for decisions as close as possible to the school... defining how school staffs can work collaboratively to make these decisions... creating ownership for those responsible for carrying out decisions by involving them directly in the decision making process and by trusting their abilities and judgments.”

Saaty (2006) argue that decision making in schools might include such areas as curriculum change which may comprise selection of textbooks, decisions regarding subjects done in the classroom, extra-curricular programs, budget decisions which may involve review, approval or disapproval of budget, building maintenance, purchases, sales and engagement in money yielding projects), personnel (which may include hiring and laying off of members of staff, staff conditions of work, salary increase and well

being of staff, school policy decisions (which include code of conduct, school regulations, discipline code, teaching schedules, reporting attendance figures, dealing with tardiness and absenteeism.

Decision making, is a process through which a choice is made. Emira (2010) argues that there are different levels for participation in decision making, ranging from the classroom level to much higher and general levels at which decisions affect the school as a whole. Examples of decisions at school level include those related to curriculum, staff development, assigning teacher responsibilities, providing materials and mental support, planning schedules for teachers and students (Conely, 1991).The current research does not confine teachers' participation in decision making to a particular level or area, but to their level of importance from the teachers' point of view.

Teachers' perspectives on their participation may vary, according to whether they believe these areas are important or not (Emira, 2010). For example, it is argued that there are areas of decision making, which lie beyond the classroom, that may or may not capture teachers' interest, but teachers will unquestionably accept them. Such decisions fall in what is called the zone of indifference, which is bigger zone of acceptance Emira (2010).The assumption is that teachers and administrators have different decision making domains so to speak, and this has led to the emergence of the contested zone, which describes decisions that are traditionally assigned to a particular group and aim to cross the border of another group's domain (Conley, 1991). However the main aim of the current research is not to fit teachers' perspectives in any of these zones. The aim is to examine teacher's participation in education as many decisions are intertwined and affect both classrooms and schools. Teachers constantly need to make decisions, which the educational process requires and these are taken at all levels (Al-Hoot and –Mahrooky, 1989). Taylor & Levin (1991) argue that teachers who are closest to student learning are more familiar with students' needs and are best equipped to make educational decisions. Besides, since teachers are the closest to the implementation of such decisions, participation would enable teachers to solve curriculum problems promptly and to apply corrective measures at appropriate times and immediately provide feedback on or about to decisional effectiveness, Dandero

(1997). Thus, if teachers participate in school decision making, better decisions will be made and as a result, student achievement will improve.

It can be argued that participation of teachers in managerial decision making does not automatically lead to positive organizational outcomes (Saaty, 2006). Some teachers may be distracted from their primary role as educators. In fact, Robertson (1993) notes that some teachers involved in the managerial and corporate life of the school reported an undermining of their commitment to the classroom. They found out that there was less time for curriculum development, lesson preparation, professional interaction with colleagues and student assistance outside classroom hours. Many teachers even see low levels of involvement in decision making in the management area as detracting from valuable classroom time (Saaty, 2006).

Although most teachers tend to rate lack of time as the main deterrent in participating in decision making (Weiss,1993), teachers are likely to still wish to participate in those management decisions that set the parameters for financial decision making in the technical domain. Consequently, it is proposed that teachers will desire some involvement in strategically financial management decisions to ensure adequate resources are provided for the technical or teaching functions of the school. Chikoko (2007:175) argues that people desire involvement in the making of decisions in matters that affect them, even when they sometimes have no capacity to effectively make such decisions. Theory and practice have shown that significant taking of responsibility by members within organizational settings increases the likelihood of a healthy institution, and the willingness to participate in future organizational improvements or changes (Chikoko, 2007). This study will look at areas in which teachers will participate for example in staff development, financial matters and management issues.

Every decision is an outcome of a dynamic process that is influenced by a multitude of forces. Regardless of its type, any decision making follows identified steps in reaching a decision on any organizational problems. Hoy and Miskel (1987:321-329) cited in Abuhumna (2010), present an analysis of steps of the decision making process as follows:(i) Recognize and define the problem or issue,(ii) Analyse the problem of the existing situation,(iii) Set the criteria for the solution,(iv) Establish the strategy for the

action,(v) and Initiate a plan of action. In the context of the study these are useful because they help to check whether teachers were involved in decisions all the way.

In view of the above discussion, the researcher will look into site based management which is a concept related to participation in decision making.

2.4.4 Site based management

Gaziel (1998:320) defines site-based management in education as ‘a system of education management that enhances the autonomy of members at site level in creating advantageous conditions for participation, improvement, accountability and professional growth’. Chan, Chin & Cheng (1997:18), on the other hand, regard site based management as: decentralization of power from the central authority to the school site level in order to encourage human initiative, participation and better decision making.

Body & Martinetz (1997:28) give a more comprehensive definition of site-based management when they define it as: the sharing of authority to make specific school related decisions, based on the information necessary and sufficient to make them most efficiently and effectively, as well as the distribution of such authority to those in or closely associated with that school, usually on site, and who are most willing and likely to know how to evaluate the relevant data, what to do about the meaning of those data, when, who, and how to do it, and who will evaluate the results of this process and make conforming or reforming decisions, over the long and consistent run. From this definition it can be observed that there is a need for principals and school management team (SMT) to involve teachers in decision making in their schools.

The importance of participation in decision making is emphasized by the Department of Education when it postulates that school based management is based on the democratic principles that enables broader participation by those ‘on site’ dealing directly with issues that need to be resolved, people who potentially have ‘on site’ expertise (van der Mescht & Tyala, 2008). The devolution of decision making in South

African schools advocated by official documents (from the Task Team Report on educational development (DoE, 1996) to more recent (undated) Draft Policy Framework for Educational Framework Development rests on sitebased management (van der Mescht, 2008). School based management posits a view of the school as an organization that is less locked into overhead control and authority, working against hierarchical models, towards learning organization (Jamali et al., 2006).

Cheun and Cheng 1996:6) posit that SBM shifts the locus of accountability whereby 'schools shift from external control management to active self- management'. In a context of strong 'external control management' accountability is relatively unproblematic: the school principal is clearly accountable to external authorities, the staff is accountable to the principal. In SBM by contrast, lines and areas of accountability can become blurred since the expectation is that all organization members will be accountable for their practice, to themselves, to each other, and the authority figures. There is also little evidence to indicate whether SBM has any effect on teaching and learning and curricular practices, the core 'business' of the schools. In fact, Bauer and Bogotch (2006:465), reporting on research findings on SBM, states that 'the relationship of SBM to classroom practice was virtually non- existent". Despite the fact that Bogotch and Bauer state that there is no relationship between SBM and classroom management, there is still a need to understand why teachers should participate in decision-making.

2.4.4.1 Teacher participation in decision making

According to Taylor and Tashakkori (1997) cited in Kirk (2002), teachers must do more than simply participate. Teachers must provide leadership and also teachers need to be empowered to do this. Leithwood, Jatzzi, and Steinbach, 1988 suggest that teachers acting as leaders have a greater commitment to change. Shared decision making is seen as a means for teachers to lead in the school and beyond the classroom. Such extended influence and involvement enhances commitment to systematic change as it enables a more empowered and efficacious teachers (Smylie 1992, 1995). Sharing or

participating in decision making in its historical context thus shifted in focus to empowering teachers to lead, not simply co-opting them into becoming better followers.

Participation in decision-making has been an area of concern among educators (Rice & Schneider, 1994). It is a joint determination of decision in general (Wegge, 2000). Citing Jung and Avolio (2004), Harris, (2004) maintains that shared decision-making is an integral part of transformational leadership, and that it is a pointer to the future, aligning personal values and interest to organization's interest. Shared decision-making brings leaders and followers together to agree on a common group goal (Wegge, 2000). The South African School Act of 1996 (SASA) emphasizes collaboration and collective decision making between school stakeholders (DoE 2006b:1). The SASA promotes the notion of staff working as a team which constantly reflects on what it is doing (being a 'learning network') (Ibid: 7). It is crucial therefore that staff members start operating as a team - classroom teams and SMT fundraising teams. When principals and teachers come together in this way, there exist an aura of friendship, belongingness and satisfaction.

The question of why management, or administrative leaders, share decision-making has found answers in a combination of factors. These factors range from attempts to co-opt workers into better compliance to a genuine desire to reach higher productivity through a more informed and wiser decision-making process as a result of empowered workers (Anderson 2002). More recent assertions in the shared decision-making literature suggest that teachers must do more than simply participate. Teachers must provide leadership. Thus it seemed obvious that teachers need to be empowered to do this (Taylor and Tashakkori, 1997 cited in Anderson, 2002:1). Evidence suggests that teachers, acting as leaders, have a greater commitment to change (Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach, 1998 cited in Anderson, 2002:1). Shared decision-making is seen as a means for teachers to lead in the school and beyond the classroom. Such extended influence and involvement enhances commitment to systematic change as it enables a more empowered and efficacious teachers (Smylie, 1992, 1995). Thus, sharing or participating in decision-making in its historical context has shifted its focus to empowering teachers to lead, not simply co-opting them into becoming better followers.

Arguments for teacher participation in organizational decision making are generally grounded in four theoretical orientations (Dachler & Wilpert, 1978, Green, 1975, Margulies & Black, 1987 cited in Duke, 2005): democratic, socialist, human growth and development, productivity and efficiency. The democratic argument for participation has also been called an ethical approach (Keith, 1996, Somech, 2002). It reflects the belief that offering the opportunity to participate in the governance of an organization is a moral imperative because individuals have the right to exercise some control over their work and their lives (Dachler & Wilpert, 1978, cited in Duke, 2005). According to Barth (2001) in the school setting, this argument suggests that teacher participation is necessary to professionalize and democratize teaching. Furthermore, a democratic school environment is believed to encourage children to participate in and sustain our country's system of government.

Though the connection of participation with democratic and pluralistic values is often cited, the emphasis on participation for professionalization or equity reasons has been found to be less prevalent among school principals than other organizations.(Blasé & Blasé, 2000). Dachler and Wilpert (1978) posit four dimensions of participation: values, assumptions and goal of implementers, properties of participation, outcomes and contextual boundaries. They further suggest that the potential of a system of participation is determined by the interrelationships between the goals of its implementers, the properties of the system, and the system's outcomes. Therefore, the individual components of the system cannot be investigated separately.

Day et al (2000,p.160) concede that, research findings from diverse countries and different school context have revealed the powerful impact of leadership processes related to school effectiveness and improvement. Essentially, schools that are effective and have the capacity to improve are led by head teachers who make a significant and measurable contribution to the effectiveness of their staff. Taylor and Tashakkori (1997)'s findings are in line with those of Day et al (2000) who found out that the best discriminator between high participation and low participation was principal leadership followed by job satisfaction.

The importance of teacher participation is also emphasized by Carr and Kemmis (1986) who postulate that participation offers individual teachers an opportunity to play a decisive role in the formulation and application of social rules and regulations. In the process the value and the rights of individual teachers are acknowledged. Carr and Kemmis further concede that participation maximizes the number of views expressed, and in the process it nurtures a respect for diversity as it encourages decision making by discussion rather than by fiat. It promotes tolerance, respect and canon for others. Participation offers individual teachers an opportunity to play a decisive role in the formulation and application of social roles and regulations as it ensures a greater commitment, motivation and responsibility from teachers.

The teachers' desire to be involved in decision making is often mentioned in research publications such as Singh and Manser (2008), Carl (2005,2007), Ngidi and Qwabe (2006), and Chikoko (2007) to name a few. Carl (2005:228) states that teachers do not wish to be viewed as mere recipients who are to implement the changes, but that they expect to be included in the initial processes of meaningful decision-making where their voices will be heard. In addition, Poppleton and Williamson (2004:289) mention that the more teachers participate in responsible and initiating roles in school change, the more positive they feel about the change, and the more they are willing to seriously engage in future change.

Another perspective on teacher involvement in shared decision making is that, whether the change amounts to reform, restructuring, or innovation, it frequently introduces a new layer of responsibilities into teachers' work Poppleton & Williams, (2004: 310. Currently teachers in South Africa have to cope with a workload that has increased significantly over the last couple of years. In a research conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council in 2000, it was found that more than 80% of teachers believed that their workload d increased considerably over the year 2000 (Rademeyer, 2005:2). In addition, it must be borne in mind that educators have had very little experience of participatory decision-making seeing that, in the past, principals were generally considered to be only persons with the knowledge and authority to make decisions (Heystek & Paquette, 1999:19).The dangers of involving inexperienced

teachers is that some of the tasks will not be done as expected since they lack knowledge and need to be capacitated in most of the areas. Nonetheless there is a dire need to involve teachers in decision making in at schools, as the positives outweigh the negatives.

As stated earlier, teachers need to be involved in decision making at schools so that they feel part of the institution and develop a sense of belonging and ownership. By so doing teachers will be committed to the organizational goals and be accountable for whatever is taking place at school. On the other hand teacher morale will be enhanced when teachers are involved in school issues as they will be clear of their roles and responsibilities.

2.4.5 Studies done on teacher participation in decision making at school level

Teacher participation is a trend that was set to transform top-down approaches, which reduced teachers to tools of implementing policies and decisions without making any meaningful contribution (Bezzina, 1997:194). It encourages quality of their profession and workplaces, which may result in a less stressful, more satisfying and motivating environment. Consequently, not only in South Africa but in many countries, teachers are faced with a task of continuously facilitating and implementing education reform that was designed without involving them (Hargreaves & Bascia, 2000). This means that teachers are demotivated and do not commit themselves in some decisions taken at school. Furthermore if teachers are not involved in curriculum related issues, they will encounter difficulties in interpreting and implementing the curriculum they are not part of. This as a result may have negative implications for the curriculum

According to Lilyquist (1998:1) there should be intense involvement of teachers in decision making processes. Teachers are expected to make valuable contributions to the school because if they are left out they may want to distance themselves from decisions (Owens 2001:284). Teacher participation in decision making has been found to be important for the successful implementation of large-scale educational innovations by teachers (Darling-Hammond et al (1996). It is assumed that “lasting school

improvement will occur when teachers become more involved in professional decision making at school site” (Rice& Schneider 1994:43). The results of studies into the innovative capacities of schools also show greater bottom-up influence and greater decision making during (formal) team meetings in high innovation as opposed to low-innovation schools Giesel (1999) , van Berg & Slegers, (1994). They further postulate that in the low- innovation schools, one can speak of little participation and little agreement on the part of teachers with respect to important decisions.

According to Rice & Schneider (1994), for teachers to be involved in decision making means that they individually experience the influence of their participation in decision making within the organization. If teachers do not feel such a personal influence, then the degree of participation and the desire to participate will simply dwindle, Rice (1994). Furthermore, Slegers (1991) argue that it may therefore be useful to increase participation in those areas where teachers desire greater participation than in fact occurs. Teachers appear to desire greater influence in those areas directly related to teaching situations. According to Bush (2003) teachers’ desire to participate in decision making is expressed through various aspects, such as claiming the right to make decisions in their fields of study, and expecting others to consider their views in a wide range of matters that may influence their work and studies. In other words, this indicates that the demand for teachers’ participation in decision making is very high. Bush (2003) confirms the importance of teachers’ involvement in decision making when he state that high levels of teacher’s involvement in decision making will enhance educational institutions. Harris (2008) argues that one of the most frequently recommended strategies for dealing with change, is to allow those affected by change to participate in its design and implementation. According to Smylie (1992) teachers willingness to participate may turn on reconciling competing professional beliefs and working relations among teachers.

Teachers who work together in a meaningful and purposeful way have also been found to be more likely to remain in the profession because they feel valued and supported in their work (Beane 1998, Bath 1999). According to Stott & Walker (1995: 51) collaboration, empowerment, co-operation and consultation in team work provides

teachers with “a significant role in school decision making”, “control over their work environment”, and “opportunities to contribute to a large range of professional roles”. They also record the claims that teams can solve problems more creatively than individual leaders and that modern organizations need “processing machines to deal with the overwhelming flow of information. Cohesion is widely acknowledged as a key characteristic of effective teams (Stott & Walker, 1999:56, Dione & Yammarino, 2004: 181, Sumanski & Kolenc, 2007:102). Cohesion refers to the extent to which team members “cohere “, feel that they belong and are happy to work together. It also refers to the extent to which team members agree on and identify with the work at hand, and clearly links with structural support in the sense that a team which knows its role in the organizational structure as a whole is more likely to feel a sense of belonging and purpose. Among the key values that underpin cohesion are trust, openness, and willingness to participate in decision making at school Bauer & Bogotch (2006:454). According to Macbeath (2006:354) high levels of mutual trust and willingness to accept others’ leadership, structurally, distributing leadership seems possible only in organizations that have moved away from traditional hierarchical models. Distributed leadership seems to be an appropriate approach to follow in leading and managing an organization in which teamwork is utilized Macbeath (2006).

Research on decision making in Australia primary (Mulford et al, 2000) and secondary (Mulford et al, 2001) schools uncovered that the more positively teachers view the decision making processes in schools, the higher the degree of influence and control they perceive to be exerted by education staff in groups in the school. Mulford et al, (2001) shows that where decision making is perceived by teachers in secondary school as collegial, cooperative and consultative and providing adequate opportunities for participation, it is more likely lead to positive student perception about their school and teachers, as well as perceptions about relationships and their own performance than where decision making is more top-down, executive, or does not foster widespread teacher involvement. Hargreaves (2000:20) observes, “There is no doubt that teachers themselves prefer principals who are honest, communicative, participatory, collegial, informal, supportive and demanding and reasonable in their expectation with a clear

vision for the school-principals who work “with” rather than “through” (Day) et al .(2000:20) .

In most cases in education, policies at national level are made by school governing bodies, administrators and politicians, but teachers are rarely part of the processes and their voices are missing (Smith & Shacklock 1998). Many principals are reluctant to involve teachers in decision making because they fear that they may lose control, but participation does not imply reckless involvement as everyone does not have to be involved in everything (Michagen & Nel 1995:111). At school level and national level the teachers’ voices are not heard as the system is still top down. Researchers of School Based Management, (SBM) generally concluded that teachers and administrators had little to manage, particularly with respect to budget, personnel, and curriculum strategies, due to the limited extent of decision making responsibility devolved to the school (Clune & White, 1988, Wohlstetter & Odden 1992, Murphy & Beck, 1995). Site based management demands that information be shared between the various stakeholders in the decision making processes (Beckman & Blom 2000:2). According to Frost et al (2000) teacher empowerment aims to develop teacher’s capacity for curriculum debate, develop self awareness and a sense of professional growth, increase teacher ability and motivate on to engage in curriculum decision making.

McLagan and Nel (1995) studies show that many principals are reluctant to involve teachers in decision making. They fear that they may loose control, but participation does not imply reckless involvement of as everyone does not have to be involved in everything. In a study conducted by Lontos (1995) in Massachuetts on teacher involvement in decision making, the results show that the majority of teachers said that their participation in the decision making process was unsatisfactory because their involvement seemed inconsequential. A study carried in Charlotte- Mecklenburg School reveals that only 50% of principals spent 50% of their time playing the role of an instructional leader while the rest of the time was spent playing the role of an operational manager. This is despite the fact that 80% of the teachers knew that they were supposed to spend about 70% of their day playing the role of instructional leader Loeb (2005). A study carried out in Ohio found out that a great percentage of teachers

feel that lack of empowerment and leadership is the greatest cause of their frustration in the teaching career Loeb (2005).

2.4.6 Participation strategies

There are various teacher participation strategies that can be employed in the implementation of site-based management e.g. through the use of quality circles, site-based management committees, task teams, green areas etc. for the purpose of this investigation only the first two will be discussed in Khoza (2009).

2.4.7 Quality circles

“Quality” is a small group concept that originated in industrial settings where the quality of the goods produced had to be controlled by special supervisors. The concept was modified to suit educational institutions where it refer to groups of staff members that have been divided into small groups which discuss problems, pass along possible solutions and recommendations to the management of the school (Bailey 1991:86-7). Quality circles operate from the principle that groups are more efficient in problem identification and problem solving than individuals (Van Rensburg 2001:185- to 186).

2.4.8 Site-based management committees

Supporters of school restructuring believe that schools should remain in harmony with the communities that they serve, they must allow for the participation of all the stakeholders in questions. One forum for achieving this is to establish site-based decision management committees. These committees may be directly involved in decision making or serve in an advisory role to the principal (Morse et al 1997:184). Wall & Rinehart (1999:52) point out that the rationale behind the involvement of these parties in committees (that involve teachers, students and teachers) is to solve problems and make decisions that were previously the sole domain of management. These committees must, however, be cautious about their decisions as the participants

may not have the collective judgment, expertise or training necessary to understand the impact of their decisions on marginalized teachers (Morse et al 1997: 184).

The committees must focus on mission-driven objectives rather than territorial imperatives (Banister & Bacon 1999:10) and on the ground teachers must ensure that they work to full fill those objectives. In order for the teachers to do that they must receive relevant training. (Mosoge & Van der Westhuizen 1998:83) argue in support of training that teachers must be empowered so that they become knowledgeable on how to deal with the issues at school. Hence there is a dire need to teachers to be involved in crafting of the vision and mission of the school. By so doing the teachers will have a clear guidance of what is expected of them, meaning that their roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined and greater commitment and enthusiasm will develop, ensuring that the school is running effectively. If teachers are excluded in these issues, they will lack sense of ownership and do not participate in activities that are taking place at school, especially if they were not part of the decision making process.

The following are some of the many areas that could be affected by the above-mentioned strategies in site-based management: developing new programs, scheduling, allocation of resources to meet instructional need and determining professional programmes. The researcher also argues that if teachers are not involved in these programmes, for example the development of new programmes, the school heads will not be in a position to identify the strengths and abilities of the teachers and the principals will have a challenge of distributing tasks to the relevant teachers.

Selecting supplementary instructional material is the duty of the teachers who are specialised in the subjects. The task of selecting learners for promotion to the next class is done by teachers. Hence it is important that teachers at school work together and try to solve the problems that occur at school.

2.4.9 Challenges of teacher participation

In order to implement educational reform, school based management has apparently emerged as an instrument to accomplish decentralization of decision making powers to school level (Squelch, 2000 cited in Swanepoel, and 2008:2). This implies an increase in the responsibilities of school management teams, especially the school principal. The central role that a principal plays in all programmes of a school entails that he/she has a considerable effect on the tone and ethos of the school (Kruger, 2003:206). Linking up with this view Botha (2004:239) claims that '...the role of the school principal becomes even more pivotal and important as these new changes come into effect'. The intended adjustment to legislation concerning the professional responsibility of principals, will probably enhance the leadership role of the principal and will ensure that he/she will become more influential regarding a variety of school related matters, including educational reform (Swanepoel, 2008). There is a dire need for principals to involve teachers as the main stakeholders in the decision making in school related matters, so to hear different viewpoints.

It is contended that an increase in the responsibilities of the school principal naturally results in an increase in workload. It therefore appears that workloads of principals have become more and more unmanageable, especially secondary school principals who lack the time for, and an understanding of their leadership task (Botha, 2004, Edwards, 2002, cited in Swanepoel, 2008). This state of affairs could surely impact on principals' view of teacher involvement in shared decision-making, since the latter management style could be regarded as a lot more time-consuming than the more familiar autocratic style of management. Support for this notion is found in, *inter alia*, in a recent collection of writings on dilemmas that principals encounter in engaging teachers in the sharing of leadership in schools (Chrispeels, 2004).

Principals in South Africa have been prescribed to, a large extent, by education authorities on how to fulfil their management task. However, until recently they could accomplish their task with relative sole authority within the prescribed parameters without being compelled to seriously involve other stakeholders. Heystek and Paquette

(1999) cited in Swanepoel, (2008:2) mention that neither educators have had much experience of participatory decision-making since in the past principals were generally granted knowledge and authority to make decisions. The shift that has occurred, from the old authoritarian paradigm and the accompanying view of power, is nonetheless not a straight forward matter for all school principals, if one keeps in mind that the majority of principals were teachers who advanced into administrative posts with little or no management training. It can be assumed that such principals will find it difficult to involve teachers in participatory decision making. Poppleton and Williamson, (2004:289), found that active involvement of teachers in school was more powerful than any of the other variables for promoting positive work, life outcomes for teachers as well as generating teachers' receptiveness and positive feeling towards change itself. It appears, though, that teachers are more willing to contribute to the school programmes as they are the change agents and have a perception that they are excluded from decision and management processes. Carl (2005) cited in Swanepoel, (2008:3), for instance, found that teachers' perceptions was that although they were the subject and /or learning area specialist, little attention, if any, was given to their voice.

What makes this situation worse is that some teachers are not well trained or qualified and they are not competent in implementing new policies that requires they contribution in making decisions at school.

2.5 Teacher leadership

Teacher leadership refers to teachers who are "leaders within and outside the classroom, identify with and contribute to community of teacher learner and leaders, influence others to improve their teaching practice, accept responsibility for realizing the goals of their leadership" (Katzenmeyer, Moller, 2001:2009). A new conceptualisation of leadership as suggested by Senge (1990), where leadership is seen as the "collective capacity to useful things and where leadership responsibility is widely shared the principal to be necessary to be sufficiently responsive to the complexity of contemporary

school leadership demands. It suggest that models of leadership which appreciate teachers as leaders and provide for a paradigm of open, transparent and deep democratic leadership should be embraced (Lambert , 1998). Teacher leadership represents a new paradigm for the teaching profession as reflected in the *Teachers as Leaders Framework* which introduced and refined by (Crowther *et al* . 2009) . This paradigm is based on their views of both a better world and power of teachers to shape meaning systems. Through collaboration new forms of understanding and practice are developed which contribute to school success and the quality of the school community in the long term (Crowther et al., 2009).

The concept of teacher leadership in South Africa is still at a level of description and perception. Some quantitative surveys have been undertaken (Khumalo, 2008), but at smaller levels (see Grant, 2006, Singh, 2007, Ntuzela, 2008). Grant (2005:45) sees a teacher leader as someone who is aware of the demands made by the changing South African situation on the school' (Grant 2006: 522). She further highlights the importance of understanding teacher leadership within the context and legacy of South Africa's Apartheid legacy and colonial past. Educational leadership is gradually shifted towards a form of collective, shared, distributed and organisational responsibility, stretched over the school's social and situational context Harris(2008). School leaders and teachers therefore work in closer cooperation and collaboration with one another and it culminates in deep democratic involvement in leadership involvement in leadership practice and collective capacity building (Senge, 1990).

My view to this argument, is that the whole concept of teacher leadership ought to be informed by proper understanding of the change process where there will be change of leadership from schools, that is, from autocratic to more democratic leadership style. Change is about the process of making something different and, as a result, it needs to be adopted by all those in leadership positions.

Characteristics of teacher leadership are noted by Ginsberg (1990), and they include aspects of mentoring, coaching and development which are entirely consistent with transformational leadership. Pounder (2006) makes the observation that in the teacher

leadership concept, teaching and leadership are strongly linked. He concludes that literature spanning twenty years viewed by York-Barr and Duke (2004) suggest that teacher leaders are respected because of their reputation for being excellent classroom performers. In my opinion, the views noted above are authentic, but with the case of my school will be careful and not link teacher leadership with ability to learner's performance as they cannot indicate the level of teacher participation at school. It would be fairer on the teacher leader being evaluated if there is a reliable method of gauging the effectiveness of strategies that are practiced by the teacher leader. Ash and Persall (2000:19) call for "new teacher roles, including responsibilities for interdisciplinary teaching, curriculum development, student assessment, counselling, peer review, and parental involvement". These duties were formerly reserved for principals and the central office. These roles and the roles they enact fall in line with Grant's (2008) model of the different zones that teacher leaders operate in. The final domain of skills which define teacher leadership relates to administrative proficiencies. These may include managing time, prioritising, delegation of tasks and authority, taking initiative, monitoring progress, and coordinating strands of work taking place in the school (Liebermann *et al*, 1998).

2.6 Teacher leadership and collaboration

The whole concept of school leadership is also underpinned by the concept of collective decision making, where every individual teacher is provided a space to express his/her views about school related activities. "The importance of effective professional development is magnified substantially when schools embark on site-based, collaborative decision making," Ash and Persall, (2000:20). The idea of sharing decision-making is also evident in Barth (1998:64) who suggest that "usually the school community deals more kindly with mistakes that are jointly made by teacher and an administrator than mistakes that can be attributed to either party alone". Similarly Sergiovanni (2001 :116) reflects on the benefits which can be obtained when there is cooperation. He explains this principle as a process when teachers cooperate with each other by working together, trying out ideas together, examining student work together

and helping each other, teaching and learning will be enhanced. This can be attained through a shared vision which occurs “where the principal had a clear vision for a better future for the school that was not imposed on staff but filtered through by a process of engagement and discussion of beliefs and values, such as it become shared vision” (Stoll, 1994:133).

Little (2007:26) argues that lead teachers participate productively in school-level decision making. A teacher leader for example is a teacher who is taking part in decision making at school. She highlights various activities and achievements which can be enjoyed in working collaboratively within the school. For her, shared decision making has taken a range of forms or strategies of participation, from formally organized and especially scheduled goal-setting sessions to a once-a-week staff meeting that engage principal and grade level team leaders in routine decision making. It can be observed that where there is shared vision, school head teachers become motivated, respected, feel part of the school community and likely to perform well. This view is supported by Muijis and Harris 2003 that one of the dimensions of a teacher leader is to focus “upon participative leadership where all teachers feel part of the change or development and have a sense of ownership”. Blasé’ and Anderson (1995) further argue that teacher leaders may assist other teachers to cohere around a particular development and foster a more collaborative way of working together.

We cannot fully discuss the enactment of teacher leadership and the factors that enhance or hinder teacher leadership without understanding the debates and literature that surrounds it. The Government Gazette of the Norms and Standard for Educators (2000) as well as the Task Team Report on Education Management and Development (1996) challenge schools to review their management practices, which traditionally have been top-down, and create a whole new approach to managing schools where management is ‘seen as an activity in which all members of educational organization engage’ and ‘not seen as the task of the few. The researcher assumes that the educational system needs leaders and managers who understand the dynamics of what it means to be a teacher leader and teacher manager within a dynamic organization.

In South Africa, leadership and management have been given equal prominence. The implementation of the South African School Act (1996) led to an enhanced emphasis on the practice of educational leadership and management, thus principals are mandated with advice from politicians, officials, academics and consultants, on how to lead and manage their schools. The blurring together of leadership and management is not entirely surprising as in practice it is often the same people who are both leading and managing, for example, a head of department or the principal or teacher leader SASA (1996). The researcher's views on this issue are that teachers who are not in leadership positions may fear that they may not be fully represented by those in management and this may result in the lack of trust on the part of ordinary teachers. Furthermore this may create tensions and derail the smooth running of the school. This clearly indicates that it is imperative that all the stakeholders be involved in the decision making process at school, this includes junior teachers.

2.7 Factors that promote teacher leadership

A number of scholarly articles reside on factors that hinder the promotion of teacher leadership in schools. Troen and Boles (1994:40) state that teaching is not a profession that values or encourages leadership within ranks. Leadership roles such as curriculum writing, school improvement and professional development are developed and delegated by the central office and are therefore limited in scope and vision and are subject to cancellation (Troen and Boles 1994:40). Barriers to teacher leadership are evident in a study conducted by Muijs and Harris (2007:24). One of the findings of the study reveals that "teachers commented that they did not feel they are always listened to when consulted, and that some managers still prefer a "top-down" leadership style". A similar scenario is reflected in research by Grant and Singh (2009), which reveals that school leadership remains firmly within the formal management at the top of the hierarchy. The researcher fully supports this argument because in some instances the principals of the schools sometimes do not consult teachers when making decisions; they just impose some of the things that should be implemented in schools. In some instances this may have a negative impact on the school's effectiveness.

It has been stated that the hierarchical nature of some schools is unfavourable for teacher leadership. According to Muijs and Harris (2007), a body of Australian and North America literature exists that has explored factors that can promote teacher leadership in institutions that traditionally were structured along lines of hierarchical leadership. Collaboration, time and shared decision-making are pointed among the factors that encourage teacher leadership. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009: 10) emphasize that leadership is influenced and that teachers who are credible to their peers, who are continuous learners and pass relevant information about the best practices to others, influence their colleagues. I argue that when teacher leaders work collaboratively they in turn are influenced by their colleagues.

Lieberman & Miller (2004:12) make a point that “teacher leaders are in a unique position to make things change” and they further maintain that this is because teacher leaders are close to the ground and have the knowledge and ability to influence the conditions for teaching and learning in schools and classrooms. It is their view that teacher leaders are advocates for new forms of accountability and assessment, are innovators in the reconstruction of norms of achievement and expectations for students and are stewards for an invigorated profession. Furthermore Lieberman & Miller (2004:13) report that “in the last thirty years, the pendulum has been swinging between two polarities that prescribe curriculum, instruction and testing and policies that enable schools to build the capacity of teachers to seriously engage in transforming their school community”. If these changes are to come about, there is a need to focus on those factors that promote teacher leadership such as collaboration.

2.8 Collaboration

Studies carried by international scholars such as Little (1990), Hargreaves (1991), Troen and Bolas (1994) and Muijs and Harris (2003 cited in Hlatshwayo, 2010) reveal that the key factors in securing successful teacher leadership are trust, principal support, strong communicative and administrative skills, an understanding of organizational culture and re-examination of traditional patterns of power and authority within the school system. Harris and Lambert (2003:44) argue that, collaboration is at

the heart of teacher leadership. Amongst teachers, collaboration has been found to be a necessary component of school improvement and changes as well as a contributory factor to teacher leadership. The shared goals and values at the core of teacher leadership are also an important influential factor in promoting teacher leadership. Research has shown that effective schools place emphasis on the teaching and learning process and invest in teacher development time.

In the South African school context, the task of the SMT is to unearth the potential and expertise of teachers interested in taking on leadership roles outside their classrooms. By so doing, the staff can work collaboratively towards whole school development and effectiveness. However, in schools where collaborative practices are well established, responses to teacher leaders prove to be more positive and strong peer networks are the key source of support for teacher leadership.

2.8.1 Collegiality

There is a body of evidence that demonstrates that teachers work most effectively when they are supported by other teachers and work collegially (Hargreaves, 1994). Collegial relations and practice is at once the core of building the capacity for school improvement (Hopkins, 2001). It has been shown that the nature of communication between those who work together on a daily basis offers the best indicator of organizational health. Hopkins (1996:177) states that 'successful schools encourage co-ordination by creating collaborative environments which encourage involvement, professional development, mutual support and assistance in problem solving'. This implies a view of schools as learning communities where teachers and learners learn together. Supporting teacher leadership in schools has a number of important dimensions such as making time for planning together, building teacher networks and visiting each other during classroom teaching.

Troen and Boles 1994) further argue that teacher leaders need opportunities for continuous development in order to improve in their roles .In addition, in order for teacher leaders to be effective, teacher leaders need to be continuously involved in

decision making and be involved in the professional development of others. Michell and Snacky (2000:78) suggest that 'where teachers feel confident in their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues and in the capacity of the school to promote professional development, school improvement is more likely to be effective. Teacher leadership needs to be made available to all; otherwise some teachers will end up as leaders, while others as merely technicians, creating a two-tier system (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001). I fully support this argument because if leadership is not distributed, some teachers will develop a tendency of not partaking in leadership roles. The clear message from literature is that school improvement is more likely to occur when leadership is distributed and when teachers have a vested interest in the development of the school Gronn, (2000).

Professional development for teacher leadership needs to focus not just on development of the teachers' skills and knowledge but also on aspects specific to their leadership roles. Skills such as research need to be incorporated into professional programmes to help teachers adapt to their new leadership roles. A study by Grant (2006:525) on teacher leadership further indicates that the "most powerful barrier to the take-up of the concept of teacher leader is that many South African schools are still bureaucratically and hierarchically organized with principals who are autocratic". I concur with Grant's view because some principals are still intransigent and refuse to adapt to change and still follow the top-down approach of leadership and this may lead to their not functioning properly. Grant (2006) further argues that in South Africa the way in which schools are structured does not allow teachers to work collaboratively. Teachers find themselves working in isolation in their classrooms, surrounded by learners all day with very limited interaction with their colleagues. I do not share the same sentiment with the above statement, referring to the case of the school where I am teaching, teachers do have time to be together during intervals in their staff rooms where they can share their experiences and ideas need encouragement to work together.

2.9 Barriers to teacher leadership

While teacher leadership is beneficiary to the individual teacher and school, there are several barriers that need to be overcome for genuine teacher leadership activity to occur in schools. One of the main barriers to teacher leadership identified in literature is the organizational structure that concerns the ‘top-down’ leadership model which still dominates in many schools (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). Research found that teachers perceived lack of status within the school and the absence of formal authority as hindrances to their ability to lead (Troen and Boles: 1994). Little (1995)’s findings confirms those of (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001) who noted that the possibility of teacher leadership in any school is dependent upon whether the senior management team within the school relinquishes real power to teachers and the extent to which teachers accept the influence of colleagues who have been designated as leaders in a particular way. Teacher leadership requires a more devolved approach to management and necessitates a shared decision making process. Wasley (1991) argues that teacher leadership is also hindered by teachers who do not want to associate themselves with management responsibilities. Such teachers feel that their job is mainly confined to teaching and learning. A similar scenario is reflected in research by Grant and Singh (2009), which reveals that school leadership remained firmly within the formal management structure at the top of the hierarchy. It can therefore be concluded that some teachers may not be willing to participate in teacher leadership although they are given a chance. Hence the researcher sought to find out the prevailing situation in the studied area.

2.10 The school management team as a barrier to teacher leadership

The School Management Team (SMT) has been viewed as an obstacle to teacher leadership in many schools. Magee (1999) identifies lack of support from the management team as a crucial component in the success of teacher leadership and further argues that where such support is not forthcoming the possibilities of teacher leadership are reduced. Similar concerns have been raised by Ash and Persall (2000) and Barth (1999) who argue that heads will need to become leaders of leaders, striving

to develop a relationship of trust with staff members, and encouraging leadership and autonomy throughout the school. For teacher leadership to develop, heads must also be willing to allow leadership from those who are not part of their 'inner circle', and might not necessarily agree with them. My view is that if the principals are still autocratic and have favours some teachers, it will be impossible to practice teacher leadership. Sometimes school principals find some difficulties to devolve power to their subordinates and may have a fear that their positions are being threatened.

When there is a strong hierarchical structure in the school, teachers do not feel wanted and often work as individuals (Ash and Persal, 2000). I argue that when the teachers are confronted by this type of leadership style, their feeling is that their views and ideas are not considered and their voices are not heard which lead to a situation whereby there is no team working at schools. Teachers thus have few opportunities to bring about change, both within and outside their classroom as long as traditional style exists in the school (Wasley, 1991).

According to Lieberman and Miller (2004:17) the bureaucratic, hierarchical nature of some schools often conflicted with the collegial nature of the reforms that the teacher leadership was designed to bring about. In many schools in South Africa, school cultures do not cater for shared leadership by all, instead they focus on leadership by a few individuals in formal management positions. Grant (2006) argues that schools need to develop a culture which recognizes that all teachers can lead. She further argues that the assumption that only people in formal positions of leadership can lead is one of the barriers to teacher leadership. This clearly suggests that if the school culture is not collegial and the management team operates in isolation then leadership is automatically impeded. Ntuzela (2008) believes that SMTs as people holding formal management positions need not be reluctant to disperse leadership to those at the lower ranks of the hierarchy; otherwise they (SMTs) will become a barrier to teacher leadership. He further argues that in South Africa, most often, principals are reluctant to distribute authority to others because of uncertainty on the legalities associated with this distribution of power.

2.11 Professional barriers to teacher leadership

While teacher leadership is beneficiary to individual teacher and school, there are more several barriers that need to be overcome for genuine leadership activity to occur in schools.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) suggest that teachers taking on leadership roles can sometimes be ostracized by their colleagues. One of the main barriers to teacher leadership is often a feeling of isolation from colleagues (Lieberman *et al*, 1988). Research by Troen and Boles (1994) found that teachers felt less connected to peer when engaging in leadership activities. Similarly to Lieberman *et al*, Little (1995) also found that teachers are less inclined to accept their colleagues in leadership roles. I have the same opinion with the above statements because teachers sometimes do not accept their peers as leaders. This is evident when they are reluctant to take instructions from them and this result in some tasks not being done properly or they delay in performing them since they do not accept the position of their peers. Moreover they develop a feeling that their integrity is undermined. Harris (2004) suggests that teacher leadership will not occur unless it is underpinned by shared pedagogical discussion, observation and team teaching. On the other hand Grant and Singh (2009) argue that teachers complain about the extra management duties as unfair because its not part of their job description but that of management staff. A similar study carried out by Muijs and Harris (2003) reveals that some educators expect to be paid for extra leadership roles. Some literature blames the previous apartheid government in South Africa for promoting an autocratic style of leadership within schools (Grant and Singh, 2009). My view is that teachers should be encouraged and be motivated to take leadership roles with enthusiasm even those duties beyond the classrooms for the smooth running of the school. This is supported by Clark (1990) who argues that adult development is more likely to be successful when it is voluntary rather than coercive.

2.12 Resistance to change on the part of principals

Principals at schools are still operating on a top down approach as they fear that when they distribute leadership they will lose power and influence at their schools.

A study conducted by Mbatha, Grobler and Looock (2006) in the Kwazulu-Natal confirms the uncertainty experienced by the management team in South Africa in delegating and distributing leadership to colleagues. They argue that although principals occupy positions of power and authority, it is not easy for them to exercise their authority as they should. One of their responsibilities is to delegate duties to other colleagues. However, the problem is that management teams are not sure whether their functions can be done by someone else who will not be held responsible at the end of the day. Mbatha et al (2006) found that principals are not clear about the extent to which they should use powers invested in them as far as delegation is concerned. This results in confusion and principals find themselves in a state of suspense not knowing what to do. In summary, the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) highlights that teachers need to play several roles, both within and beyond classroom and among those roles, a teacher is expected to be a leader, manager and administrator.

2.13 Gender stereotyping as a barrier to teacher leadership

Gender stereotyping has been portrayed in literature as one of the factors that hinder teacher leadership. Gender stereotyping is evident in the South African context where Grant (2005:27) describes how “in the majority of rural communities, women are viewed (both by men and women) as less equal to men...” In these communities members believe that a male person is best suited to lead a school, than a female (Grant 2005:27). Traditional culture therefore is part of the threat to teacher leadership. Hall (1996, cited in Grant 2005:48) argues that “power in organizations is associated mainly with men, based on general attitude that men make better leaders. According to Muijs and Harris (2003) when female teachers practice teacher leadership they experience an estrangement from their colleagues. This however is not true of the school in which I am teaching, where the school head is female and no one seems to have a problem with

that. This means that all the teachers irrespective of gender respects the position of the principal and also adhere to the school rules under her leadership. Although many studies show that men are viewed as better leaders, experience is also showing that women can also make better leaders if given the opportunity. As such, Grant and Singh (2009) reveal there is need to diminish the inequalities of traditional forms of leadership and explore models of leadership that promote democracy and social justice.

The educational system in South Africa leadership can no longer be characterized by a hierarchical and bureaucratic style of management. Although the Task Team on Education Management and Development (DOE, 1996) was mandated to make strategic proposals for education department capacity such as self-management of schools and support of teacher leadership, few teachers appear to embrace a teacher leadership role. Grant and Singh (2009), argue that without teacher leadership, the transformation of the South African Schools Act into professional learning communities is unlikely to occur. Furthermore, these authors (Grant & Singh, 2009) state that the concept of teacher leadership in South Africa is commonly equated with male headship. I fully agree with this situation because with the case of South African schools the principalship posts in high schools are dominated by male teachers.

However, Grant and Singh (2009) further argue that participative and democratic forms of leadership lead to distributed leadership. The argument raised by Grant and Singh is in line with related literature in the sense that within the democratic South Africa, the South African Schools Act 1996 promotes distributed leadership. SASA encourages teachers to participate in decision making and also promotes that teachers should work together in schools.

2.14 Benefits of teacher leadership

Besides its impact on educators, teacher leadership can also play a beneficial role in as far as the learners are concerned. Shared decision making within the distributed practice requires a school context and culture which is supportive, collaborative (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 1988) and collegial (Muijis & Harris, 2003) and which opens up

for safe space for learning and continuing professional development(Katzenmeyer & Moller,2001). I fully support this statement because in order for teaching and learning to be effective , a conducive atmosphere is required. Ash and Persall (2000:19) reflect that 'all rules, regulations, roles and work processes in the school should be designed to support and enhance the faculty's ability to design quality learning experiences for all students'. The role which good leadership can play to everyone (including learners) is evident in the work of Bark (1998:64) who argues that if a principal gives opportunities for leadership to untried (and perhaps entrusted) teachers who express passionate interest in given issues, everyone can win".

According to Carr and Kemmis (1986:2000) cited in Williams (2008) participating in leadership maximizes the number of views expressed, and in the process it nurtures a respect for diversity. However participation offers teachers an opportunity to play a decisive role in the formulation and application of social rules and regulations. In this situation the value and worth and the rights of the individual teachers are taken into consideration. Carr and Kemmis (1986) further argue that participation emphasizes a peer support network rather than superior-subordinate relationships. Participation offers individual teachers an opportunity to play a decisive role in the formulation and application of social rules and regulations. In the process, the value and worth and the rights of the individual teachers are acknowledged. These scholars further contend that if teachers participate in teacher leadership, motivation, greater commitment and responsibility on the part of the teachers is ensured.

In a study conducted by Callie Grant, Karen Gardner et.al, it emerged that the majority of teachers who participated in the study (75%) did not agree with the view that only people in positions of authority should lead. Of the sample, 72% of the teachers believed that school teachers were confident and capable of leading. Only 8% of the teachers were of the opinion that it was only the School Management Team (SMT) who should make decisions in the school. This perception reinforces the view of the Task Team on Education Management Development, Department of Education (1996:27) which states that "Management should not be seen as being the task of the few, it

should be seen as an activity in which all members of educational organizations engage.

2.15 Distributed leadership

In order to strengthen school leadership, the key concern is how to assist the internal management of schools in becoming more collaborative. According to Bennet (2003:325) distributed leadership is not something “done” by an individual “to others” rather it is an emergent property of a group or network of others in which group members pool their expertise”. It concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role Harris (2004). Thurlow (2003:37) postulates that teachers need to be encouraged to find their voices; take upon their potential as leaders and change agents to produce a liberating culture in their schools. He adds that this requires a radical shift for schools from a “dependency culture” to one of “empowerment”. Harris and Muijs (2003:439-9) argue that teachers need to shift from a follower role to one of operating as teacher leaders, whether they are informal leaders or in a formal leadership role such as that of head of department or learning area.

With regard to the issue of teacher leadership, Spillane (2001) states:

In developing a distributed perspective on leadership, we moved beyond acknowledging leadership practice as an organizational property in order to investigate how leadership might be conceptualized as a distributed practice stretched over the social contexts of the school.

Distributed or dispersed leadership is central to capacity creation and to the flexibilities and adaptabilities of such new organizational forms of learning as “learning organizations” and networks. However, the realities of distributed leadership in action cannot happen if schools continue to function as they are Spillane (2001). Argyris, 1976, Senge1990, Louis and Kruse, 1995) argue that they still need to develop better understandings about what type of leadership is really involved when it is distributed, about how schools might function and act in different ways, and about what the operational images of distributed leadership in action might look like Spillane(2001).

According to Gronn, 2002; Harris, 2003 and Spillane, 2006) distributed leadership refers to forms of collaboration practiced by the principal, teachers, and members of the school's development. The rationale for distributed school leadership is grounded in the concept of sustainable change (Fullan 2001). Moreover, given the intensification of work activities of school administrators, selected approaches to leadership must also be sustainable for those who lead (Bart, 1990; Donaldson, 2001). As Hall and Hord (1996) conclude, "Principals can't do it alone". According to Story (2004:52) the fundamental premise advanced by proponents of the concept of distributed leadership is that leadership activities should not be accredited into the hands of a sole individual but, on the contrary, they should be shared between a number of people in an organization or team. Johnson (2004) argues that distributed leadership is an antidote to slick top-down management approaches which is becoming more common in schools. He then calls distributed leadership a micro political strategy of dispersing authority for reform projects to teachers as well as administrators. Thus, scholars assert that sustainable school improvement must be supported by leadership that is shared among stakeholders (Barth, 2001; Fullan, 2001; Harris, 2003; Marks & Printy 2003; Stoll & Fink, 1996).

In the South African context Grant (2009) advocates that a form of distributed leadership is practical where principals are willing and prepared to relinquish power. She states succinctly that for a form of distributed leadership is necessary at the level of the school, where principals are willing to relinquish their power to others and where fixed leader follower dualisms are abandoned so that South African schools are no longer led by one figure at the top of the hierarchy. Grant and Singh (2009) add that for a change in school leadership, there must be a move towards more participation. Parts of distributed theory reflect the role of teacher leadership. Harris (2004:21) found that distributed leadership results in positive effects on pedagogy on school culture and an educational quality. In addition Harris and Spillane (2008: 51) see the role of distributed leadership as offering schools with the "opportunity to stand back and think exactly about how leadership is distributed and difference made, or not made by distribution. They further contend that distributed leadership suggests that followers may actually be a key element in determining leadership through their interactions with leaders (Harris

and Spillane, 2008). Such type of leadership encourages different views from all school members, hence sharing of ideas, as well as building sense of trust & belonging.

2.15.1 Elements of distributed leadership

According to Gronn (2002), distributed leadership is characterized as a form of collective leadership, in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively. This distributed view of leadership requires schools to “de-centre the leader” and to subscribe to the view that leadership resides not solely in the individual at the top, but in every person at entry level who in one way or another, acts as a leader” Goleman (2002:4). Distributed leadership therefore means multiple sources of guidance and direction, “following the contours of expertise in an organization, made coherent through a common culture.

Hopkins and Jackson (2003: 97) refer to leadership as “the intellectual capital of the organization residing within its members. Distributed leadership is based on the premise that all teachers can and must lead. Macbeath (2009:186) postulates that without mutual trust, relationships and respect are compromised and mistrust exerts a corrosive influence. Touraine (2000:38) further argues that within contemporary society, there is a tendency towards de- socialization, towards a withdrawal of trust in others. For example , a European survey found that , in Britain, only 29.8 per cent agreed with the statement “most people can be trusted”; in Finland, the corresponding figure is 58.0 per cent Van Schaik (2000). Moreover, Britain- especially England extends relatively little trust to its professionals in schools. According to Hopkins and Jackson (2003:100) all teachers have a potential and entitlement to contribute meaningfully towards leadership.

2.15.2 Factors that inhibit distributed leadership

Since 1994 South African education 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. It is only when teachers have been empowered and the organizational conditions are

conducive to democratic deliberation, that the devolution of power and to the authority to the level of teachers and their participation in the decision making process can be truly meaningful Khoza(2003). Numerous factors have, however, militated against distributed leadership becoming actualized. Grant (2009) posits an understanding of leadership as being linked to formal position due to, amongst others, a sense of insecurity on the part of teachers and official policy which emphasizes principal accountability. Within this essentially top-down functionalist perspective of leadership in South African schools, teachers are relegated to what Watkins (1986) cited in Williams (2008) refers to a “mere ciphers or automatons devoid of any semblance of human agency”.

A consequence of the authoritarian ethos that persists at many South African schools is the fact; it militates against the establishment of the free space in which creative interaction and deliberative exchange are encouraged. At schools where no free space exists, the possibility of teachers becoming agents of their own destiny as opposed to mere functionaries of the state is minimized. A prerequisite for the successful implementation of distributed leadership at schools is the existence of a group of educators who can actively contribute towards the establishment of distributed leadership. On the one hand, what is required are school principals who can provide what Woods (2005:92) refers to as ‘firm framing’, which is the structural framework required for distributed leadership. Distributed leadership can only come to fruition in a well structured organization which is characterized by shared values and beliefs. According to Mayrowertz (2008), some researchers suggest that democracy among adults in schools, as typified by shared decision-making processes that call for greater participation of teachers, can lead to negative results for teachers and schools. Teachers can become overstressed by shared decision making, and the benefits of participation do not necessarily accrue to better teaching practice or to the benefit of the school organization as a whole, especially if teachers’ and organizational goals are not aligned.

Distributed leadership requires those in formal leadership positions to relinquish power to others. Apart from the challenge to authority and ego, this potentially places the head

or principal in a vulnerable position because of lack of direct control over certain activities. Moreover, there are financial barriers, as formal leadership positions carry additional increments. In order to secure informal leadership in schools heads will require to use other incentives and to seek alternative ways of remunerating staff who take on leadership responsibilities. Secondly, the top down approaches to leadership and the internal school structures offer significant impediments to the development of distributed leadership. Thirdly, the separate pastoral and academic structures in schools, the subject or department divisions, plus the strong year - level groupings present significant barriers to teachers working together. These structures can actively prevent teachers attaining autonomy and taking on leadership roles within the school as they demarcate role and responsibility. Finally, and most importantly, distributed leadership poses a major challenge of how to distribute development responsibility and authority and, more importantly, who distributes responsibility and authority.

2.16 Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on the areas in which teachers participate in decision making such as finances, management, and curriculum related issues. It also reviewed the type of leadership styles that are practiced at school level that is moving away from autocratic leadership style to a more democratic style .School leaders are encouraged that they must they must decentralise power to all at schools so that there is smooth running of the school programmes.

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and justifies the research methodology used in the study. It examines the paradigmic assumptions underlying various philosophic assumptions used in the study. The research design, population and sampling procedures, research instruments used to collect data and ethical considerations are also discussed. which teachers participate in decision making, curriculum and other management issues.

3.2 Research paradigm and approach to the study

This section discusses the paradigm adopted in this study. The researcher adopted an interpretative paradigm as guided by the nature of the research questions interpretivist paradigm.

According to Maree (2007) a paradigm is a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular world view. Paradigms serve as the lens or organizing principle by which reality is interpreted. There are three basic research paradigms, positivism, interpretivist, and critical science (Cantrell, 2006). Interpretivist is the way to gain insights through discovering meanings by improving our comprehension of the whole. The underlying assumption of interpretivist is that the whole needs to be examined in order to understand a phenomenon. It also proposes that there are multiple realities, not single realities of phenomena, and that these realities can differ across time and place (O'Brien, 2006). According to Creswell (2003:9) an interpretivist / constructivist researcher tends to rely on 'the participants' views of the situation being studied and recognizes the impact on the research of their own background and experiences. Constructivists do not generally begin with the theory (as with positivists) rather they "generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meanings throughout the research process". The constructivist researcher is more likely to rely on qualitative data collection methods and analysis of both qualitative and

quantitative methods (mixed methods). Quantitative data may be utilized in a way which supports or expands upon qualitative data and effectively deepens the description.

Durrheim (1999:6) argues that an interpretative paradigm provides relevant information to the researcher in terms of “subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social activities. With the interpretivist paradigm, efforts are made to get inside the person and understand from within, this is done to retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated. Pring (2000:96) clarifies that “we need to know their intentions and their motives...” With regard this research method, the researcher talks of “subjective meanings” of those whom they are researching, that is, the different understandings and interpretations which the participants bring with them to the situation”. Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999:127), describe an interpretive researcher as a person who wants “to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations or phenomena as they occur in the real world and therefore want to study them in their natural setting”. This paradigm is relevant to the current study because the research questions are interpretative in nature. The researcher wanted to understand the extent of teacher participation in decision making and other management issues, their experiences and their views in terms of their involvement. Further the researcher wanted to examine how teachers felt about the areas in which they were involved in and the types of teachers that participated. This paradigm was adopted because it assisted the researcher to understand the participants’ views on teacher participation in decision. It also assisted the researcher to describe, interpret and make sense of feelings, experiences and views of teachers in decision making as they occur in school.

3.3 Research Methodology

The study adopted qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2005) the goal of qualitative research is to explore and understand a central phenomenon, which is the concept or process explored in a qualitative research study. It is concerned with understanding the processes and social and cultural contexts which underlie various behavioural patterns and is mostly concerned with exploring the “why’ questions of research (Maree, 2007: 49). Qualitative inquiry employs different knowledge claims,

strategies of inquiry, and methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2007). Holloway and Wheeler (1996) cited in Maree (2007: 49) expand that qualitative research typically studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural surrounding and focusing on their meanings and interpretations.

Qualitative researchers often study human action from the perspective of social actors themselves (Prozesky and Mouton. 2005). Thus, in this particular research, the researcher gathered qualitative information from the teachers themselves in the school setting. This approach was adopted because the sample size was small and purposefully selected from those individuals who have the most experience with the studied phenomenon (Patton, 2002 cited in Maree, 2007). Furthermore, qualitative research was adopted in this study because it allowed the researcher to study teacher participation in decision making in depth from lived experiences of teachers and principals who are involved in it, Watt (2007). Additionally the approach gave the researcher a chance to collect data from teachers and principals from their natural surroundings. The adopted approach was used because of the instruments it used as they assisted the researcher to gather live data direct from the respondents and observe their actions and reactions towards teacher participation in decision making. According to Berg (2004) qualitative research sought answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings.

3.4 The Research Design

Research design is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done (Maree 2007). The researcher adopted a case study design. A case study design is regarded as a building block for data collection frequently associated with qualitative research (Burton 2000). According to Yin (2003:23) case study research is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of

evidence are used". This definition is in line with Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2000) and Creswell (2003) who also define a case study design as an in-depth, intensive enquiry reflecting a rich and lively reality and exploration of a bounded system. Babbie and Mouton(2005) postulates that a case study facilitates an intensive investigation of a single unit which can be an individual case study, community studies, social group studies, studies of organizations and institutions, studies of events, roles and relationships, and studies of countries and nations.

One of the reasons for the adoption of case study as a research design was that researchers were becoming more concerned about the limitations of quantitative methods in providing holistic and in-depth explanations of the social and behavioural problems in question. Through a case study a researcher was able to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and understand the behavioural conditions through the actor's perspectives (Maree, 2007). By including both quantitative and qualitative data, a case study helped both the process and outcome of a phenomenon through complete observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under investigation (Tellis, 1997). Case studies therefore in their true essence, explore and investigate contemporary real life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships Tellis (1997). They also strive to portray what it is like to be in a particular situation to catch the close-up reality and thick description of participants lived experiences of thoughts about, and feelings for, a situation enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles, in Mouton (2004). Case studies are qualitative in nature Mouton (2004) and allow for a large amount of data.

The researcher adopted a case study because it allowed her to gather large amounts of data. It also enabled the researcher to go into greater depth and get more insight into the real dynamics of situations and people. In addition, a case study uses a number of instruments of data collection such as observation and interviews which allowed the researcher to study the respondents in their natural settings. Stakes (2008) differentiates between intrinsic case study, where the purpose is to have an in depth knowledge about a particular case and instrumental case study, where the purpose is to

show general phenomena. The current researcher used the intrinsic case study as it helped in exploring the participation of teachers in decision making and also gathered the views of teachers and principals regarding the participation of teachers in decision-making.

Despite the many strengths that were presented above, case studies also have limitations. Yin (2003) discusses two types of arguments against case study design. First case studies are often accused of lacking rigour. Secondly, Yin (2003:21) notes that too many times, the case study investigator has been sloppy, and has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusion. In view of the above statement the researcher did not exercise biasness of any nature that would influence the respondents as this would not yield valid and reliable results of the case to be studied. The researcher guided against this weakness by adhering to ethical considerations.

3.5 Population, sample and sampling

3.5.1 Population

Population is the theoretically specified aggregation of study elements and it is from which a sample is actually selected (Babbie & Mouton, 2005:173). The population of this study is 48 schools in the Fort Beaufort District, 48 principals and 300 teachers. It is from this population that the researcher will choose her sample. A population is a full set of cases from which a sample is taken (Mitchell, 2008).

3.5.2 Sample and sampling

Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the study. Merriam (1998:60) defines sampling as the selection of a research site, time, people and events in a field research. According to Preissle (1993: 57) sampling has to do with representation of individuals and subsets making up the population. Merriam (1998) postulates that the number of participants in a sample depend on questions being asked, data being

collected, the analysis in progress and the resources available to support the study. Qualitative research is generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling rather than probability or random sampling approaches (Maree, 2007: 77).

The sample for this study is composed of four secondary schools, four principals, eight Heads of Departments (HODs) and eight teachers. These were purposefully selected. Purposive sampling simply means that participants were selected because of some defining characteristic that makes them the holders of the data needed for the study. Sampling decisions were therefore made for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions (Maree, 2007). Purposive sampling decisions are not only restricted to the selection of participants but also involve the settings, incidents, events and activities to be included for the data collection.

The researcher purposively chose four schools in the Fort Beaufort district. These were selected based on their accessibility to the researcher. In purposive sampling the researcher hand picked the cases to be included in a study on the basis of judgment of their typicality (Cohen et al 2006:103). The schools that were part of this study were those whose teachers are vocal and have raised concern in different fora about teacher participation in their schools. Cohen (2007) further posits that purposive sampling is used to access “knowledgeable people”, those that have an in-depth knowledge about a particular issue hence the researcher chose the teachers since they are the ones who are directly involved in the school activities. Principals and heads of department (HOD) were purposively selected because of their position at school. The senior and junior teachers were purposively selected because the researcher was interested in their views in terms of teacher involvement in decision-making in their schools.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

3.6.1 Interviews

The interview is a widely used tool to access people's experiences and their inner perceptions, attitudes and feelings of reality (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The basic interview is one of the most frequently used methods of data collection within the qualitative approach. According to Herbert and Irene Rubin (1995:43 as cited in Babbie and Mouton 2006) qualitative interviewing design is characterized by being "flexible, iterative, and continuous, rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone." Interviews produce "in- depth, insightful and detailed data that can be readily validated and that will most likely provide the sought- for understanding" (Descombe, 2005:189). According to Tellis (1997) one of the advantages of an interview is that "it gives voice to the powerless and voiceless". Gratton & Jones (2004) identifies four categories of interviews namely: the structured, semi-structured, focus group or group interviews and unstructured interviews.

An interview as suggested by Cohen (2007:35) is a "principal means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research questions". It was of utmost importance to the researcher that the individual interview becomes a "conversation with a purpose" (Cohen 2007:249), where each participant in the interview, as explained by Kitwood (1997) "will define the situation in a particular way" (cited in Cohen et al 2007:350). This study used semi- structured interviews as a primary strategy for data collection. An interview is a flexible tool that permits the interviewer to use open –ended questions. This allowed the researcher to probe and also clarify responses which were not clear. This enabled the respondents to freely express their views freely. The researcher was also be able to read facial expressions from the respondents and this gave the researcher a chance to probe for more information on issues concerning teacher participation in decision making.

3.6.2 Document analysis

According to Maree (2007), document analysis means focusing on all types of written material that could shed light on the studied phenomenon. Borg, Gall, M. and Gall, J (2003) posit that qualitative researchers often study written communication found on natural settings as data sources. Document analysis is unobtrusive and non-reactive and can yield a lot of data about the values and beliefs of participants in their natural surrounding (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Yin (2003:79) views the following as documents: letters, memoranda, and other communiqués, agendas, announcements and minutes of meetings, and other written reports of events, administrative documents, proposal progress reports, and other internal documents, formal studies or evaluations of the same “site” under study and new clippings and other articles appearing in the mass media. The researcher analyzed documents such as minute book of staff meetings to find out more about teacher participation in decision making. The researcher used document analysis in this study because the recorded minutes of staff meetings gave her an insight of what transpires in schools on teacher participation in decision making.

3.6.3 Observation

Observation is the fundamental base of all research methods” (Adler and Adler, 1994:389) and it is the “mainstay of the ethnographic enterprise” (Werner and Schoepfle, 1987:257). According to Maree (2007:84), observation is an essential data gathering technique as it holds the possibility of providing us with an insider perspective of the group dynamics and behaviours in different settings. He further postulates that observation allows the researcher to hear, see, and begin to experience reality as participants do. “The greatest advantage of observation as a technique is the presence of an observing, thinking researcher on the scene of the action” (Babbie and Mouton, 2004:294).

Observational information is often useful in providing additional information about the area of study. Yin (2003) postulates;

If the case study is about the new technology for instance, observation of the technology at work are invaluable aids for understanding the actual use of the technology or potential problems being encountered. The observation may be so valuable that you may even consider taking photographs at the case study site. At a minimum these photographs will help to convey important case characteristics to outside observers (p.93).

The advantage of observation is that the behaviour is recorded as it occurs and that the observer being an outsider can see phenomena about the situation which those people involved in it may take for granted (Cohen, et al, 2006; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Tuckman, 1978). Another advantage of the observer as participant is that the researcher is uninvolved and does not influence the dynamic of the setting (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:85).

Cohen, Manion and Morris (2000) reveals that observations have a distinctive feature that offers the investigator the opportunity to gather “live” data from teachers in their schools on teacher participation in decision making. In this way, the researcher was able to capture what was actually taking place rather than relying on second hand information. That makes observation as a research method more valid and authentic than other forms of inferential methods. Further, discrepancies may arise from what people say and what people do as they may say something to please the researcher or lie deliberately. However, in observation the researcher can interpret the respondents’ facial expressions and other body gestures which send meanings. Creswell (2003) posits that observations have limitations in that the researcher may not have good attending and observing skills and this may affect the process of data analysis. Robson (2002) postulates that what people do may differ from what they say they do and observation schedules enable the data to be collected on practice and on non-verbal behaviour.

Maree (2007:85) states that there are four types of observation that are used in qualitative research namely complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant.

Complete observer: The researcher is a non-participant observer looking at the situation from a distance (called an etic or “outsider” perspective). It is the least obstructive form of observation, but has the limitation that the researcher does not

become immersed in the situation and does not really understand what she/ he observes.

Participant as observer: This is typically found in action research projects where the researcher becomes part of the research process, and works with the participants in the situation to design and develop intervention strategies. The researcher becomes a participant in the situation being observed, and may intervene in the dynamics of the situation and even try to alter it. The researcher thus immerses himself or herself in a chosen setting to gain an insider perspective (called an emic perspective) of that setting.

Complete participant : The researcher gets completely immersed in the setting, to such an extent that those being observed do not know that they are subjects of observation. This type of observation is seldom used as it raises serious ethical concerns when those being observed have not granted consent to being observed or when they are not aware that they are, infact, being observed Maree (2007).

The researcher used the *observer as participant* when conducting this research. In this scenario the researcher gets into the situation, but focuses mainly on his or her role as observer. The researcher may look for patterns of behaviour in a particular community to understand the assumptions, values and beliefs of the participants, and to make sense of the social dynamics, but the researcher remains uninvolved and does not influence the dynamics of the setting Maree (2007).

One of the biggest advantages of observation is that you can do it anywhere (Kelleher, 1993, cited in Babbie & Mouton, 2005). On the other hand observation has its limitations. According to Creswell, (2002;123) the researcher may not have good attending and observing skills and this may affect the process of data analysis.

Observation was adopted by the researcher because it gave her a chance to observe personally the proceedings of staff meetings and how teachers participated in these meetings and how decisions were made. The researcher observed proceedings of staff meetings and was able to identify the extent to which teachers participate in decision making in schools.

3.7 Credibility and Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed the notion of trustworthiness as a key principle in qualitative research. Babbie and Mouton (2005:277) also concur that the key criterion or principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness, neutrality of its findings or decisions. Just as a quantitative study cannot be considered valid unless it is reliable, a qualitative study cannot be called transferable unless it is credible, and it cannot be deemed credible unless it is dependable. Trustworthiness entails credibility and transferability, which is the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other context (Bassey 1999). According to Winter (2000) trustworthiness of a study can be enhanced through prolonged engagement with data sources, persistent observation, adequate checking of raw data with their sources and triangulation of data. Creswell (2000) argues that trustworthiness of the study is established when findings reflect as closely as possible the meanings and describes by the participants.

3.7.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to that which can be seen and believed. To enhance the credibility of research findings, the researcher used multiple data sources such as teacher – mentors, pre- service teachers. The researcher kept notes on research decisions made, coded data, and used member checking to verify and validate findings (Maree, 2007).

Credibility is achieved through the following procedures: prolonged engagement with the data sources, persistent observation, adequate checking of the raw data with their sources and triangulation of data (Babbie & Mouton, 2005: Winter, 2000). Triangulation is the best way to elicit the various and divergent constructions of reality that exist within the context of a study .It is used to collect information about different events and relationships from different points of view. This means asking a variety of questions, seeking different sources, and using multiple methods (Babbie & Mouton, 2005: 277). The researcher ensured credibility by triangulating data from interviews, observations and document analysis. Whenever data from these sources corresponded it proved that it was credible.

3.7.2 Transferability

Babbie and Mouton (2005:277) explain that transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied in other contexts or with other respondents. In a qualitative study the obligation for demonstrating transferability rests on those who wish to apply to it to the receiving context. Guba 1994, cited in Babbie & Mouton (2005: 277).

3.7.2.1 Strategies for transferability

Thick description - because transferability in a qualitative study depends on similarities between sending and receiving contexts, the researcher collects sufficiently detailed descriptions of data in context and reports them with sufficient detail and precision, to allow judgements about transferability to be made by the reader. Transferability can be achieved through purposive sampling, where qualitative research seeks to maximize the range of specific information that can be obtained from and about that context, by purposely selecting locations and respondents that differ from one another (Babbie & Mouton, 2005:277).

3.7.3 Data analysis

According to Wellington (2000:65) analysis refers to “a close or systematic study or the separation of a school into its part for study and is therefore, an integral part of the whole research process.” Qualitative researchers integrate the operations of organizing, analyzing and interpreting data and call the entire process data analysis (McMillan and Schumacher (1993:486).

The process of data analysis intends to bring about order, structure, and interpretation to the mass of collected data, Marshall & Ross man (1999:150) Data analysis according to Terre Blanche and Durrheim “involves reading through your data repeatedly, and engaging in activities of breaking the data down to (themes and categories) and building it up again in novel ways (elaborating and interpreting). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:412) describe the search for themes as a kind of pattern-finding process where

we identify a type of occurrence by virtue of it being perceived as an underlying “common form” found in different contexts. The approach to data analysis for the qualitative data involves a search for themes that emerge. Data reduction in research is the most important stage in data analysis. This refers to data selection and condensation (Wellington 2000:134).

3.8 Ethical considerations

The consideration of ethics in research is of paramount importance in education as it deals with people. Ethics have traditionally been seen as a set of general principles “invariantly and validly applied to all situations” Clarke and Dawson (1999:91). Jansen van Rensburg (2001:28) describes research ethics as referring to the moral dimensions of researching about what is right and wrong while one is engaged in research.

According to Mouton (2001:38) “social research is not a value neutral activity. It involves people and therefore it raises questions about ethics”. Ethics can be defined as a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others”, Cohen (2007). Consent of participants to participate in any research is vital, Clarke and Dawson (1999). Kavle (1996) identifies three main areas of ethical issues namely, informed consent, confidentiality, and the consequence of an interview. Stake (2005: 447) concede that signed informed letters serve as a “moral obligation contract” between the researcher and the participants. Durrheim and Wassenaar (2001:66) state that ethical issues are informed by autonomy, nonmaleficence and beneficence. This principle of autonomy according to Cohen (2007) entails respect of autonomy of all people participating in the research. The research should do no harm to the participants and should be of benefit to the participant (beneficence). It was therefore imperative that all participants must receive a clear explanation of what the researcher expects of them so that they could make informed choice whereby they participated voluntarily in a research. According to Makore-Rukuni (2001:33), in conducting research, the ethical principle of autonomy is contained in the idea of informed consent where the client should be allowed to choose to participate, or not to participate in research, after receiving all relevant information about the risk or harm that could arise if they participate in the research. The researcher should obtain

the necessary permission from the respondents after they are thoroughly and truthfully informed about the purpose of the interview and the investigation. The respondents should also be informed that their identity will remain anonymous (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Furthermore they postulate that the researcher should guard against manipulating respondents or treating them as objects or numbers rather than individual human beings. Therefore the researcher must respect the autonomy of all people participating in the research.

3.9 Summary

Chapter 3 examined and justified methodology selected for the study to show its suitability. It covered the philosophic interpretive paradigm, the qualitative approach and case study design. It further presented interviews, observation and documentary analysis as instruments used to select data. It finally covered the purposive sampling procedure, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

4 CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

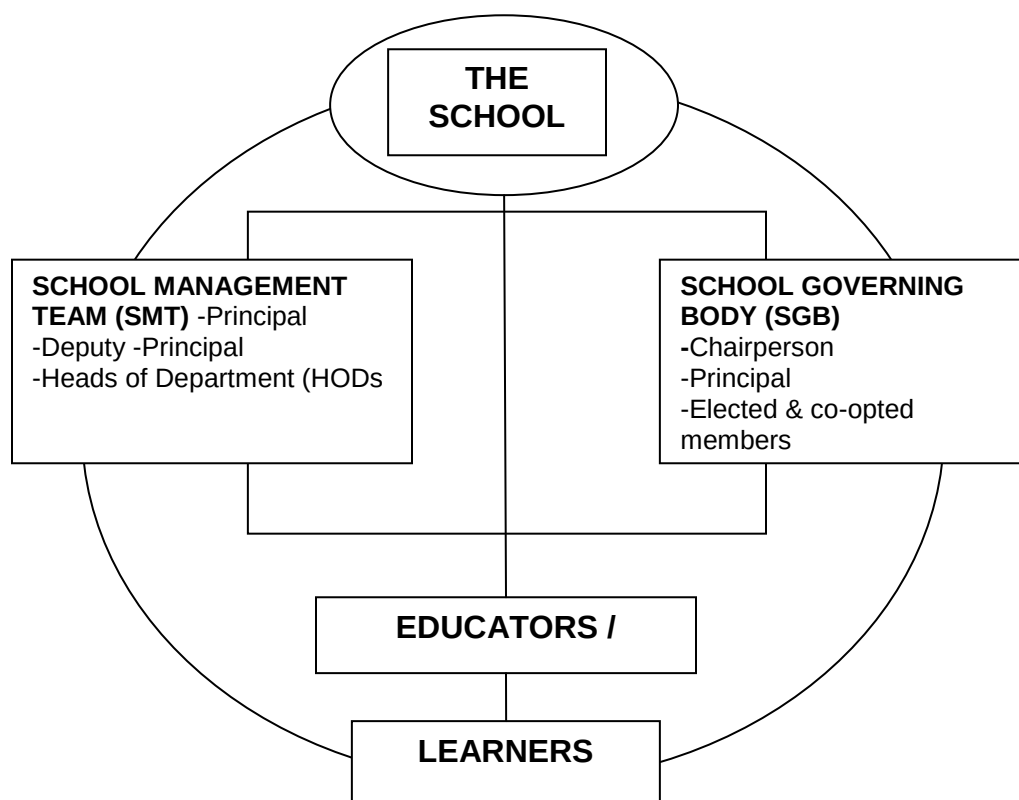
The previous chapter outlined the methodology employed in this study. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse and present data collected to find out the extent of teacher participation in decision making in curriculum and management related issues at school level. The sample consisted of four schools and sixteen participants who included four principals, four heads of departments, four senior teachers and four junior teachers. Participants are identified as follows: Principals :Pr 1-4, Heads of departments: HOD 1-4, Senior teachers: Snr Tr 1-4 and Junior teachers : Jnr .Tr. 1-4. Data were collected via semi structured interviews with all participants. The data collected is reduced by clustering common themes as well as writing reflections and tallying and ranking of responses to uncover the main issues that are arising which are put together as findings of the study.

Presentation of the data, analysis and interpretation of findings are facilitated by the research questions of the study. The major research question is: To what extent do teachers participate in decision making in curriculum and management issues at school level? The sub research questions are:

- (i) In Which areas are teachers involved in decision making at the school level?
- (ii) Which teachers do principals/school management involve in decision making at the school level?
- (iii) What strategies do principals/school management use to involve teachers in decision making?
- (iv) What are the views of principals/school management and teachers themselves regarding teacher participation in curriculum and management issues?

The schools under study have a defined organizational structure that is in place. The diagram below represents the organizational structure of the schools.

The secondary school organogram (Manual for School Management: Eastern Cape Department of Education)



(Adapted from; Eastern Cape Department of Education)

Figure 4.1: Manual for School Management: B 37

For the school to function properly and effectively the school organizational structure should be in place. In a school situation the principal is the head of the school who has the responsibility to see to it that the core business of the school which is teaching and learning takes place. Also the principal's work as instructional leader revolves around supervision and monitoring of progress made by teachers towards completing tasks incumbent on them to discharge and providing assistance and support for them to do so. The principal is also the situational representative of the department of education in

the school and is therefore responsible for ensuring that departmental instructions are communicated to staff and are adhered to by the school.

The school management team (SMT) comprises the principal, deputy principal and the heads of department (HOD's) as well as teachers indicated in the diagram. The responsibility of the SMT is to work together with the principal and the school governing body (SGB) in ensuring that the school becomes a dynamic environment for both teachers and learners. Furthermore the role of the SMT is to assist the principal with his/her management tasks and to share the management tasks more widely in the school. It also has a responsibility of helping with planning, conflict resolution, problem solving and decision making.

The heads of department (HOD's) play a crucial role in assisting with curricular management and by following up on tasks in the absence of the head, by helping to supervise and monitor work and by leading subject or phase committees and helping to organize and lead co-curricular activities. In the school the principal holds an ex officio position on both the SGB and the SMT and is therefore the primary link or liaison officer between the departmental governance and professional management structures of the school. This means that the principal must give special attention to promoting flow of information between these structures. The SGB is an important structure, which is responsible for democratization in the school and the principal, and the SMT should work together with this structure, each respecting what the other can contribute to the school.

The teachers as shown in the diagram are a very important stakeholder in the school as they are responsible for the core business which is teaching and learning. They are also responsible for managing and leading the school through the challenges of change. It is the responsibility of the teachers to work closely with the parents to ensure that the learners are progressing in their school work. Subsequently the learners are also the key stakeholders to the school as without them there will be no institution called school and their responsibility is to read and apply what they have been taught by their teachers.

The first part of the chapter presents biographical information of the participants. The biographical data is used to aid the researcher in finding the basic information regarding participants in the study which in turn shows the quality of the respondents that participated in decision making in schools. All respondents who participated in the study were seen as information rich and were in a position to give accurate information on issues pertaining to decision making in selected schools because they work in the context that was interrogated by the study.

4.2 Biographical Characteristics of Respondents

The chapter unfolds with biographical information of the respondents who participated in the study in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. The table below shows the biographic data of the respondents

Table 4.1: The table below presents the gender of participants.

RESPONDENTS	PRINCIPALS		HOD's		SENIOR TEACHERS		JUNIOR TEACHERS	
Gender	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	1	25	1	25	1	33	2	50
Female	3	75	3	75	2	67	2	50
Total	4	100	4	100	3	100	4	100

Table 4.2: The table below introduce the age range of respondents

RESPONDENTS	PRINCIPALS		HOD's		SENIOR TEACHERS		JUNIOR TEACHERS	
Age Range	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
30-39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
40-49	0	0	1	25	2	67	3	75
50-59	4	100	3	75	1	33	1	25
60+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	100	4	100	3	100	4	100

The majority of the respondents were relatively old, that is senior teachers, heads of departments and principals. Their ages range between 40 and 59 years. This clearly shows that these respondents are mature and relevant people who are capable of providing insightful and useful information in this study. The ages of junior teachers who participated in the study ranged from 30 to 49years. It is expected that at that age range they will be able to give more information on their involvement in decision-making. There is also an equal number of males and females who were purposively selected as they were perceived to be having the necessary information required by the study.

The table below shows the academic qualifications of respondents.

Table 4.3: Academic Qualifications of the respondents

RESPONDENTS	PRINCIPALS	HOD's	SENIOR TEACHERS	JUNIOR TEACHERS
Academic Qualifications	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %
STD (Senior Teacher Dip)	0	0	0	0
ACE	4: 100	4: 100	2: 50	2: 50
BA				
BEd	1: 25	1: 25	0	2: 50
MEd	1: 25	2: 50	2: 25	1: 25
PGCE	1: 25	1: 25		0
HED	1: 25	0		0
BPEd		0	1: 25	2: 50
		1: 25	1:25	0

LEGEND:

STD	-	Senior Teachers' Diploma
ACE	-	Advanced Certificate in Education
BA	-	Bachelor of Arts
BEd	-	Bachelor of Education
Med	-	Masters in Education
PGCE	-	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
HED	-	Higher Education Diploma
BPEd	-	Bachelor of Pedagogies

All principals and HODs are holders of Senior Teachers Diploma (STD) and 50% of the senior teachers and 50% of the junior teachers also have this qualification. 25% of the principals hold an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), 25% hold BA qualifications, 25% hold BEd qualifications and lastly 25% of the principals have a master's qualification. Among HODs 25% have an ACE (Advanced Certificate in Education), 50% hold Bachelor of Arts (BA) qualifications, 25% hold Bachelor of Education (BED) qualifications. Among senior teachers 50% hold STD qualification, 25% hold a BA qualification, 25% hold a PGCE, 25% a BPED. 50% of the junior teachers have an STD, 50% have an ACE, and 25% hold a BA qualification and 50% hold a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

This data clearly indicates all that the respondents are qualified teachers and are in a position to assist in giving authentic information and have a clear understanding of teacher participation in decision making.

4.2.1 Teaching experience of principals and HODs

Teaching experience is important to the study because it gives the principal guideline as to which responsibility to delegate to depending on their experience. The table below presents data on the length of teaching experience of principals and HODs. The table below presents the experience of principals and HODs.

Table 4.4: Experience of principals and HoDs

Teaching experience	Principals	%	HoDs	%
1-20 years	0	0	1	25
21-40 years	4	100	3	75

Table 4.4 above shows that 100% principals has between 21 – 40 years experience as class teachers. It also indicates that 25% HoDs have between 1-20 years of teaching experience while the majority (75%) have between 21 -40 years teaching experience.

This shows that the sample consists of respondents with a relatively long experience of teaching service. The principals from the four schools have over 25 years of teaching experience and this shows that they are highly knowledgeable on issues pertaining to teaching and learning.

When principals and HoDs join the teaching force they become teachers. However through promotion they become school administrators. The study sought to find out the administrative experience of Principals and HoDs.

Table 4.5 Administrative experience of Principals and HoDs

Experience as principal /HoD	Principals	%	HoDs	%
1-5 years	3	75	0	0
6-10 years	0	0	0	0
11-15 years	1	25	4	100
	4	100	4	100

When it comes to experience as principals, only one principal has over 10 years of experience as a principal. The other three have less than five years experience. During interviews it emerged that one of the principals has been an acting principal for over 3 years and two principals were recently promoted after just over 1 year of acting as principal. From this data it seems that principals are promoted on the basis of long experience as teachers.

With regard to HoDs, 3 (75%) HoDs have over 20 years teaching experience and 1 (25%) has over 10 years of experience as the HOD. It seems most HoDs are experienced teachers with knowledge on their subject areas. It can therefore be concluded that schools managers are hired on the basis of qualification and experience, as shown earlier as shown in Table 4.4. The subsequent sections discusses the teaching and managerial experience of teachers and junior teachers.

4.2.2 Teaching experience of teachers and junior teachers

Table 4.6 below shows that (25%) of senior teachers have less than 10 years of experience and 25% have over 10 years of experience and 50% lie in the range of 15-20 years of teaching experience. Among junior teachers 75% have less than 10 years of experience and 25% have over 10 years of experience.

Table 4.5: Teaching experience of teachers and junior teachers

Teaching experience	Senior teachers	%	Junior teachers	%
1-5 years	0	0	1	25
6-10 years	1	25	3	75
11- 15 years	1	25	0	0
16-20 years	2	50	0	0
21-25 years	0	0	0	0
	4	100	4	100

It appears that most respondents have more experience in the teaching field and their experience will be very useful in giving useful insight into what is exactly happening in as far as decision making is concerned in schools. As teachers themselves, they can reveal to what extent they participate in decision making in their schools. The next section focuses on substantive positions at the selected schools.

4.2.3 Substantive Positions

All principals except for one are substantive principals, one of them has held this position for more than 10 years and two of them held this position for more than 5 years. There is only one who is an acting capacity and has held that position for the past two years. All HODs are also substantive and three of them held these positions for more than 8 years and one head of department held this position for 2 years. In the case of

the junior teachers and senior teachers, there is no-one who is a temporary teacher. They are all substantive in their positions.

So far the researcher has given biographical information so as to illuminate the educational qualifications and length of service of the respondents. The next section dwells on the participation of the respondents in decision making, showing the extent to which they partake in this aspect of management.

4.3 Participant involvement in decision making

The type of teachers who participate in decision making from various schools are categorized as the principals, school management team, heads of departments, junior teachers and senior teachers. They are also categorized on the basis of their gender, meaning female and male teachers are identified as such. The areas in which these teachers participate in decision making, their views concerning their involvement and the strategies that the principals use to involve teachers in decision making at their schools are presented below.

4.3.1 Types of teachers involved in decision making

The study sought to find out who is involved in decision making in the sampled schools. All respondents indicated that they are involved in decision making but in different capacities. The responses from the principals also indicate that teachers participate in decision making.

In response to this question, Pr 1 responded saying; *I involve heads of departments (HODs), master teachers and senior teachers. I discuss the major issues regarding curriculum related issues, disciplinary and management issues.* From this statement, it seems management and senior teachers are the ones involved in decision making. This idea is confirmed by junior teacher 1 who says:

Not exactly. It depends on the issue to be discussed. There are critical ones whereby the SMT, and master teachers are called and what was discussed just come as a report to the staff members.

From this statement, it seems junior teachers are rarely involved in decision making. When it comes to crucial matters, these are discussed by management and are later reported to other members of staff. HOD 3 concurs with junior teacher1 by saying:

Yes, as heads of departments we are involved because if there are decisions to be made we are called by the principal. Whatever is to be decided upon she discuss it with the SMT first. Sometimes there is a separate meeting convened where the principal will start by approaching the SGB teachers, for instance when the school time needs to have some changes.

HoD 3 takes the discussion further by revealing that there are instances when teachers are involved in decision making, but this is not always the case. In most cases, as Principal 2 confirms, it is *Heads of departments, deputy principal and senior teachers* who are involved in decision making.

The response from Pr 3 is also similar to that of Pr 1. The only difference is that the P3 states that apart from involving all those that are mentioned by Pr 1, he added that he involves the SMT. In response to the same issue Pr 4 divulged:

'Involvement depends on what is to be discussed. I decide on who is to be involved in decision making and who is not to be involved depending on what is to be discussed but at the end the of the day everybody gets to be involved in one way or the other.'

The mixed reactions from the principals are indicative of an unsystematic way of teacher involvement in decision making. This might also be a reflection of different approaches that are used by principals in their schools in decision making. The fact that principals regroup senior management teams according to issues at hand on a day to day basis means it is possible to have inconsistency in decision making teams. This becomes a weakness because issues may not be followed up the same way they were started when a new team is put together on a new week.

The Heads of departments were also asked the similar question, whether they are involved in decision making, HOD 1 responded by saying;

Yes, as HODs we are involved in decision making because if there are decisions to be made, we are called by the principal. Whatever is about to be decided upon by the principal, a meeting is convened, firstly with the SMTs. Sometimes there is a separate meeting if there is an issue that needs the involvement of school development committees for example, issues that may pertain to simple school policies like the start and knock off time.

HOD 2 stated that she is sometimes involved but at other times she is not involved in decision making. When further probed to explain the areas she is involved in and the areas she is not involved in, the response was *'there are decisions that are taken at school without my knowledge and I get to know through announcements yet I am involved in some other decisions. This alone is a reflection that I am sometimes involved and not involved in some instances* .HOD 3 concurs with HOD 2 because she stated that it depends on the issue at hand or what needs to be discussed. Most times the head discusses supervisory and disciplinary matters with me but often leaves me out of financial matter decisions.

At times a problem needs to be discussed by all teachers due to the need for democracy and things vary so we look at the weight and nature of the problem. For example there are certain sensitive issues like what the school needs. The key people are the SMT, for example in the case of appointing a teacher the SMT first look at the needs of the school maybe which subjects need a teacher and when going to address the staff meeting the SMT will drive the meeting towards what was discussed by the them.

Asked whether or not he is closely involved HOD 4 responded by saying *'he is involved in decision making'*. When probed to explain the decisions he is involved in, the response was; *'I am involved in almost everything that involves administration and curriculum issues.'* The responses from the HODs are also indicative of different approaches used by school principals in decision making. Their responses mirrors a situation whereby their involvement is decided by the principals and they are involved based on the nature and importance of decisions to be made. From the comments made by principals and HoDs, it seems members of staff are categorized according to seniority when it comes to involvement in decision making, with principals, HoDs and

senior teachers making most of the decisions. When it comes to lighter issues, then other members of staff are involved.

To get further clarity on this issue, junior teachers were also asked whether they are involved in decision making or not. Jnr Tr4 responded saying;

I think decision making is a very broad concept and it is important to know in which areas the decisions are to be made. Schools run at different levels .There is SGB that has its part, SMT, which has its core role of governing the school. Other decisions I may not know. We have committees that are tasked with various functions like the health committee, sport, disciplinary, entertainment and the bereavement committee that are led by different people. If need be they consult but normally if things are in their power they can deal with that on their own. I am more involved in issues pertaining to the school curriculum and my learning area.

From this statement it seems that decision-making takes place at different levels, for different reason, thus at the end of the day nearly every member is involved in decision making. What differs are levels and matters to be decided on. On this issue Jnr Tr 3 responded by stating that he is involved in feeding scheme decisions. Jnr Tr 4 echoed similar statement to what Jnr Tr 2 said. The response was;

Yes I am involved more importantly in my learning area and also in sport activities. What I do in my class is to conduct it and set dates like if I feel like my class must have a debate I take that decision on my own. I don't have to consult my head for such activity to occur. Even to punish my learners and setting class rules that's my own decision. I also make decision on what textbook is suitable for my class and still my HOD does not have a problem with that although I do not exclude her in whatever that I have decided upon. In things like drafting the school timetable I am not involved.

The two teachers perceived that they do partake in decision making but at curriculum implementation level. Whilst some teachers believe they are part of the decision making body in their schools, Jnr Tr 1 said the following regarding his involvement in decision making:

Not exactly, It depends on the issue. There are critical ones whereby the SMT and the master teachers are called and it comes as a report to other staff members like myself. But there are issues whereby a staff meeting is convened and a decision is taken.

Jnr Tr 1's sentiments are similar to those raised by one of the HoDs, that the nature of decision to be made determines who gets involved. Critical matters are decided at management level, nonetheless they are some decisions that require the input of teachers and these are at times discussed during staff meetings. The researcher observed that in staff meetings, all the teachers were given an opportunity to contribute in the issues debated. Suggestions were accommodated from all the teachers and the final decision was taken from the majority. It was noted that although everyone was given a chance to contribute, the junior teachers did not often contribute and this applied to the four schools under study.

4.3.1.1 Involvement on the basis of gender

Respondents were asked to state who contributes more in terms of gender and whose voice is mostly taken in decision making. Respondents had similar views on teacher contribution in terms of gender. Although there was equal contribution on participation or in terms of the fact that both genders' contributions were taken into account, female teachers were more vocal than male teachers in most of these schools. This is confirmed by school principal 3 when she states that:

All teachers both male and females do contribute equally and we respect the contribution of every teacher irrespective of their gender. But what takes place in the staff meetings is that the female teachers are the ones who are more vocal than male ones.

Senior teacher 2 also confirms this by saying:

There is a 50/50 contribution. No gender dominates since we all respect each other's views. But junior teachers both females and males are always silent in staff meetings; this I think may be attributed to the fact that they are inexperienced.

Also there is an indication from all these schools that some teachers claim that there are more female teachers than male teachers makes the female teachers outnumber and dominate male teachers in their contributions. One of the respondents stated that this may be due to the fact that female teachers are very assertive because they have more experience. This means that the female teachers in this school have longer service than male teachers. This is confirmed by junior teacher 3 when she posits that:

Every teacher contributes but the female teachers dominate and they are at an advantage because they are more experienced and vocal than our male teachers. But that does not mean that the male teachers' decisions are not considered. There is no favouritism by our principal when it comes to contributions from female teachers. Their contributions are usually taken on board just as the contributions from male teachers.

Senior teacher 4 added that

I can say that educators who contribute more are the female teachers as I think they are dominating since there are few males. Our male teachers sometimes develop some attitudes as they claim that the female teachers are bullying them and have a tendency of making decisions for them. Sometimes this creates unnecessary tensions among the staff members. Nonetheless in a meeting situation as long as someone comes out with a genuine idea it is taken into consideration even if it is from a male teacher. What takes place here at school is that in a meeting situation if a suggestion comes from a female teacher, male teachers like to oppose that. This sometimes creates some problems and affects the meeting progress. Our male teachers are bullies, they have a tendency of not wanting to take authority from female teachers. Otherwise all junior teachers have little input in staff meetings.

From this statement, it seems that female teachers at times take advantage of their seniority to impose issues during meetings and this creates tensions amongst male and female teachers. This aspect calls for respect amongst the teachers so that everyone is involved in decision making. Nonetheless, this scenario is not applicable to all schools as shown by previous quotations that there is 50/50 contribution in their schools. Senior teacher 1 confirms this, though she also collaborates that female teachers generally contribute more during meetings than male teachers. Senior teacher 1 postulates that

The female teachers are the ones who contribute more but all decisions are taken into consideration irrespective of gender as long as it a constructive idea. So there is no gender discrimination. In case of junior teachers, sometimes they talk but most of the time in my observation they do not in staff meetings. Maybe they have fears as they are inexperienced.

Contrary to what senior teacher 4 states, junior teacher 4 cites that there is no sign of negative attitudes whatsoever; from her response everything runs smooth in staff meeting. He qualifies and cements his statement by saying, “*In this new South Africa gender discrimination is discouraged so everyone’s decision is taken into consideration in our school and we do not have a problem at all.*”

Using observation as a data collection technique, the researcher observed that from the staff meetings there was participation by all teachers but the most vocal ones were the females. The females were noticed to be contributing more than the other gender. This emerged from the fact that the female teachers out-numbered their male counterparts. This did not necessarily mean the females had better reasons or ideas but that they were many and very assertive. However, what was noted in school 2 is that male teachers were contributing more than females and were coming up with interesting ideas which were adopted during the meetings.

When asked concerning their participation in decision making Senior T2 from school 2 said:

As male teachers we are not involved in decisions pertaining catering, suitable or acceptable hair styles by girls, purchasing of school curtains, we just see those things done. The teachers who are doing that are the female teachers and we just get the explanation later. And sometimes we are not happy about this.

When further probed about their feelings about this he added: females do not like male involvement in these because I think the perception is that we may not make the right choice. Nonetheless as teachers of the school I feel that whatever that is done at school we must be part of it from the onset. From this assertion it seems there are some decisions that exclude male teachers based on the view that they are female-oriented.

Such an approach create disharmony as shown by the comments by Snr Tr 2, who feels that all members of staff should be involved in these issues.

It emerged from the study that all teachers do contribute in decision making process but their level of participation differs according to their positions at school and it depends on the issue for discussion. The SMT discusses the issues first before the staff meeting is convened. Concerning gender participation, the study found that all teachers make contributions irrespective of gender but the female teachers seem to be more vocal than males. This does not necessarily mean that female teachers had better ideas than male but because female teachers are more than male from all the schools understudy. Everyone's ideas and contributions were considered and implemented. It was also noted that most junior teachers do not contribute much in the staff meetings.

4.4 Areas of participation in decision making

The researcher investigated the most areas in which teachers participate in decision making at school. It emerged from the study that participation at school ranges from areas like discipline, sport, finance, school administration and curriculum related issues. Participation in these various areas is dealt with by particular teachers who have expertise regarding that particular area like sport and financial issues. Regarding curriculum related issues, all teachers are involved as teaching is the core business in all the four schools.

4.4.1 Disciplinary issues

In order for any school to run smoothly, discipline must be instilled and accepted as one of the pillars of efficiency, both on the side of the learners and also teachers. Disciplinary measures are used to help correct unacceptable behaviours of any individuals and bring them within the acceptable standards expected by any school. It is expected that learners must accept the responsibilities of their actions when they have broken the rules but before resorting to any form of punishment reasonable efforts should be made to discipline the learner. Fairness must be ensured at all times. There

are various types of misconducts that the learners commit that range from minor to serious misconduct. The punishment meted out must match the type of offence committed by the learner. Various disciplinary policies must be put in place and adhered to by any school. The acceptable punishment types are detention, replacement of damaged property, agreed payment of compensation, community services and withdrawal of services. The use of corporal punishment is unacceptable and must not be used under any circumstances. The disciplinary committees are put in place so that they maintain order at schools.

Junior teachers were asked to elaborate on their level of involvement in this area. On this issue Junior teacher 1 stated:

Most of the time junior teachers are involved in disciplinary hearings. However when there is a major offence done by a learner for instance when a learner has stabbed another one or has not come to school for a very long time sometimes the learner has been found with dagga at school, it is only the SMT and the senior teachers who deal with this. We are not involved in these issues at all.

Junior teacher 2 responded as follows:

In my school all teachers are responsible for maintaining order and instilling discipline to the learners. But in the case where learners have committed serious offences I am not involved, it becomes the responsibility of the SMT to deal with the case.

From the above comments it seems all teachers are involved in disciplinary action, especially on a day-to-day basis, however, when it comes to serious offences, these are taken up the hierarchy where they are dealt with. Junior teacher 4 adds another dimension to the argument that although he is a junior teacher he is involved in disciplinary issues because of his position as a disciplinary committee member. He stated:

I am involved in the disciplinary committee and I was nominated on the basis that I have a skill to see when things go wrong and I did a course in guidance and counselling. For instance I have

problem solving skills, and have an art of showing or guiding how learners should behave in the school premises. I deal with late comers. I am also a local person so I am known to many of the learners so they may not behave badly in my presence.

From this statement it appears that decision making positions are filled based on skill and not seniority. Thus, junior members who are qualified and skilled can partake in decision making based on these qualities. Junior teacher 4 explains further that:

We are five in this committee. We are always confronted with different issues like learner fights, theft, learner spitting at a teacher, stabbing etc. We make decisions on these offences as we are given powers to do so especially with minor offences. For major transgression we involve the SGB, the parents and the culprit so that the matter is discussed. Obviously the principal as an accounting officer together with the SMT are involved and then a collective decision is made.

Senior teacher 3 also stated that she is involved in disciplinary issues. She disclosed:

In disciplining the learners, I am involved where the learner is behaving badly, not necessarily to punish but to put him in the right direction. And when you are a disciplinary teacher, you know the areas of act on and you know why the particular learner behaves in a particular manner. I know most of the things they do as I am close to them. Also whenever a learner is doing wrong, he/she will be referred to me by the teachers as I relate well with them.

She continued:

I am also liaison officer between the school and the department of education as well as between the school and the community because I know the learners and their parents. I am involved in resolving minor disciplinary issues like sorting out learners fighting in class, use of vulgar language and boyfriend girlfriend stuff and basking in the sun during tuition time. Then the major ones like stabbing, drug and sexual abuse become a case for the principal and all teachers.

When further asked whether they use a switch as a way of punishment the teacher responded, ' *You know these learners are naughty, you will reprimand him/her for wrong doing but the learner keeps on committing the same mistake. In this case I use a switch although I know that is not accepted.*'

Data presented above show that both junior and senior teachers are involved in minor disciplinary issues, then those in disciplinary committees have further responsibilities in this area. All HODs and principals as already stated earlier are involved in all disciplinary issues and at school that these include the major offences as they are in the school management. For instance HOD2 stated:

I am involved in all major and minor disciplinary issues at school just as the principal and other teachers who are in the disciplinary committee and the SGB. No learner can be suspended at school without us knowing even if the case happens in a class which we are not teaching or we did not receive the report on what the learner has done. But for minor offences we let teachers discipline the learners themselves for example late submission of the work or late coming. Sometimes we use a switch as a form of punishment.

The reflections from the junior teachers indicate that they are involved in disciplinary issues in their respective schools. However what appears to be very common among their responses is that they are not involved in major disciplinary issues. The other reflection is that educators who are involved in major disciplinary issues are the principal, the SMT and the disciplinary committee which also includes the SGB. Concurring with what junior teachers pointed out with regards to their partial involvement in disciplinary issues, principals point out that all teachers are involved in disciplinary issues, but to a certain extent. Principal 1 stated:

Everyone is involved in disciplining the learners whether you are experienced or not. Everyone deals with the learners who have done wrong to some extent. But with the case of serious misconduct like learner drunkenness, learner stabbing another then the SMT deals with that. Although there is also the intervention of the SGB. As the accounting officer I becomes involved, no decisions taken that by pass me.

Principal 3 clarifies this matter by stating people who is involved in disciplinary issues and the extent of their involvement in disciplinary issues:

All teachers are involved but it also depends on the type of the misconduct. Minor issues like stealing of pens or truancy are usually dealt with by the class teachers who are responsible for different classes. For major issues, consultation starts with the class teacher and the principal is consulted. From the principal the issue can be handed over to the disciplinary committee although they have limited powers. For example they cannot expel a learner. The SGB has a right to suspend a learner for a week. The SGB recommends the expulsion to the department in major issues like stabbing to death of the learner by another learner. The types of educators that are involved in the disciplinary committee are firm in character and have a firm. Mostly it's the senior teachers that deal with these issues since they are experienced.

Principal 2 concurs with Principal 4 by making the following statement:

It is the duty of every teacher to make sure that learners are disciplined at school so that the school runs smoothly. There is a disciplinary committee that mainly consist of senior teachers. Their operation is based on what is prescribed by the department together with the school rules. This committee deals with all major issues like learner stabbed by another, learner r pregnancy, bullying and substance abuse. For suspension or expulsion of the learner the SGB is involved in taking such decisions. But as an accounting officer I am involved in all the decisions taken.

Reflections from the principals point to the fact that all teachers are involved in disciplining the learners. Their involvement generally include minor offences like truancy, stealing of pens in class. For major transgressions like learner stabbing one another, pregnancy and substance abuse the disciplinary committee is actively involved in dealing with these issues. The SGB, is mandated to make and endorse all major decisions with regards to suspension of the learner. All principals indicated that they are part of whatever decisions taken pertaining to the disciplinary measures given to the learner.

It was observed that from schools S1 & S3 that when a learner has committed a serious offence that situation is communicated to the staff members so that everyone must be aware of what is happening at school. Perusal of the minutes confirms that learners commit offences and the disciplinary committee deals with the matters in a manner warranting the seriousness of the offence. It was also observed that although the use of corporal punishment has been abolished, all the sample schools use this type of discipline as a way of punishing the learners. When asking T3 of the teachers' reasons for still using corporal punishment he responded that:

You know my friend if you punish the learners by saying they must clean the toilets as is common in our school the learners seem not take that as abuse. If you ask them to go the garden and work there you will find that instead of doing the task the learner ends up entertaining himself by communicating with the people who are passing by. So when you are using a switch at least they respond better. Of course we know that the use of corporal punishment is prohibited.

On the same issue Principal P4 elucidated that:

Discipline is a very challenging issue. We do want to use modern methods that are in line with the government policy but find we get nowhere with these difficult students. That is why teachers resort to beating the offending ones. Some act as if they are heading straight to jail after school. They are very disruptive to learning

Reacting on the issue of why teachers continued to use corporal punishment P2 said:

We discourage use of corporal punishment but sometimes it is frustrating that those modern methods that are softer do not seem to work. Students do worse mischief after cautioning. Teachers resort to this form of discipline as a last choice .Some students injure others and are so disruptive that they can stop others from learning.

All the respondents stated that they are involved in decision making but in various areas depending on their field of interest and expertise. Document analysis also reveals that there is a disciplinary committee that is tasked with handling disciplinary issues in schools. There is also a book where the learners who are continuously committing serious offences are written for record purposes. Data gathered from the documents

also reveals that there are cases that are handled by the class teachers and cases that straight away are taken to the disciplinary committee or to the principal. The cases that are handled by class teachers are said to be minor cases whereas serious cases for example substance abuse and acts of violence are taken to the disciplinary committee and ultimately reported to the SGB, depending on the nature of the offence. Also it emerged that corporal punishment is still used at schools as a way of punishment although it is against the government policies and regulations.

4.4.2 Sport activities

Sporting at school is very crucial and it is imperative that every school must have sport activities as sports transfers certain important skills, attitudes and values. These are letting the learners work together effectively as a team, taking healthy exercises for their health, being culturally sensitive across a range of social contexts and communicating effectively with others. The sport activities include football and handball activities, swimming, races, rugby, cricket, shot-put, tennis, discus and javelin throwing. Learners should be given the opportunity to involve themselves in the sport they are talented in and also those they show interest of involvement. Committees are set to lead this department and the teachers who are give direction is the sport include the sports master/mistress and the deputy head etc depending on the type of sport. This committee is responsible for drawing up a year plan that indicates when and with whom the matches will take place. The sport committee is elected to be in place for a period of a year and then elections start again and the new committee carries out its planned programme.

Respondents were asked to state other areas they are involved in and sport came out as one of the major areas junior teachers participate in. All junior teachers or newly appointed teachers and some senior teachers stated that they are actively involved in sport activities at school. These teachers seem to have most interest in this field and they perform the duties pertaining to sport with enthusiasm. They take most of the decisions on their own. They just consult the principal thereafter. These teachers further

indicated that all the aged teachers especially those in SMT do not participate actively in this area. Elaborating on this Junior teacher 2 stated:

I am involved in sport activities as I am a sport mistress and my deputy is a female teacher. There were no criteria in place for my nomination and this was done at a staff meeting. Teachers who are mostly involved are the junior teachers and there are few senior teachers who are there for guidance. There is a perception that junior teachers are still energetic hence we are nominated. In addition it is said that we may not know anything about the administration work so that is why people in this committee are newly appointed teachers. We make decisions on the number of away and home base matches each year. And also we decide on which schools we have to play with. But normally whatever we have decided upon we report to the entire staff. Most of the time the principal and the SMT respect these decisions.

Junior teacher 1 also pointed out that:

The teachers who are involved in sport mostly are the junior teachers. There is a sport committee that ensures that matches are played and this committee is responsible for making the sport programme for the year and they are not questioned on the choices of the schools to play with. But it becomes very difficult for this committee to make decisions on financial matters concerning sport.

From the above statements, it seems junior teachers are more involved in sports than senior teachers simply because of their age and lack of experience in administration. However, although they make most decisions on their sport programmes, they are not involved in financial administration. This is also explained by junior teacher 3 that:

'in terms of knowing how much funds are allocated for sport, we are just in the dark. Sometimes we are just told that sport funds are exhausted whilst we will be thinking that there is some money left and we are not given any chance to challenge that.' Senior teacher S4 concurred with all junior teachers stating:

All teachers are involved in sport except for the old female teachers who do not involve themselves. Mostly it is only the young blood that are involved meaning the junior teachers. There is a sport committee that decides when the matches will be played and with which school, how many away and how many home base

matches are scheduled. We just do not implement these decisions we consult first.

Senior teacher 1 further added:

Most of those who are involved are new in the field and there are very few old teachers. The sport committee has been given powers to make decisions concerning sport, surprisingly sometimes you find a scenario where the sport committee is told that there are no funds available for sport although the sport committee is aware that they haven't finished their budget yet. I remember when there was a strike action, we were told that there will be no sport activities and we were not part of that decision making. The SMT together with the school clerk always tell us what must be done meaning that we are remote controlled somewhere. This raises questions on what was the purpose of having this committee if they can't make decisions.

The fact that senior teacher 1 states that they are sometimes told by the SMT and the school clerk on what should be done reflects the fact that there are some decisions that are solely taken by the school management team without the involvement of senior and junior teachers. All respondents seem to point out that mostly it is junior teachers that are involved in sport as they are referred to as “young blood”. The reflection from their responses is that most old teachers do not actively take part in sporting activities and sport decision making.

HOD 3 pointed out:

Junior teachers are the most involved in sports committee. This committee includes both male and female teachers. This committee is given the mandate to carry out everything concerning sports but it depends on the principal to consider the decision to be implemented or not e.g. if this committee wants to have an outgoing trip they have to convince the principal on taking such a trip. If they have failed, the trip will be called off.

The major issue that HOD 2 brought out is that while there is a sport committee, the ultimate power to approve or not to approve a sport activity comes from the principal because in a way the principal has to be convinced. HOD 4 also stated something similar to what HOD4 said. The HOD4 revealed that.

There is a sports committee that includes both junior teachers and senior teachers. There is a sport master and sport mistress who are heading this department. All sporting codes are catered for an example netball rugby, soccer and athletics, but there are no old teachers who are part of this committee. The junior ones and the senior ones who are still active hence they were nominated to be part of this committee.

When HOD 2 was probed on why the HODs are not actively involved in sport, she responded by saying they just want to give a chance to the young blood and when they were still energetic they were actively involved and their non-involvement does not necessary mean they know nothing about sport. Principal 1 also echoes what junior, senior and HOD 3 pointed out about teacher involvement in sport.

There is a sport committee that consists mostly of junior teachers. The criteria that is used to choose them is how active and still energetic they are compared to other teachers. And also since they are still new or have no experience sport activities will create a situation where they will deal or be involved with the learners outside the classroom situation. These teachers who form part of the sport committee are having a mandate to take decisions concerning sport activities. They decide when the matches should be played and which school to be play with. No one challenges their decisions concerning that but all is known by the principal.

Principal 4 is very clear on teacher involvement in sport and also points out clearly the type of teachers that are involved in sport.

The teachers that are involved as I have indicated are the junior teachers or newly appointed teachers. The criteria used is that these teachers at least are young and are still active although there are experienced teachers who are involved. They take responsibility and they make the decisions on their own and then I just approve as the principal. These teachers are responsible for the physical health of the learners.

There is a consensus from all respondents that junior teachers are the most involved in sports, though financial decisions regarding sports are made by the school management. In addition, from observing the matches that took place, the researcher confirms what is said by all teachers that teachers who are mostly involved in sports are

the junior teachers. But the researcher also noted the aged teachers from the school that hosted the visitors made their contribution on sporting days. In the researcher's view, that these teachers may not be directly involved in sport but they make their contribution in sport.

From the minutes of all the four schools, it emerged that sport committees are nominated and the researcher can clearly see that all teachers are involved are in sports, but mostly the newly appointed or junior teachers. In all the minutes there was an indication that the school requires that the teachers should take sports very seriously for the benefit of the learners.

4.4.3 Curriculum related issues

Curriculum issues came up as another area in which teachers are involved in making decisions. Each school decides what is to be followed at their schools. There are prescribed learning areas and it becomes the responsibility of the school to choose which subjects to be taught and this differs from school to school. This solely depends on whether there are teachers who are qualified to teach those subjects. For the GET (grade 8-9) band there are standardized learning areas which are compulsory to all learners. Then from the FET band (grade 10-12) there is a subject choice depending what the school offers but the mother tongue, mathematics or mathematical literacy, and life orientation are compulsory. However teacher participation in this area varied depending on the position held by the particular teacher. What appears to be very common in the teachers' responses is that they are more actively involved in areas that are of interest to them, for example areas of their expertise. So the SMT must make sure that curriculum policies are put in place and ensure that curriculum is successfully implemented so that quality teaching and learning is achieved.

From the responses gathered from the school principals, all share the same sentiments and experience as far as the curriculum issues are concerned. They mentioned that it is the duty of the deputy principal to discharge the duties related to curriculum issues as the curriculum head. Principal 3 said:

It is the responsibility of the deputy principal to deal with these issues. For instance today we have students from the University of Fort Hare who are here to do their teaching practice so these students are linked to him. As the principal I have nothing to do with them although I am aware of their presence because as the accounting officer I granted them permission to come to our school.

He also added that:

But I must also mention that It was not me alone who dealt with this issues but the staff take the collective agreement on whether or not they accept them as these students will do their practice teaching the learners who are taught by these teachers. They have to make proper arrangements so that these students do not encounter a lot of challenges especially concerning the subject matter.

Principal 2 in turn mentioned that:

The deputy principal is the head of the curriculum related issues and policy implementation. For example the policy stipulates what needs to be done, therefore it is the responsibility of the deputy principal to ensure that things are done as stipulated by the departmental policy. Also the deputy principal ensures that the teachers do attend workshops that are curriculum related and deadlines concerning what needs to be done are met. I am proud to say our deputy principal is doing this duty satisfactorily.

The principals from all the four schools revealed that apart from the fact that the deputy principal is the head of the curriculum issues, all teachers are actively involved in the implementation of the curriculum as it is their core business. They further stated that it does not matter what category that particular teacher is, she/he has to teach.

Principal 2 echoed this by saying:

In addition, as teaching is the core business all teachers are involved whether junior or senior because each teacher decides on how to structure his/her teaching programmes. Each teacher decides on what tools or resources to utilize for teaching and learning in her/his class.

It is clear that within schools, it is not only the principal and deputy who are involved in curriculum implementation but the entire staff. The heads of department (HODs) are

compelled to ensure that things go properly with delivery of the curriculum like checking and ensuring that the teachers in their departments do follow the requirements of all learning areas. This is confirmed by HOD 4 who stated:

I am involved maybe when there is a shortage of a teacher in a certain learning area. We sit down as SMT and identify who can teach or assist in that particular field. Most of the time it starts with the department that is, it becomes a departmental issue and if we can't find a solution to the problem we involve the deputy principal and the principal in the ultimate end.

In connection with posts and appointment of teachers as mentioned by HOD 4 above, HOD1 further stated that

There are certain sensitive issues that I am involved in e.g. in the case of appointing a teacher whether the post is for a junior or senior teacher. The SMT first look at the needs of a school, such as which subjects need a teacher. The SMT has to look if there is a need for example a science teacher so when they are looking for that teacher, the idea must be driven in that angle of looking for a science teacher. So what I mean is that the SMT must be proactive and be in position to give direction or influence when there is a staff meeting and as the SMT we should have already spotted that teacher since we will be the first to analyse the situation.

HOD 2 points out a slightly different issue from HOD 1. While HOD 1 points out that the SMT takes a leading role in the appointment of a teacher, HOD 2 points out that all teachers are involved in the appointment of a teacher. The HOD 2 asserted that

In case of teacher employment it is a matter of every teacher that is, from the principal to the junior teacher to sit down and discuss the needs of the school and after that the staff will be able to shape a post i.e. to determine or outline the job description and requirements. In fact as the SMT we first caucus so that we go to the meeting having something or we just influence the decisions of the meeting but this might change depending on whether the teachers are having convincing ideas regarding the issue. When the matter is final then it is taken to the SGB.

The reflections from HODs about teacher appointment are that the SMT takes a leading role in determining the type of teacher that they want and in most instances the decision they make as SMT are binding. In a way they only go to the teachers to inform and convince them before the matter is taken to the SGB. This is an area where the decisions are taken by the SMT and other stakeholders serve to endorse the decisions taken. The situation might only change when other stakeholders might have strong convincing ideas that are contrary to what the SMT might have come up with.

Junior teachers also shared their views on their involvement in curriculum related issues. Their views touched more on what they do in their classes. Their participation is more linked their areas of expertise as echoed by Junior teacher 2:

In my learning area I am involved as I am an English teacher. I take decisions in conducting my classes and set dates for any class activities to take place like if there will be a debate I take decisions on my own and do not have to consult anyone. Also if I feel that my learners should write a class test I give it straight away. I am involved in choosing of textbooks for my learners e.g. what literature is suitable for them. As I have the HOD in my department I don't consult her regarding this and she respects my decision.

When further asked about her involvement in the appointment of teachers she answered that:

I cannot say we are fully involved in the appointment of teacher although the SMT brings the issue for discussion. I remember one time when we were having the same situation the staff meeting was convened but one could clearly see that we debate something that is having a direction and this was coming from the part of the SMT. All the same we reached the consensus and a teacher was employed.

It appears junior teachers are involved in the selection of teachers for employment, but at a minimal level. The decision lies more with the management of the school. Senior teachers were also asked the extent to which they partake in curriculum development and selection of teachers and Senior teacher 2 pointed out that:

I am not involved in all the curriculum related issues. I am only involved mostly in the teaching of my classes. I am involved in choosing what textbooks and other learning materials my learners should use in my learning area. But it is the duty of the HOD's to order the books.

When asked about his involvement in teacher appointment he stated that:

When there is a post here at school a staff meeting is called and we discuss the post according to the school needs. Then it depends on type of post to employ the teacher from outside or not.

Senior teacher 3 explained that:

I am a grade 10 tourism teachers and grade 12 English teacher. As I am teaching in rural areas I'm involved in choosing the careers for the learners from grade 8 to the senior level. There was for example a learner who was good in drawing and I could see that she was an artist and I encouraged her and I eventually referred her to the FET college to pursue the art career, she is doing very well there. I am also responsible for choosing the correct textbooks that my learners should use.

As far as the teaching of the learning areas is concerned Senior teacher ST4 said something different from all the respondents. She made the following statements:

I am involved in the teaching of my subjects and I am responsible for whatever that takes place in my class like giving the learners projects, deciding what to teach first, setting of class tests and I do not consult anyone and I am happy. I only consult the head of department when I want my tests to be moderated. What I do not like is to be given to teach a learning area that I was never trained to teach like Arts and Culture that I do not know. In fact this you will see in the staff allocation and is not discussed with you first.

The new element that emerges from this statement is that teachers are at times given subjects that they are not trained to teach and at times without consultation with them. This has a capacity to impact negatively on the esteem of the concerned teacher who does not have the necessary expertise to teach the subject and on the learners who are taught by an unskilled educator.

With regard to curriculum issues, reflection from the responses of HODs point out that all teachers are involved in deciding on what textbooks to use, but it is the duty of the HOD to order the required learning material that the teachers request for. It is also evident that all teachers are involved in the teaching of their subject areas as curriculum implementers and the HOD's are not consulted concerning the daily activities in class as postulated by Jnr Tr 2 who decides on her own what learners should do in her class. Also it emerged clearly that the SMT does assembly first when there is a vacant post in the school before they take the matter to the staff meeting. This implies the SMT impose these type of decisions to the teachers and then for formality they bring the issue to the staff meeting.

To support the above reflections, notes from the minute book reveal that all teachers should be informed when there is a vacant post at school and in this case it was a vacant post for the HOD. According to the minutes, teachers suggested and urged that there must be transparency in the post mentioned so that everyone who qualifies should know that in advance and apply for the post. This according to the researcher means that the SMT did not consult all teachers in relation to the post. The minutes further stated that the SMT excluded other teachers and only involve those teachers in the SGB and the rest of the staff members were not happy about that. Nonetheless it is also stated that the headmaster showed remorse and apologized because of the awkward processes they had pursued as the SMT.

Also the statements made by senior teacher 1 and 4 give a picture that in some schools there is still a top down approach where ideas are just imposed on teachers. The reflection is that teachers are still not happy in that type of approach. The researcher noted that the general feeling of the teachers is that they are not comfortable to teach the learning areas they are not trained to teach as expected by the new curriculum, National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

4.4.4 Timetabling

Timetables at schools are drawn and are based on and are derived from the allocation of duties to educators. They create a sense of order to each and every school so that everyone knows the programme of the day and follows it strictly. This ranges from going to classes and break time. There are three important timetables that each school must draw; the master time table, timetable for each class group and also the educators' time table. It is the duty of the school management team to draw a master timetable. There are also other time tables like invigilation time table, examination timetable, supervision timetable, curricular time table and others depending on the school.

Asked about their involvement in making timetables, Junior teacher 2 disclosed that drawing the time tables is not their duty because they are not experienced. He indicated that this was tried once and never worked as shown in the statement below :

For time tabling I am not involved this is the duty of the experienced teachers or HOD'S and also depends on who is allocated for that. The examination co-coordinator duty was once given to a junior teacher at my school which included the drawing of examination time table and she encountered a lot of problems due to inexperience. Then a senior teacher took over and he did the job perfectly and everything ran smoothly during the examinations.

Contrary to what junior teacher 2 stated regarding making of school timetable, junior teacher 1 stated that: *In their school teachers are mostly involved in the making of the timetable.* However, Senior teacher 2 concurs with junior teacher 2 by detailing that:

For things like making of the timetable I am not involved at all. This is solely done by other experienced teachers especially the senior teachers that are females. I have never seen any male teacher asked to assist in the making of school timetable .This does not bother me when I am not involved in the drawing of the timetable as I have no interest in doing it.

When junior teacher 3 was asked of his involvement in the drawing up timetables he answered that:

I am not responsible for drawing up of school time table. It is usually drawn up by the female teachers and I was never asked to be part of those teachers who are responsible for making it.

It seems junior members are rarely involved in drawing up school timetables. This is mainly the responsibility of senior members of staff as stated by HoDs that they are responsible for drawing up timetables and they are assisted by senior teachers as these teachers have a long service at school and they also know how to make them. This is confirmed by HOD 4 when she states that:

Well, all the HODs are responsible for the drawing of the timetable. Sometimes we request the senior teachers to assist us when we are still busy or to attend to something else.

Principal 2 also confirmed what junior teacher 2, senior teacher 2 and HOD 2 said by stating that *'as far as the drafting of the timetable is concerned, both senior teachers and HODs are responsible for that. We do not involve junior teachers in this aspect.'* It emerged from the study that in most of the schools the school master timetable is done by the experienced teachers. It is also very clear that all junior teachers are not involved in these issues and this applies to three schools under study. Only one school indicated that they involve junior teachers in this area. There is no evidence from document analysis of minutes of the meetings that teachers were involved in drawing up the master time table. This applies to all selected schools. But from the reading of the minutes from one school, it is indicated that the school time table and subject allocation is ready to be displayed the following day and all teachers were requested to adhere to the timetable. This implies that teachers are expected to follow what has been set by the school management. Whilst this may seem like an imposition, this approach eliminates confusion and tensions as a result of fighting for slots amongst teachers if given the chance.

4.4.5 Ordering of Textbooks

Textbooks are a very important resource that is crucial in all schools for teaching and learning to take place effectively. The ordering of the textbooks needs to be done with

strict measures because when a wrong choice is made, it will hamper teaching and learning. In this instance teachers have a duty of selecting the correct textbooks for their learners. In order for this to be successful the teachers should attend book exhibitions so that they can identify the most suitable learning material.

. When asked about their involvement in textbook selection, junior teacher 3 stated that: *'For the type of textbooks that my learners use I am responsible for that, meaning I decide which textbooks they are supposed to use in my learning area.'* Senior teacher 1 added that:

I am involved in choosing the right textbooks for my learners and also I am responsible in choosing the right subject study guides or videos but I consult the principal regarding all that. As a subject teacher I am also responsible for choosing other learning materials like I remember when commerce was to be introduced all the commerce teachers were called to discuss the issue.

All respondents echoed the same thing by stating that all teachers are responsible for the selection of textbooks and it then becomes the duty of SMT and the finance committee to get the quotations and buy the required textbooks. The common view by all respondents suggests a uniform pattern in the way some of the curriculum related issues like learning material are handled in schools. Senior teacher 2 clarifies that:

As far as ordering of textbooks in my school the person responsible for this is a senior teacher and she has been doing this for a long time and we are satisfied with the way she is doing this. Otherwise for the selection of the textbooks to be used I do that for my learning area. The challenge is that the teacher responsible for that is doing this alone and not involving the junior teachers so that they learn how this trade is done for future continuity.

HOD 3 made the following statement:

In my school the teachers make the list of textbooks and submit them to the HOD who is responsible for ordering the textbooks. We do not involve junior teachers and senior teachers in this case its solely done by the heads of department.

Junior teachers shared the same sentiments by stating that they are involved in the selection of textbooks but it remains the duty of the HOD to make orders for each learning area. This is confirmed by junior teacher 4 when he said:

As far as the selection of textbooks is concerned as teachers involved we choose the correct textbooks to use. In my school there are many textbooks that were delivered by different publishers so we read and compare them so that at the end we make a decision on the best textbook to use. Then for the ordering the HOD's take care.

Junior teacher 2 made the following statement:

The HOD gives me all the textbooks that are prescribed for my learning area then I choose the one that I think will be suitable for my teaching. Also my HOD on an advisory bases and as we teach the same learning area assist me on the selection of the suitable textbook but I make the final decision. I am not involved in the ordering of textbooks.

Principal 2 however echoed a different sentiment by postulating that:

In my school for years the ordering of textbooks is done by the senior teacher and we do not encounter any problems. She is doing this duty very well.

The data presented above shows that generally teachers are responsible for the selection of correct textbooks that are suitable for their learners, but the person responsible for ordering them is the HOD. Teachers just submit their lists, but some teachers confirm that they discuss the textbooks with their HOD's in departmental meetings. From data, there is only one school that ordered textbooks through their senior teacher and she was commended for doing a good job. The researcher found out that the teachers were interested in doing things this way as they considered this their field of expertise. Moreover all teachers were satisfied by the way this process was carried out. The findings of this study indicate that teachers as subject specialists have adequate knowledge on particular textbooks to be used by the learners. A thorough selection of textbooks is done.

Furthermore, the researcher witnessed a departmental meeting at the end of the year where there was a discussion of ordering of textbooks by the head of department and the teachers. This proves that indeed in some cases textbook selection is done during staff meetings. Also there was evidence from the minute book that the school has a Learner Teaching Support Material (LTSM) committee. It was indicated from the minutes that this committee should ascertain the study guides which are important in the learning process are made available. Also it was stipulated that the in grade 12, the Enjoy Economics textbooks was needed urgently.

4.4.6 Assessment of teachers school work

Assessment of school work is a process of collecting, synthesizing, and interpretation information to assist teachers, parents and others in making decisions about the progress of learners Eastern Cape Department Of Education, Manual for School Management (2000). Teachers are responsible for ensuring that they collect evidence of learner's learning and competences. All teachers must develop a year assessment program for each subject and grade they are teaching and submit it to the HOD before the start of the school year.

Under curriculum issues there is also an issue of assessment that is done by all categories of teachers. Respondents divulged as to who is involved and how they go about it in their respective schools. From all the four schools teachers indicated that they prepare their school work and tasks like written tests, examinations papers together with their memoranda and they submit them to their subject heads. Then the subject heads check or moderate the papers in order to ensure that they are NCS compliant. Failure for a particular teacher to meet the expected requirements, the HOD's the teacher request the teacher to re-test. On the other hand, all schools must have an assessment committee that assesses or does learner promotion and this is done following what is prescribed by the department.

Reflections from their responses were that all teachers assess their learners; the only differences how they go about doing it. Junior teacher 2 states that, *I do assessment in*

my class because I ask them questions as the lesson progresses as to check whether they are not left behind or they understand what I am trying to explain. She further explains that:

All categories of teachers are involved because the assessment committee entails two HODs, two senior teachers and two junior teachers. Their responsibility is to check whether learner promotion is followed correctly.

Document analysis also reveals that there are four types of assessments that are used at schools. There is baseline assessment, diagnostic assessment, formative assessment and summative assessment. While there are these types of assessment that are mostly used, there has been an introduction of continuous assessment as an obligatory part of learning and teaching which has become essential for schools to have an assessment policy which schools draw up on their own. As a result schools have come up with assessment committees responsible for the assessment of learner's school work. Senior teacher 1 gave the following comments on teachers who are involved in the assessment committee:

Those involved are the senior teachers, master teachers and HODs. They moderate the exam question papers and the memos and see to it that they are NCS compliant. If the papers are not up to standard, the HOD's have the right to condemn the paper or not to take it. Also the teachers involved also do the promotion process in all internal grades. They do this following requirements of the department.

Principal 1 postulated that:

The HODs are responsible for assessing teachers' work. They check whether departmental requirements are met by the teachers. They also check learner portfolio and ensure that their work is up to standard. Furthermore they check if the tests are in line with the NCS requirements and if not they request that particular educator to reset the test.

The sentiments presented above are that teachers are involved in various forms of assessment such as formative, continuous and summative among others. They go as far as setting some examination papers during term but these are moderated by HoDs,

senior teachers and master teachers according to the department of education's requirements. Assessment of school work also involves the checking of teachers work with regard to the requirements stipulated by the department. This is confirmed by the statements from the heads of departments. HoD 1 stated:

In the case of assessment as the HOD I check whether the teachers do follow the syllabus as prescribed by the department. Also as HODs we check whether the teachers in our departments set the question papers that are NCS compliant, the memos are answered correctly and learner scripts are marked correctly. Also we have to ensure that the teachers submit the question papers and their memos in the dates that were set in the staff meeting. In this case the process is not all smooth as other teachers just give some difficulties and do not observe the due dates.

HOD 3 states that:

As an HOD in my school what I am responsible for in assessment is, I to check whether the teachers are following the prescribed syllabus. Also I moderate the examination papers and their memos to check whether they are NCS compliant or not. Then if they are not I request that particular teacher to reset the test. In fact I must state it clearly that all the heads of departments do the same thing.

It emerged from data that it is specially the HODs and senior teachers' responsibilities to check and moderate test papers and lead the assessment process smoothly. They set timetables and ensure that all requirements in terms of compliance with NCS and syllabi are met. The HODs also supervise the submissions ensuring that all details are submitted to the teachers for processing and all records compiled. Also it emerged from the study that the assessment committee are also responsible for learner promotion.

4.4.7 Streaming

Streaming refers to the categorization or grouping of subjects in line with the ability of a particular group of learners. It prepares learners for furthering studies or choosing a career path. The potential and the interests of the learner are paramount when streaming is done. At school level all learners from the GET band do the same learning

areas and it is in this phase where the learner will show interest in a particular field. The key role players are teachers who are responsible for helping learners make informed choices for the GET band where learners do subjects that will determine their careers. Learners also have to work very hard so that it becomes easy for the teacher to direct him/ her to the right direction. In addition, the parents also have to make a contribution in shaping the future of the learners. Teachers who teach at this phase have a responsibility of assisting the learner to choose the correct subject and this is done in line with the learners' potential. It is very important that teachers be very careful and critical when choosing the subject for the learners because failure to do so will jeopardize the future of the learner.

There is a standard document that was sent to schools by the Department of Education that stipulates how schools should handle streaming. The document has a list of subjects that are grouped and schools get to choose a group of subjects that go along with the expertise of educators in that school. According to the Departmental requirement, grade 8 and 9 do the same subjects and streaming is done from grades 10 – 12. It was also observed that learners doing grades 10 -12 are not doing the same subjects, for example there are 3 streams: (1) sciences, (2) commerce, (3) general .The researcher also found that the learners in FET band are grouped with regards to their abilities and interest

The respondents from the four schools understudy concur that the government provided them with the documents that stipulated the streams that must be followed in schools. It is the responsibility of each school to choose the streams to be followed at school. The streaming of subjects starts from the FET band, which is grade 8-9. Then from grade 10-12 learners make choices of the subject they intend to do as their careers. The respondents also indicated that it is the responsibility of the grade 9 teachers to help learners make informed choice in connection to what a learner should do in grade 10. All the choices are based on the learner capabilities or abilities. When the principals were interviewed with regards to streaming of the subjects Principal 2 made the following statement:

Firstly, I must indicate that streaming of the subjects starts in the GET band and the learners have to choose the stream of subject he/she wants to follow as his/her career. The streams are stipulated by the government and each school chooses what it can offer. In order for the learners to decide which stream to take teachers who teach Grade 9 assist these learners in making the subject choice. But what is paramount is that the choice must be made according to the learner's ability. All teachers who teach this grade are responsible for that whether junior or senior teacher as the understanding is that they know the learners very well.

Principal 3 commented:

First I must indicate that the government provides all the schools with the grouping of the subject then it depends on a school the streams to offer. As far as streaming of learners is concerned, it is the responsibility of all the teachers to ensure that learners are put on the correct streams. But basically it is the responsibility of the teachers in grade 9 to do the task.

HOD 2 concurred that:

The SMT caucuses when the new learning area is to be introduced and sell the idea to other staff members in a meeting situation. I remember that we had a concern that learners fail Life Science and we thought of replacing it with Business Studies and the idea had the blessing of all the teachers. In addition when it comes to grade 9 learners, the learners are given guidance by their teachers as to which stream to follow in grade 10 since these teachers know the learner's abilities so irrespective of their teaching experience these teachers do take decisions on that.

Senior teacher 4 also shares similar sentiments with HOD 4 by stating:

In streaming of learners Grade 9 teachers are responsible for that and they report it to the SMT and accept their decision. The reason why we are not involved in this is because we are not teaching grade 9, so those who teach this grade know the capabilities of the learners and then decide what the learner is supposed to do in grade 10.

Junior teachers had slightly different views statements from what principals heads of departments and senior teachers in connection with the streaming of subjects. Junior teacher 1 stated that;

Yes I am involved in terms of choosing the correct subjects for my learners who will do grade 10 the following year. Concerning the streaming of subjects junior teachers are not involved. Those decisions are taken by the SMT. I only remember when Accounting was to be introduced as one of the subjects to be done in grade 10, that was first by the SMT only and later came as a report to us.

Junior teacher 2 and 3 stated that they had not been employed yet when the streaming was done in their respective schools but they understand that there is a set guidelines from the Department of Education that gives direction on how streaming should be done. This is confirmed by junior teacher 2 who stated that *'I was not there when streaming was being done but I understand it is done according to departmental requirements.'* Junior teacher 3 added to this by saying *'I do not know who decided on streaming of subjects in the school'.*

Junior teacher 4 also stated:

I did not feature I just saw things coming and implemented. All level 1 teachers did not participate in the streaming of the subjects.

When further probed as to why all level 1 teachers are not involved in streaming, the response from Jnr Tr 4 was, *'there are issues that are done by the SMT and we do not have that much privilege to enquire why this happens'.* Senior teacher 2 posits that:

As far as streaming of the subjects is concerned I can say I was involved since this was discussed in a staff meeting. What I am not involved in is to choose the careers for the learners in grade 10 as I am not teaching grade 9 so I do not know their potential or abilities. This is the duty of the teachers who teach grade 9.

HOD 3 concurred with junior teacher 1 by stating:

In streaming of the correct subjects grade 9 teachers are responsible for that and they report it to the SMT and we accept their decision. The reason why we are not involved in this is because we are not teaching grade 9, so those who teach this grade know the capabilities and abilities of the learners and then decide what the learner is supposed to do in grade 10. In addition

, in our school there was a high failure rate in Economics then as HODs we called the teacher concerned and convince her that we need to introduce Tourism and all teachers were for that idea. When we compared the results there was a big difference because the learners passed the new learning area with good results.

All respondents from the four schools indicated that there is a set of guidelines that entails which groups of learning areas are to be followed by all schools and then each school chooses the group of subjects to offer. Some junior teachers argued that they were not yet employed when the choosing of the streams was done so they do not do anything about that. It emerged from the study that it is the responsibility of all teachers that teach Grade 9 to guide learners to the correct stream to follow in Grade 10. Even the junior teachers are involved in this exercise as long as that particular teacher teaches that Grade.

Document analysis also indicates that streaming is done at the school level. Analysis of minutes of school meetings reveals that schools do carry out a streaming exercise based on the abilities of the learners. They also streamline teachers based on their strengths and qualifications for example the selection of a commerce HOD in a school will depend on the qualification and experience of those in that particular field. This is revealed from minutes of meetings from school 2.

4.4.8 Financial related issues

In order for any school to function properly the school management team should ensure that there are sufficient funds and resources available and they must be used effectively. The money that the school receives is utilized for purchasing learner teacher support material and any educational materials. The funds that the school has must solely be used for the benefit of the learners more than the teachers. However although it is the duty of the teachers to purchase the learning materials and any other items that the school might need, the SGB must first approve the financial decisions as the financial chairperson from the parent component. In all the government schools there must be a finance committee that excludes the principal but as the accounting officer

she/he must be aware of whatever is purchased by the school. As far as the handling of finances is concerned there must be transparency and accountability. Any person who is been entrusted with access to the use of funds is expected to give a reasonable account to all stakeholders on how the funds were utilized.

Important to note also is that schools do receive money from the government and all the four schools that participated in this study fall under section 21, and they are also none fee paying schools. There are government policies governing the use of funds. Schools are expected to follow government policies in their management of funds and from time to time they are audited by the government. While there are funds stipulated for certain sections, schools decide on what programmes to finance and through consultation of the finance committee and the principal as the accounting officer. Document analysis reveals that schools are expected to run finances in accordance with the public finance management (Act 1 of 1999). There is also the South African Schools Act where the SGB is responsible for the administration and control of school assets and resources. The principal then becomes answerable to the SGB for carrying out delegated duties but at the same time the SGB retains ultimate accountability for all financial expenses at the school.

All categories of teachers were interviewed on their participation in decision making regarding financial matters. In all the four schools understudy it emerged that there are finance committees that are responsible for handling school finances. It emerged from the study that two of the schools involve teachers in all financial matters and there is transparency. On the other hand in the other two schools the study found that although there is finance committee, it is not actively involved in finance issue, so it is there for formality. The school heads do not involve these committees at all. It is stated that there is no transparency at all and in school 2, the school head involves the school clerk only in handling the financial matters. This is confirmed by these respondents: Junior teacher 1 postulates that:

Personally I am not involved in finances. There is a finance committee but it is not functional. They have been there for the past three years but they have been operating without a budget. When the sport committee talks about sport funds arguments start

from the side of the principal. At times what happens is that sport budget is drafted but you will find that the sport committee is told by the principal that they have exhausted the sport funds although they are pretty sure that they haven't. The principal does not want to give any chance of arguments around this issue. I strongly feel that there is no transparency regarding the finances of the school and this is unfair.

Consequently Junior teacher 3 stated:

I do not want to lie although I am in the finance committee but I was never called to discuss school finances. The system that is there is not that transparent particularly in this avenue. We just do not know how much is there. Most of the time the principal does everything with the school clerk and never ask for assistance from anyone. There is also a finance policy and the finance committee that is there just for formality so that when the departmental officials ask for it, it is produced. This policy was drafted by the principal and the school clerk and the finance committee was never involved. Transactions are done by these two then a cheque is issued and the SGB just sign. We are not consulted at all. I remember one time when we had an outgoing match, the principal was given the quotation but he said there is no money and there was no further explanation.

The reflection from the responses of Jnr Tr 1 and Jnr Tr 3 are indicative of a top down approach and lack of transparency in the running of finances in their schools as they are in the dark about what is happening although they are in the finance committee. The other indication is that although there are finance committees, they are not actively involved in decision making on finance issues. The reflection is that in these schools, the principals manage finances with minimal consultation and minimal participation of other relevant stakeholders.

Senior teacher 3 confirms what junior teacher 1 and junior teacher 3 says by saying

I am not involved. I don't even know how much the school has. We are just told and do not have any say in the finances of the school. We just see the finance report when there is a parents meeting. School finances are not a topic for discussion at any point. If the SMT says there are no finances we just keep quiet and accept that. Personally I developed an attitude that says I don't care what is going on as long as I will not be accountable for anything as the

principal and clerk are the ones who know about the school finances.

Senior teacher 1 postulates that,

The committee do come with their budget we scrutinize it and then present it to the staff and at the ultimate end present it to the SGB. There is sometimes a problem that this finance committee is not 100% functional. The management has a tendency of making the budget on their own and just presents it to us. We usually reject that and the whole process starts afresh. But this year the finance committee is functional but not all members dedicate themselves to that and I am not sure of their reasons.

She continues:

In addition, goods are purchased without our knowledge as the finance committee. I remember seeing burglar bars being put in the school and this was a prerogative of the SMT. We were never consulted and we just kept quiet as we felt that there is nothing we can do. The SMT becomes arrogant and no explanation is given and only apologizes when there is a staff meeting. I feel that there is lack of transparency on how funds are handled.

HOD 3 echoed that:

No, I am not involved but there is a finance committee that is not functional. If someone is having a suggestion on what needs to be purchased the idea will depend on whether the principal feels good about that or not. We do not even know how much funds are there. There is absolutely no transparency concerning the finances. Honestly and truly speaking I do not think other teachers know even the deputy principal is in the dark concerning the school finances.

HOD 2 however stated something contrary to junior teacher 1 &3 and senior teacher 3.

She stipulated that:

Everyone is involved in finance issues. When all the school committees are selected and we make sure that everyone in the school belongs to a certain committee like finance, sport, bereavement, catering, sport and other committees that are there. In the finance committee there is an HOD, SGB, as the treasurer, two additional a senior and junior. I am directly involved in seeing

to it that finance procedures are carried out properly and I am having experience dealing with the finances.

HOD. 2 further added that;

This committee is partly functional because those who are not signatories in this committee are inactive but this doesn't give problems even if they are not consulted. If a teacher needs to purchase something she first consults the principal for the go ahead and then approach the accounting clerk and a cheque is signed .What is paramount here madam is that whatever is bought is receipted for balancing of the books and also for record keeping so that there are no problems at the end .Otherwise there is transparency regarding school finances.

All principals state that they involve all teachers in financial related issues, a view that is not shared by all the respondents, namely; junior teacher 1, senior teacher 1, HOD 1 and junior teacher 3, senior teacher 3, HOD 3 state that they are not involved in financial related issues. For example Principal 3 says something that is contrary to what the HOD 3, Junior and senior teacher 3 say. These respondents say that they are not involved in financial related issues whereas principal 3 states that;

The principal and the finance committee are involved. This committee is appointed by the staff members. Teachers who form part of this committee are commerce teachers and sometimes if anyone shows interest she/he is not deprived of that opportunity. The treasurer comes from the school and the school clerk is responsible for recording and receipting. When there are some items to be bought the principal, the department which wants these items together with the school clerk are involved in the buying processes. If the sport section also needs some items to be purchased they send a delegation and what they need is bought.

He added:

What happens is that the budget is made by the finance committee so that all departments are catered for. They just consult me before they buy anything or finalise any decision. There is no situation where as a principal I utilize the school funds alone except for the case maybe I am out of school and happens that I come across something that the school needs, I just make that purchasing without consulting anyone and just report when I

am back at school. In terms of transparency, it is there because even the SGB is involved.

While there is a contradiction between principal 3 and his teachers, that is, HOD 3, junior teacher 3 and senior teacher 3; principal 2 and principal 4 stated something that is also confirmed by the teacher participants from their schools. They stated that they involve their teachers in all financial matters. This data confirms what was said in the introduction to this section that two principals do not involve their staff in making financial decisions as exposed by the teachers, whilst the other two do so. With regard to the principals who involve staff members and the financial committee in decision making it is revealed that a budget is done and is presented to all the staff members. Principal 4 confirms that:

The finance committee is comprised of the teachers who are from the commerce department and who knows how to handle the funds and make the balance sheet. They are not the only ones. There are other teachers who are there because of their experience in school finances. This committee draws up the budget and presents it to the whole staff. There is nothing that this committee does without consultation so I can say there is transparency regarding how the school funds are handled. At the same time as an accounting officer nothing is purchased without my knowledge. Books are audited every year and if any departmental official or anyone who is interested on how funds are allocated and spent she/he is welcome.

Principal 2 added that:

There is a finance committee that takes care of all financial matters. They draw up the budget and consult with the staff members for whatever they decide to purchase. This committee was nominated on the base of these teachers strengths. To ensure that there is transparency all departments are represented when the budget is made. But as an ex officio member I am always aware and approve what needs to be purchased. In addition the SGB endorses whatever decision is taken regarding the finances as the chairperson is from the parent component.

The assertions that are made by the two principals are confirmed by other teachers from these schools who state that there is transparency regarding financial matters

because the finance committee consults other teachers before and after items are purchased. Furthermore, the chairperson of the SGB cements all the decisions pertaining what needs to be purchased. No teachers are left in the dark regarding finances as all teachers know how much funds the school had. Senior teacher 4 stated that:

Well, here at school what happens is that in January a school budget is made. The finance committee, sport, the SMT and the SGB chairperson together with the principal convene a meeting where the school finances are allocated according to the departments. All the funds are allocated and it is expected that each department utilizes its funds adequately. If there are items that need to be bought or done especially major ones like renovations or buying of a printer the principal informs us. I can say generally we are satisfied about how the school finances are handled.

Also HOD 2 and Junior teacher 2 concurred with their principal:

there is transparency in their school regarding school finances. They argued that a school budget is made and every staff member is made aware of how much a school has. As teachers we do not all be part of the meeting that deals with the budget but after the budget is done we are informed by the principal.

Data presented above reveals that there are mixed feelings on the side of teachers with that of the school principals. All principals claim that they involve all teachers in decision making concerning financial matters. This is contrary to what other teachers revealed. From the four schools under study two of them seem to encounter problems as far as the financial issues are concerned. Some teachers in these school pointed out that there is no transparency in school financial matters. They stated that even though there are finance committees, have no powers in making financial decisions. Some teachers revealed that they do not know how much money is there in their school. Whilst two schools faced problems with transparency, the other two schools did not. The principals included all staff members in decision-making or in the least informing them about the financial status of the schools and this eliminated tensions in the particular schools. The consultative approach used by these schools creates trust between the principals and the teachers and the SGB.

Nonetheless, what emerged from all principals is that they feel finances are run in a transparent manner where consultation is wide. The principal though not a signatory to accounts, s/he has power to approve or disapprove transactions. This is done in conjunction with the SGB, the finance committee and the HODs.

With regard to document analysis, minutes of meetings from the school 2 and school 4 confirm that schools do their budget at the beginning of the year where funds are allocated according to their departments. Again document analysis reveals that when teachers need something that has financial implications, they first of all consult the finance committee and once they are in agreement then a decision to make a purchase is made. All financial issues are done in consultation with the principal.

While minutes confirm that schools do their budget, financial statements confirm how funds are utilized. However, according to government regulations, the principal as an official of the department of education has a responsibility to advise the governing body when they issue instructions or act in a manner that contravenes departmental instructions or policy. In addition SGB has a responsibility to ensure that the school funds are utilized effectively hence they form part of the finance committee or become signatories.

4.4.9 Junior teacher non involvement in decision making

Junior teachers are not involved in all areas of decision making. The majority of them are young and energetic and they want to be involved in many things that are happening at school and are eager to learn. All the junior teachers indicated that they would like to be involved and participate in all decisions that are made at school. They all projected a feeling of dissatisfaction and frustration that they are deprived participation in some areas. They stated that they feel their potential is undermined and this made them to feel as if they are not part of the school. This is confirmed in Jnr Tr 1's response :

Well, when you are a newly appointed teacher you do not mind when you are not involved that but as time goes you want to feel

part of the school where your contribution is taken into consideration. This is frustrating at times and one feels inferior. We are there as teachers so we need to be treated as such at all times. Most of the time as junior teachers we are not involved in policy making and administrative issues.

Junior teacher Jn1's response echoes a desire to be involved in all decisions taken and is frustrated by non involvement in some decisions. The response from Jnr Tr 2 concurs with what Jnr Tr 1 stated. She said :

Sometimes I feel bad as I would love to be part of every decision taken at school. This sometimes makes us feel as if we are not real teachers or we are undermined. This also makes one not to participate in staff meetings because you are not sure whether what you will say will be considered or not. I strongly feel that we should be part of all the decisions taken at school irrespective of our experience.

Junior teacher 3 also echoes what junior teacher 1 and 2 said with reference to their non involvement in school administration issues and school policy making and the frustration they go through as a result of their non involvement.

This is what Jnr Tr 3 explained:

At our school you will find that you will be told that you have to do a certain task or you see things happening, and you are expected to implement things that you were not part of. This does not make me feel good as I think whatever is decided at school I must be there. This sometimes makes junior teachers have feelings that they are not real teachers.

Junior teacher 4 feels that non involvement is discriminatory and it undermines their intellect and it stifles their potential of contributing positively towards school development. He stated:

I think this makes us feel very bad or discriminated and I think as human beings we can have a positive contribution even in the areas where we were not expected to have a say and we surprise everyone. Moreover as part of the staff as well we should be involved in all the decisions that take place in the school. Also being exposed in all sort of scenario will give us a chance to learn. We must be taken like any other teacher at school.

The responses from all junior teachers echo their frustration as a result of their non involvement in decision making in certain areas like policy making, administration and in some disciplinary issues in their schools. Junior teachers feel that they can contribute a lot but are frustrated by partial involvement.

4.5 The situations where principals do not consult subordinates but make decisions alone

The study also sought to find from teachers whether principals do take decisions on their own without the involvement of teachers. All the respondents under study indicated that the school heads sometimes do take decisions without consulting some teachers. The teachers echoed that they are most of the time not happy about not being consulted as this may affect them in one way or another. Regarding this issue, the school principals confirm that they do take such decision when unexpected situations arise. They also postulate that this is most of the time because they feel that consultation sometimes can be time consuming. The practice of individual decision making by principals is confirmed by junior teacher 1:

Yes there are. For instance the principal will tell you that you have to do a certain task that you were not aware of. He sometimes lets people from outside to come and make a presentations without consulting us first .Or you will find that periods are being shortened without us knowing. Also we are told when the monthly tests are to be written. Sometimes the arrangement does not suit the teachers and you will find that you will not be given a chance to raise your concerns about this issue in a meeting situation we (teachers) are not listened to. Also there was a case of a child who forged her mother's signature, the principal dealt with that alone and did not involve the disciplinary committee or the learner's class teacher. I can add on to say not consulting teachers at times has negative results as teachers will be reluctant to implement the decisions they were not part of.

In concurrence Junior teacher 3 stated:

Our principal sometimes reminds us that he is the only head here. For example last year we had a staff meeting and it was observed that whenever we take decisions in a meeting where he is not

present he does not approve the decisions taken when the outcomes of the meeting are reported to him. Surprisingly he had been called but his response was negative, saying that he was busy. We once agreed that we should not issue reports on the closing day then we decided to issue them on the next term. He was furious stating that the staff should not take such a decisions without him. We were so surprised because he was not part of the meeting for reasons known to him.

Junior 2 also pointed out that:

When teachers wanted to attend a SADTU meeting, the principal called the HOD and he denied us permission to attend the meeting. Upon receiving the feedback, we challenged him to say we are not asking for permission but reporting that we are going to the meeting on that day. Somehow I can say he is autocratic.

The above statements prove that in some instances principals take a high-handed autocratic approach when making decisions that affect the whole school. This creates frustrations amongst teachers. This autocratic approach is also evidenced in the way meetings are at times handled. It was observed from the staff meetings attended by the researcher that the principal was not always in attendance although he was present at the school. There was no explanation or any apology received from him. Also from the minutes of the meeting there are very few meetings he chaired. The deputy principal always chaired the staff meetings. Senior teacher 4 concurred with junior teacher 1, and 3 when she stated:

Sometimes the principal will arrange a meeting and at the same time when the meeting is supposed to take place she just cancels the meeting at the last hour without consulting the teachers whereas she is the one who initiated that. This type of treatment is not acceptable at all as it demonstrates some sort of autocratic tendencies. She sometimes explains the reasons for cancelling the meeting when she is asked.

Senior teacher 3 also added:

Our principal has a tendency of not consulting when there is a change in the school programme. We just see things happening and most of the time this negatively affects the school programme and creates confusion on the side of the teachers and also the

learners. I think we need to be informed in advance in whatever that will change the school programme.

Junior teacher 4 did not share the same sentiments with all other teachers regarding the fact that the principal takes decisions alone and also claimed that he is not offended by that or take any exception. He explained:

Of course there are such times when the principal takes decisions alone and I understand that the principal can make decisions without consulting teachers. There are some cases where the principal can use her discretion. Otherwise our principal does not always do so. We are always made aware of all the programmes of the day and even if there will be changes the things that will take place in this school.

HOD 4 Disclosing her point of view said:

Her character is not such that she always excludes teachers. She is not autocratic at all. However the few decisions the principal does take alone sometimes have negative repercussions as some of those decisions are defied by the teachers.

In connection with this issue HOD2 argued that:

Definitely, when there is an urgent thing to be done, the principal does not consult but uses her discretion. For example when there is a disaster like there are some learners who come to school wet due to the rain on their way to school, the principal just sends those learners back home. She does not consult anyone. Another example is when there is a sick learner, she does not convene the staff meeting or the teacher concerned she just takes the learner to the hospital. At times the democratic processes are so slow that the principal finds it better to be temporarily autocratic when she sees that things are not done as expected. So one has to do away with democracy if she wants things to be done as expected.

When the principals were asked about whether they take decisions without consulting the teachers, this is what principal 2 intimated:

Yes, there are for instance cases where I see there is a health hazard maybe the school runs out of water. In such a case I take the decision to release the learners and I just report to the teachers there after. I also nominate some co-coordinators of certain committees all by myself as I am aware that it can take

ages if I call a staff meeting. So I just impose this. The reason why I do this is because I know the strengths and weakness of the teachers in my school.

Principal 1 further insisted:

At times I have to use my own decisions and do away with democracy and be autocratic especially when I see that things do not go as expected. For example if teachers do not submit the marks or to say in such and such a date I am expecting this to be done.

On the same issue HOD 2 also remarked:

Definitely, when there is an urgent issue to be attended to, the principal does not consult she just uses her discretion. For example when there is a disaster or when it happens that during the day the weather changes and there is a possibility that it will rain heavily, the principal just informs us that the school will knock out earlier. She does not consult all of us as sometimes there is no time to convene a meeting as other teachers will be busy in their classrooms so they are just informed. .The principal sometimes becomes autocratic when she sees that things are not done when teachers are approached democratically. Sometimes you will find her saying' this is not going to happen here, this is what I expect and we do as per instruction.

While other principals claimed that they sometimes do away with consultation, principal 4 commented that she always consults. On the same vein HOD 4 said, *"It is her character to do that although I would not go as far as saying she is autocratic"*.

4.6 Summary

The study indicated that in all schools the principals do take decisions without consulting the teachers and some teachers accept and understand that. They argue that in some instances the principal might take decisions solely and use her/his discretion but this depends on the type of issue to be handled. On the same vein this situation frustrates some teachers because they claim that principals have a tendency of coming up with the changes in the school programme and when things will not go as planned they are not consulted and this frustrates them.

4.7 Decision making by Heads of Departments only

Heads explained their position in terms of decision making in schools. They made it clear that when there are emergencies they have to take decisions without consultation. They admitted that while in the main they consult, there were times when they did not. They also complained that at times teachers misinterpreted democratic privileges and refused to act on school matters quickly. Thus, like heads they had to make urgent decisions without consulting in some instances. They also said there were some decisions that only the heads were supposed to make.

Principals were also asked to state areas where they involve only HODs in decision making. Principal 4's response was:

I involve HODs when a decision is to be introduced at school or when there is a new idea to be introduced for instance when I bring a new idea from a workshop or principals meeting where it was discussed on how the school must run. I first meet with the HODs before I convene the staff meeting so that we go there having a common understanding as the SMT.

On the same issue Principal 3 stated:

Most of the time when there is a state of emergency, I report the issue to them so that we check if the decision to be taken is correct or not. There are certain periods where the management is to make quick decision and there is no time to consult the entire staff. In addition there are cases where the staff members can't reach a consensus regarding certain issues then I ask for their intervention.

Principal 1 gave the following comment regarding consultation of HODs:

Heads of departments are involved when we have to make a school improvement plan for the year ahead. They do that before and they present it to the staff. Also it is the responsibility of the heads of departments to make the subject allocation.

On the issue of consultation Principal 2 stated:

I involve the heads in administrative issues. Sometimes when things do not go as planned I usually discuss with the HOD and try to plan strategies of handling a particular issue. If we have noticed that the teachers do not go to class in the last period or those who attend the last period come before the bell rings, or usually do not stay for the entire period we come together and decide on the strategy to curtail this kind of behaviour. Sometimes when we notice a high failure rate in a certain subject I involve the HODs so that we also decide on how we can make plans to improve the situation.

The indications from the above responses from the principals are that whatever happens at school, the first people that they consult are the HODs. Decisions on the running of the school are usually made by school principals in consultation with HODs. Realizing that at times staff do not easily reach consensus principals indicated they use HODs as a fast track consultation group.

Principals were asked to mention areas where teachers are not interested in contributing or participating in decision making. Their responses were not very different as all principals indicated that teachers do not contribute a lot in areas where they are not very competent. Principal 2 explained that:

I can say that what I have observed is that teachers do not contribute in areas where they are not clear. I can also indicate that our male teachers do not contribute when we discuss issues pertaining to neatness of learners and sometimes disciplinary and administrative issue like making of the timetable. This becomes female stuff but what I can indicate is that it depends on an issue and on individual. Some teachers do not contribute in administrative issues.

Principal 1 added:

This is not frequently happening but what I can indicate is that teachers do not want to contribute in areas where they have no confidence in.

Principal 3 agreed with the other principals that teachers can only make decisions on issues they are competent in, hence, principals and HoDs make most of the decisions:

I can say this depends on an individual. One maybe a specialist in a certain area then may have less interest in another area for instance the junior teachers are always keen in participation in sport but in administrative issues they become passive.

When other teachers were asked the same question they stated that:

With regards to administration I feel that is not my duty nor is it my special area. I am a classroom specialist and I want to be left there. Those who have that duty are exempted from other duties. I also do not want administrative duties delegated to me because I hate arguing with staff who may not respect me (Junior teacher 2).

On the same issue Junior teacher 4 indicated that:

I do not want to be involved in the making of the school timetable which I find very complicated. I have not been trained to do that. It is a frustrating task because as you place an item it clashes with another. I am fine with sporting duties which are fun anyhow.

Senior teacher 3 added:

I do not want to be involved in disciplinary issues or to be in a disciplinary committee because each day there are cases that are brought to the principal's office. That means as a disciplinary teacher you are ever in meetings. Beside sometimes parents of the culprits are called or SGB to deal with them and they may decide to reject the rulings you made and learners may jeer at you as a teacher who tried but failed to control them.

Senior teacher 4 also said:

Well, the task I will refuse to do is balancing financial books and mastering the quarterly returns before banking. Doing of returns as I see it is a very difficult thing to do.

Data presented above reveals that teachers only want to partake in decision-making in areas they are competent in, which is commendable. However, this creates a dilemma in that on the one hand they want to be consulted on everything, on the other they do not want to be involved in issues they are not well versed in. A consultative process is necessary so that different views may be

presented from various sources. In addition, it seems it is unavoidable for principals and HoDs to make emergence decisions without consultation, though time permitting teachers should be consulted on issues affecting the schools. Lastly, it was established that the junior teachers do not want to be involved in the administrative, disciplinary and financial issues, though they have a strong desire to be consulted on issues pertaining to running the school.

4.8 Strategies used by principals in involving teachers in decision making

Respondents were asked about the strategies that their principals use to involve teachers in decision making. Teachers pointed out that it depends upon the issue that is being discussed. The strategies range from individual consultation, SMT consultation, staff meetings or group meeting, committees and delegation to subordinates. Junior teacher 1 and HOD 2 sum up the strategies clearly. These are some of their statements: A certain protocol is followed, that is, things are first discussed by the principal and the HODs. It then depends on the nature of the issue but sometimes we hear some stuff from the HODs. At times a staff meeting is called to discuss the issues. Individual groups like sport committee or grade 12 teachers are sometimes called by the principal if there is something that concerns them. Individual teachers are sometimes called to give advice or opinions in challenging situations if they have experience or expertise in the area. A teacher for example who has a course in counselling may be asked how to tackle an issue of a learner who is suicidal (Junior teacher 1).

HOD 2 also stated that:

What I can clearly state is that in my school a distributed leadership is practiced and implemented because everyone is tasked or belongs to a certain committee. By virtue of one being involved in committees this means that there are reports she/he has to give either to the principal or to the entire staff. Our principal is open minded so she is able to deal with all the kind of situations meaning approaching teachers as groups or as

individuals. When she is faced with a problem she can't solve alone she consults the SMT for advice or calls a particular teacher who holds the expertise concerning a certain area.

Concerning the same issue some senior teachers shared a different view. The senior teacher's assertion points to a situation whereby the principal made decisions on her own and no transparency at all in as far as decision making is concerned. This is confirmed by the following responses:

Senior teacher 4 stated that:

The principal just writes a note with the agenda to circulate to all teachers and she expects us to sign it and if you have signed that note she takes it you have agreed with what is there. Otherwise it's very rare that we have staff meetings. As the teachers we are not comfortable with this type of consultation.

Senior teacher 3 remarked that:

The principal sometimes calls his deputy and instructs him to convene a staff meeting. He then follows up by getting details of how the meeting progressed. It is the details of decisions taken that he will evaluate and if they are acceptable he approves them for implementation.

Principals were also asked to state the strategies that they use to involve teachers in decision making. They all are of the opinion that consultation is key in decision making. From their views they reflect the use of varied strategies ranging from selective participation to all stakeholder participation in decision making. They state that on issues pertaining to the running of the school, they consult the SMTs and when it involves a particular teacher with expertise in a certain area; they consult that particular teacher individually. In addition the principals said that they convene a staff meeting to discuss certain issue especially at the beginning of the term and when there are issues that involve all teachers. This is confirmed by principal 1 who explained that:

Consultation is the key when you want to involve teachers in decision making. I consult the SMT, master and senior teachers and then the entire staff. I also call a teacher when I need some

clarity concerning a certain issue whether it's something curriculum related or not. If the idea or problem involves other teachers I call the staff meeting. If I have observed that there is a tendency of late coming, late submission etc, I address the entire staff.

Principal 2 stated:

Most of the time when there is an issue/issues to be discussed I consult with the SMT first. Then I convene a staff meeting where all teachers will have a chance of making their contribution regarding school matters. I sometimes call a particular teacher where I will need some clarity pertaining a certain issue. I sometimes do that when I am confronted with something that I find difficulties to tackle. Concerning this field with what she gathered from the workshop.

Junior teachers 2 explained that

The principals sometimes use formal consultative fora to consult staff such as committee report meetings, staff meetings and specialist consultation on the basis of expertise. However they also use informal means such as inviting individuals for a chat to get opinions. All these are strategies that bring in information.

Junior teacher 3 made the following comments:

First of I am not sure whether I will give the response that you expect but what usually happens is that first of all the principal meets with the SMT and discusses what needs to be done or what the teachers should be aware of . If the item needs the attention of the entire staff a meeting is convened to address the issue. Also if the principal needs clarity pertaining to a certain issue known by a certain teacher or teachers she calls them/ him. For example if something is around sport we are called as the sport committee. Or if it is something that is nutrition related, nutrition coordinator is called by the principal.

Senior teacher 1 stated:

If the principal has found himself in a corner due to the decisions he has made, he takes that particular issue/issues to the staff meeting so that he is rescued pretending to forget that he did not involve the teachers. The principal has a tendency of consulting

the SGB to discuss the matters concerning us. This raises more questions and as teachers we are not satisfied about this conduct. On the other hand in cases where a teacher is suspected of substance abuse he then calls that teacher and addresses the issue in the presents of the SMT. In cases like this we are not involved as entire staff members.

When the HODs were interviewed on the same issue, HOD 4 concurred with junior teacher 2.

When an issue that concerns the entire staff comes up, the principal formally calls a meeting where every teacher is made to read and sign book which circulates with the agenda written down and the teachers are expected to be at the meeting where things will be discussed. Firstly most of the time the SMT is consulted by the principal and if there is a need to involve other teachers that will be channelled down to them. At other times consultation is casual with the principal chatting to a teacher.

Thus the strategies of consultation used by principals ranged from staff meetings, committee meetings, to individual consultation. Consultation is either formal or informal. One strategy used for consultation is to call an expert to advise or give an opinion on an issue.

4.9 Importance of involving teachers in decision making

It is interesting to note that the majority of the respondents from the schools hold the opinion that involving all teachers in decision making yield good results. Teachers see their involvement as something that is key to their active participation in decisions taken as they will be the owners of the ideas. They are of the opinion that participation creates collegial approach to work and shared ideas and participation in all that can be done at a school. They also view participation as something that creates eagerness to implement shared ideas. The following statement is the response that confirms these views.

Principal 2 remarked that:

Teachers do very well if they are part and parcel of the decisions done at school. For instance giving a chance to teachers to choose which textbooks to use makes them to implement or do the teaching with all the commitment and enthusiasm. It is easy for the teachers to help each other when one is encountering some problems or correct him/ her when she is going astray. This kind of involvement can be done without my intervention as the principal. The consultation makes things light for me. Also this improves the working conditions as there will be harmony among teachers and also there will be an element of trust. If things are distributed among all teachers this also relieves stress and overload from teacher to teacher. In this case surely the teaching and learning will improve and this will improve the school results.

Principal 4 on his part insisted that :

In cases where teachers are involved the school runs smoothly and is better able to achieve the vision and mission of the school. Every teacher feels part of the school community and owns the decisions taken. Also when the teachers participate in any activity in school and also in instruction related issues they are eager to implement that curriculum as mostly one would know that it was his/her idea. Schools reap good results and better outcomes which will result in high pass rates.

Senior teachers also share the same sentiments as principals that ownership of ideas is as result of active participation by relevant stakeholders in decision making. Being involved in decision making is paramount and beneficial to both the teachers and learners which results on improved learner performance. Senior teachers were also of the view that participation in decision making can boost the morale of the teachers and also improve discipline on both the teacher and the learner. Teachers also view their involvement as a way of creating collaborative teaching that enhances the smooth running of the school.

On this issue Senior teacher 4 reasoned:

When all teachers are involved in decision making everyone owns that decision. There is a smooth running of the school even if the departmental official visits the school every teacher knows what is taking place in the school. Involvement in decision making encourages teamwork.

Senior teacher 1 commented:

If all teachers are involved there is discipline in the school. Everyone becomes enthusiastic to come to school and make contributions. This again affects the core business positively as everyone shows eagerness to work towards school progress. The school community spirit is uplifted and creates collaborative working. Conflicts are rare in this situation. If we are all involved in decision making we just own the results whether good or bad.

HOD 4 stated:

If one decides to do things alone she/he will not see things or become aware that she/he made a mistake but if other teachers are involved other views will crop up. There are no tensions when all teachers are involved and when the duties are to be performed they all do that with enthusiasm and same spirit. You own all the decisions taken as you are part of it. In addition there will be progress in school programmes and also progress both academically and on the administrative side.

The issue of participation in decision making is viewed by all respondents as something that reduces tension at the work place and contributes positively towards organizational development. The principals view participation as a tool of ushering in progress in all school programmes. Ownership of programmes through ideas that are shared is a view that is shared by all respondents. All the respondents commented that when teachers are involved in decision making they work together with the same spirit and strive towards the common goal. It emerged from the study that when teachers work together the school programmes are run successfully. The absenteeism of teachers is reduced as all the teachers are keen and enthusiastic to come to school. The data discloses that senior teachers view involvement in the school decision making process as a tool that encourages collaborative team work. Furthermore principals concluded that when teachers are involved in decision making the school will progress and the student performance will improve.

4.10 Challenges of not involving teachers in decision making

When teachers are not involved in any decisions at school there can be challenges that might jeopardize the programmes of the school. The schools might not progress normally as expected when teachers who are one of the essential or primary stakeholders are not consulted. It is imperative that each and every teacher be part of what is taking place in her/ his school.

All teachers share the same sentiment concerning their non-involvement in some of the crucial decisions made at the school level. Regarding the impact of their non involvement they all cited high teacher de-motivation, absenteeism, low morale, lack of sense of ownership in decisions they were not part of. Teachers generally are reluctant to implement decisions they were not consulted on when taken and this does not yield good results. In addition the core business of the school which is teaching and learning will be negatively affected. This is confirmed by junior teacher 3 who stated:

Lack of ownership in decision making causes teachers to become disinterested in doing their work. This is because one would feel that he was not part of that decision. And definitely that will contribute to school not operating effectively. For example in my school there are times that the principal informs us that the learners have a programme to do with the local municipality. School programmes are disrupted and yet teachers were not part of that decision. This decision lowers the teacher morale and creates negative attitude towards the principal and surely teaching and learning will be negatively affected. Lack of commitment will occur because teachers will be reluctant to implement decisions they were not part. Also there will be a high absenteeism rate because teachers will see no need to come to school when they are not given a chance to air their views.

On the question of challenges caused by lack of consultation Junior teacher 4 stated that:

This scenario creates chaos in the school because when teachers are not involved they will be reluctant to do the school tasks. Teachers will be demotivated and this may result in the school atmosphere becoming heavy for teaching and learning .No one will be eager to implement the decisions he does not know .A high

absenteeism rate will occur. There will be no team teaching as encouraged by NCS.

The responses from junior teacher 3 & 4 indicate lack of ownership of ideas as one of the challenges that schools can face as a result of non-participation of teachers in decision making. They further cite lack of team work and unwillingness to work and implement decisions they were not involved in crafting. Their responses reflect on poor working relations and conditions which in turn could have a negative effect on their work. Senior teacher 2 further cites sabotaging as one of the challenges that might affect the school as a result of non-participation of members.

Snr Tr 2 remarked that:

Sabotaging will be the order of the day for those who were not involved. There will be tensions in the work place as people will feel that their views are undermined or are excluded in some decision made. There will be also be high absenteeism on the part of teachers and this will have a negative impact on the teaching and learning.

Senior teacher 4 further cites defiant attitudes against management as one of the challenges that schools might face as a result of non-participation of teachers in decision making. Snr Tr 4 postulated that:

Teachers will develop defiant attitudes because things are not done as they wish or else they claim that they were not part of that decision and be reluctant to implement the decisions they did not participate in. There was a case where there were mixed feelings on when classes should be cleaned on Wednesday. Some teachers suggested that the last two periods of that day should be used while others suggested that it should be the first two periods after break. Eventually the last two periods were used as a cleaning slot and the teachers who were against this decision did not supervise the learners during cleaning because they felt that they were not part of that decision, others took their bags and left the school.

Senior teacher 3 made the following comments:

There will be conflicts that are created amongst staff members and this will lead to unhealthy running of the school. It also affects the teacher morale and if the morale is not good we cannot help each other even in this new curriculum NCS that needs team teaching. This affects the teaching and learning. This will create an unhealthy environment where people will not work freely and the learners will suffer at the ultimate end.

The indications from senior teachers 3 and 4 on the challenges of non-participation in decision making emphasize on conflict, defiance, poor morale and sabotaging of ideas that come from above. They further reflect on an unhealthy learning environment for the learners and an unhealthy working environment for the teachers. The principals and the HODs share the same views regarding the challenges of not involving the teachers in decision making. It is clear that if teachers are deprived of their right to participate in decision making the school will not run effectively or smoothly and this will hamper the teaching and learning which in this case learner performance will be low. In order for the teaching and learning to be effective both the teachers and learners as the learning community should create a conducive atmosphere for the core business to take place. Principal 2 confirms this by stating:

Firstly I can highlight that if teachers are not involved they will develop resistance in implementing things they are not part of. This really brings problems because some teachers will not collaborate in school activities. In addition the teaching and learning will be negatively affected as these teachers will not come to school regularly. This may imply to some teachers that there is no democracy and transparency if they are not involved in decisions taken at school.

HOD 1 gave the following comments about it:

If the principal takes decisions her own and not involve teachers they will say it is his baby and will not involve themselves and take responsibility. This will have a negative impact on the running of the school and this will also affect the performance of the learners. Sometimes when the teachers are not involved they drag their feet in implementing that decision or do not even do it at all. In addition this will result in teacher absenteeism and de-motivation.

Giving information on this issue Principal 2 stated:

Firstly I can highlight that if teachers are not involved they will develop resistance in implementing things they are not part of. This really brings problems because some teachers will not co-operate in the school activities. In addition the teaching and learning will be negatively affected as teachers will not come to school regularly. This may imply to some teachers that there is no democracy and transparency if they are not involved in decision taken at school.

The responses from the principals and HODs dwell on non-participation as something that can negatively affect teaching and learning. They assert that teaching and learning will be hampered and this will result in high failure rate of learners. The school climate will be unhealthy and this creates tensions between the management and the teachers when they are not consulted. Non-involvement of teachers creates a situation whereby teachers will be reluctant to participate in the school programmes that are imposed on them.

It came out from the study that the SMTs, HODs sometimes included junior teachers in the decision making process. However in some areas like curriculum related issues all teachers are involved. In areas such as finance some teachers are excluded and this demotivated them. Teachers were involved in making decisions in such areas as curriculum where they were selected according to subject specialization. For sport the teachers were required to be energetic, enthusiastic and in some cases experienced in order to lead the sport programme. In financial matters teachers with commerce or math were favourites although integrity, seniority were also a pre-requisite qualities. For discipline teachers needed to be experienced and know the school acts that govern disciplinary matters such as corporal punishment but maturity was also a quality considered for the disciplinary committee.

Principals used strategies such as committees, groups and individual contacts to involve teacher in decision making

The teachers views regarding their participation in decision making had successes like developing a sense of ownership of the programmes for which decisions were made

and a sense of belonging to the school. Teacher perceptions indicated that when they are involved in decision making, their morale and enthusiasm became very high resulting in improved teaching and learning. On the other hand the challenge of non involvement of teachers was that became demotivated and that negatively affected the implementation of school policies and programmes. This also resulted in teacher absenteeism and a high failure rate of learners.

4.11 Summary

The data stated that when the teachers are not involved in decision making at school there will be challenges that will occur. Teachers feel that it is imperative that they are included in any decision processes that take place as if they are not involved they will participate in the school activities willingly. Furthermore they will be demotivated and this has a potential of negatively affect the running of the school as they will not own any decisions taken without them.

5 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 analysed and presented findings from the data collected. The study hereunder discusses the findings with respect to the main research questions. The main objective of this chapter is to discuss findings and bring them into fold of existing knowledge in teacher participation in decision making at schools.

5.2 People who participate in decision making at schools

In schools, all teachers despite the position they hold make academic and administrative decisions on different events in the school. Decision making which is the art of teaching, since best schools and best heads are judged on their ability to make well informed decisions on how learners can benefit in a formal learning environment. This is in-line with what some scholars studying learning environments have concluded (Hallinger, 2005; Southworth; Bush, 2011; Lashway, 2000, Borko, Liston & whitcomb, 2007). A rational tenet in decision making is that regardless of the manner of options presented on an issue, decisions should to be taken consistently in tandem with guidelines set. While intuition and emotions do come into decision making, they should not be the norm. Analytic and problem solving skills are better to rely on to guide choices rather than intuition. Thus when information is inadequate or complex, judgment still has to be consistently sound (Saaty, 2008; Sanha, 2005). That is why in schools senior teachers, HODs & SMTs with a record of sound judgment because of their experience have to be mainly relied on to make crucial decisions. That is recommended because decisions have to fulfil the objectives of the school as an organization. This is in line with the thinking of such scholars as (Kobus, Proctor & Holste, 2001).

The research findings of this study indicate that all teachers are involved in decision making but their degree of involvement varies according to the positions they hold.

Indicators are that seniority and expertise is considered depending on issues involved and this varies from school to school. This was also observed by Kobus, Proctor & Holste, 2001; Sinha, 2005).

Teacher participation is therefore greatly influenced by the importance of the matter at hand, for example policy issues and discipline. This means the setting of making up the decisions making boards have to be put in place to ensure decisions are made smoothly in accordance with set norms and guidelines. Committees like disciplinary and curriculum development have to be manned by experienced seasoned educators so that the decisions taken in them are sound. This is also supported in related literature by Saaty 2008; Sanha, 2005).

5.3 Non involvement of Junior teachers/Senior teachers in decision making

The study revealed that junior and senior teachers are not involved in all issues that require decision making in schools. Their involvement depends upon their expertise on a particular issue which means they are partially involved. It is this partial involvement that frustrates some of them as they expressed that they feel discriminated against when they are not involved in some issues. This is supported by Loeb (2005) who states that a great percentage of teachers feel that lack of empowerment in decision making is the greatest cause of their frustration in their teaching career. The research findings were that junior and senior teachers feel demotivated when their views are not taken on board and as a result they lose a sense of belonging to the school. Nonetheless, the observations made in meetings show that junior teachers were not contributing most of the time in meetings due to fear that their views will be discarded. Awotua-Efebo (1999) further states that where teachers lack motivation and involvement in decision making, truancy, excessive excuses, absenteeism tension and complaints usually emerge leading to general ineffectiveness, inefficiency, low productivity and non-achievement of goals of organization (Toker, 2009).

The study also reveals that in instances where junior/senior teachers are involved; their participation in decision making is more skewed to classroom practice and extra-curricular activities that are physically involving like sports. By so doing these teachers feel that they are seen to be useful when it comes to such aspects of education as curriculum but no in others such as administrative. This in a way is contrary to what the human relations model advocates for. According to the human relations model the task of the school executive is to make subordinates know they are useful and important members of the team, to explain his/her decision and to discuss subordinates objections to his or her plans. This is in line with what Mualuko (2009) Ritchie & Woods (2007) object to. According to this model the expectations of subordinates are that administration should share information with them and involve them in school decision making to help satisfy their basic needs for belonging and individual recognition. This is what Somech, 2006; Oshagbemi & Gill (2003) advocate for.

5.3.1 School Management Team

The research findings are that the school management team which comprises the principal, deputy principal and the heads of departments sometimes take decisions together with the rest of the staff in meetings. At other times they first discuss the issues alone as the school management team and apply a top-down approach (May & Winter 2007; Evan, Fraser, Andrew, Dougill, Mabee, Reed (2006) This implies that there are instances where decision making is centralized and there is little or no consultation. The centralization of decision making maybe due the fact that in some instances consultation and all stakeholder involvement is said to be time consuming. This is confirmed by Jones (2004) who states that consultation has however, its own demerits in that it delays decision making and there is the potential of confusing issues and losing one's grip on issues. On the same vein, Jones (2004) argues that

First, there is the issue of time. The more you consult the longer the decision making process will take... the more people you consult with, the higher the chances of being confused by the mass of views- some no doubt contradictory – you will receive. Secondly if too many people become involved you may well lose your grip over the whole process (p.128).

The issue of centralization of decision has been discussed and Harris joins the discussion and argues in contrast with this idea and states that distributed leadership model recognizes that there are multiple leaders and that leadership activities are widely shared within and between organizations. Furthermore these models focus upon the interactions, rather than the actions of those in formal and informal leadership.

While the school management team (SMT) is core in the making of decisions as the principal is the accounting officer. The assumption is that the school management team may feel that consultation may put them in a compromising position as decision making becomes a monotonous process. The school management team may as a result end up not consulting at all and subsequently be perceived as having dictatorial tendencies or authoritarian tendencies by their subordinates. This was also confirmed by junior and senior teachers who echoed non consultation and centralized decision making.

Although the South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996) calls for active involvement of all stakeholders in all aspects of school decision making processes, research has shown that some principals allow little or no subordinate participation in school decision making processes, because such involvement is perceived as unproductive (Bush and Heystek 2003; Van Wyk 2004; Mncube 2007). There are issues which are better handled through decisions by SMTs because it is their responsibility and therefore they are better informed. Duties and terms of reference of SMTs are also outlined in SASA(1996). Other reason principals make decisions with SMTs is that as shown in related literature they are experienced are trusted to make sound decisions. They have a track record that proves their capabilities (Saaty, 2008; Sanha, 2005)

5.3.2 Participation on the basis of gender

It was discovered in this study that there was a disparity in the involvement of male and female teachers in the decision making processes. While other studies (Olorunsola & Olayemi, (2011) Burke & Mattis, (2005) revealed that male teachers are more involved in decision making in schools than their female counterparts, the findings of this study

were contrary to this. The study found that in all participating schools, females were numerically outnumbering their male counterparts, BBC(2011) This scenario is uncomfortable to male teachers as they felt that in some instances issues are deliberately put to vote by females when it comes to decisions that favour them because they know they will vote and outnumber the males Gronn (2002). It appears that female teachers were more vocal in meetings than male teachers. However males also contributed in meetings but were less vocal than females. The issue of being outnumbered by females does not mean that male views are not taken on board, it was rather a general feeling that they are sometimes choked by their female colleagues when issues are put to vote. They felt that females do not vote rationally but they sometimes vote selfishly to support each other even when it is not going to benefit the school. This is just an uneasiness that appears to be common to men in a patriarchal society who are not used to females taking a lead or being assertive. This is also similar to what some scholars found out (ILO,2002; Wentling,2003;Jamali,Sidani & Safieddine, 2005).

In the four schools under study, the findings were that the school management teams are predominantly female. This again could be another factor that makes male teachers feel that there is an imbalance that is skewed towards females in terms of their contribution in decision making. Related literature shows that this is the case in some communities, confirming what the data in the study revealed (Win, 2004; Wentling, 2003).

5.3.3 Aspect of expertise and experience in participation

Research established that teaching experience and expertise in all four schools under study was one of the major factors for one to participate in certain decision making issues. Hoy and Miskel (2005) postulate that expertise and experience must be considered in deciding who should be involved in reaching a decision. This is a plausible idea because someone who is experienced has cases to refer to and knows what can be expected from certain situations. This means experience guides such people to making sound decisions. This confirms Dimmock's (1993) findings that

teachers with the most experience are put in strategic boards that are fundamental to running the school so that their experience works for the benefit of the school. However, this means junior teachers are not prioritized.

This is in line with the human relations model that stresses the need to consider expertise, experience, creativity, willingness and all positive aspects of subordinates in an organization hence the need to consider those able and willing to participate constructively in decision making in schools (Maluako 2009). The involvement of experienced teachers in decision making process could ease the principals' mounting problems as many heads will be put together to intellectually solve problems that could have remained unsolved by the principals alone.

The research findings are that senior teachers are being consulted more on curricular issues since they have a role of mentoring junior teachers. They are also involved in their areas of expertise and in areas where they have experience. This is confirmed by Anderson and Shannon cited in Somech(2006)

Dimmock (1993) found out that heads preferred consulting experienced members of staff to those who have just graduated. His findings also indicated that teaching experience was an accurate indicator of participation in decision making in schools. Van der Bank (1997:150) argues that there are two criteria which could be used to determine which staff members should participate in which decisions. The first of these criteria is 'relevancy' and the second has to do with 'expertise'. 'Relevancy' - refers to the interest a specific person has concerning the problem and the subsequent decision. 'Expertise' – refers to the extent to which participants to decision making are qualified by means of training and experience.

According to Van der Mescht and Tyala, (2008) the importance of participation in decision making is emphasized by the Department of Education when it puts it as a rule that school management should be based on the democratic principles that enables broader participation by those 'on site' dealing directly with issues that need to be resolved, people who potentially have 'on site' expertise. In instances where principals consult all teachers for decision making processes, they will be applying the collegial

leadership model. This is in tandem with what some leading scholars advocate (Hallinger, 2005; Lashway, 2002; Harris, 2003). The Collegial model emphasizes that power and decision-making should be shared among some or all members of the organization who are thought to have a shared understanding about the aims of the institution (Bush, 2003). Furthermore, he contends that collegial models seem to be particularly appropriate for organizations such as schools and colleges that have a significant numbers of professional staff. The collegial model works by having those in senior positions mentoring those in junior positions who may not be ready to make decisions but can be coached bit by bit. Definitely the younger generation has to be groomed to take the ropes in later times. The collegial model encourages sharing of tasks and complementary engagement where decisions made in one forum are enhanced by those receiving them so that at each level keeps on being built up and added to. It is based on team work and its goals include transformation of staff from one level of operation to a higher one through cooperative planning and implementation of policies and decisions taken at various fora such as staff meetings and senior management meetings of the SMT.

5.4 Areas of participation in decision making

5.4.1 Discipline of learners

The study found out that in all four participating schools, all teachers are involved in making decisions concerning the general disciplining of the learners. This is in line with distributed leadership model that encourages collective and collaboration of teachers and that leadership must be distributed among all the stakeholders. According to Barnerr & McCormic (2003) decision making might include participating in producing a code of conduct, school regulations, reporting attendance figures, and dealing with tardiness and absenteeism. In order for the school to function properly and effectively there must be discipline on both the side of the learners and the teachers as well (Lashway, 2002).

The School Act of 1996 stipulates Regulations for Safety Measures at schools and categorically states that dangerous objects and drugs are not allowed in school premises. However, learners continue to bring weapons into school premises and at times use them against other learners and their educators. Matsitsa (2008) observes that children in schools now engage in criminal activities that are “injurious to teachers and fellow learners and hamper academic activities”. This implies that educators need to act professionally and administer the necessary disciplinary measures in order to ensure a conducive learning environment for the majority of the learners (p. 240). De Wet (2007) found that Free State learner sand educators are mostly exposed to verbal and physical violence, learner- on-learner, learner-on-educator and educator- on-learner violence and violence-related behaviour. Learners must be made aware that they are responsible for their actions (Reeve & Jung 2006; Dweck, 2002).

According to Nieuwenhuis, Beckman and Prinsloo (2007) the schools have a crucial role to perpetuate societal values and this can only be done if learners are taught to be responsible for their own behaviours. Similarly, Du Bois (2006) argues that a school system should mirror the society and teachers in the school should be in total control of learners. At schools the learners maybe so unruly and militant that the principal is required to use strict disciplinary measures to improve their academic performance. The data showed that discipline in these schools, discipline is primarily aimed at correction and developmental restitution, rather than retribution and provides protection for the learners (The Eastern Cape Education for School Management 2000).

The school disciplinary committees are responsible for dealing with the misbehaviours that are committed by learners and then decide the type of punishment suitable for each misconduct. The school principal as an accounting officer is made aware of whatever punishment is given to the learner. On the other hand if teachers work as a team in dealing with all sort of ill-discipline at school there will be a conducive learning climate that will lead to successful student achievements at school. Also it is imperative that the parents are always taken on board in all circumstances related to any serious punishment meted out to their children as this may create problems if this is not done.

When Barker (2006) argued that *“we all have the ability to make a difference... as individuals, we can choose to take action and participate in the world around us... together we can shape the future”*, he was actually illustrating the importance of working together as a united force, or team. This is in tandem with what the study revealed of all the leaders in the schools. According to Steyn & Niekerk (2002) teamwork can enhance quality management in schools as teams can utilize resources more efficiently and effectively. Organizational effectiveness improves the quality of educational programs and creates better learning and working environments. Thus, successful teamwork is considered an indispensable ingredient in the process of building of successful schools. This was confirmed in literature by such scholars as Lashway, 2002; Bush, 2006; Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Harris, 2007 & Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008) who are at pains to authoritatively say that team work is vital for the success of the school programmes.

5.4.2 Sporting activities

It was established that from the four schools all junior teachers and senior teachers are involved in sport activities. Senior teacher participation is helpful in order to give direction as they are experienced. According to Grant (2006) teachers get involved with whole school development issues, such as creating the mission and vision of the institution as well as in policy development. Teacher leadership is vital in relation to extra-curricular activities, sport and school development projects such as fundraising and development of sport related school policies and planning of tournaments. It is evident that teachers in the study area were working collaboratively with other staff members on issues regarding sport. Furthermore those involved in sports hold pivotal roles as sport managers and coaches and they take crucial decisions regarding sport issues. Dlodla (2001) postulates that, collaborative power raises staff members to learn to make most of their collective capacity to run the day-day affairs of their schools and solve problems. If teachers are involved in the running of the school, they are challenged in a number of ways, such as learning new ways of doing things and even values and attitudes. The lack of involvement results in fear and uncertainty which

induces reluctance to change even if fruits of change are somehow desired. This is supported by Saaty (2008; Sanha, 2005).

If teachers are denied opportunities to participate in areas they are interested in and areas where they have a high level of expertise, they are likely to be demotivated and be reluctant to involve themselves in any activities at school. Additionally, it is evident that despite the fact that the sport committees were granted powers to make decisions related to sport, but when it comes to issues related to sport finances there are challenges. The sports committee is excluded from making financial decisions related to sporting programmes. This is also noted in related literature where heads claim that they cannot delegate such facets as financial decisions due to the fact that they remain accountable for monies spent by the school. However this is an old notion because in distributed leadership a head is expected to delegate by way of distribution of tasks such duties to a capable teacher and then just supervise such a teacher. This is supported by such scholars as (Hallinger & Heck, 2009; & Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008)

5.4.3 Financial issues

Financial management of schools is a relatively new experience for all the four schools that participated in the study. Teachers doubted their own abilities, and the knowledge and skills of others, in this area. The introduction of section 21 schools that are funded by the government also came up with devolution of financial management in these schools whereby these schools have to manage the financial resource they receive from the government. The management of funds and the power and control associated with it may create an environment in which the degree of competence, integrity, fairness and openness of people and process are inevitably scrutinized.

Devolution of financial management to the school site recognizes the importance of participative decision making in educational organizations (Duignan, 1990). The level of participation in financial decision making needs to be extended to the classroom teacher; otherwise school financial management could be just another form of

centralized control, with the principal in the middle of the action. However, in an attempt to establish a high level of teacher involvement in decision making and to promote an image of self-management, some schools have established administrative structures, e.g. finance committees, that, in effect, distract teachers from their primary instructional role (Robertson, 1993). Some teachers are required to attend many meetings such as budget committees, financial execution meetings and staff development committees. They are encouraged to be involved in a plethora of financial issues ranging from income generation to marketing and long-term financial planning (Eastern Cape Department Manual for School Management 2000).

Despite this wide range of apparent participation, in many cases teachers find that, while these committees create an illusion of involvement, they can actually impede any real teacher influence (Abuhama, 2010). While some teachers agree that, in some cases, the potential benefits of participation may outweigh the costs of their involvement, the teachers feel that there is little possibility of these potential benefits being actually achieved, unless their level of participation is matched with a similar level of influence over the final decision outcomes. For example the study found out that junior teachers were able to participate and make decision with regards to sport but were unable to be part of the final financial decision.

5.4.4 Curriculum related issues

Teachers are the major stakeholders in a child's education who have ongoing knowledge and access to information regarding how the learner performs in relation to standards of education. This pertains also to the suitability of the curriculum in meeting the child's needs (Chad, 1999). This is supported by Ash and Persall (2000) who call for new teacher roles, including responsibilities for interdisciplinary teaching, curriculum development, student assessment, counselling, peer review, and parental involvement. Studies conducted by Karlsson (2002) and Mncube (2007) found out that all stakeholders (teachers, parents and learners) need to be engaged in real decisions about teaching and learning in the school if real improvement in the education is to be achieved. This is confirmed by the South African School Act of 1996 (SASA) that

emphasizes collaboration and collective decision making between school stakeholders. Teachers appear to desire greater influence in those areas directly related to teaching situations. According to Devaney (cited in Little, 1995) teachers are curriculum leaders and master teachers. In all four schools data reveals that teachers are not part of policy crafting but they are expected to implement it. Principals however are well placed to exercise more influence on the teaching and learning in their schools (Bush, 2006; Harris, 2007; Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008). The study found out that in the schools under study, the deputy principal assisted by heads of department is the head of all curriculum related issues.

Teachers' desire to participate in decision making is expressed through various aspects, such as claiming the right to make decisions in their fields of study, and expecting others to consider their views in a wide range of matters that may influence their work and their studies. Teachers are more likely to be involved in areas where they will have a personal stake and expertise. The role of school heads therefore is that of guiding and grooming their subordinates so that they are in line with school issues. In line with this, Bush (2006) suggests that any school head that wants to succeed must not expect his teachers to follow him without questioning. The important point that literature makes is that principals "expect teachers whose time is spent in the classroom where they take on different leadership roles, at varying times, according to the principles of formative leadership" Mujis and Harris (2003; Hallinger and Heck, 2009; Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins (2007) to follow them blindly, which is contradictory to their various roles in the school.

5.4.5 Ordering of text books

It emerged from the study that in all participating schools teachers are involved in the ordering of textbooks as the subject specialists. Teachers considered participation as the process in which school heads engage them in all areas of school administration where they have a personal stake in the outcome of the decision. For example, this may relate to school-based promotion, choice of curriculum, ordering of textbooks,

organizing fund raising activities, selection of prefects, formulation of school discipline policies Saaty (2006).

In all four schools the study found out that the heads of departments put it on the subject teacher's shoulders to choose the suitable textbooks for the learners and their responsibility is just to make orders. The reason advanced for this is that the selection of textbooks should remain a pre-requisite of subject specialists simply they are the ones who can tell what is best for their learners. Failure to select the required textbooks may result in poor performance of learners. This is an area where decision making is shared for the common good of the learners. This is also in line with scholars who advocate for distributed leadership on the basis of recognition of specialization (Bush, 2006; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins (2007). Teachers have leadership capabilities waiting to be unlocked and engaged for the good reason of the schools (Robinson, 2008; Hallinger, 2005). Sillins, Mulford and Harris (2002) conclude that student outcomes are more likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed throughout the school and where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them. By distributing powers, head teachers do not become weak; they instead become stronger as the institutions excel in performance (Bush, 2009; Lashway, 2002). When teacher's expertise and suggestions are acknowledged and rewarded by co-opting them into decision making an associated high level of job satisfaction and morale is noted. Participation in decision depicts recognition of intellectual power which acknowledges capacity to work in teams and become more creative and cooperative (Ozaralli, 2003).

5.4.6 Making of school timetables

It was established from all four schools that making of timetables is solely the responsibility of the experienced teachers. A school timetable is a table for co-ordinating the four elements namely student activities; teachers' attendance, lesson venues and periods (Eastern Cape Department for School Management 2000). A school timetable usually shows weekly cycles as well as fortnightly cycles depending on the school. The study found out that it is usually the senior teachers and HODs who are given the task of making a school timetable. Again in this case, expertise and

experience is considered in that senior teachers are expected to be experienced and they have knowledge of how well time and classrooms can be best utilized. This conforms to the distributed leadership model. A distributed perspective recognizes that there are multiple leaders and that leadership activities are widely shared within the staff. This is in line with what some scholars have observed (Harris, 2007, Evans, 2004). The key element in the development of leadership is the notion of learning together and the construction of meaning and knowledge collectively and constructively. Lambert (2003) argues that such leadership allows opportunities to surface and it mediates perception, values, beliefs, information and assumptions through continuous conversations. The involvement of senior teachers in the making timetables highlights the fact that leadership acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to the leadership practice whether or not they are formally designated or defined leaders Little (2007).

Dludla (2001) points out that collaborative power arises as staff members learn to make most of their collective capacity to run the day-to-day affairs of their school and solve problems (Heck & Hallinger 2005). Thus in using participative leadership, school heads form teams called committees and give the special tasks which they debate on, make decisions on and action (Bush, 2006; Lashway, 2002).

In all 4 schools, data revealed that making of the school timetable is the duty of the heads of department HODs and some of the senior teachers. Only 1 school involved junior teachers in this issue.

5.4.7 Streaming of subjects

In all four schools the study established that streaming of learners is done according to the learner's ability and potential. Streaming of learners is done to those learners who have passed Grade 9 for Grade 10 and this is determined by the performance of the learner in that grade. It is important that teachers recommend suitable subjects for learners so that they progress to grade 10 with subjects that suit their capabilities. If streaming is not done correctly, this can affect the overall performance of the learners

and the school. All the teachers who teach grade 9 learners are the ones responsible for making decisions on the whole process of selecting which learners are supposed to follow a certain stream as to shape their career. Streams also differ from school to school but there are compulsory learning areas that are common to all schools. This is in line with collegial model by Bush (2006) who states that professionals have a right to share in the wider decision making process and need to collaborate for effective teaching and learning. Leithwood, Mascall, Strauss, Sacks, Memon, Yaskina (2006) argue that teacher participation does not entail teachers taking over the school leadership as in a case where all decisions need to be taken by teachers, but recognizes their importance for the purpose of unity and wanting to work towards the school objectives. Selection also takes into account the fact that those teachers possess the information and expertise because of the fact that they teach the students. Distributed leadership advocates for experts to be used since they have rich detailed subject matter in the areas they are specialized in.

5.4.8 Assessment of school work

All teachers are involved in the assessment of the learners work as this is the core business. They are responsible to set the test for their learners so that they become aware of how the learner progresses.

The assessment of school work in this study is the prerogative of the heads of departments to check on learner portfolios as well as teacher portfolios. It is the duty of principals to ensure that all work is NCS compliant. This is in line with the national regulatory document, SASA (1996). This duty is usually delegated to the deputy principal who in most cases is given the role of being in charge of all curriculum issues. Teachers are empowered to translate their visions into reality when they are co-opted into decision making on issues that pertain to their core business. This implies that teachers should also be made to understand the direction the principal steers the school. This means they should critique and assess their own work as well as each other. The impetus to empower employees in this way is characteristic of transformational leadership (Ozaralli, 2003). The essence of transformational leadership

is focus on change. This type of leadership requires a leader to influence appropriate change. It compliments participative & collaborative leadership styles which advocate for team work Lashway(2002, Leithwood, & Hallinger(2002)) .

The overall objective of transformational is to capacitate individual teachers in order to achieve the school goals, as well as ensure that there is effective teaching and learning. Capacitating of teachers is not only the duty of the principal and the deputy head but that of all teachers as they are expected to put their heads together and collaboratively supervise each other. The overall beneficial in this exercise should be the learner.

Another aspect of leadership that is vital is instructional leadership. This focuses on core learning and instruction issues such as curriculum delivery and assessment as well as student work (Hallinger, 2005; Bush, 2006. It entails the principal checking on whether teachers get to class on time, cover syllabi in fully and assess students meaningfully. When this is combined with transformational, participative as well as distributive leadership, then the school has a chance of being successful in getting students to achieve high passes in national examinations (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007).These leadership styles also enhance teacher participation. According to Arnstein (2006) there are eight levels of citizen participation which are described as follows:

- (i) Manipulation: a placement where people are manipulated or given duties but have no power to make decisions over those duties. This is a level where teachers are given no power to make final decisions but there is pretence that they are in decisions making board. In the schools, teachers were co-opted into such committees as the finance , the subject committee, the sports as well as the disciplinary committee. This placement gave them opportunity to debate issues but in reality, they could not make any decisions that stick. Senior and junior teachers revealed that they discuss issues , take decisions but sometimes witness something else acted on. This is similar to the manipulation level.

- (ii) Therapy: citizens are put into groups and given tasks that are designed in such a way that those who attempt to solve them must fail and become frustrated and then be taken into therapy where the person is treated as mad. This level shows how teachers can be frustrated by being set up to fail, only to be considered mentally ill when they fail and get frustrated. This was attested to by some teachers who said they were consulted and agreed to the joint discussion to teach new learning areas they had not been trained in . At the end of the year students failed national examinations and they were bitterly blamed. Some of them revealed that their frustration levels and blood pressures were high because of this although no cases were reported of mental illness.
- (iii) Informing: citizens are pre-occupied by officials who tell them their rights and responsibilities while in the truth they are distracted while action is being taken about programmes they should have participated in and are being actioned. The citizens lack power to ensure that their views will be heard. Teachers are distracted by being given insignificant responsibilities while major meetings go on and actioned without their input. This level also has teachers who revealed that they indeed were conscientised of their rights to participate in decisions by a series of officials from union members, the principal and deputy to heads of departments but later they found that they have no real power. Decisions are made without their input.
- (iv) Consultation: citizens are called to a meeting where they are used as window dressing because their ideas will never been considered and the officials would have distracted them. This level implies that teachers are consulted but their advise is thrown away as it is only to fool them into thinking their decisions are valued. This was stated by some of the teachers who indicated that they had experienced this.

- (v) Placation: at this level citizens begin to have some degree of influence though tokenism is still apparent. Citizens are allowed to advise or plan but retain no power officials retain the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the advice. Placation means teachers are appeased by being allowed a degree of involvement in decision making but it is limited. At this level, vocal teachers who complained of non involvement were called into meetings to have them participate but they could not ensure their suggestions were taken.
- (vi) Partnership: at this level power is redistributed through negotiation between the officials and the citizens and they agree to share planning and decision making responsibilities for resolving impasses. At this level teachers allowed to partner the officials in decision making. They are given equal rights and responsibilities as the officials. At this level, vocal teachers who complained of non involvement were called into meetings to have them participate but they could not ensure their suggestions were taken.
- (vii) Delegated power: negotiations between citizens and public officials can also result in achieving dominant decision-making authority over a particular plan or program and citizens are assured accountability of the program to them. The implications of this level are that teachers are given limited power to decide in terms of programmes which they become accountable. Some senior teachers who challenged the principal were asked to genuinely partner the SMTs and were co-opted to the important committees like the finance committees. They claimed that they were functioning well and felt valued.
- (viii) Citizen control: people are simply demanding that degree of power or control which guarantees that participants can govern the program, be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects and be able to negotiate the conditions. This level is relevant to the school situation because it empowers teachers to debate and decide on policies to

adopt for the school. It enables them to take full control and decide on crucial aspects of servicing students. Only one teacher professed that this was happening at their school.

5.5 Summary

The study stated that for teachers to become aware of the learners progress , continuous assessment is conducted by the teachers in their learning areas. Classwork , small projects and test are done as to check whether the learner understood what was taught in class. Furthermore the study showed that it is the duty of the heads of departments to check whether the teachers did the work according to what is required in the syllabus.

5.6 Strategies used by principals to involve teachers in decision making

There are various strategies that principals use in involving teachers in decision making.

Principals involve teachers in several different ways. They may for example engage them as a group, for example grade 12 teachers across the subject areas, all staff as a group in staff meetings. Another strategy is for the principal to consult and take decisions with a committee such as the finance or sport committee. The principal can also consult with individuals who may be specialised and reaches decisions on issues related to their speciality with them.

Decision making has never been easy and it is especially challenging for the educational managers of today. This has also been observed in related literature by scholars like (Bamberger, 2006; Boliver & Marino, 2006). Educational managers therefore need to evaluate the nature of the problems and decisions to be made and then decide if participative group decision-making is called for.

The study further found out that in all the four schools there are committees that are constituted in areas of finance, sport, assessment and discipline. These committees have different roles that they play. The consultation and participation of these

committees depends on the specific role and mandate that each committee has to serve. The level of involvement of these committees has implications on the overall performance of the school.

Furthermore, there is one to one consultation leading to decision making, for example, the principal might consult a teacher with expertise in a certain area leading to decision making. In this scenario when a teacher is being consulted will have her or his ego boosted because his abilities and potential are recognized and also the fact that s/he can make a contribution in school issues boosts his/her morale.

5.6.1 Committee level participation by teachers

Data also revealed that the use of committees is prevalent in these schools. Committees attempt to draw people with relevant expertise in areas where they are asked to assist. Committees are normally used when not everyone can get together to make a decision. Committees can have an advantage of widening view points and sharing responsibilities. In a way committees draw together people with relevant skills and expertise from the whole staff, who in some instances come up with a decision much faster than it could be reached if they were not brought together. In some instances some teachers are not satisfied with this level of participation as they feel that decisions arrived at by committees are at times not adopted by school principals and are not implemented (Bush, 2003). This is because at times committees are set up but have no power to make decisions. This happens especially where the principal is authoritarian but knows the community expects committees to be set up and he does this as window dressing.

Dudla (2001) postulates that in a collegial group, flexible patterns of communication are used so that all members feel free to participate equally and at will. Minority opinions are encouraged and understood. Individuals know and understand one another, and are sensitive to each other's ideas and reactions. There is a level of trust and mutual respect that results in members dealing candidly with one another without fear of harmful effects. Doubts, resistance and concerns are discussed and resolved so that

each member feels comfortable. Van Rensburg (2001) refers to committees as quality circles. These are groups of teachers who are divided into small groups which discuss problems on behalf of the rest of the staff and pass along possible solutions and recommendations to the management of the school. This is confirmed by the collegial model that posits that members of the same organization share a common set of values (Bush, 2006). These common values guide the managerial activities of the organization and are thought to lead to shared educational value. The common values of professionals form part of the justification for the optimistic assumption that is always possible to reach agreement about goals and policies (Bush 2003). Bush, (2003) further states that imposing decisions on staff is considered morally repugnant, and inconsistent with the notion of consent. The idea of systems of committees can be linked to collegial approaches to leadership according to which, “the decision-making process inside committees is thought to be egalitarian...the assumption is that decisions are reached by consensus or compromise rather than listen to the head or principal only Bush (2003).

The study found that where principals use committees, these become highly productive and bring together high-value ideas which are well debated and therefore sound. This was also revealed to be true by such some scholars in the field of education. In fact according to Lindahl (2008), teams made into committees are usually non-hierarchal and as such could give high morale, more freedom and autonomy to encourage contributions from all team members in a relaxed atmosphere. Effective teams are important due to their potential for “flattening the leadership hierarchy which maximizes the leadership contributions of all members of the organization, thereby increasing productivity and morale (as) many minds are better than one”.

5.6.2 Group level participation

The study revealed that school managers, teachers, non-teaching staff members, learners, school and community members may work more effectively when they co-operate rather than when they work as isolated individuals or sections to achieve common goals and shared objectives (Smith, 2003). Working collaboratively can

enhance participation among stakeholders as confirmed by Smith (2003) who further states that people working together can achieve more than a group of individuals working alone. Group decision-making could lead to positive team dynamics and improved productivity (Mincu and Associates 2003). This is because team members would feel in control of their destiny and subsequently commit themselves to working hard for the well being of the organization. The various committees established schools can achieve these desirable effects if all stakeholders understand the benefits. Research has indicated that participative decision-making results in a number of benefits for example increased decision quality, decision understanding, decision acceptance and decision accuracy (Lashway2002). He further states that groups provide a large sum of knowledge than would be accessible to individual members, thus leading to informed decisions.

Data from respondents revealed that principals sometimes do distribute roles to their deputy principals, heads of departments, senior and junior teachers and committees that might be at school. Such kind of arrangement by the principal and all stakeholders may only work positively if there is good leadership that can develop and articulate the vision and envision all stakeholders at the school.

The study found out that where there was collaboration and participation by all staff at the school, there was overall success of that particular programme. This is in line with what scholars who advocate for participative leadership have called for (Hallinger, 2005; Harris, 2007). In this instance the strategies used by principals conformed to distributed leadership style. In situations where leadership was distributed there was participative leadership in the planning process thereby leading to the ownership and sustainability of plans. This strategy had an overall positive effect on school performance

The study revealed how some decisions become necessary out of situational developments. One of the mostly frequently used strategies to leadership is situational leadership. School managers have, through experience, come to terms with the fact that the adoption of a particularly relevant style in a specific situation leads to school effectiveness, rather than relying on a single style of one's choice (Mullins, 2002). The participants revealed that leadership is dictated by environmental changes within and

outside the school. At one time, students may be so unruly and abuse substances like alcohol and dagga that it requires the principal of the school to use strict measures of discipline so as to improve their academic performance. However, in another development students may be so committed and focused that it may require being liberal minded to allow participative leadership to prevail. Of course, this depends on the changes in the situation of the school. This is also corroborated by Cheng (2002) who asserts that the relationship between school performance and leadership style is moderated by the situational factors.

Teamwork may lead to good school performance and quality education because, in successful schools where the school community works as a team, “teamwork can enhance quality management as teams can utilize resources more efficiently and effectively, increase organizational effectiveness, improve the quality of educational programs and create better learning and working environments Nsubuga (2008). In this view, as Steyn and Van Niekerk (2002) quoted in Nsubuga 2008), successful teamwork may be regarded an “indispensable ingredient in the process of building successful schools”.

5.6.3 One-on-one consultation

The study established that teachers are consulted on a one on one decision basis in the four schools. The principals use this strategy when they seek clarity in certain issues at schools. Sometimes an individual teacher is approached when he/she has advanced knowledge with regards to certain issues for example, a commerce teacher can be called in to assist with finance issues since he/she is well vast with numbers or balancing books. In another scenario, a teacher maybe called to solve disciplinary issues although she/he is not a member of a disciplinary committee but she/he has the expertise to deal with such problems that have prevailed at that particular time. This kind of engagement surely uplifts the spirit of the teacher concerned and a sense of belonging and respect and confidence develops. One -on-one consultations also help the principals to know and understand their teachers as individuals and this may lead to trust building and pave way to open communications.

The study also found out that there are some instances where principals employ the autocratic leadership style of leadership. Principals revealed that if they gave instruction but noticed that staffs were reluctant to do as instructed, they would act autocratically. They also used this style if they realized that their teachers did not have skill in such things as financial matters. This is corroborated by such scholars as (Thurlow & McLennan in Thurlow, Bush & Coleman, 2003:3)

Contrary to the autocratic strategy, the study found out that democratic strategies can lead to positive performance of the school. The study also found out that teachers felt that democracy was the best leadership strategy for school governance and decision making. Principals therefore have a duty not only to involve teachers in decision making but to motivate them to participate in decision making.

5.7 Principal/teacher views on involving teachers in decision making

The study found that the success of a school depends on the working together of all teachers in order to achieve the vision and mission of the school. Teacher participation creates collegial and collaborative approach to school work. In the current study, all teachers shared the view that shared decision making is good for the overall performance of the school. Respondents were of the view that ownership of ideas and successful implementation of plans is a result of active participation by all stakeholders in decision making. The view that active participation boosts moral of teachers and improves learner performance was shared by principals as well as teachers. This was supported in literature by such scholars as (Hallinger, 2005; Bush; 2006).

Apart from improved morale of teachers, participation was viewed as something that reduces tension as all stakeholders will be aware of what is happening. Leonard (1993) cited in Mangunda (2003) states that participation involves the devolution and redistribution of decision making authority. The views of the principals and the teachers are in line with Macbeath (2005) who states when a way of including other stakeholders in the education process is through consultation. Consultation involves the seeking for and accommodation of other people's views, opinions and suggestions. Contrary to

these views Jones (2005) postulates that consultation has its demerits in that it delays decision making and there is the potential of confusing issues and losing one's grip on issues. On the other hand Tate (1999) argues that principals need to know that the principal who shares power with teachers is still a leader. This principal is a more effective instructional leader because empowered teachers are more likely to maximize their potential.

5.7.1 Challenges of non-participation in decision making

The study found that when teachers are not involved in decision making their non-participation negatively affects the school. Teachers become demotivated, there is high absenteeism rate and their morale becomes low and this results in lack of ownership in decisions they did not take part in. The challenges of non-participation as the study reveals include conflict and defiance poor morale and this was evident in the data presented by some respondents. This was also observed to happen in some schools (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008)

Resistance to change is another challenge that can be faced as a result of non-participation in decision making. In the study, data revealed that when junior teachers were left out of decision making they were disgruntled. All this these lead to a situation where the institution fails to run smoothly and effectively. Chikoko (2007) argues that people desire involvement in the making of decisions on matters that affect them, even when they sometimes have no capacity to effectively make such decisions. Therefore, decentralization should be accompanied by sustainable capacity building among stakeholders. Badenhorst (2008) reports that significant levels of dissatisfaction among teachers pertaining to factors related to their workplace occur when staff are not included in decision making. A lack of job satisfaction results in frequent teacher absenteeism from school, aggressive behaviour towards colleagues and learners, psychological withdrawal from work, burn-out, and early exits from the teaching profession (Krishnevani & Anitha, 2008). Where teacher's participation in decision making is limited, teachers may lose opportunity for personal growth, while administration loses expert and intelligent contribution by teachers (Ozaralli, 2003). She

further highlights that when teacher's expertise and suggestions are acknowledged and rewarded by co-opting them into decision making, an associated high level of job satisfaction and morale is noted.

Participation in decision making depicts recognition of intellectual power, and when teacher's intellectual power or ability is acknowledged, they become more participative, creative and satisfactory Ozaralli (2003). Teachers do not wish to be viewed as mere recipients policies who are to implement the changes but they expect to be included in the initial processes of meaningful decision-making where their voices will be heard. Luthans (2005) supports this view that if managers claim to want participation from their people but never let them become intellectually and emotionally involved and never use their suggestions, the result may be negative. Still in line with this view, Emeneke (2004) buttressed the fact that when people are part of decision making process there is greater opportunity of the expression of mind, ideas, existing disputes and more occasions for disagreements and agreements. On the other hand some teachers who feel over-burdened with work, might not be so willing to participate.

School leaders who use the authoritarian leadership style engender poor academic performance, because they adopt harsh leadership styles, which are highly resented by their subordinates. The coercive style leader often creates terror, bullying and demeaning his subordinates, roaring with displeasure at the slightest problem. Subordinates get intimidated and stop bringing bad news or any news in fear of getting bashed or blamed for it, and the morale of the workers plummets Nsubuga (2008).

5.7.2 Importance of involving teachers in decision making

The study revealed that teacher participation in decision making can yield good results in the school. The study found that working together in the school creates collegiality and the sharing of ideas broadens the scope of thinking thereby leading to organizational success. Ownership of ideas is achieved through participation, and greater commitment to organization goals is achieved.

Co- active (2008) points out that there is more commitment to an action in which people have played a part in decision making, greater understanding and agreement about the action and ownership of the decision than when they are left out. Jones (2005) adds that that when teachers know that the leader has full confidence in them to allow them to take their own decisions, freedom to air their views and reward them for achievement, they will feel part of the organization, be assured of ownership and consequently become committed to achieving their shared vision and mission.

This study disclosed major contestations of non involvement of teachers in decision making. In support of this Udo and Akpa (2007) assert that:

Where teachers are adequately involved in decision making process, there would be commitment and adequate support for the principal and the realization of school goals will be easy while apathy and opposition within the school will be minimized (p78).

Staff co-operation is believed to be an indisputable asset to the school principals while involvement in decision making process by the teachers could ease the principal's mounting problems as many heads would be put together to intellectually solve the problems that could have remained unsolved by the principals alone.

5.8 Summary

Teacher participation in schools is practiced in a climate of collegiality and collaborative working that leads teamwork and hence the success of the school. The picture that emerged from the school is that teachers are not involved in all decisions that are made. This depends on the issue to be discussed. Junior and senior teachers are consulted on the basis of their experience and expertise. The study found that the school heads make unilateral decisions when there is limited time for consultation and the situation is beyond their control.

The data also revealed that the principals use certain strategies to involve teachers in decision making. Teachers are either consulted on a one to one basis with regards to the knowledge they acquired in a particular field or are consulted in groups in a meeting situation or in certain committees such as disciplinary committee or sport. It also

emerged that principals use democratic or autocratic leadership styles in certain situations

The study also found that success of the school depends on the commitment of all teachers. The challenges of not involving teachers in decision making yield negative results. It emerged from the study that although teachers are involved in certain committee such as sport and finance committees they have limited say in financial matters of the school.

6 CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The major purpose of the study was to investigate the extent of teacher participation in decision making, curriculum and other management issues in schools. The summary of findings is organized around the themes that were abstracted from the research questions. The section culminates in a discussion on the extent of teacher participation in decision making. This is followed by a justification of the research methodology that underpinned this study. A brief conclusion is made followed by the recommendations.

6.2 Summary of research findings

6.2.1 The category of teachers who participate in decision making

The research findings indicate that all teachers are involved in decision making but their degree of involvement varies according to the positions they hold. Indicators are that seniority and expertise are crucial and valued factors that are considered depending on issues tabled at a particular time. This varies from school to school.

6.2.2 Involvement of junior and senior teachers in decision making

The study showed that junior and senior teachers are not involved in all issues that require decision making in schools. Their engagement on this aspect depends upon their expertise on a particular issue such as sport and discipline. That implies that they are not guaranteed to be consulted on all issues. When they are sidelined, the situation frustrates them as reflected by their complaints that they are discriminated against because are not involved in some issues.

6.2.3 The school management team

The research findings disclosed that the school management team (SMT) which comprises the principal, deputy principal, and the heads of departments (HODs) are a central decision making board of the school. They however, as heads of departments sometimes take decisions together with the rest of the staff in meetings. Sometimes they first discuss the issues alone as the school management team and apply a top-down approach.

6.2.4 Gender participation in decision making

Data also revealed that there was disparity in the involvement of male and female teachers at schools. The findings are that in schools, the school management teams are predominantly flooded with females. This factor makes male teachers feel that there is imbalance that is skewed towards females in terms of their contribution in decision making. Nonetheless, views from all members of staff are considered.

6.2.5 Areas of participation in decision making

Collected data showed that all teachers are involved in making decisions concerning the general discipline of the learners. This aspect is spread among all teachers as they interface with students all the time and have a responsibility of maintaining order at all times.

The study also found that the type of teachers who are involved in decision making with regards to curriculum are the principals, heads of department, senior teachers and junior teachers. All these teachers have input in what and how learners are taught. Some of these teachers are left out in certain decision making aspects, for example junior teachers are not involved in administrative issues. In some instances the school heads make unilateral decisions when emergency arises and do not involve the teachers.

It also emerged from the study that female teachers are more vocal than male teachers but in most cases the contribution of teachers are taken into consideration irrespective of gender. Furthermore, junior teachers are also actively involved in sports. In this area they are involved in making decision that affect the administration of the sporting programmes. The sports aspect of decision making is discussed in detail in the next sub-section. Nonetheless, as shown teachers partake in decision making in different capacities based on qualification and expertise.

6.2.6 Sport issues

Data revealed that all schools participate in sport activities and various sporting codes are offered in each school. As stated in the previous section, junior teachers participate in decisions with regards to sport but are not involved in financial administration of these sports. Their participation in sports is based on the assumption that they are still energetic and highly motivated about sport and they have undertaken some skilling workshops on various sports.

Additionally, some senior teachers are involved in sport activities but on an advisory capacity. Senior teachers give direction as they are experienced while the energetic junior teachers run the programmes.

6.2.7 Disciplinary issues

Data also revealed that in all schools learners continue to show ill-discipline and they commit some crimes that are minor like truancy, teasing each other as well as major ones such as bullying, carrying dangerous weapons, fighting and substance abuse. Thus disciplinary issues are an all encompassing activity for teachers across the board. However, if the offence is serious the matter is dealt with at management level, with parents included, if necessary.

6.2.8 Curriculum related issues

The study found that all teachers participate in curriculum related issues in a number of areas such as,

- Selection of textbooks

The study revealed that the heads of departments put it on subject teacher's shoulders to choose suitable textbooks for the learners and it is the HODs' responsibility to make orders. The reason advanced for this is that the selection of textbooks should remain a pre-requisite of subject specialists simply because they are the ones who know the suitability of particular text titles for their learners. In the study, there was only one incident where a senior teacher bore the responsibility of ordering books and she was commended for doing the job well.

- Assessment of the learners work

The study found that HODs and some senior teachers are responsible for the assessment of the learners' work. Also the study stated that all teachers are responsible for learner assessment in their learning areas/

- Streaming of subjects and learners

The data revealed that in all four schools the Department of Education provides the necessary documents that show how subjects should be grouped. The main findings were that all grade 9 teachers are responsible for assisting the learners to make the right choice of subjects for grade 10. Streaming of learners is done according to the learners' potential and abilities.

6.2.9 Making of timetable

The researcher noted that usually it is the responsibility of the heads of department and the senior teachers to make comprehensive timetables. They are given the task of making the school master timetable because of their experience. It was only in one school where the principal involved junior teachers in this area.

6.2.10 Aspect of expertise and experience in participation

The main findings on teachers' expertise & experience are that senior teachers were consulted more on curriculum issues since they have a role of mentoring junior teachers. They are involved in their areas of expertise and in areas where they have experience. In that way skills are cascaded down in a rich way and to a receptive group.

6.2.11 The strategies that the principals use to involve teachers in decision making

Data revealed that the principals use certain strategies to involve teachers in decision making processes at school. Teachers are either consulted as a group, in- committees, or on a one-to-one basis.

6.2.12 One – on – one consultation

Principals use the individual or one-to-one approach when they seek clarity on certain issues. Sometimes an individual teacher is approached when she/he poses advanced knowledge in certain areas e.g. a commerce teacher is approached with regards to finance issues.

6.2.13 Group level participation

The study revealed that school managers, teachers, non-teaching staff members, learners, school and community members work more effectively when they co-operate rather than working as isolated individuals or sections to achieve common goals.

6.2.14 Committee level participation

Data also showed that the use of committees is prevalent in these schools. Principals do attempt to draw people to committees where they have relevant expertise to assist. The study noted that not all teachers participate in the discussion which means they are represented.

6.2.15 Views of teachers and principals regarding teacher participation in decision making

The study found that the success of the school depends on teachers working together in order to achieve the vision and mission of the school. Teacher participation in decision making creates collegial and collaborative approach to school work and this results in the overall high powered performance of the school. The study found that when teachers are involved in decision making, they develop a sense of ownership and commitment to the decisions made.

In the study, it was also revealed that when teachers are not involved in decision making, their non-involvement negatively affects the school. Teachers become demotivated and there is high teacher absenteeism. Their morale becomes low and they lack the sense of ownership in decisions they did not participate in. Furthermore, non-participation in decision making create tensions, conflict and defiance by the teachers to the school management team.

6.3 Implications for theory

Theories enable researchers to explain general behaviour and patterns in educational settings (Neuman, 2006). This means a theory can explain how elements are related. The study used the human relations model by Follet (1996), the collegial model by Bush (2011) and distributed leadership model by Harris (2004). The models were used to show how schools should be run in order to create teamwork and harness all the

teachers' potential. The study also revealed that all participating schools used these models in various situations.

The Collegial model was adopted in all participating schools. This model emphasizes that power and decision making should be shared among some or all members of the school. This model supports that all teachers must be involved in the decision making processes at school. Adopting the model made teachers to work with a singleness of purpose.

The distributed leadership model was applied in all the schools as well. It is primarily concerned with leadership that acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice, whether or not they are formally designated or defined leaders. Senior teachers were involved in activities like the drafting of the timetable and assessment of school work. In these schools all teachers were involved in the choosing of textbooks.

The Humans relation model was adopted in all the four schools. According to this model the expectations for subordinates are for seniors and the principal to share information with them and involve them in school decision making to help harvest a wide array of ideas and also to satisfy their basic needs for belonging and individual recognition. The model stresses the need to consider expertise, experience, creativity, willingness and all positive aspects of subordinates in an organization. Junior teachers were given a mandate to make decisions on how to carry activities in their classes. In some cases individual teachers were approached to complete certain tasks as they are experienced.

6.4 Justification of the research methodology used

An interpretive approach was used for the study. This methodology helped the researcher to get close to the participants to examine the dimension of lack of teacher participation from the perspective of all stakeholders. The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to find out the extent to which participants get involved in decision making. It also made it possible to establish the causes of principals not allowing teachers to decide in certain situations. Qualitative data was used to allow the

participants to express their views and opinions. It also managed to bring out the reactions of teachers who were not involved in decision making thus balancing issues with their perspective added to that of principals.

This method harvested authentic data because participants were able to give verbatim statements. Document analysis, interviews and observations were used to collect authentic information from the respondents.

6.5 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which teachers participate in decision making in curriculum and management related issues. Thus the questions asked included areas in which teachers participate in decision making, the strategies used by school heads to effect this and to identify the positions in which participating teachers functioned. It was also the objective of the study to find out the views of respondents on teacher participation.

The study found out that teachers participate in decisions at various platforms such as finance, sport, disciplinary and subject committees. To be fitted in these committees was done according to experience. Junior teachers featured in sport and subject committees as these required their expertise. Senior teachers, HODs and the principal and his deputy participate in finance , disciplinary and subject committees because and experience.

6.6 Recommendations

In order for schools to operate effectively all teachers must be involved in decision making in schools. Principal must encourage collaboration by all teachers so that

organizational goals can be implemented and owned by all teachers. Teachers who possess certain experience and expertise must be taken into consideration and be approached for the betterment of the school. In the light of this information the researcher recommends the following:

- All principals must move away from the autocratic leadership style and adopt participative and distributed style in order for their schools to operate effectively.
- All teachers irrespective of experience be groomed in decision making processes in their schools so they can take over when need be.
- All teachers must be awarded opportunity to attend workshops to be capacitated in financial issues so that they can be a large pool to call on to balance finance books of the school.
- Gender balance must be highly considered when new teachers are employed so that there is equal contribution when there are staff meetings.
- Junior teachers must also be involved in administrative issues like drawing up of the timetables.

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