

**THE INFLUENCE OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP ON TEACHING PRACTICE  
SUPERVISION IN MASVINGO PROVINCE'S TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES**

**By**

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# DECLARATION

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## DECLARATION

**Student Number: 2015095140**

I, John Musarega Makasi, declare that the thesis entitled **THE INFLUENCE OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP ON TEACHING PRACTICE SUPERVISION IN MASVINGO PROVINCE'S TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES** is my own work and has not been submitted by me at any other University/Faculty. I cede copyright of this thesis in favour of the University of the Free State.

Signature  ..... Date 19-01-2022 .....

Mr, John M. Makasi

## **DEDICATION**

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This thesis is dedicated to my late father, Mr Hamburosi Makasi. You departed too early to see my achievements in life. I am sure this could have been your greatest celebration.

To my grandson Zayne and his mother Tafadzwa, my wife Monika, two sons Farai and Honour and my only daughter Praise, you have been my source of strength and inspiration. God bless you.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I would like to give all honour to the Almighty for giving me the good health and strength to go through my study successfully. Secondly, my profound gratitude goes to my committed supervisor, Doctor N. Gcelu for her expert academic and professional guidance from the beginning to the end of this study. I further wish to thank her for creating a supportive climate conducive to my embarking on this important venture. I will forever cherish her dedicated support.

I would also like to thank my college Principal, Dr R. Chipato, for allowing me free access to college Internet and typing facilities. My sincere gratitude also go to my fellow workmates, Dr K. Mashuro, Professor H. Makura, Dr D. Zireva and Dr V. Jenjekwa for their insights and constructive criticisms of my work. Their advice and ideas are greatly appreciated.

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Further, I would like to appreciate the support accorded to me by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education through:

- 1) The office of the Permanent Secretary for allowing me permission to carry out the study in the schools.
- 2) The Provincial Education Director for granting me permission to conduct the study in Masvingo Province.
- 3) The District Education Officer (Masvingo District) for granting me permission to carry out my study in Masvingo District primary schools.
- 4) School Heads for allowing me to access teacher leaders.
- 5) The teacher leaders (school-based supervisors) for accepting to provide information for this study by participating in interviews and focus group discussions.

Last but not least, this thesis would not have been a joy to read had it not been for the sacrifice and commitment of the language editor, Professor R. Mareva. It has been marvellous to read my own work after his meticulous editing at the final stage. I salute him for his hard work, patience and commitment to duty.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

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2-5-2: Two terms in, five terms out and two terms in.

3-3-3: Three terms in, three terms out and three terms in.

A-Level: The A-Level is a subject based qualification conferred as part of the General Certificate of Education.

O-Level: The O-Level is a subject-based qualification conferred as part of the General Certificate of Education

BA: Bachelor of Arts

CE: Certificate in Education

CIET: Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training.

CTEMED: Centre for Teacher Education and Material Development

DLP: Distributed Leadership Project

DTE: Department of Teacher Education

LDC Less Developed Countries

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

MED (EAPPS): Master in Education Educational Administration Planning and Policy Studies

MUST: Multi-Site Teacher Education

NCSL National College of School Leadership

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Policy Studies

TESSA: Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

UNISA: University of South Africa

ZINTEC: Zimbabwe Integrated National Teacher Education Course

ZOU: Zimbabwe Open University

## ABSTRACT

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Distributed leadership (DL) grew out of turning away from the “great man” concept of educational leadership, in which a single actor was thought necessary to lead in a top-down way in a bureaucratic organisational school structure. Extant literature heralds that the DL has gained currency and advocates more actors in instructional leadership. Teacher leaders in schools in Zimbabwe are selected by the teaching practice departments of the educational institution for teachers to supervise students from teaching colleges. However, their supervision is sometimes not effective to develop the professional competencies of trainee-teachers and to reflect on their teaching because teacher leaders are not trained on how to conduct their professional roles and responsibilities during the supervision. Hence, this study sought to explore the influence of DL on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province’s teacher education colleges.

The study is underpinned by symbolic interaction by Herbert Mead (1883), and distributed leadership theory as lens to understand how DL influences teacher leaders on supervising student teachers on teaching practice. The interpretivist research paradigm using the qualitative research approach and a multiple case study research design were employed to explore the influence of DL on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. A sample of eight teacher leaders was purposively selected using the maximum variation technique, for multiple interviews and focus group discussion.

Among the findings that were revealed by this study, it came out that distributed leadership has a positive influence on teaching practice supervision. It was also revealed that to understand and assist in the enhancement of supervision, the supervision scholar (in teacher colleges) must interact with the teacher leaders (in schools that are responsible of supervising students from teacher colleges) on a regular basis, and that interaction should include reflective dialogue on theory, research and practice. The study concludes that teacher leaders can use the distributed leadership concept because it has a positive influence on teaching practice supervision. One of the recommendations by the researcher, based on the findings, is that school heads must realise how DL is likely to influence teaching practice

supervision for teacher leaders to fully take the position of leading so that they become confident in supervising the student teachers.

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# CHAPTER 1 ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

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## 1.1 OVERVIEW

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This chapter outlines the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions and objectives of the study titled: *The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Zimbabwe's teacher education colleges*. It goes further to give a brief summary of the methodology used to conduct the research, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study. Key terms of the study are defined and a summary of each chapter concludes chapter one.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

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In Zimbabwe, the legacy of colonial rule divided land into three categories (Mukeredzi,2018). Formerly sparsely inhabited white farming communities with typically established infrastructure are situated near towns and cities, as well as along the main watershed with fertile agriculture farmlands ( Mukeredzi, 2018). A distance, remote from towns and cities, are sparsely populated, black-owned small-scale market gardening farming communities on infertile soils but with poor infrastructure, and at their "hems" are the traditional village style sparsely populated faraway, rural, communal lands identified as "tribal trust lands" or "reserves," and according to Mukeredzi (2018), both words denote some uninhabited land allotted by white colonial "masters" but not owned by the black populace. According to Kline, White and Lock (2013), "remote" in this case refers to the actual road distance to the next metropolitan centre, where physical boundaries create the most limits. Both in Zimbabwe and in the current study, rural is viewed from this standpoint. Mukeredzi (2018) reports that these isolated rural areas span for hundreds of kilometres far from towns and old white farms, and are identified by wide swathes of barren ground and animal grazing land. In Zimbabwe, rural elementary schools are located in these village-style distant rural locations. Typical of the region, there is a lack of infrastructure and extremely inadequately resourced schools, forcing teachers to "improvise" (Mukeredzi, 2018). The schools are far apart, and there are no communication facilities (telephones, cell phones, and broadband internet), electricity, or piped water, and bad roads make transport constrained and undependable. When accessible, fares are too expensive for many parents

and this does not spare the student teachers on practicum. According to Murekedzi(2018), rural areas in the modern world struggle more compared to other regions due to a lack of research and poorly advised efforts to design adequate education improvement measures.

Teacher leaders are integral to a distributive leadership model, in which responsibility is diffused from resting solely on principals and administrators. This generates greater buy-in and success of new initiatives (Valdez & Ikemoto, 2015).

Mentors who are usually referred to as “supervising teachers” or “cooperating teachers,” “lead teachers” or “host teachers” are selected by the teaching practice departments of the educational institution for teachers (Akuamoah-Boateng & Sam-Tagoe, 2018). Akuamoah-Boateng and Sam-Tagoe(2018) further opined that mentoring is sometimes not effective to develop the professional competencies of trainee-teachers and to reflect on their teaching. This is because teacher leaders are not trained on how to conduct their professional roles and responsibilities during the collaboration for the supervision. However, teacher leaders should build strong trust and goodwill relationships with student teachers in order to help them advance professionally. They should set an example of commitment, efficiency, responsibility, and excitement, as they have the greatest and most effective effect on the trainee's orientation, disposition, concepts, and classroom practices (Mukeredzi, 2015).

Leaders who want to make forward-looking changes in the schools systems have to do more than issue orders and try to impose compliance (OECD, 2019). OECD(2019) further articulates that the leaders need to build a shared vision and understanding, make efforts at change and build collective ownership over reforms, and offer support that will make change a reality, all when retaining credibility. They need to go against the dynamics of turf and hierarchical bureaucracies that still dominate educational institutions. The primary interest is in the synergetic interaction between leaders and teacher leaders in an effort to enhance teacher leaders’ capacity to effectively supervise student teachers in schools (Liu, 2020).

Distributed leadership (DL) has steadily gained interest over the last two decades and the evidence has increasingly supported the conclusion that distributed leadership helps improve schools’ organizational capacity by involving diverse and talented people in leading, which can improve social capital, including more committed (Hulpia& Devos, 2010) and satisfied leaders and teachers (Liu &Printy,

2017; Liu & Werblow, 2019; Sun & Xia, 2018; Torres, 2019; Liu & Watson, 2020) enhanced staff, mutual respect (Bellibas & Liu, 2018) and academic optimism (Mascall et al., 2008).

In USA, the No Child Left Behind reform exerted a lot of pressure on schools to improve learner outcomes (OECD, 2019). The net effect of this reform was that school leaders were held more accountable for their student's progress. In addition, the reform demanded schools to produce students who would be globally competitive. The demands of the reform required a new brand of leadership. The traditional view of the principal as a super-hero leader was gradually getting uncoordinated with global trends (Schleider, 2019). School principals, with the nature of their work schedule, lack time to meet fully the expectations of the Nation at Risk and No Child Left Behind reforms Leithwood et al. (2020). With the ever-increasing accountability demands on the part of principals, the role of the teacher leaders' distributed leadership becomes a topical issue for school achievements Liu (2020). Luschei and Jeong (2021) argue that teacher leaders are a critical resource to aid principals in their distributed leadership role. This support becomes more critical in view of the fact that principals are usually overwhelmed by a host of duties. Teacher leaders join school leadership because they hope to be leaders with a mission and purpose (Liu & Werblow, 2019) and they are actively engaged in the daily operations of the school as they deal with teachers, including, supervising the student teachers to improve students' achievements (Liu & Werblow, 2019).

Again, the Japanese tradition of lesson study means that Japanese teachers work together to improve the quality of the lessons they teach. Teachers whose practice is not on the same level as teacher leaders can see what good practice is. Also, since the structure of profession provides opportunities for teachers to move up the ladder of increasing prestige and responsibility, it also pays for a good teacher to become even better Torres (2019).

Furthermore, Shanghai in China created a grant source of community of teachers and unlocked teachers' creativity simply by tapping into the desire of people to contribute, collaborate and be recognised for their contribution. Again, the Empowerment Management Programme in Shanghai allows for inter- school collaboration and aims at supporting and improving low performing schools. It promotes collaboration among teachers and schools and also fosters equity. Under the programme, partnerships between high-performing and low performing schools share set-up for a period of two

years. Teachers and school leaders from both schools work closely together, including visits across schools, discussing effective practices, observing classrooms and providing feedback OECD (2019).

In Portugal, according to OECD (2018), the Portuguese government introduced the Project for Autonomy and Curriculum Flexibility which is responsible for advancing transformative reforms. It is important for education leaders to be transparent with teachers and school leaders about where reform is heading and what it means for them. Success depends on having an inclusive style of leadership that fosters collaboration and allows staff to take risks, and that encourages staff to have the confidence to see problems from multiple perspectives and come up with new solutions. This is about achieving consensus without giving up on reforms.

Trust is always international; it can only be nurtured and inspired through healthy relations and constructive transparency. That is the lesson we can all learn from Finland, where opinion polls consistently show high levels of public trust in education. At a time when command-and-control systems are weakening, building trust is the most promising way to advance and fuel modern education systems (Schleider, 2018).

Chikoko, Naicker and Shoko (2016) state that from a distributed leadership perspective, because the leadership outcomes are shared, if something fails, the whole team shares the responsibility rather than just one person. This adds a feeling of protection in the group and gives people more incentive to contribute to the group for its common good. According to Good (2011), cited in (Chikoko et al. 2016), when the group succeeds, everyone shares the glory rather than the sole leader getting the credit for everyone else's work

According to Daniels, Hondeghem and Dooly (2019), teachers have long served as team leaders, department chairs, association leaders and curriculum developers. In these roles teachers have often served as “representatives” rather than “leaders” who enact change. In addition, leadership roles for teachers have traditionally lacked flexibility and required a lengthy, ongoing commitment of time and energy. Often the decision to take on leadership tasks has been accompanied by a decision to get out of teaching and into administration. While recognizing the centrality of teaching, reports emphasize the need for teachers to extend their sphere of influence beyond the classroom and into school-wide leadership activities (Torres, 2019).

At school level, the principal is the officer charged with implementing educational reforms (Chitamba, 2019). Adoption and adaption of the new curriculum in Zimbabwe schools, thus, largely rests with the principals. They attend national, provincial and district meetings and are expected to cascade the new ideas to their schools. The one-man heroic school leader perched at the hierarchy and exclusively monopolising decisions has proved unsustainable (Bellibas & Liu, 2018). Spillane and Mertz (2015) argue for distribution of tasks and activities across many players within the school that are focused on school improvement. The teacher leader is a critical actor in distributed leadership (Spillane & Mertz, 2015).

Chitamba (2019) argues that principals face a number of challenges in the discharge of their instructional leadership role. They cite work overload as one of the challenges. The principal is accountable for everything that goes on in the school. This may be insurmountable for one man if students' improvement is the ultimate goal. Allocating distributed leadership role to the teacher leader could go a long way towards overall students' achievement (Chitamba, 2019)

The leadership considerations of teachers are grounded in their desire to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all students. Studies have shown that teachers do not subscribe to traditional definitions of leadership as "higher" or "superior" positions within the organisational hierarchy (Torres, 2019). Instead, teachers view leadership as a collaborative effort, a "banding together" with other teachers to promote professional development and growth and the improvement of educational services (Liu, 2020:262).

Today, leadership roles have begun to emerge and promise real opportunities for teachers to impact educational change without necessarily leaving the classroom. Teachers are now serving as research colleagues, working as advisor-mentors to new teachers, and facilitating professional development activities as master teachers. Teachers also act as members of school-based leadership teams, instructional support teams and leaders of change efforts (Torres, 2019). In addition, teachers are forging a number of new and unique leadership roles through their own initiative by developing and implementing programmes they personally believe will result in positive change (Patrick, 2022).

In one of the most extensive studies on the work of teacher leaders, Lieberman, Saxland Miles (1988) focused on what teachers actually did when they assumed leadership positions designed to provide assistance to other teachers. The authors found that the work of lead teachers was varied and largely

specific to individual contexts of the schools. In order to be effective with their colleagues, lead teachers found it necessary to learn a variety of leadership skills while on the job. Those skills included:

- Building trust and developing rapport;
- Diagnosing organisational conditions;
- Dealing with processes;
- Managing the work; and,
- Building skills and confidence in others.

The authors concluded that restructuring school communities to incorporate leadership positions for teachers will require teacher leaders to take certain actions. These include: placing a non-judgemental value on providing assistance, modelling collegiality as a mode of work, enhancing teachers' self-esteem, using different approaches to assistance, making provisions for continuous learning and support for teachers at the school site, and encouraging others to provide leadership to their peers.

In Zimbabwe, instructional supervision has been in practice since education was introduced by the missionaries in the nineteenth century (Murimba & Moyo, 1993). In early days supervision was characterised by a different dimension, namely inspection. Chitamba (2019) describes inspection as the act of scrutinizing officially or examining closely, especially for faults or errors. The faults could be institutional, individual teacher-, pupil- and classroom-based. Institutional-based faults range from indecent teacher personality, lack of thorough planning and preparation, lack of marking and supervision of pupil's work, poor seating arrangement, and poor measurement (Madziyire, 2013). Teachers were viewed by their managers as implements and machines that had to work as directed by their supervisors (Ndebele, 2006; Zepeda, 2009).

As time moved on, some new developments in the nature of supervision were experienced in Zimbabwe. Madziyire (2013) observes that the democratic administration movement which was occurring in the United States of America's education system during the period from the early seventies to the eighties influenced the supervision process in Zimbabwe. Chitamba (2019) states that with the post- independence democratization of the education system and popularization of discovery learning, there was (in Zimbabwe) some attempt to sensitise supervisory teachers so that they could

demonstrate a concern for individual needs and interests of learners. Demonstration lessons became popular as supervisors sought to encourage the talent of each individual teacher.

Despite (Chitamba's, 2019) observation,( Beaton, 2005) observed that while the political changes that were taking place in Zimbabwe in the 1980s encouraged supervision to be more human in their supervision of teachers, an element of inspection still lingered on. Mlilo (2007) confirmed Beaton's (2005) assertion through a new study he conducted on the effectiveness of school heads in Hwange District in Matebeleland North Province in the western part of Zimbabwe. He found out that large numbers of teachers would not look forward to supervision as they felt supervision was a very unpleasant experience. According to Chitamba (2019), what is currently happening in Zimbabwean schools is that supervision is through inspection and control. Teachers are hired to carry out specific duties according to clearly stipulated requirements of management. Chivore (1996 , pp. 32) described this type of supervision as "autocratic, dictatorial and tense". Such an atmosphere is riddled with non-supportive, suspicious and apathetic tendencies which are not conducive to effective supervision. Thus, inevitably, the relationship that exists between heads and teachers is that of bosses and employees.

However, in Zimbabwe, besides the principal, no officer in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has the obligation and authority to carry out distributed leadership at school level (Mapolisa& Tshabalala, 2013). Muranda, Tshabalala and Gazimbe(2015) state that the principal of the school, by virtue of delegated authority from the Ministry and Permanent Secretary, is in undisputed control of the school.

The latest education reform in Zimbabwe is the "Updated Curriculum" launched in 2015 (The Herald, 26 September 2015). The "Updated Curriculum", also referred to as the Zero Draft Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education, aims to improve teaching and learning in Zimbabwean schools (The Zimbabwe Curriculum Review: Concept Paper, 2015).Implementation of the reform started in January2016. The reform views education as a vehicle for initiating change and adopts the school as the zone of operation for those changes. One of the fundamental changes in the "Updated curriculum" is the introduction of the continuous assessment as a form of evaluation for learners (The Zimbabwe Curriculum Review Concept Paper, 2015). Furthermore, The Concept Paper(2015) states that assessment was also going to be summative.

Teacher leadership has of late become an increasingly popular topic among educational policy makers and influential educational organisations as an important component of school reform (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Wenner and Campbell further highlight that it is obvious there is great need for empirical research on teacher leadership and they say, “No comprehensive literature review of empirical research has been completed over the last decade since tremendous shifts in policy and other influences have coalesced to reshape the educational landscape.” Wenner and Campbell (2017, pp.164) claim that “teacher leadership can be no more than passing fad unless empirical research can support the value of teacher leadership in terms of student learning.” Laplan and Owings (2010:164) argue that teacher leaders have not been popularised in scholarly journals, while Wenner and Campbell (2017) contend that there is no universal role definition and job description for teacher leaders when it comes to distributed leadership in schools. The teacher leader is, thus, part of the distributed leadership group at school level and it is imperative that the instructional leadership roles are distributed among multiple organisation members. In this study, as the teacher leader is part of the distributed leadership, its influence has a great impact on teaching practice supervision. The construct of distributed leadership holds that instructional leadership is a shared responsibility (Spillane & Mertz, 2015), and therefore, teacher leaders should be seen as an integral part of the instructional leadership team (Chitamba, 2019).

The present study sought to explore the influence of distributed leadership on teacher leaders’ supervisory role when supervising students on teaching practice in Zimbabwe, in order to unpack the experiences, challenges, demands and expectations as well as its enhancement in schools to strengthen teaching practice supervision and strategies that may be employed in pursuit of improved teaching and learning. Symbolic interactionism theory and distributed leadership theory will be used to understand the influence of distributed leadership on leadership role of these men and woman who are part of the leadership team of the school but who are relegated into oblivion. Symbolic interaction argues that human beings develop meanings in their social setting through interacting with others Blaisé & Blaise, (2010), whereas distributed theory opines that distributed leadership helps make the shift from focusing on the work of individuals to the collection of people, interactions, artifacts and routines (Roberts, 2019). The study seeks to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on the role and experiences of teacher leaders on teaching practice supervision.

### 1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

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Teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, have been producing qualified teachers for several generations, enrolling thousands of student teachers who gain experience by being attached to teacher leaders in schools during their teaching practice phase which normally lasts for one year. In Zimbabwe, the student pursuing a Diploma in Education (primary teacher) under the University of Zimbabwe follows a three year programme on a 3-3-3 model. The student teacher covers the first year, that is, three terms, doing theory on campus, the second year on practicum in the field, which is "Teaching Practice", and the final year back on campus. As Madziyire (2013) posits, there are many officials who are expected to supervise the teaching/learning process. These include the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, the Permanent Secretary of Education, Provincial Education Directors, Civil Service Commission Inspectors, Education Inspectors and heads of schools. Out of these supervisors, the head of school is the only one who resides in the school and is in constant touch with the teachers. The school head in Zimbabwe, according to Sibanda, Mutopa and Maphosa (2011), oversees teaching and learning in schools to ensure that quality instruction takes place, in other words, effective supervision which affects the quality of teaching by teachers. The heads, therefore, are the epicentre of the supervision of teachers, with other officers merely complimenting their efforts. (Muzenda, 2019).school-based supervisors play a key role in teacher training, in part because of the amount of time they spend with the trainees (Ngara & Ngwarai, 2012; Chakanyuka, 2006). Literature informs that, the heads of schools in Zimbabwe are not rising to the demands of their roles of being competent professional supervisors to influence student teachers to be efficient teachers of tomorrow (Muzenda, 2019). Hence the responsibility is handed to the teacher leaders and as it is perceived Chitamba ( 2019, pp. 34) responsibility of teacher leaders towards the abundance knowledge gained by the student teachers is left unnoticed.

Furthermore the college lecturers tend to take over when a final teaching practice assessment is done to the detriment of the teacher leaders. Since two thirds of the final mark is from the college and one third from the school a criteria from the University of Zimbabwe. Department of Teacher Handbook (2019).This gives the teacher leader little room to have a final say towards the end of this product(the student teacher)'s overall performance despite having taken full charge over him/her for a period of one year.

This has therefore evoked the researcher to carry out a research on how distributed leadership can influence teacher leaders on their teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. The study, therefore, sought to explore the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province's teacher education colleges.

## **1.4 THE CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION**

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The central research question for this study is: *How does distributed leadership influence teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province's teacher education colleges?*

### **1.4.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

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To answer the above central research question, the following sub-questions were proposed:

- 1) *What are the demands and expectations from teacher leaders in supervising student teachers?*
- 2) *What are the teacher leaders' perceptions on strategies of employing distributed leadership?*
- 3) *What are the challenges of distributed leadership in supervising student teachers in schools?*
- 4) *How can the leadership distributed to teacher leaders be strengthened to enhance teaching knowledge among student teachers?*

## **1.5 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

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### **1.5.1 PRIMARY AIM**

The current study sought to explore the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province's teacher education colleges.

### **1.5.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of the study are:

- 1) To examine the demands and expectations for teacher leaders in distributed leadership practices.
- 2) To explore the teacher leaders' perceptions on strategies of employing distributed leadership
- 3) To unravel the opportunities and challenges of distributed leadership practice
- 4) To examine how the leadership distributed to teacher leaders can be strengthened to enhance teaching knowledge among student teachers.

## **1.6 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

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The lack of supervision empowerment among the teacher leaders in schools in and around Masvingo district to supervise student teachers who are attached to them, prompted the researcher to conduct a study on how distributed leadership could influence them to have full responsibility and supervise effectively the students on teaching practice. The researcher observed with concern the lack of full responsibility the teacher leaders showed on student teachers of whom he also supervised as a lecturer in teacher education colleges. The researcher also had informal discussions with these teacher leaders and other experienced teachers in the primary schools on the challenges they faced in supervising these student teachers.

The literature indicates that there is no universal role definition and job description for teacher leaders when it comes to distributed leadership in schools. Wenner and Campbell (2017) .The researcher needs to unpack the experiences, challenges, demands and expectations as well as how distributed leadership can be enhanced in schools to strengthen teacher leaders' position when supervising students on teaching practice. Glanz (1994.pp. 226) "Teacher leaders daily engage, yet their instructional role remains minuscule."The researcher's motivation to carry out this research emanated from his experience as a teacher leader at two primary schools for two decades and as a college lecturer for close to fourteen years now. Since then, a passion for the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision has developed.

During my tenure as a teacher leader and lecturer, I have interacted with different teacher leaders from local, district and provincial schools and from my interaction with these practioners , it appears there is no influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision among teacher leaders.The lack of uniformity on the distributed leadership roles ignited my interest to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision.

The study therefore, investigated the issue of the influence of distributed leadership amongst all stakeholders in schools to uphold transparency and collaboration so as to mould a teacher who is marketable. The researcher believes that when the group succeeds, everyone shares the glory rather than leaders getting all the credit for everyone's work.

## 1.7 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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To conduct this study titled *The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province's teacher education colleges*, the researcher adopted a qualitative research approach as well as a case study research design. These were deemed appropriate because the author wanted to collect rich descriptive data on teachers' views on, and experiences of, distributed leadership as an empowerment for teachers to effectively supervise pre-service teachers (Creswell, 2014). The inquirer wanted to understand distributed leadership as an empowerment tool for student teachers' supervision by teacher leaders who are the direct beneficiaries of this innovation in professional development. The choice of this approach was also informed by Mead's (1863-1931) symbolic interactionism theory, which underpinned the theoretical framework of this study. The symbolic interactionism theory holds that people construct meanings through interaction. Understanding how teachers co-construct meanings during distributed leadership supervision can be best solicited through qualitative and not quantitative approaches (Berg, 2014).

The author purposively sampled, using the maximum variation technique, the setting and participants of this study. According to (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Creswell, 2012; Magwa and Magwa, 2015; Patton, 2002 and Ritchie and Lewis, 2013), purposive sampling is employed to select information-rich participants on a particular phenomenon. On the setting, Masvingo Province, specifically Masvingo District, was chosen as it has primary school teachers' colleges, which are the only colleges in Masvingo Province providing training for primary school teachers. The colleges deploy their students to all school categories, that is rural, urban and farm schools. All three colleges offer the 3-3-3 programme under the scheme of association with the University of Zimbabwe (Department of Teacher Education [DTE] Handbook, 2015). Eight teacher leaders with over three years' experience from schools where the three teachers' colleges deploy their students for teaching practice were selected for this study (the schools comprised three urban, one farm, and four rural). The teacher leaders were chosen because they were directly involved in the supervision of primary school student teachers from the three primary school teachers' colleges in Masvingo District of Masvingo Province. The selected teacher leaders were deemed to have the information the author needed to address this study's critical questions.

The instruments used to collect qualitative data to answer the research questions for this study included semi-structured interviews and focused group discussions Ritchie & Lewis (2013). Eight teacher leaders were interviewed. The interviews were important for providing detailed qualitative data about how participants understood distributed leadership, its role in teachers' professional growth, supervision through distributed leadership, and the effectiveness of distributed leadership for the professional growth of student teachers. Interviews also assisted in obtaining information regarding the challenges faced by teachers when supervising student teachers on teaching practice and in constructing and accounting for teacher leaders' perceptions on strategies of employing distributed leadership supervision for improving professional growth in student teachers(research questions 1 to 4).

The qualitative data generated for this study were transcribed, coded, analysed and presented as an integrated whole in Chapter 4. Thick descriptions were provided to authenticate participants' views. Details about the methodology for this study, including all ethical issues are discussed in Chapter 3.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

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The 21<sup>st</sup> century has drawn a lot of interest in educational leadership because it is generally believed that leadership is second to teaching in improving students' outcome (Oplaika, 2010). Zimbabwe has initiated reforms like the "Updated Curriculum" and Performance Lag Action Programme (PLAP), which demand accountability on the part of schools. These reforms advocate for effective distributed leadership. The leadership of the principal alone may not always be able to meet the accountability demands in schools (Hallinger, 2015). The focus on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision was pertinent in that, on the school's organisational structure, teacher leaders are third to the principals and, hence, are integral to students' achievement in schools. The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision by teacher leaders may enhance student teachers' improvement during their teaching practice. Teacher leaders daily engage, yet their instructional role remains miniscule (Glanz, 1994).

The present research on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges is significant in many ways. At personal level, the motivation to carry out this research emanated from my experience as a teacher leader at two primary schools for two decades

and college lecturer for close to fourteen years now. Since then, I have developed a passion for the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision. Secondly, over the years, there has been growing interest in educational management as a field of inquiry. While the scholars are generally agreed on the distributed leadership role of principals, they are not with regards to the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision (Wenner& Campbell, 2017). This should be a concern for distributed leadership scholars.

As a teacher leader for more than two decades and lecturer at a teachers' college, I have interacted with many teacher leaders from the schools, districts and provinces. From my interaction with these practitioners, there appears to be no influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision on teacher leaders. Each teacher leader's supervisory role on student teachers appeared to depend on their school heads. This lack of uniformity in the distributed leadership role ignited my interest to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. As a lecturer, the researcher can appreciate the dilemma of teacher leaders when they are described as "squandered resources" (Harvey, 1994). The responsibility of teacher leaders continues to be ill-defined and ambiguous (Martinez, 2011). Accordingly, the study was designed to help broaden my conceptions and insights on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. There was, therefore, a professional development purpose to study.

On the research front, I was motivated to make a meaningful contribution to the development of both theory and practice about the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision. In addition, the study hopes to stimulate our scholars to conduct further research on the distributed leadership of teacher leaders. It is also envisaged, through this study, that policy makers will have at their disposal, insights to make informed choices on how to optimise teacher leaders for the improvement of classroom teaching and student teacher achievement.

When the group succeeds, everyone shares the glory rather than leaders getting all the credit for everyone's work (Chitamba, 2019). The study would not only be important in Zimbabwe, but to other countries as well, since distributed leadership has become a critical component to effect teaching practice supervision, globally. This study hoped to contribute to the on-going discourse about preparing quality student teachers by contributing new knowledge to the field of teaching practice

supervision for student teachers' professional development. Therefore, this study hoped to contribute to the on-going discourses about the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in preparing quality student teachers in teacher education colleges.

### **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

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According to Chitamba(2019), limitations are outside forces beyond the researcher's control and which limit the transferability of the study. Appreciably, notwithstanding the fact that the study provides pertinent insights into the role and experiences of teacher leaders with distributed leadership, there are inherent limitations to it. Respondents of the study were drawn from one district, Masvingo District. Masvingo Province has seven districts. Each district may be unique, limiting the generalisation of the findings. Nonetheless, efforts were made to ameliorate the effect of these limitations. To counteract limitations, purposive sampling was used. Symbolic interactionists contend that it may be possible to come up with a representative sample by employing sound judgement (Pattson, 2002).

This study was a product of two supervisors. The proposal was initiated by a supervisor who left the university before it was approved. It took time before I was reallocated another supervisor who then struggled to make sense of my proposal since it was a product of another supervisor. However my new supervisor soldiered on despite the limitations.

### **1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

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This study was limited to the Masvingo District primary schools since it is the only district out of the seven districts in Masvingo Province with teacher education colleges that have student teachers deployed for teaching practice in all the districts of Masvingo Province. This could also accommodate teacher leaders with diverse experience on supervision of these students since they are located mostly in urban and rural school settings. Three colleges and eight primary schools (three urban, four rural and one church-run) participated in this study. The teacher leaders were purposively selected using the maximum variation technique to include only those who are experienced and have been actively involved in supervision of student teachers for at least three years. These participants were sampled out to include information-rich participants (Creswell, 2014; Magwa & Magwa, 2015).

Each participant was involved in a one-on-one interview, lasting approximately 30-45 minutes. The author was able to acquire a panoramic understanding of the views of teacher leaders on the influence of distributed leadership as a tool to their roles as school-based supervisors from their own perspectives.

### 1.11 FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

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All teachers' colleges in this study offered both the 2-5-2 programme for some groups and 3-3-3 programme for other groups for primary school pre-service teacher preparations where the student teachers went out to schools for teaching practice, some for five terms and others for three terms. Pre-service teachers were under teacher leaders/mentors who are expected to supervise, guide, support and direct them. This long period provided me with a large population from which to pick a sample of experienced teacher leaders in both programmes. As a lecturer, I also have access to the schools since they collaborate with the colleges in the preparation of teachers. This means I could engage with participants and moderate the focus group discussions without any major challenges.

### 1.12 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

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The following key terms are defined for use within this study.

**1) Distributed leadership:** Within a school, distributed leadership often takes the form of instructional leadership team. This team represents the larger school community, and each team member is involved because of their content and pedagogical expertise rather than their years of experience or formal leadership role in the school. Leading schools efficiently call for the involvement of different leaders in formal and informal positions that assume responsibilities in the organisation (Wing Institute, 2021).

**2) Pre-service teacher/mentee/student teacher:** A mentee is a novice who receives guidance and support from a more experienced individual in the same field or trade (Hudson & Hudson, 2016; Ngara & Ngwarai, 2012; Leshem, 2012). In this study, the mentee is the student teacher who receives guidance and support from the school-based teacher (mentor). A pre-service teacher is a college student involved in a school-based field experience (Moyo, 2002). For this study, the terms primary school pre-service teacher/mentee/student teacher will be used synonymously.

**3) Mentor/mentor teacher leader/school-based supervisor:** According to Wetzell, Hoffman and Maloch (2017), a mentor is a normative teacher designated by the head to help and guide the new

teacher and trainee teachers. Advancing the same understanding of a mentor, Perunka and Erkkila. (2013. pp.15 ), in their study from Finland, say that, “mentor means a supervisor who is supporting a mentee during his/her teaching practice”. In this study, the mentor is the class teacher under whom the mentee is placed. This mentor teacher is expected to supervise the student teacher/mentee with the goal of supporting and guiding the growth and development of the primary school pre-service teacher. In this study, the three terms, namely mentor, mentor teacher and school-based supervisor are used interchangeably

**4) Teaching practice/practicum/field-based teaching/attachment:** Teaching practice in Zimbabwe is work integrated learning that is described as a period of time during which student teachers work in schools in order to apply theory into practice (Kiggundu & Nayumuli, 2009; Musingafi & Mafumbate, 2014; Marimo, 2014; Samkange, 2015). Musingafi & Mafumbate (2014) further describe teaching practice as a practicum where student teachers get the opportunity to practise the art of teaching in preparation for the real world of the teaching profession. In Zimbabwe, this phase is a practical component of the teacher-training programme, which culminates in the final certification of the student teachers. For this study, teaching practice/practicum is taken to mean the five terms of the 3-3-3 primary school pre-service teachers training when pre-service teachers are placed into primary schools under the supervision of the mentor teacher.

**5) Supervision:** This distinct professional activity involves observation, evaluation and feedback aimed at facilitating the supervisee’s self, assessment and acquisition of knowledge and skills. This is done through the supervisors, instructing, modelling and mutually solving problems (Creaner, 2013; Moyo, 2002). It is safe to say that supervision takes into account the effort of the school officials (in this study the school-based teachers) towards improving the quality of learning and wellbeing of the supervisee. For this study, supervision entails all the activities that the teacher leader (school-based supervisor) performs in the development and growth of the primary school pre-service teacher.

**6. Influence:** According to Wooll (2021) influence is the ability to change how someone else behaves or thinks, based on persuasion instead of authority.

## 1.13 THESIS OUTLINE

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The study is arranged into five (5) chapters. Each chapter discusses a particular feature of the study. Given below are brief salient concerns of each chapter.

**Chapter 1:** Orientation and Background to the Study

This chapter addresses the problem and its setting. It sets the background to the study, the problem statement, the aim of the research and the research questions that shape the research focus.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

The chapter reviews literature related to the study. The theoretical frameworks underpinning the study are outlined. Symbolic interactionism and distributed leadership theoretical frameworks will be discussed.

**Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

The chapter presents the methodology used to collect data. The research approach, design, sample and sampling procedures are discussed. It also addresses data gathering instruments, data presentation and ethical considerations.

**Chapter 4: Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation.**

Chapter 4 analyses and discusses data on the experiences of teacher leaders on distributed leadership in schools.

**Chapter 5: Summary, Discussion of Findings, Recommendations and Conclusions**

This is the last chapter. It presents a summary of the whole study, draws conclusions based on the findings of the research and proffers recommendations and suggestions for future research.

**1.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

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Chapter 1 has set forth the problem that stimulated this research. It provided an orientation and background to the study. The problem statement for this study was discussed in this chapter. The significance of the study has been examined. The main research question and the vital sub-questions that guide this study are part of this chapter. Research aims and objectives of the study were also presented. A summary of research methodology was presented. The limitations and delimitations of the study were discussed in detail. Key terms used in the study have been explained and the layout of the thesis was outlined.

**CHAPTER 2**

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**LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **2.1 OVERVIEW**

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This chapter provides a review of related literature on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. The literature review helped to situate the study into the global and local contexts. In the process, I was able to borrow concepts, approaches and methodologies utilised by other researchers who studied the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in various contexts. The review starts by focusing on perspectives on distributed leadership supervision in general and pre-service teaching practice in various countries. The rest of the chapter is then organised following the order of this study's research objectives. This was intended to make it easier for me to compare the results of this study with findings from other studies and contexts, in Chapter Four.

## **2.2 PERSPECTIVES ON DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP**

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Distributed leadership is normatively the preferred leadership model, judging by the number of authors on this theme in extant literature. It is perceived to be attractive because it spreads leadership across the organisation and empowers staff to develop their leadership capabilities. The literature conceptualises distributed leadership as an emergent model (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2010; Spillane, 2006; Bennet, Wise, Woods & Harvey, 2003). However, recent evidence shows that policy-makers are advocating distributed leadership in school systems as diverse as England (Lumby, 2013) and Malaysia (Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2018; Norwain, 2018). School principals may also be "capturing" this model in order to require teachers to do work (Gunter, Hall & Bragg, 2013; Hartely, 2010). Bolden, Petrov and Gosling (2009) say the notion of "allocative distribution" may explain what a top-down process is often indistinguishable from delegation, for example in Nigeria (Imoni, 2018). Prescriptions contradict the "emergent" dimension of distributed leadership and suggest either a fundamental shift in ways of thinking about this model or the use of popular labels to justify traditional managerial leadership.

The concept of distributed leadership has gradually acquired an important role in the academic spheres in general and specifically in the educational context (Spillane, Harveson & Diamond 2009, in Gomez-Hurtado, Gonzalez, Coronel & Rodriguez, 2020), particularly in those organisations with team-based organisational structures. The distributed leadership perspective offers a framework for analysis of

educational leadership (Oborn, Barrett & Dawson, 2013; Currie, Lockett & Suhomlinova 2009). Authors such as Gronn (2008) and Spillane (2006) highlighted the term, given their insistence on placing the focus on the organisational versus the individual, and on the interactions versus actions. Leading schools efficiently calls for the involvement of different leaders in formal and informal positions that assume responsibilities in the organisation (Gronn, 2008; Spillane, et al., 2007 in Wing Institute, 2021).

Distributed leadership, in which the principal shares certain leadership work with teachers to optimize student and school outcomes, has emerged as a leading school leadership model, and indeed is reflected within recent principal standards. The model's origins lie in research that suggested that principals cannot "do it alone," in today's complex and challenging school environments, and that teachers have often performed leadership work that was not acknowledged.

However, according to Wing Institute (2021) critics of distributed leadership note the potential for growing teacher workloads without corresponding compensation, and the possibility of exclusion of certain groups of teachers from leadership work. Wing Institute 2021 further argues that, Careful planning and purposeful design, a collaborative work culture based on trust and respect, and having teachers at school who possess leadership capacity, all appear to be necessary ingredients in order for distributed leadership to be effective. School leadership teams, in which the principal works with a team of teacher leaders to share leadership work, represents an example of distributed leadership in action, and has been shown to accelerate and sustain school reform work (Wing Institute, 2021).

The seminal research conducted by Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001, 2004) set the stage for further investigation into distributed leadership. These researches, according to Wing Institute (2020) argue that, to understand leadership practice, it is essential to go beyond a consideration of roles, strategies, and traits of the individuals who occupy formal leadership positions to investigate how the practice of leadership is stretched over leaders, followers, and material and symbolic artefacts in the situation.

It is further argued that distributed leadership involves the principal and teachers collaborating to determine and carry out the best practices for the school, rather than the principal serving as the sole or primary authority on these matters (Spillane et al., 2001, 2004).

Studies on distributed leadership use a variety of perspectives and terminology (Liu, Bellibas & Gumus, 2020) such as shared instructional leadership (Mark & Printy, 2003), collective leadership (Leithwood & Mascal, 2008), and democratic leadership (Natsiopoulou & Gurroukkakis, 2010). These terms are often used interchangeably with distributed leadership, leading to some confusion and the misconception that distributed leadership includes the notion that everyone leads together at the same level (Harris, 2007). Rather, distributed leadership “essentially means that those best equipped or skilled or positioned to lead do so, in order to fulfil a particular goal in organisational requirement” (Harris & DeFlaminis, 2016).

Eckert (2019) noted that distributed leadership does not consist solely of delegation of tasks by principals to teachers. Rather, distributed leadership is considered a key component of learning-centred leadership, which is performed collaboratively by administrators and teachers and relies on complex, organic interrelations as well as shared responsibilities for learning outcomes (Murphy, Elliot, Goldring, & Porter, 2006). Administrators and teachers work and learn together as they coordinate practices such as setting the direction for the school, developing school staff, redesigning the organisation as necessary, and improving the instructional programme.

According to Leithwood and Louis (2012), the idea of distributed leadership is based on the notion that when teacher leaders, who have assumed responsibility for achieving common goals, work together with the principal, they accomplish working alone. In fact, inflexible hierarchies can produce low staff morale and performance (Tian, Risku & Collin, 2016).

Supporting research and important factors and caveats on distributed leadership have received an extensive amount of research attention, particularly in the past decade (Gumus, et al. 2018) and supporting research includes related investigations that have generally confirmed the leadership potential of teachers to act as mentors, curriculum specialists, and resource providers, in addition to classroom instructors (Tian & Huber, 2020). Distributed leadership has been associated with positive outcomes such as improved student academic performance (Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Leithwood & Mascal, 2008) teacher academic optimism and professional efficacy (Mascal, Leithwood, Strauss & Sacks, 2008), organisational commitment (Hulpa & Devos, 2010;

Hulpa, Devos & Van Keer, 2011) teacher satisfaction (Liu, et al. 2020), teacher retention (Booker & Gauzerman, 2009; Cowain & Goldhaber, 2016), and increased teacher effectiveness and instructional improvement (Ali & Yangaiya, 2015; Canburn & Han, 2009; Supovitz & Riggan, 2012).

Collective leadership, which encompasses the practices through which teachers and administrators influence colleagues, policy makers, and others to improve teaching and learning (Liu, 2020; Eckert, 2018) has also been shown to have greater influence on student outcomes than individual principal leadership (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstorn & Anderson, 2010). The source of this influence may lie at least in part on collective leadership's potential to enhance teacher professional efficacy, which has been shown to be a highly influential factor for student teaching (Hattie, 2017).

In a recent overview of the research support for distributed leadership Leithwood et al. (2020) argued that school leadership can have an especially positive influence on school and student outcomes when it is distributed. Still, how that leadership is distributed produces diverse outcomes and results, and effectiveness depends on how leadership roles and responsibilities are distributed to optimally address the organisation's needs. Research suggests that careful planning, coordination and intentional support on the part of the principal or other school leaders to distribute leadership based on staff characteristics or competencies maximize the chances for improved school outcomes (Bush & Clover, 2012; Leithwood et al. 2007).

The quality and distribution of leadership functions and opportunities for participative decision making and cooperation in leadership teams have been found to influence teachers' organisational commitment, with teachers more strongly committed when informal leadership responsibilities are shared based on patterns of staff expertise, such as when teams are created to solve problems of practice (De Flaminis, 2013; Hulpia & Devos, 2010). These patterns of expertise, of course, vary from school-to-school context (Eckert, 2019; Hallinger & Heck, 2010a; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2020). This means that distributed leadership will likely be enacted differently across schools.

As the research base on distributed leadership has expanded, critics have appeared in literature. For example, some critics suggested that distributed leadership was conceived as a way to get teachers to

do more work and as a more efficient way to deliver top-down, standardised policies and practices (Hargreaves & Flink, 2009). Lumby (2013) argued that claims of distributed leadership having the potential to empower and open up new teacher opportunities might be unwarranted and that there was no mention of the potential for unequal inclusion related to gender and race. Lumby (2013, pp. 45) suggested that distributed leadership “reconciles staff to growing workloads and accountability and writes troubling issues of the disempowerment and/or exclusion of staff out of the leadership script.” Indeed, some research has included examples of how those with leadership authority and responsibilities in schools have used distributed leadership for detrimental and damaging purposes (Harris, 2013).

Empirical research suggests that careful design and wise execution of distributed leadership strategies, when tailored to suit the school context, provide best chances for distributed leadership to improve organisational performance and outcomes (Canburn & Han, 2009). In addition, high levels of trust, transparency and mutual respect, along with a culture of collaborative learning and shared practice, are necessary for distributed leadership to have a positive impact (Harris, 2014; Massachusetts Department Elementary and Secondary Education, n.d., Tian et al. 2016). The leadership capacity of teachers must also be considered, as this capacity can be hampered or supported by factors such as degree of preparation and professional development for leadership work (Jensen, Roberts-Hull, Magee & Gunnivan, 2016; Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree Richardson & Orphans, 2009) and even meaningful leadership work, when added to the work load of teachers who are already at full capacity with their own instructional responsibilities, will likely not translate to more positive student outcomes (Eckert, 2019). As Harris and De Flaminis (2016, pp.66) noted, “distributed leadership is not a panacea, it depends on how it is shared, received and enacted”.

However, some new developments in nature of supervision were experienced in Zimbabwe. Madziyire (2013) observes that the democratic administration movement which was occurring in the United States of America’s education system during the period from early seventies to the eighties, influenced the supervision process in Zimbabwe. Chitamba (2019) states that with the post-independence democratization of the education system and popularization of discovery learning, there was (in Zimbabwe) some attempt of supervisory teachers so that they could demonstrate a concern for

individual needs and interests of learners. This study sought to explore the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Zimbabwe teacher education colleges.

## **2.3 CONCEPTUALISATION OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP**

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In distributed leadership, according to Hill (2008) the phenomenological distributed nature of culture emphasises the interaction of individuals with others in a way that renders the individual inseparable from others and others are expressed through the individual.

Liljenberg 2015) argues that practising distributed leadership is considered a challenge for head teachers since it is a new strategy that needs much study, especially on its effectiveness and the ways in which it constructs new leadership roles with each school.

Robinson (2009) supported research on distributed leadership and widely disseminated encouraging findings to policy makers working towards school improvement, such as by. (Hallinger and Heck 2009, 2010a, 2010b), and Liethwood and Mascall (2008). National principals' leadership standards now reflect the importance of distributed leadership and include it in the effective practices for operations and management and school improvement (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015).

The notion of distributed leadership was operationalised in the Annenberg Foundation's Distributed Leadership Project (DLP), which sought to build leadership capacity through a distributive perspective in urban schools with highly diverse student populations and in need of substantial school improvement (De Flaminis, 2013). The DLP provided principal preparation to establish a distributed leadership mindset and assisted with the development of distributed leadership teams to build leadership capacity in Philadelphia schools. Positive results in the form of multiple leadership team outcomes, e.g., effective team functioning and trust and efficacy levels among team members, led to the programme being replicated in New York in 2015 (Harris & De Flaminis, 2016). The study on influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice can take a leaf out of the DLP since it sought to build leadership capacity through a distributive perspective.

Distributed leadership was a risky approach when leadership was designated to incompetent teachers (Tahir, SuiLiang, Musah, Jaffri, Mohammed & Yasin, 2016), and for some teachers, it is perceived as increased workloads and responsibilities (Timperly, 2009; Tahir et al. 2016).

According to Roberts (2019), schools are hungry for leaders who can transform the school culture for the better. The distributed leadership theory holds that educational leadership is often not held in one person, but is instead distributed among multiple individuals. A body of leadership has multiple individuals who have the tools and skills to contribute to the success of the organisation.

In order to make space for new directions of action, school leaders must come to understand that school culture is a result of the collective actions of the people, artifacts, and routines that have shaped the current context. Considering culture as a product of tasks, people, artifacts, interactions, and routines shows a pathway for change (Solly, 2018). A map of existing tasks opens up opportunities to make sustainable change in schools.

Roberts (2019) further argues that distributed leadership focuses on leadership practice rather than specific leadership roles. These leadership practices occur when those in authoritative and subordinate positions interact with each other.

Despite these benefits, (Tahir et al. 2016) summarised obstacles to distributed leadership based on the following themes in practising distributed leadership: most teachers felt that they have to do more administrative tasks which they felt did not belong to them, lack of motivation based on the past experiences, and no such training to be leaders, hence they lack confidence to lead their counterparts. Some teachers believed that most of their time was committed to their teaching tasks, hence little time remained to lead their colleagues. Hence, this study sought to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Zimbabwe teacher education colleges so that teacher leaders may have confidence to supervise their counterparts.

## **2.4 TEACHER LEADERS**

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It is evident from the international literature that there are overlapping and competing definitions of the term “teacher leader”.The fact that there exists some conceptual confusion over the exact meaning of

teacher leadership makes its pursuit of legitimacy within the leadership field much more difficult to achieve (Harris, 2003). For example, Wasley (1991, pp.23) defines teacher leadership, as “the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn’t ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader.”

Across the United States as well as internationally, the term “teacher leadership” is used to label a variety of different teacher roles and teaching assignments (Meyer, 2019). Teacher leadership is a process. Teacher leaders are the professionals who carry through with the process to lead change in their schools for the benefit of all students. They step outside their classroom doors and accept the challenges to improve their practice through working with colleagues, school administration and professional staff, as well as students and their families.

According to Meyer (2019), one of the confusions in defining teacher leadership and identifying teacher leaders is that “leadership” is not found in a position or title. In most schools there are teachers who are the designated leaders of their grade level teams or departments, but being named a “teacher leader” is not the same as being a teacher leader. Teacher leaders exemplify certain defining characteristics. While all teachers possess several of these traits, only teacher leaders consistently and simultaneously integrate them into teacher leadership.

Zepeda (2017) and Glickman et al. (2018) view teacher leaders as supervisors with a distinct professional activity in which education and training aim at developing science-informed practices which are facilitated through a collaborative interpersonal process which involves observation, evaluation, feedback, facilitation of self-assessment, and acquisition of knowledge and skills by instruction, modelling and mutual problem solving. This is supported by the symbolic interaction theory (Blumer, 1969) which holds that the meaning of things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows.

## **2.4.1 Teacher leadership traits**

### **2.4.1.1 Experts**

Meyer (2019) opines that teacher leaders share their expertise. Expertise may come in the form of knowledge and skills about specific content (e.g., mathematics, social- emotional learning) or teaching skills (e.g., teaching with technology, questioning strategies). Their expertise may also come in the form of leadership skills(e.g., helping teams build consensus, making data-driven decisions).

Meyer (2019) further argues that at the same time they are sharing their expertise, teacher leaders are acquiring expertise as they pursue professional development to help them solve problems their teams have identified. They seek to learn from their colleagues – believing that the collective knowledge of the group is essential to successful teaching and student learning- further building on their knowledge and skills. Expert teachers, according to Meyer, are not always teacher leaders. Grursoy et al. (2016) support this when they say, supervisors are expected to act as active agents in conflict resolution and problem solving in the practicum. Proper supervision requires the establishment of mutual understanding among all stakeholders involved in the practicum, hence it cannot be a mechanistically routine of a series of actions. In this study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision, building expertise is essential to becoming a teacher leader (Gursoy et al., 2016).

#### **2.4.1.2 Exceptional communicators**

According to Meyer (2019), teacher leaders are excellent communicators. A key teacher leadership skill is the ability to prioritize listening over speaking and seeking to understand different perspectives. Teacher leaders clarify, probe and synthesize ideas and questions to understand the concerns and leverage the expertise of others. They also strive to establish open communication, where all ideas are heard and all possibilities explored. Teacher leaders want to solve problems by getting a group to think outside the box.

One of the essential qualities of teacher leaders' communication is honesty. Teacher leaders communicate in ways that are professional and truthful, reflecting what is working and what is not. They acknowledge where mistakes have occurred and where changes are needed rather than avoid difficult conversations (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development,2020). In this study, the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision may make teacher leaders acknowledge were mistakes have occurred and where changes are needed.

### **2.4.1.3 Change agents**

While most teachers are experts and have effective communication skills, teacher leaders differentiate themselves by being change agents. They take up initiatives and work to make them successful. Education is a professional field that is constantly being “reformed” and reacting to social, economic and political changes. This continuous change makes being a teacher exciting and exhausting, and it is why teacher leadership is so important—every school needs teachers who will “lean in” when change happens (Meyer (2019)). This study sought to explore how the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision may make teacher leaders lean in when change happens.

According to Grursoy et al. (2016), supervisors are expected to act as active agents in conflict resolution and problem solving in the practicum. Proper supervision requires the establishment of mutual understanding among all stakeholders involved in the practicum, hence it cannot be a mechanistically routine of series of actions.

Change may be needed with a grade-level team or a department and be focused on helping a particular group of students. Teacher leaders themselves might initiate change based on evidence that things need to be done in a different way. When teachers are change agents, they are leading a transformation in their schools or their local and professional communities by supporting (and inspiring up next) others to make changes that will have a meaningful and positive impact for students (Osborne, 2019 )

### **2.4.1.4 Inspirational leaders**

People in educational leadership are familiar with the concept of transformational leader. Meyer (2019) opines that transformational leaders work with others to problem-solve and implement and monitor strategic initiatives. They inspire everyone to be their very best because a transformational leader believes that everyone has important contributions to make and that everyone needs to be involved. Inspiration is at the core of transformational leadership— and it is not easy to master. The inspirational role of the teacher leaders is critical and often overlooked. Because teacher leaders are colleagues – not supervisors – successful leadership depends on other teachers wanting to follow their leader. This study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision may increase awareness on the inspirational role of the teacher leaders.

In support of this (Ebele and Olufu (2017) on supervision in secondary schools in Abuja, Nigeria, concur that supervision is highly instruction-related and seeks to cooperatively identify weaknesses of the teacher in delivery of instruction to render appropriate remedial action, with the aim of improving delivery.

Mohammad (2019) argues that through teaching planning, the teacher leader can increase the professional and educational growth of the student teacher, motivating them to face difficulties of teaching and learning with confidence and morale, avoid embarrassing situations through their education, and have good ability to identify their learning strengths and weaknesses.

#### **2.4.1.5 Trustworthy colleagues**

To be a teacher leader, others must trust you enough to follow your lead. Teacher leaders build trust through what they do and say as well as what they do not. Tschannen, Moran and Hoy(2018) explain that trust between teachers involves five core qualities:

- **Benevolence:** They share their confidence that others will act with goodwill.
- **Competence:** They share their belief that the group has the ability to be successful.
- **Honesty:** They communicate and act in authentic and equitable ways.
- **Openness:** They share information, even if it shows their personal vulnerabilities.
- **Reliability:** They always do what they say will do.

Trustworthiness is important across all aspects of teacher leadership, and engendering confidence in others is key to being a transformational leader. Competence is part of shared expertise. Honesty is essential in effective communication. Openness is seen in the willingness and ability to explore new possibilities. Reliability is essential to all these parts of the teacher leadership process because no one follows unreliable leader (Meyer, 2019).

#### **2.4.1.6 Explorers**

According to Meyer (2019) Teacher leaders are trailblazers. They are first adopters, willing to try out new ideas and discover the unseen “potholes” in new initiatives. They volunteer for pilot projects and

pursue professional development opportunities to learn more so they can improve their practice, share their experiences, and collaborate with others to solve problems and reach team goals. An important part of this explorer quality is that teacher leaders- because they are willing to go first – share their vulnerabilities by being open about their successes and failures. Hence, from the current study on influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision, teacher leaders can have confidence in sharing their vulnerability by being open about their success and failures.

Teacher leaders demonstrate honesty, an important part of building trust, by sharing their mistakes and “hard lessons” with their colleagues as they encourage them to take the trail they have begun to blaze. All teachers need to explore more, and this can begin with new teachers (Meyer, 2019).

#### **2.4.2 Teacher leadership is a professional process**

Teacher leaders reflect all of these qualities (and many more) in their teacher leadership through everyday interactions with students, colleagues and the school community. Teacher leadership is a “package” of attitudes, knowledge and skills that are continually developed (Meyer, 2019). Meyer goes on to articulate that teacher leaders are cautiously excited about change. They are ready to pursue new ideas that will result in more meaningful learning experiences and more positive and inclusive spaces for all students. They care not only about the students who share their classrooms but also about the students in their colleagues’ classrooms and throughout the school. Meyer concludes that teacher leaders believe that meaningful and sustained change happens when teachers work with administrators, staff, families, students, and the community to do what is best, based on evidence about what students need.

## **2.5 DEMANDS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHER LEADERS ON PRE-SERVICE TEACHER SUPERVISION**

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### **2.5.1 Preview on demands and expectations: Teacher leaders’ perspective**

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At a time when principals across the industrialised world are called upon to provide effective leadership that results in quality teaching and optimum learning for all students in schools (Brandon, Hanna & Negropontes, 2015; Day et al. 2011; Fullan, 2014; Pollock, Wang & Hauseman, 2015; Schleicher, 2015; Zepeda, 2017), it is acknowledged that the work of school leaders is increasingly complex and demanding (Canadian Association of Principals & Alberta Teachers' Association (CAP) 2014; Le Fevre & Robinson, 2014; Leithwood, Sun & Pollock, 2017; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2016; Pollock, Lashley, Rindova & Jung-Hoon Han, 2017). Despite the intensification of their work, generational turnover in their ranks and a steady parade of external pressure, exemplary principals in three high performing Canadian provinces continue to direct considerable effort towards bolstering their practices as instructional leaders, engaging supervisors, and evidence informed teacher evaluation (Brandon, Hollweck, Donlevy & Whelen, 2018).

The construct of overall instructional leadership (Brandon et al. 2015; Fullan, 2014) was used to illustrate five ways exemplary principals overcome three prominent and persistent obstacles to effective teacher supervision and evaluation, which are: (a) management challenge (b) complexity challenge and (c) the learning challenge (Brandon et al. 2015; Brandon, 2008, 2006, 2005).

The five findings or illustrations of five ways that principals have overcome the obstacles are based on data collected from interviews, focus groups, field notes, observations, documents, artefacts, and reflective research journals from these studies (Brandon, 2005, 2006, 2008; Brandon et al., 2015; Brandon, Saar & Friesen, 2016; Brandon, Couvier & Prasow, 2008; Hollweck, 2016).

Four assertions or analytic generalisations about the impact of overall instructional leadership on overcoming the three obstacles were derived from the five findings based on reasoned judgement and assertional logic about the extent to which they may be transferrable to supervision and evaluation practice in other settings. The four assertions or analytic generalizations are: (a) Shared, distributed, and collective approaches to overall instructional leadership.

(b) Effective supervision and evaluation are part of a career-long continuum of practice that fosters teacher growth while ensuring quality teaching.

(c) There are multiple learning pathways to effective overall instructional leadership. (d) Policy contexts that place teacher supervision and evaluation practice within a broader conception of overall instructional leadership are beneficial.

Each assertion is cross-referenced to specific findings to make it easier to judge the assertion's soundness as an analytic generalisation (Brandon & Kvale, 2015). Stake (2006) cautioned that, "It is not evidence for a court or law or geometric proof. It is persuasion, logical persuasion, that the assertion is credible". Through this study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision, teacher leaders may venture into multiple pathways to effective overall supervision.

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## **2.5.2 THE THREE PERSISTENT OBSTACLES TO EFFECTIVE TEACHER SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION**

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The three enduring obstacles to effective teacher supervision and evaluation are briefly described as: (a) management challenges (b) the complexity challenges (c) the learning challenge.

### **2.5.2.1 The management challenge**

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Inadequate time to provide instructional leadership and supervision is a consistently identified impediment by school administrators (Brandon, 2006, 2008; Canadian Association of Principals, 2014; Marshall, 2013; Pollock et al., 2015). Time needed to attend to such matters as budgeting, student and parent concerns, preparing reports, other bureaucratic requirements, and more immediate organisational tasks often takes precedence over working to support instruction. These management concerns are frequently cited as inhibitors to having sufficient time to adequately provide supervisory or instructional leadership. This study, therefore, seeks to influence distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision so that teacher leaders become empowered to leadership positions for supervision of student teachers.

### **2.5.2.2 The complexity challenge**

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Issues associated with the interpersonal politics of teacher supervision, expectation ambiguity for school administrators, along with the intellectual and interpersonal demands related to understanding and supporting quality teaching and teacher growth contribute to the second enduring obstacle to

effective supervision and evaluation- the complexity challenge (Brandon, 2005, 2006, 2008; Brandon et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2012, 2013; LeFevre & Robinson, 2014; Leithwood et al. 2017; OECD 2016; Zepeda, 2017).

The relationship aspects of the challenge of complexity are intense and humanistic endeavour, no matter how well the policies and practices are laid out on paper. The inter-human dynamics of this work, compassion, empathy and relationship development are at the centre (Brandon et al. 2018). The study sought to bring empathy and relationship development as suggested by (Brandon et al. 2018) through investigating the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision.

### **2.5.2.3 The learning challenge**

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The absence of on-going attention to the development of instructional leadership knowledge and skills has been a major obstacle to effective supervision and evaluation. Insufficient attention has been devoted to the development of supervisory knowledge and skills in many schools, creating the learning challenge (Brandon et al., 2018). Much more in the way of on-going support is needed (Brandon et al. 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2010, 2012, 2013).

There is an argument that a broader conception of instructional leadership is a significant way to frame more effective approaches to teacher supervision and evaluation. Much of instructional and supervision literature focuses on what (Fullan, 2014) described as direct instructional leadership- principal actions that directly impact instruction (Brandon et al. 2018). Overall instructional leadership in relation to effective teacher supervision and evaluation is situated within three interrelated strands of the school leadership research literature: (a) shared instructional leadership (b) supervision as informed instructional support and (c) evaluation as multi-track evidence informed professional judgement. As suggested by the above scholars, this study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision may bring in shared instructional leadership.

## **2.6 CHALLENGES OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP IN SUPERVISING STUDENT TEACHERS**

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According to (Jacobs, Gordons and Salis, 2016), the wide variety of supervision processes described in the supervision processes described in the supervision literature-mentoring, clinical supervision, peer coaching, professional development, curriculum development, and community building- to name a few, means there is no way that school administrators, with all of their responsibilities, can provide the breadth and depth of supervision that is called for.

Contemporary literature points at some difficulties, barriers and obstacles associated with practising distributed leadership in schools. Most researchers that engaged with distributed leadership were cautious of its efficacy in producing effective solutions to issues in school leaders since it was a new idea that lacked clarity (Harris, 2004; Tahir, Sui Liang, Musah, Jaffri, Mohammed & Yasin, 2016), was a risky approach when leadership was designated to incompetent teachers (Tahri et al., 2016) and for some teachers, it is perceived as increased workloads and responsibilities (Torrance, 2012). Liljenberg (2015) also argued that the usage and application of distributed leadership in the school context is not an easy task for school leaders to implement. Hence, practising distributed leadership is considered a challenge for head teachers since it is a new strategy that needs much study, especially on its effectiveness and the ways in which it constructed new leadership roles with each school. Empirically speaking, problems and issues of distributed leadership within the educational context can be divided according to problems in the school hierarchical structure, teacher competencies, the willingness to assume leadership roles, the concept of power sharing between head teachers with teachers and teachers and head teachers' understanding of the practice of distributed leadership.

As a bureaucratic organisation, the culture of hierarchical management structures in schools has created a boundary associated with roles and responsibilities (Tahir et al. 2016). This leads to hierarchically-defined and status-oriented roles. Furthermore, the unwritten code governing relations and differentiating peers, supervisors, and subordinates (Tahir et al. 2016) widens the boundaries between leaders and followers. Superiors are generally respected and are usually the decision makers. The other main stumbling block to developing distributed leadership is likely the attitudes of teachers and head teachers (Tahir et al. 2016) when head teachers are willing to share their power and not every teacher is predisposed to assume leadership and administrative tasks (Tahir et al. 2016).

The extension of opportunities to take on leadership roles and responsibilities may not be welcomed by teachers unless there is a clear understanding of the benefits for the school and, ultimately, the teachers. In this sense, (Tahir et al. 2016) stressed that teachers lacked an understanding of the concept of distributed leadership despite it being practised by their head teachers. In another study conducted by Lizotte, (2013), she reported that most teachers had high feelings of incompetence and felt unprepared to lead their colleagues since most of them were trained to be team members and not team leaders.

In addition, Lizotte, (2013) also summarised obstacles based on the following themes in practising distributed leadership: most teachers felt that they had to do more administrative tasks which they felt did not belong to them, lack of motivation based on the past experiences, and no such training to be leaders. Therefore, they lacked confidence to lead their counterparts. Some teachers believed that most of their time was committed to their teaching tasks, hence little time remained to lead their colleagues (Tahir et al., 2016). Teachers also believed that participating in leadership gave them extra workloads. In this situation Tahir et al.(2016) believed that in order to ensure the success of the distributed leadership approach, school leaders must provide time and abundant resources to teachers for them to start their distributed leadership accountability.

In Belgium, Hulpia and Devos (2010) highlighted that teachers in low performing schools had a vague understanding of distributed leadership and task distributions were rigidly assigned. Teachers lacked support and were not properly monitored by their school leaders, which affected the teachers' organisational commitment. Tahir et al.(2016) conducted a study in the State of Georgia, based on teacher perceptions of distributed leadership. They reached the conclusion that barriers to implementing distributed leadership were mainly based on five major factors of trust, respect, culture, resources, and time provided for teachers.

Distributed leadership can lead to significant management issues and competing leadership styles (Tahir et al. 2016). In her study, (Storey, 2018) found that the principal and key subject leaders were prioritising different objectives, different performance targets and different performance measures. In addition, principals tended to deal with the contradiction between authority and influence by limiting distributed leadership and subordinating it to managerial authority (Tahir et al. 2016).

In another study, Tahir et al. (2016) found out that teachers also faced many difficulties in accepting the delegated tasks if school administrators were afraid of losing their authority when performing leadership delegation. In their study, Tahir et al. (2016) also found that sharing leadership could be risky for head teachers when it leads to teacher in competencies when there is a lack of trust within the school context.

Furthermore, the distribution of leadership may not succeed in reinforcing commitment to management agendas, as heads were held accountable for meeting government targets. Hence, it is difficult for teachers to lead if the monitoring function is mostly held by the school leaders. Another pertinent challenge faced by head teachers while implementing distributed leadership perspectives is the difficulties in finding teachers that manage to execute the relevant tasks that were delegated. Hence, the study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can influence teachers to execute tasks delegated to them. For example, a study by Nayeem (2011), in Bangladesh, reveals that head teachers encountered difficulties in delegating their tasks to the right teachers suitable for the job. Apart from that, there were possibilities that teachers might take advantage of distributed leadership to challenge and resist the dominant policy agenda. The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision is likely to face the same challenge of taking advantage of its implementation. To minimise the risks of distributed leadership, operations were restricted to a small group of senior teachers. This led to division among teachers, and between leaders and followers.

Furthermore, Torrance (2012) carried out a comprehensive case study of a distributed approach to leadership. Firstly, head teachers revealed that some teachers and staff were reluctant to be the informal middle layer leaders even though head teachers tried very hard to support and encourage them to become leaders within the school context. Most teachers and school staff reported that they did not possess the talent and personality of a leader. They felt that being a leader among their colleagues was a challenging task. Secondly, workloads of teachers and staff were part of reasons teachers and school staff were unwilling to be part of the head teacher's distributed leadership approach. Thirdly, head teachers highlighted the issue of perception towards legitimate appointments since most of them believed that being a leader without having any formal appointment confused the issue of leadership among their colleagues. Torrance's sentiment of teachers having confusion on the issue of leadership

without formal appointment might as well have a challenge on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision.

In Chinese schools, Tahir et al. (2016) conducted a case study related to the implementation of distributed leadership which revealed that lack of time for teachers was a barrier for distributed leadership implementation. Based on interview data, teacher leaders explained that they considered themselves unsuccessful in providing instructional help to colleagues. From the study, it was also reported that teachers had low readiness in accepting extra responsibilities, with the perception that it increased their workloads unless they were appointed legitimately. The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision lies on the teacher leaders' perspective on whether they need to be appointed first to effectively carry out their duty of supervising student teachers.

Some teachers reported their unwillingness to be part of the leadership circle because of reasons such as lack of knowledge and skills in leadership, and micro politics within the school. Leadership researchers believe that distributed leadership is extremely new and thus, people lack understanding of it, is still in its beginning stage (Tahir et al., 2016), is limited (Maria, 2011) and limited research has been done on it (Tahir et al., 2016), and especially relates to constraints and barriers of executing the suggested leadership approach. Torrance (2012) pointed out that many studies have been conducted on the topic. However, few empirical studies were conducted based on head teachers' experiences and perceptions and when assigning the distributed leadership perspective in the school leadership structure. This study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can bring about insights on some difficulties, obstacles and barriers pointed out by contemporary literature which are associated with practising distributed leadership during supervision in teacher education colleges.

## **2.7 TEACHER LEADERSHIP EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP PRACTICE**

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### **2.7.1 Teacher empowerment**

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Teacher empowerment involves investing in teachers the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies as informed by their professional judgement. Empowered teachers can discover their potential and limitations for themselves as well as develop competence in their professional development. This makes empowerment a crucial issue (Barley, Ozcan&Yildiz, 2017). As suggested by Barley et al. (2017) this study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can empower teacher leaders to discover their potential and limitations for themselves.

According to Boglerand Nir (2012), empowerment suggests real changes in one's professional expertise, rising autonomy and involvement in the decision making process. Similarly, Balyer et al.(2017) emphasize that empowerment is participating in decisions about school goals and practising these decisions in the education field. Kimwarey, Chirure and Omindi(2014) assert that an empowered individual has the skills and knowledge to act or improve in a positive way. Through empowerment, teachers develop their own competence and self-discover their potential and limitations. With regard to education, teacher empowerment has correlations to motivation and provides teachers with knowledge about themselves and their colleagues in order to foster student achievement collaboratively (Barley, Ozcan&Yildiz, 2017). According to Balyer et al. (2017), there is a correlation between teacher empowerment and student success. Additionally, Barley et al.(2017) proposed that teacher empowerment is the opportunity to exercise teacher leadership by creating a non-hierarchical network of collaborative learning. The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can give teacher leaders an opportunity to exercise teacher leadership by creating non-hierarchical network of collaborative supervision.

Moreover, Balyer et al. (2017) emphasize that teacher empowerment is influenced by teacher quality, their background, personality, expectations, and the implemented programmes at a school. Also, Balyer et al. (2017) indicate that empowered educators believe in themselves and that their abilities, understand the system, dedicate time and energy to their work, and respect others.

In many studies, teacher empowerment is proved to be related to many different management strategies such as facilitative administration, making decisions, control and leadership. In this study, teacher empowerment falls into seven prescribed areas(Balyer et al.,2017).

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## **2.7.2 TEACHER EMPOWERMENT THROUGH PROVIDING DECISION MAKING**

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Balyer et al. (2017) highlight the fact that decision-making includes teachers' involvement in educational decisions such as financial issues, choosing teachers, determining programmes, and necessary student success. Balyer et al. (2017) further claim that decision making should be exercised more carefully, and that teachers' participation area should be well defined. Hence, Balyer et al. (2017) state that providing teacher full participation in critical decisions impacts their quality of work. By doing so, their voice is heard in many areas related to their work.

Teacher empowerment is often envisaged to increase teachers' decision-making authority and accountability in their fields. Furthermore, when teachers participate in making decisions, their problem-solving abilities improve, and their entire school benefits from it, resulting in a feeling of stronger commitment to the overall organisation (Dee, Henkin & Duemer, 2002; Devos, Tuytens & Hulpia, 2004; Moran, 2015). Therefore, delegating decision-making tasks to teachers is a major element of teacher empowerment. However, schools should have certain and well-explained rules regarding teacher participation in order to avoid it becoming a privilege for just a few teachers. This study on investigating the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can make teacher leaders participate in decision making as well as improving problem solving abilities (Dee, Henkin & Duemer 2002; Devos, Tuytens & Hulpia, 2004).

### **2.7.2.1 Teacher empowerment through providing opportunities for their professional growth**

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According to (Barley et al. 2017), professional development refers to facilities that schools provide for teachers to increase their professional assets in an uninterrupted fashion, especially in terms of their teaching skills. They can develop their skills and learn more about the work via these professional development activities. In this respect, administrators can enhance teachers' effectiveness by supporting their professional development efforts (Short & Greer, 1997; Barley et al. 2017). By empowering teachers via these kinds of developmental activities, administrators can create more

teacher leaders. They can also prevent stress in teachers as well as identify their needs and offer professional learning experience as administrators (Barley et al.,2017). In light of (Barley et al. 2017)arguments, his study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can engender prevention of stress in teacher leaders as well as identify their needs and offer learning experiences as administrators.

### **2.7.2.2 Teacher empowerment through improving their status**

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Teachers' status affects how they perceive themselves both at the school and in the community, as well as their ability to teach. It also refers to their perceptions of having professional respect from other teachers at school with regard to their knowledge and expertise (Klecher & Loadman, 1998; Barley et al. 2017).

Barley et al. (2017) argue that teachers want to be treated like professionals. In this way, they retain control over their own teaching practices. Therefore, according to Barley et al. (2017), administrators should support or facilitate their teachers' work by empowering their status.

### **2.7.2.3 Teacher empowerment through developing their self-efficacy**

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When teachers feel competent about their abilities, it affects students' learning in a positive way. Empowering teachers is believed to influence their feeling of competency. This refers to teachers' perceptions of their knowledge, skills and talents for helping their students and establishing good programmes for their students (Barley et al. 2017). In this regard, school administrators can empower teachers by offering simple compliments and recognizing student achievement which, in turn, rewards the teachers who made the students achievement possible (Kimwarey et al. 2014).

### **2.7.2.4 Teacher empowerment through supporting their autonomy**

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Teachers' autonomy is their sense of freedom to make their own decisions about living, programmes, books and instrumental planning (Barley et al., 2017). According to the same authors,, teachers' work control allows them to make their own decisions and take more risks. In this manner, the authors also claim that creating a supportive environment can build teachers' sense of autonomy.

Teachers who are more autonomous want to implement original ideas during their teaching practices, take risks, assist students, and develop skills. In this regard, creating opportunities for teachers to become more involved with new initiatives and responsibilities develops teacher autonomy. Furthermore, Barley et al. (2017) emphasize that empowerment can become a determinant of organisational commitment. It is also believed to lower teacher burnout increase.

#### **2.7.2.5 Teacher empowerment through improving social attractiveness, trustworthiness and communications**

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Empowerment is a significant predictor of interpersonal-level trust (Barley et al., 2017). Therefore, another way to empower teachers is to create an atmosphere consisting of social attractiveness, trustworthiness and communication at school. According to (Barley et al. 2017) because effective communication skills are crucial in a school setting, administrators must focus on establishing trusting relationships and improving meaningful communication in order to empower teachers and develop an environment of collaborative leadership. This study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can empower teacher leaders to create an atmosphere consisting of social attractiveness, trustworthiness and communication in schools.

#### **2.7.2.6 Teacher empowerment through employing them as assistant principals**

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Teachers who have some leadership roles may develop their work skills as well (Gerhe, 2004; Kimwaley, Chirure & Omondi, 2014). Moreover (Barley et al. 2017) contend that employing teachers in some managerial positions, such as assistant principals or coordinators, can empower them. While performing these roles, teachers can develop their leadership and administrative capabilities, which may result in a better climate of student discipline. Such empowerment practices may also allow principals to assist teachers with instructional practice.

### **2.8 STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION**

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#### **2.8.1 Supervision: Different perceptions**

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Traditional supervision models, with their perspective, evaluative and hierarchical connotations borrowed from the industrial era, are still present in the current supervisory practices in Zimbabwean

schools (Ngwenya, 2020). Naturalistic models which were developed in later years seem to depart from that norm as they offer a professional development thrust focused on classroom practice. Both schools of thought may be employed by school-based supervisors, contingent to their orientation acquired through training or staff development programmes. However, the users of these people-centred models need to be aware that, supervision has emerged slowly as a distinct practice, always in relation to the institutional, academic, cultural, and professional dynamics that have historically generated the complex agenda of schooling (Sergiovanni et al., 2014). No one-size-fits-all model exists, hence the need for knowledgeable education managers in the supervision domain, if the learnt models are to be utilised effectively and efficiently for the professional development of teachers in schools (Ngwenya, 2020). In this study, the models are scrutinized to see if they have an influence on distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges as suggested by (Ngwenya, 2020).

Supervision, according to Gursory (2016), is a distinct professional activity in which education and training aimed at developing science-informed practice are facilitated through a collaborative interpersonal process. It involves observation, evaluation, feedback, facilitation of supervisee self-assessment, and acquisition of knowledge and skills by instruction, modelling and mutual problem-solving.

According to (Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon 2018), there are a number of relational factors that must be presented for a community of leaders to fully develop, including openness to others and to others' ideas, the courage to express one's beliefs, pedagogical knowledge, and care for other educators and students. The authors advise that the concept of leadership needs to be continuously redefined as the community develops. They also suggest that the responsibilities of professional development be shifted from external experts to teachers.

Supervisors are expected to act as active agents in conflict resolution and problem-solving in the practicum. Proper supervision requires the establishment of mutual understanding among stakeholders involved in the practicum, hence it "... cannot be a mechanistically routinized series of actions (Gursory, 2016).

Furthermore, according to (Glickman et al. 2018), supervision is a practitioner's profession and, therefore, according to Gordon (2019), to really understand and assist in the enhancement of supervision, the supervision scholar must interact with supervisors and teachers on a regular basis, and that interaction should include reflective dialogue on theory, research and practice. It is through the nexus of theory, research and practice that we improve supervision, teaching and learning.

Glickman et al. (2018) suggest that working effectively with teachers in a supervisory capacity is anything but a "one-size-fits-all" endeavour.

"Administrators must be mindful of their behaviours as they engage in instructional supervision work, selecting the procedures, techniques, strategies, and language appropriate for the individual and the specific situation" (McGhee & Stark, 2018).

Supervision might use a technique called hedging (Thomas, 2013), using tentative language such, "it sounds like...." or "Could it be.....?" to communicate that it is acceptable for the teacher to express different ideas. Goal formation questions guide teachers in describing their ultimate situation at a macro-level (e.g. exceptional educators, perfect classroom) or micro level (e.g., class response to a specific lesson, and hope for outcome of supervision meeting).

Whenever possible, questions that amplify the teacher's strengths (along with direct compliments) should be asked to strengthen the relationship and to motivate the teacher toward self-initiated goals. Finally, the supervisor encourages them to set small, specific goals that will bring them closer to the idea (Thomas, 2013).

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## **2.8.2 SUPERVISION STRATEGIES**

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### **2.8.2.1 Scientific Supervision Model (SSM)**

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Taylor is dubbed the father of the SSM philosophy and his associates, Grant, Gilbreths, Fayol and Weber, have heavily contributed to the model (Ngwenya, 2020). Influenced by Taylor's "principle of scientific management," supervision employed scientific measurements and work was divided between supervisors and supervisees according to area of specialisation (Ngwenya, 2020).

Aspiring teachers were carefully chosen, scientifically and systematically trained in the methods of teaching and thereafter expected to perform according to prescribed standards. In turn, learners demonstrated mastery of subject matter by mere regurgitation of facts (Sergiovanni et al., 2014). In Taylor's view, the execution of the job according to predetermined procedures and the predictability of the outcomes is what made schools to be effective and efficient (Ngwenya, 2020). In this study, the influence of distributed leadership can positively change the supervision strategy of the scientific way of management. However, with time, the multiplication of schools has rendered the traditional inspectorate model of supervision, a product of the SSM, dysfunctional, hence the need for school-based models which focus on the professional development of teachers (Musundire, 2015).

According to this classic autocratic supervision model, teachers are hired and programmed to conduct pre-specified duties in accordance with the wishes of management (Sergiovanni et al., 2014; Ngwenya, 2020). The teaching menu prescribed is delivered in a uniform and predictable manner regardless of the different learning abilities that learners exhibit at any given time (Ngwenya, 2020). Often supervisors emphasize control, accountability, and efficiency in an atmosphere of a clear-cut boss-subordinate relationship (Ngwenya, 2020). Supervision, from Taylor's perspective, would require a "rigid discipline on the job, concentration on the task to be performed with minimal interpersonal contact between workers and strict application of an incentive pay system" (Chiome & Mupa, 2014. pp.180) if production of excellent academic results is to be maximised. Its emphasis on planning, regulation and control suggests a bureaucratic structure (Mulder, 2017). Vestiges of this brand of supervision are prevalent in schools but are not favoured by supervisees (Ngwenya, 2020). As such this brand of supervision has little influence on distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision as suggested by the same author.

### **2.8.2.2 Human Relation Supervision Model (HRSM)**

Follet is credited with the HRSM, and it came about as a direct challenge to the dehumanising view of the SSM, as instructions were being democratised (Ngwenya, 2020). Follet's holistic view of teachers contradicts the manipulative phenomenon embedded in the SSM. During the 1920s, attempts were made to increase teachers' job satisfaction by democratising the supervisory practices which would focus on personal relationship (Mulder, 2017). Supervision was supposed to consider the welfare of the teachers and adopt participatory-oriented practices for the purpose of making their supervisees feel that

they had a stake in the affairs of the school (Sergiovanni et al., 2014). Elton Mayo and Fritz Roethlisberger's Hawthorne experiment which revealed that man was a wanting animal who performed according to expectations when put under observation, could have popularised this movement (Mulder, 2017). However, its greatest flaw was that of trying to please subordinates at the expense of work, which led to it being condemned by its critics in the supervision arena (Ngwenya, 2020). In this study, the human relations supervisory model could help the teacher leaders to be positively influenced by the distributed leadership on their teaching practice supervision as suggested by Ngwenya

### **2.8.2.3 Human Resource Supervision Model (HRSM)**

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This was also a product of the revisionist revolution and its advocates described it as enlightened supervision. The assumption was that teachers wanted to grow professionally at all cost (Chiome & Mupa, 2014). Teachers achieved satisfaction by “successful accomplishment of important and meaningful work and this sort of accomplishment was the key component of school effectiveness” (Sergiovanni et al. 2014). Attempts were made to restore equilibrium in supervision by combining the positives of the SSM and the HRSM, based on the task and human element (Ngwenya, 2020). Ownership of goals and work commitment were enhanced by delegation of responsibilities to supervisees, which was some form of power equalisation strategies and empowerment (Ngwenya, 2020). For teachers to actualise themselves, they needed to be engaged in staff development programmes for renewal and achievement of goals (Chiome & Mupa, 2014). Like with the NSSM, behaviourist scholars championed this movement in an attempt to tap into the supervisees' potential. Distributed leadership can be used by human resource to positively influence teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges.

### **2.8.2.4 Artistic Supervision Model (ASM)**

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Traditionally, teaching has been scientifically dominated and the assumption was that it could be delivered using predictable methods and routines for the end result to be achieved (Ngwenya, 2020). This scientific philosophy further asserts that these predictable procedures or methods could be replicated, with the same results. However, the ASM sought to transform teaching from a mechanistic repetition of teaching protocols to a diverse repertory of instructional responses to learners' natural curiosity and diverse levels of readiness (Ngwenya, 2020), resulting in this radical paradigm shift. The

proponents of the ASM argue that teaching is an art, implying that there is no one way of teaching, as teachers are unique. In any teaching - learning episode at any given time, the absence of certain teaching behaviours does not imply that no teaching has taken place (Ngwenya, 2020). In this scenario, supervisors are required to observe the competencies of the teacher, responses of the learners and the environment itself to appreciate the teaching - learning situation. Its major weakness is probably its heavy reliance on the supervisor who has his or her own prejudices too, which may influence perceptions and judgements (Ngwenya, 2020), and the supervisor's biases that may influence the collection and interpretation of data (Ngwenya, 2020). In light of Ngwenya's arguments, in this study artistic supervision has a bigger chunk of influencing distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision.

#### **2.8.2.5 Clinical Supervision Model (CSM)**

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According to Ngwenya (2020), Cogan and Goldhammer were the architects of this naturalistic in-class supervision model. Cogan conceived eight phases of the CSM which Goldhammer later condensed them to five and later to three: planning conference, classroom observation and feedback conference (Paba, 2017). The key words were professional collegiality and professional development (Ngwenya, 2020). Teachers were being viewed as unique individuals endowed with different potentials and needs. By the same token, they required differential supervisory strategies which culminated in Individualised Developmental Programmes (IDP) (Paba, 2017). Although akin to the SSM, its evaluative component is different. Both supervisor and supervisee evaluate the outcome of the lesson in a mutual and professional manner after the developmental supervisory process (Paba, 2017). Advocates of this model corroborate that the latter view was meant to eliminate the sting myth associated with evaluation as professional and people-oriented models were being sought for use in schools (Ngwenya, 2020). In that manner, it was a departure from the "sporadic visits" and "global comments" which characterised the SSM (Ngwenya, 2020). Concurring with the above view is Paba's (2017) assertion that CSM allows supervision and supervisees to discuss and analyse what occurred in the classroom in a collegial and professional manner and, therefore, be able to devise strategies meant to overcome challenges encountered in the process, with the ultimate aim of professional teacher development. Its focus on teaching problems is premised on continuous improvement of the total quality management (TQM) principle which leads to self-reviewable and organisational development

(Ngwenya, 2020). The clinical supervision model has a positive influence on distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges.

#### **2.8.2.6 Connoisseurship Supervision Model(CSM)**

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Ngwenya (2020) views connoisseurship as the ability to develop in supervisors and supervisees the qualities and skills of appreciation, inference, disclosure and description. He further suggests that it is an “art of appreciation which can be displayed in any realm in which the character, import, or value of objects, situations, and performance are variably distributed, including educational practice.”

Connoisseurship involves the ability to see, not to merely look, and this is achieved by developing the ability to name and appreciate the different dimensions of situations and experiences in the way that they relate to one another (Ngwenya, 2020).

Supervisors should be able to draw upon, and make use of, a wide array of information and place their experiences and understandings in a wider context and connect them with the supervisees’ values and commitments (Ngwenya, 2020). The author further argues that connoisseurship is something that needs to be worked at. Its advocates further assert that it borders on subject matter and is private, yet the art of disclosure is public.

Supervisors need to engage in a continuing exploration of themselves, others and their arena of practice by being able to reflect in, and on, action, engage with feelings, and be able to make informed and committed judgements (Ngwenya, 2020). In addition to this, connoisseur must possess highly descriptive and interpretive skills in describing the teaching and learning episode and the supervisory process (Ngwenya, 2020). However, the assumption that supervisors are knowledgeable in all aspects of the educative enterprise is a fallacy as new information becomes available on a daily basis- especially with the advent of technological advancement (Ngwenya, 2020). According to this study, the connoisseurship model has a flare on influencing distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges.

#### **2.8.2.7 Collegial/Peer/Collaborative/Cooperation Supervision Model (CSM)**

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According to Ngwenya (2020), the CS model is a low-cost substitute of macro supervision for the purposes of professional development which may be undertaken either on a one-on-one basis (buddy

system/attachment) or as a team. In both cases, if well constituted, individuals may provide leadership for cooperative efforts and participate in training colleagues in various skills (Sergiovanni et al. 2014). In that respect, supervisees are empowered as they work jointly in pre-observation, observation and feedback conference phases divorced from the supervisor (Sergiovanni et al. 2014). It is in this context that Zepeda and Mayers(2013) view peer supervision as a formative and developmental approach meant to continuously improve the performance of supervisees. However, its reliance on individuals may make the supervisory function lack authority (Ngwenya, 2020). Besides, powerful and influential individuals may hijack this noble model to achieve personal agendas (Ngwenya, 2020). In this study collegial supervision directly influences distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges.

## **2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

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### **2.9.1 The symbolic interactionism theory**

This study is informed by the symbolic interaction theory by George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) and Charles Cooley and coined by Herbert Blumer (Oliver, 2012). It is also informed by the distributed leadership theory (Hutchins, 1990).Symbolic interactionism is the manner we translate and allocate meaning to the world around us through our translations (Mackinnon, 2005). The theory emphasises that shared meanings come from interaction between humans. It pays greater attention to how human beings understand their world from their unique perspective. Key to symbolic interactionism is the notion that human beings use language and symbols in their interaction. People develop symbols that explain the world around them in their view. Language becomes a tool for constructing reality. Thus, when teacher leaders gave accounts on the challenges faced on enacting distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision during interviews, they shared symbols with the researcher.

Mead asserts that society is possible because people interact cooperatively which, in turn, is made possible because humans have the unique capacity to take the role of the other. Thick descriptions on influence of distributed leadership on supervision by teacher leaders' opinions through interviews made the accounts emic (Blaise & Blaise, 2010).The real basis of social life is found in the capacity to take the role of the other. Blumer (1969) suggests that it is the social process in the group life that creates and upholds the rules, not the rules that create and uphold group life. The real basis of social life is found in the capacity to take the role of the other (Reynolds, 2003). In social settings, actions of

others are instrumental in the formation of meaning for individuals and regard to specific object(Mackinnon, 2005).According to Mead, cited in Armstrong and Obholzer(2005), an institution is meant to be a collective organisation of a certain set of attitudes and behaviour commonly shared and symbolically recognised by each member through her or his mind, hence internalised by means of the me agency which will determine, regulate and control(often unconsciously) the consequent social action and conduct.

Oliver (2012) identifies ten tenets of symbolic interactionism. These tenets include the importance of negotiation, that is, the process through which meanings are developed, the importance of the natural environment in comprehending meaning, use of symbols, self-concept, individuality and small-scale interaction.

Symbolic interaction is concerned with the use of symbols as reflected in the use of language and signs. Sandstrom and Fine (2003. pp.218) note that, “People are unique creatures because of their ability to use symbols. Because people use and rely upon symbols, they do not respond to stimuli in an automatic way; instead they give meaning to the stimuli they experience and then act in terms of these meanings.”This makes human behaviour unique from the behaviour of all the other animals or organisms that act on instinct or reflex. Before responding to stimuli in the environment, human beings give meaning to those stimuli, and then use symbols to respond. Through the use of symbols, I was able to understand the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision by teacher leaders.

The study involved Interviews and focus group discussions with teacher leaders on the influence of distributed leadership to enact teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges involving creation, interpretation and negotiation of symbols and their meanings with the researcher, thus making symbolic interactionism a suitable theoretical framework for this study.

Small-scale interaction is another feature of symbolic interactionism. I found symbolic interactionism to be the most suitable theoretical framework for this multiple case study, which focused on small-scale interaction with eight teacher leaders rather than a large population of teacher leaders. The study explored the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision by teacher leaders, in

teacher education colleges and other stakeholders and created meanings, giving the study an interactionist inclination. In a school set-up, the interaction circle of teacher leaders, deputy head, school head and learners resemble a micro-grouping.

Symbolic interactionism also emphasises the importance of individuality. Individuality recognises the importance of individual difference (Mackinnon, 2005). This study recognised that each teacher leader is different from the other, implying that even the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision is different from each teacher leader to the next. The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision differs among teacher leaders when put into practice, depending on their background, setting and context in which they enact the role.

The importance of the natural environment in comprehending meanings is of cardinal importance to interactionists (Blaise & Blaise, 2010). The concept of natural environment stresses the fact that activities do not happen in mechanical manner. Human behaviour is always located. Human activities, together with assumptions and interpretations on which they are premised, are based on our perception of the environment. In this study, the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges is viewed from the environment perception.

### **2.9.2 The distributed leadership theory**

Distributed leadership theory began in the late 1990s as a way to think about leadership as a set of tasks directed, shared, and enacted across the school organisation (Hutchins, 1990). Hutchins further views leadership as something that is acted out or done by individuals to influence others. Hence, this study sought to explore whether distributed leadership has an influence on teaching practice supervision, since Hutchins agrees that leadership is acted or done by individuals to influence others. Social or shared leadership often still sees leadership as activities done by individuals well, with cooperation with others. Taking a distributed perspective, leadership is a rising resource of the system. It sits between those who consider leadership as a result of personal agency and those who view it as a consequence of the circumstances. In this study, the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision can be viewed as a result of personal agency or as a consequence of the circumstances too.

Distributed cognition researchers felt thinking and acting unfolded in interaction with others and with the environment and that to think about cognition in terms of the individual alone missed the reality of how cognition unfolds in the world (Roberts, 2019). Hence, schools are hungry for leaders who can transform the school culture for the better. The distributed leadership theory holds that educational leadership is often not held in one person, but is, instead, distributed among multiple individuals. Roberts opines that a body of leadership has multiple individuals who have the tools and the skills to contribute to the success of the organisation. As such, in this study, the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision has multiple individuals to influence.

Roberts (2019) further argues that in order to make space for the new directions for actions, school leaders must come to understand that school culture is a result of the collective actions of the people, artifacts, and routines that have shaped the current context. Considering culture as a product of tasks, people, artifacts, interactions, and routines shows a pathway for change. Having a map of existing tasks opens up opportunities to make sustainable change in schools.

Distributed leadership, therefore, helps make the shift from focusing on the work of individuals to the collection of people, interactions, artifacts, and routines (Roberts, 2019). Therefore, Roberts concludes that distributed leadership focuses on leadership practice rather than specific leadership roles. These leadership practices occur when those in authoritative and subordinate positions interact with each other. Therefore, in this study, the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges helps make the shifts from focusing on the work of individuals to the collection of people, interactions, artifacts, and routines.

### **2.9.2.1 Benefits of distributed leadership**

Distributed leadership:

- Boosts employee commitment and engagement due to understanding of collective liability for the organisation's process.
- Promotes cooperative ideas and help produce new solutions in old obstacles.
- Supports more efficient and conscious decision making.
- Assists in developing a high sense of openness and belief in the organisation.

- Helps succession planning outlining so that it can help organisation to recognise and sustain leadership potential.
- Inspires higher grade teamwork at all levels of the organisation.
- Gives people a more resilient and versatile approach to work

In my study, teacher leaders were interviewed and discussions on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision were carried out at their schools, their natural environment. This enabled gathering of thick and rich descriptions of their roles and experiences, *in situ*. The study incorporated these tenets since the focus of the study was on getting meanings on how the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision was constructed by teacher leaders in their role as supervisors in teacher education colleges. The study focused on investigating the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges towards enhancing student teachers' achievement of their professional growth.

## **2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

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The chapter presented a review of related literature on the influence of distributed leadership on supervision of pre-service teachers during their teaching practice. The review revealed that teaching practice is a key component in the preparation of pre-service teachers. Literature reviewed also uncovered the demands and expectations as well as the challenges faced by teacher leaders in an effort to make pre-service teachers grow professionally. The symbolic interaction theory, utilised as a lens for understanding the perspective of teacher leaders on supervising student teachers on teaching practice, has been explained. Also, the supervision models were highlighted in an effort to improve the professional practice of pre-service teachers. The next chapter provides the methodology adopted for this study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 OVERVIEW

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This chapter discusses the methods used to conduct the study on the influence of distributed leadership on supervision of students on teaching practice in Masvingo Province's teacher education colleges of Zimbabwe. The discussion focuses on the research paradigm, research approach, design adopted, data generation methods, and data analysis used in the study. The chapter also presents issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues concerning the study.

### 3.2 OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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Table 3.1 below provides an outline of this chapter before the in-depth presentation and discussion of issues in the table.

**TABLE3.1: OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 3**

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Title	The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province's teacher education colleges
Epistemological paradigm	Interpretivism paradigm
Theoretical framework	Symbolic interactionism and distributed leadership theory
Methodological Approach	Qualitative research approach
Research design	Multiple case study research design
Data collection methods	The instrumentation used to administer data collection was through semi-structured interviews audio taped with eight teacher leaders focus group discussions with teacher leaders from four schools.
Data documents	Audio recordings Transcriptions Field notes
Sampling procedures	Purposive sampling using the maximal variation technique was used to select the research participants. Masvingo District was used as the research site out of seven districts in Masvingo Province. Eight teacher leaders supervising student teachers on teaching practice from eight primary schools were selected to participate in this study.

Data analysis & presentation	All audiotaped data were transcribed by the researcher and coded using predetermined themes. Similar data for each theme were grouped together and presented as an intergraded whole (see Chapter 4).
Ethical considerations	Informed consent Voluntary participation Anonymity Confidentiality of participants
Trustworthiness	Constructs used as criteria to ensure trustworthiness of the study are credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability.

### 3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

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A research paradigm is an approach or a research model to conducting research that has been verified by the research community for long and that has been in practice for hundreds of years. Most of the research paradigms emerge from one of the two of the approaches to research that are positivist approach and interpretive approach (Stephen, 2015).

Adil-abduland Khalid (2016) defines a paradigm as a pattern of beliefs and values held by researchers when they seek to find solutions to problems. The beliefs and values that the researchers share when they inquire into the experiences of teacher leaders in respect of distributed leadership in Zimbabwe relate to a paradigm. Frequently used paradigms in research include pragmatism, realism, interpretivism, positivism and post-positivism. The present study employs interpretivism as its paradigm. Provided below is a rigorous discussion of the basic tenets of interpretivism and its justification for its adoption in the study of the role and experiences of teacher leaders with distributed leadership in Zimbabwe.

Meyers (2009) observes that understanding of reality is drawn from societal constructions like language and collective meaning. Interpretivism is rooted in observation and interpretation. Information about events is gathered through observation and is interpreted through meanings people attach to them. Interpretivism emphasises that the world is better perceived from the experiences of the subjects. It, therefore, follows that a better understanding of the role and experiences of teacher leaders

with distributed leadership is best understood from their experiences using instruments like interviews and focus group discussions that depend on the subjective union between the researcher and the participants.

Adom, Yeboah and Ankrah(2016) describe the constructivist philosophical paradigm as an approach that asserts that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on these experiences. It is based on the analogy or basis that people form or construct much of what they learn through experience (Adom et al.2016). Thus, to the constructivist, constructing meaning is learning; there is no other kind.

The constructivist philosophical paradigm portrays the idea that learning does not just happen from the traditional method of teachers standing in front of the class and lecturing. Instead, to the constructivist, learning occurs only when the learner discovers knowledge through the spirit of experimentation and doing (Adom et al. 2016).

Moreover, like the qualitative researcher, constructivists assert that reality is subjective because it is from the individual perspectives of participants engaged in the study and are, thus, multiple or varied. Furthermore, the researcher gleans meaning of events through interactions with others in social and cultural contexts. Research grounded in the constructivist philosophical paradigm mostly begins with an open-ended inquiry through research questions.

In this study the researcher used the constructivist philosophical paradigm. The philosophical paradigm is mostly used to underpin research that seeks to understand how individuals make sense of their everyday lives in their natural settings, either in the local community or working environment. This paradigm was deemed appropriate because the researcher wanted to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice in teacher education colleges from teacher leaders' perspective.

### **3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH**

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In order to adequately answer the research question of this study, a qualitative research approach was employed. Castellan(2010) defines qualitative research as an investigation of the expressions of individuals' understanding of themselves and that of their environment. The research is qualitative because data gathered often comes in great detail. The goal of qualitative research is to obtain an understanding from individuals about the world around them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).Harwell(2011) describes qualitative research as aiming at gathering expressive data in its context. This is in line with McMillan and Schumacher (2010:28) who state that, “qualitative research is based on naturalistic phenomenological philosophy that views reality as multi-layered, interactive and a shared social experience.”

The qualitative research approach was employed to address the critical research questions in this study as it was considered the best approach for investigating human behaviour and learning (Gay et al. 2011; Flick, 2014; Cohen et al. 2011). The qualitative research approach assisted me to gather rich descriptive data meant to develop an in-depth understanding of the way distributed leadership influenced teacher leaders during supervision of student teachers on teaching practice, demands and expectations from the pre-service teachers when teacher leaders enacted their supervisory role, and the challenges faced in practicing distributed leadership during supervision (Creswell, 2015; Creswell, 2012). Employing qualitative research minimises presumptions with which a researcher would have approached the phenomenon under study (De Vos et al. 2012:266). In the same vein, Creswell (2014) argues that qualitative methods enable the researcher to obtain deep and intricate detail about a phenomenon.

The choice of the qualitative research approach was also determined by the purpose of the study as well as the nature of the data needed to address the research questions. The study aimed at exploring the way distributed leadership influenced teacher leaders during supervision of student teachers when they enact their supervisory role. Qualitative data were found most suitable to address the research aim of this study and, thus, partly justified the rationale for the researcher's choice of the qualitative research approach.

Flick (2014) and Magwa & Magwa (2015) argue that data generating tools for qualitative research include focus group discussions, interviews and document analysis, and that information collected is mainly in the form of words rather than statistical data. The researcher intended to collect data from

participants about their understanding of how distributed leadership influences supervision as a tool in supervising primary school student teachers on teaching practice. The collection of data from participants' viewpoints could be more conveniently achieved through the qualitative research approach.

The qualitative research approach was adopted to address the critical research questions for this study which is on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. The decision to utilise this approach was informed by the purpose of this study and the nature of the data required for addressing the above sub-questions.

The qualitative research approach enabled the researcher to gather rich descriptive data and to develop an in-depth understanding of distributed leadership and how it influences effective supervision of pre-service teachers for their professional growth (Creswell, 2013). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) argue that the social world can only be understood from the “standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated.”

Eight school leader teachers responsible for supervising the student teachers from the three teachers' colleges were involved in this study. The qualitative research approach was adopted as it was deemed the best approach for investigating human behaviour and learning (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2014; Gay, Mills Airasian, 2011). The qualitative research approach provided opportunities for the researcher to understand leadership better and the manner in which it influences distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges.

Flick (2014) argues that data collection tools for qualitative studies include interviews, observations, focus group discussions and document analysis, and the information generated is largely in the form of words rather than statistical data. The researcher intended to collect data from the participants on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges and this could only be achieved through a qualitative research approach. In this research, participants were afforded an opportunity to explain reality and the researcher made sense of that reality in their context. Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism informed this study. Symbolic interactionism examines how individuals interact in small groups to define their contexts (Haralambos et al. 2013). Overall,

qualitative approach is suitable for investigations that aim at gaining in-depth insights into how participants develop meaning and how they explain their experiences, a characteristic which may be difficult to achieve in quantitative approaches (Barbour, 2013).

### **3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN**

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Harwell (2011) postulates two views of research design. The first view refers to research design as the total research journey from the conception of a problem through to the conclusions and recommendations. The second view relates to research methodology, specifically, data gathering and data analysis.

This study adopted the view that research design refers to research methodology. The view is supported by Khumah (2012), who states that a research design shows and describes how data are collected. A research design can be conceived as a blue-print or a detailed plan for how a study is to be conducted, from selecting a sample of interest to the study to collecting and analysing data.

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argue that the research design shows all the phases of the study from the sample to data collection, data analysis and conclusions. In other words, research design shows the direction of the study. Khumah(2012) defines research design as the complete scheme or programme of research, which includes an outline of what the investigator will do from writing hypothesis to the final analysis of data.

Neuman (2014) emphasises the collection of data when he defines research design as the conceptual structure with which a study is conducted. A research design can, therefore, be viewed as a roadmap towards an inquiry, with the intent of answering specific research questions. Research questions give impetus to the choice of a research design, that is, what a house plan is to a builder, a design is to a researcher.

Neuman (2014) posits that despite different views on research, there are common features across definitions. These include the idea that research should address research questions. A research question should guide the nature and type of data collected. It also guides the sampling procedure. The critical

feature of the research design is that it should be able to define the road map that seeks to answer the research questions adequately.

This study was guided by the research plan, which included sampling procedures, data collection, data analysis, conclusions and recommendations. The study employed purposive sampling using the maximal variation technique. The qualitative approach guided the data collection process to answer the research questions. The design used for this study was a multiple case study, that is, distributed leadership is viewed as a case for improving student teachers' achievement and teacher leaders the case material. A discussion of the design follows.

### **3.5.1 The multiplecase study**

This study on the influence of the distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision of student teachers in teacher education colleges was conducted using a multiple case study design. The case study design helped the researcher in laying and carrying out the research in a manner that ensured valid findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2015). According to Creswell (2013), a multiple case study design explores a real-life multiple bound system through detailed in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, in this case the teacher leaders. A multiple case study includes two or more cases or replications across the cases to investigate the same phenomenon.

#### **3.5.1.1 The quintain**

The multi-case starts with a quintain and according to Stake (2007) quintains are functions or conditions of which we might seek examples to study, for example, a programme. A quintain is an object or phenomenon or condition to be studied- a target. In multi-case study it is the target collection. A single case is meaningful to some extent in terms of other cases. Any case would be incomprehensible if other somewhat similar cases were not already known. So even when there is no attempt to be comparative, the single case is studied with attention to other cases.

Stake, (2007) further elaborates that in a case study research, the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection of cases. The individual cases share a common characteristic or condition. The cases in the collection are somehow categorically bound together. There may be members of a group or examples of a phenomenon. This group, category or phenomenon is a quintain.

A case researcher needs to generate a picture of the case and then produce a portrayal of the case for others to see (Stake, 2007). In certain ways, the case is dynamic. It operates in real time. It acts purposively, encounters obstacles, and often has a strong sense of self. It interacts with the other cases, playing different roles vying and complying. It has stages of life, only one of which may be observed, but the sense of history and future are part of the picture.

The qualitative case study was developed to study the experiences of real cases operating in real situations (Stake, 2007). Qualitative understanding of cases requires experiencing the activity of the case as it occurs in its context and to its particular situation. Cases are rather special. A case is a noun, a thing, an entity, it is seldom a verb, a participle, a functioning. Schools may be our cases – real things that are easy to visualise, however hard they may be to understand (Stouffer, 1941). In this study, I looked at a multiple case of eight schools.

### **3.5.1.2 Case and multi-case studies**

Both case studies and multi-case studies are usually studies of particularisation more than generalisation. However, in a multi-case study a researcher studies multiple cases to understand the similarities and differences between the cases. In this study, the different schools and teacher leaders are the multiple cases to study. Therefore, the researcher can provide literature with important influences from its differences and similarities (Vannon, 2014, 2015).

According to Baxter and Jack (2008) the evidence that is generated from a multi-case study is strong and reliable. Multi-case studies allow a wider discovery of theoretical evolution and research questions. When the suggestions are more intensely grounded in different empirical evidence, this type of case study also creates a more convincing theory (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). When a multi-case study is used, it comes with both benefits and difficulties which is important to take under consideration by the researcher. The researcher may, however, according to Baxter and Jack (2008), keep in mind that there can be an expensive and time-consuming process to make a multi-case study.

Data from a multi-case study usually will come mostly from the cases studied, but the researchers may gather other data than case data.

### **3.5.1.3 Multiple case study and research questions**

A multi-case study is organised around at least one research question. It asks what is most important for understanding the quintain. It may focus on the binding concept or idea that holds the case together (Stake, 2007). It is a conceptual infrastructure for binding the study. The multi-case study will probably have several research questions. Within a multi-case project, the study of individual cases will often not be organised around the multi-case research question. To some extent, sometimes entirely, each case gets organised and studied separately around research questions of its own.

### **3.5.1.4 Multi-case study and context**

Each case to be studied is a complex entity located in its own situation. It has its special contexts or backgrounds. Historical context is almost always of interest, but so are cultural and physical contexts. Stake (2007) argues that others that are often of interest are the social, economic, political, ethical and aesthetic context. One of the purposes of a multi-case study is to illuminate some of these many contexts, especially the problematic ones. In this study, the context is on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges.

A multiple case study research design was deemed suitable for the study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges because it was a current phenomenon (Hamel, 1993). The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges of Zimbabwe is an under-researched field of inquiry (Chitamba, 2019), hence its utility remains a contemporary phenomenon. In actual fact, there is paucity of knowledge on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. The multiple case study research enabled me to study the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges, *in situ*.

My choice was also informed by the multi-case's ability to use multiple sources of data found in the context. My aim was to use interviews and focus group discussions to gather empirical evidence from the data set. The gathered empirical evidence was collated to obtain optimum answers on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision. This helped me develop a deeper understanding of how distributed leadership influences teacher leaders in performing supervision on

students on teaching practice in teacher education colleges and what gaps need to be studied rigorously in future.

The nature of the research question allowed the multiple case study design to be the most suitable because it provided a proper way to collect and report findings giving an opportunity to better appreciate a problem in a broader context. Data on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges were systematically collected, resulting in better understanding of the context in which teacher leaders operate.

My desire to obtain beliefs and experiences about the influence of distributed leadership on teacher leader's role of supervising students on teaching practice from different sources motivated me to consider the case study research. My goal was to gain insights into the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges and be able to describe them. Verbatim expressions that sought to answer research questions, it was hoped, would best be captured through a multiple case study research. As indicated in Chapter 1, this study is anchored in symbolic interactionism and distributed leadership theory which contend that human beings develop meanings through communications. As Chapter 1 indicated, there is paucity of literature on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges; hence, it became expedient through the multiple case studies, to investigate teacher leaders. As an under-researched field of inquiry, it was intended that the multiple case study research would bring new knowledge and stimulate other researchers (Flyberg, 2006).

As a way of mitigating criticism against the use of multi-case study in this research, I used two data collection instruments, interviews and focus group discussions (Stake, 2010). Additionally, the purpose of the research was not to generalise the findings of the study to all teacher leaders in Masvingo, but to develop an in-depth understanding of the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges.

### **3.6 SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

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Eight participants were involved in this study, four were from four urban schools, three were from schools in the rural areas and one was from a church run school.

A sample of eight teacher leaders in this research may sound small. However, the researcher went back and forth a couple of times to gain deeper understanding of issues and probed on unclear situations. The aim of qualitative research is to understand, from within, the subjective reality of the study participants. This will not be achieved through superficial knowledge about a large, representative sample of individual (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Rather, we want to reach people within the study area, who can share their unique slice of reality, so that all slices together illustrate the range of variation within the study area. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the general rule in qualitative research is that one continues to sample until one is not getting any new information or is no longer gaining new insights. With careful sampling and equally careful collection techniques, a surprisingly small number of interviews narratives or focus groups can yield the data to answer one's research question (Rotchie & Lewis, 2013). The study employed purposive sampling using the maximal variation technique to choose research subjects. Elmisharaf (2016) claims that maximum variation sampling (sometimes referred to as maximum diversity sampling or maximum heterogeneity sampling) is a sampling method in which researcher attempts to collect data from the widest range of perspectives possible about a certain topic. By so doing, the researcher will be purposefully picking a wide range of variation on dimensions of interest to obtain information about the significance of various circumstances.

Cohen et al. (2014) argue that purposive sampling is suitable for qualitative research. Wagner, et al. (2012) state that in purposive sampling, the researcher handpicks certain groups or individuals to include in the sample, based on their relevance to the problem under study. They further indicate that the rationale for purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Participants for the study were purposively sampled using the maximal variation technique to draw on those who were likely to provide information necessary to address the research questions on how distributed leadership influences teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges..

### **3.6.1 Sample selection**

Etikan, Musa and Alkassin(2016) define a sample as the group or cases (individuals) selected from all the possible respondents in a population in which the study is being conducted. These are participants

or informants selected from a research population who are representatives of that population. Bell (2010) views a population sample as a fraction of the total population. A sample reduces travelling costs that would be incurred when researching the entire target population. The sample of this study is eight teacher leaders deployed in Masvingo district of Masvingo Province. Teacher leaders who had completed their probation period with at least three years' experience were chosen because I wanted participants who would provide extensive and relevant information. The teacher leaders worked at schools that fall under different responsible authorities and locations. Four were government schools in an urban location, the other a church-run school, while the other three were rural district-run schools. The location and size of the school has influence on enactment of distributed leadership. Consequently, it was an important factor in sampling.

The quality of any research effort, to a considerable extent, depends on the sampling strategy used (Cohen et al. 2014). A good sample should be representative of the population. This argument is consistent with qualitative research, which emphasises that the sample should be characteristic of the target population (Best & Khan, 2006).

Stake (2010) suggests that qualitative research relies on collection of thick and rich data and so any sample size that is capable of meeting the criterion is recommended. For me, thick data could be elicited from teacher leaders who were experienced. These could be more informed about the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges, having sufficient experience to share. The researcher aimed at getting thick and rich data from eight (8) teacher leaders who were purposively sampled using the maximum variation technique. The other factor I considered in coming up with a small sample was that I wanted to get original thick data.

Identification of the research population facilitates the choice of the sample. Etikan, Musa and Alkassin(2016) define a population as people or objects from which samples are taken for research. Bell (2010) views a population sample as a fraction of the total population. The population of this study was (240) two hundred and forty teacher leaders from Masvingo District primary schools. Teacher leaders were the focus of this study because they were both teachers and supervisors directly involved in the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education

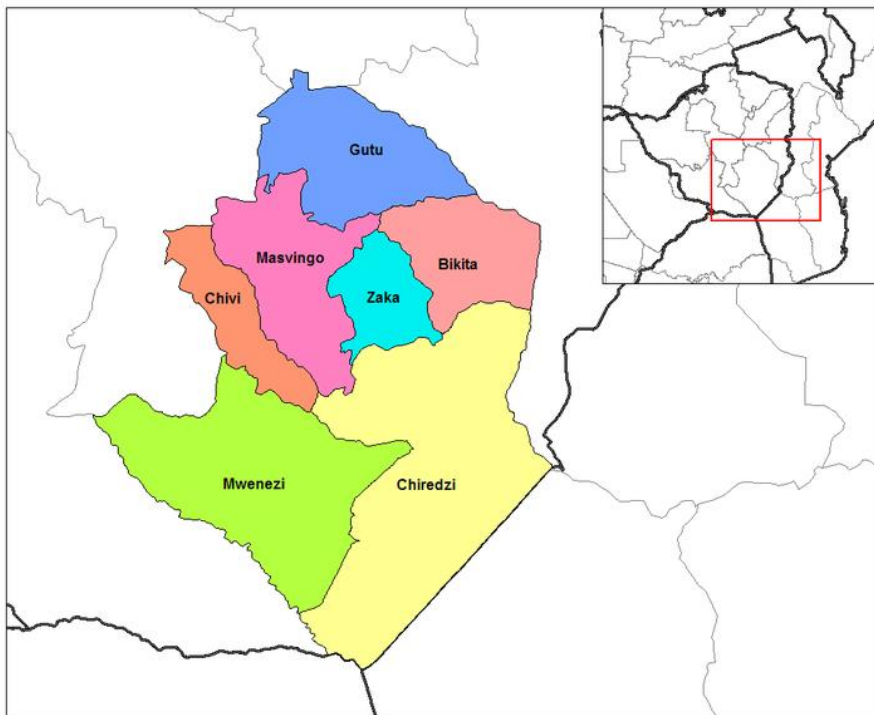
colleges (Hallinger& Heck, 2012) and for that reason, had hands-on experience and were not completely detached from leadership.

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### 3.6.2 SETTING OF THE STUDY

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This study was conducted in Zimbabwe, a country with ten provinces, of which Masvingo was chosen because of the limited budget for the study. Masvingo Province has seven districts and Masvingo District was selected because this is the only district with three primary teacher education colleges, namely Bondolfi, Masvingo and Morgenster Teachers’Colleges. This was also in line with the advice given by Denzin and Lincoln (2000:pp.370) that, “many qualitative researchers employ purposive and not random sampling methods as they seek out groups, settings and individuals where processes being studied are most likely to occur.” In addition, the selection of Masvingo District as the setting of the study was informed by literature, which suggests that only relevant constituencies that illuminate and inform understanding need to be included in a qualitative sample (Creswell, 2012; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). Based on this guidance, the researcher selected Masvingo District as the setting for this study. The selection criteria included two key characteristics, namely, a well-defined structure for the supervision and monitoring of the student teachers on teaching practice and a clearly laid out programme showing that student teachers were supervised occasionally.



### **FIGURE 3.1: MAP OF ZIMBABWE SHOWING THE SEVEN DISTRICTS OF THE MASVINGO PROVINCE**

Adapted from Mumhure(2017:76)

Masvingo District was the only district out of the seven districts in Masvingo Province with teacher education colleges that have student teachers who are deployed for teaching practice in all the districts of Masvingo Province.

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#### **3.6.3 SELECTION OF SCHOOLS**

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The selection of schools that participated in this study was based on geographical location, having students from the three respective teacher education colleges. This was aimed at including schools from diverse areas within the settings. Ritchie and Lewis (2013:83) argue that one of the requirements for a qualitative sample “[...] is to ensure that the sample is as diverse as possible within the boundaries of the defined population.” Heads of teaching practice departments from the three colleges also assisted me in identifying schools that were quite active and produced distinctive students during teaching practice.

Following the above advice on the set criteria and informed by relevant literature, the researcher finally selected eight primary schools from all colleges for this study, comprising four rural schools, one growth point school and three urban schools. From the eight schools, eight teacher leaders were purposively sampled for the study. The eight primary schools represented diverse geographical locations in the Masvingo District (See Chapter 4).

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#### **3.6.4 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS**

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The selection of participants was closely aligned with the selection of schools. All teacher leaders who taught classes at primary school level in Zimbabwe are holders of Diploma in Education or Certificate in Education certificates, with some having Bachelor of Education degrees. Therefore, those who took part in this study had similar qualifications. Participants for this study were primary school teachers whom I refer to in this study as teacher leaders and were effectively involved in supervising student teachers for at least three years. This was because the researcher wanted information-rich participants (Yin, 2011).

Following the above criteria and informed by relevant literature, the researcher finally included eight teachers in his sample. The intention was not to come up with a big sample because qualitative studies require small samples (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). Furthermore, this study was intended to be descriptive and exploratory. Too many participants were likely to generate excessive amounts of data, which was likely going to overwhelm me (Yin, 2011).

The other consideration that informed my selection of a small sample was the nature of the primary data collection strategy for case studies. Gay et al.(2011) argue that qualitative researchers are mostly guided by circumstances. The sample size may appear to be small, but the researcher had to return several times to the same participants seeking clarification or confirming issues (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

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After deciding on a research design, developing it and constructing research instruments, researchers begin to collect data to address critical research questions for their studies. Data collection for this study spread over a period of nine months. Qualitative case studies use data collection instruments that yield data mostly in text (Berg, 2001; Cohen et al., 2011; Yin, 2011). The data collection instruments used for this study included semi-structured interviews, observations, focus groups and document analysis (Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2014; Yin, 2011). The process of data collection for this study, the manner in which the instruments were constructed and used is discussed in the section below.

#### **3.7.1 INSTRUMENTATION**

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Before collecting data to answer the study's critical research questions, the researcher designed four research instruments for the generation of relevant data. According to Mumhure(2017), the construction of the data generation instruments is to be done after an extensive literature review. This literature review constituted what distributed leadership meant, its role in the professional growth of student teachers, supervision criteria used by teachers during supervision of students and their effectiveness in professional growth, viability of distributed leadership and how it positively influences supervision for professional growth, challenges faced in supervising students on teaching practice and how they can be improved. This study utilised semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions

to generate qualitative research data (Cohen et al., 2011). The two data generation instruments were important in providing me with multiple data sources for the purposes of triangulation of information (Yin, 2011).

The interview schedule was pilot-tested with three primary school teachers from three neighbouring schools which did not form part of this study's sample. According to Mumhure(2017), the teachers should be known to the researcher to be effective mentors in assisting students during teaching practice. These should be deemed to be 'information rich' and relevant for testing the validity of the instruments. The purpose of the pilot test was to provide me with information about the time to be taken interviewing participants and the clarity of my questions. The validity of the interview schedule was further increased through specialist judgement. Five peers, who are also PhD students with other universities and my supervisor, assessed the validity of the data generation instruments and their recommendations were considered accordingly.

### **3.7.1.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

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According to Tharenou et al. (2007:pp.103), semi-structured interviews have an overall topic, general themes, targeted issues and specific questions. They are more flexible than structured interviews, but more focused than unstructured interviews because the interviewer is still free to pursue matters as the situation dictates, just as in unstructured interviews. Tharenou et al., (2007.pp.104), citing Crabtree (1992), explain that semi-structured interviews are guided, concentrated, focused and open-ended communication of events that are co-created by the interviewer and the interviewee and occur outside the stream of everyday life.

The interview schedules used to generate data to answers the four research questions for this study were constructed after an extensive literature study of distributed leadership, documents on policy, teaching practice supervision instruments and Department of Teacher Education narratives. The semi-structured interview questions were validated by five colleagues, who are also PhD students with other universities in and outside Zimbabwe, and my supervisor. To further increase the validity of the semi-structured interview schedules, the researcher conducted a pilot study with three primary school

teachers from three neighbouring primary schools not included in the final sample for this study. The teachers selected for the pilot study were already known by the researcher to be effectively involved in mentoring students on teaching practice. This was intended to familiarise the researcher with the instruments, find out the time taken for one interview session and whether the questions were accessible to the participants. The semi-structured interview questions were found to be appropriate and only minor adjustments were made. The next step involved actual face-to-face interviews with eight purposively selected primary school teachers. The period of data collection using interviews was from September 2018 to January 2019 (refer to Table 4 in Chapter 4 below). Interviews could not be conducted in December 2019, as this was during school holidays and, therefore, it was difficult to arrange meetings with potential interviewees.

An interview schedule is a structured set of questions used by the researcher to ask interviewees to provide answers to research questions (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). In this study, pre-set semi-structured interview questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) were used to solicit answers from eight purposively selected interviewees on their understanding of distributed leadership and how it positively influences supervision of students for their professional growth. The interviewees were also asked about the effectiveness of the activities of teachers during supervision of students on teaching practice, the viability of distributed leadership for supervision of pre-service teachers for their professional growth, challenges teachers faced and how supervision could be improved through distributed leadership to better serve them as vehicles for professionally developing student teachers (questions 1 to 4). It was important to ask similar questions to all interviewees to ensure that no area was left out and to compare responses during data analysis.

Pre-set semi-structured interview questions were deemed appropriate for this study for various reasons. Firstly, they were found flexible and permitted me to deviate from the scheduled questions and probe further in order to gain a deeper understanding (Yin, 2011) from teachers about how distributed leadership would positively assist effective supervision of pre-service teachers for their professional growth, how it can be enacted, the challenges, if any and how these could be solved. Furthermore, the researcher did not want to inconvenience interviewees as all interviews were conducted after school and some of them were staying away from their workplaces. They also provided me with opportunities to understand the world from the perspective of the participants (Barbour, 2013; Creswell, 2012;

Nieuwenhuis, 2012). In addition, the researcher was able to gather rich descriptive data critical for addressing all my research questions and to understand how the teachers constructed knowledge and social reality (Cohen et al., 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2012).

Finally, the interviews also allowed me to generate data that could not be accessed using other methods. This data included facial expressions, gestures, body language and other important cues, especially when participants were expressing their feelings about the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision for pre-services for their professional development.

All five interviews were conducted at the workstations of the participants. The interviewees were selected from five primary schools, two rural, one growth point and two urban primary schools. The researcher phoned the participants and arranged for interviews in advance. This was intended not to disrupt teaching and learning activities. Participants signed consent forms after the researcher explained to them the purpose of the study and assured them of confidentiality. Most of the schools had experienced primary school teachers who were also degree holders. However only the most experienced were selected per school because the researcher needed information-rich participants (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Yin, 2011). The interviewees were asked to provide detailed verbal information about their views and experiences of distributed leadership as a tool for supervision of student teachers to make them grow professionally. The interview questions were closely linked to the research questions for this study. In addition, the interviews were in tandem with Mead's social interaction theory, which posits that people construct meanings through social interaction. The researcher was able to construct the meanings interviewees had about distributed leadership supervision as a vehicle for influencing pre-service teachers' professional growth. The researcher had to probe further for detailed explanations of various facts and issues not understood. This enabled the interviewees to develop their ideas and provide in-depth information about their understanding of distributed leadership and its influence on the professional growth of pre-service teachers.

The interview method has its own limitations. As a regular supervisor of pre-service teachers in schools, some of the interviewees knew me. It was possible for them to be biased in their responses in order to please me (Borg & Gall, 1996). To counter this limitation, the researcher had to ask the same question differently at a later stage of the interview process to establish consistency in the responses.

The researcher observed four lesson presentations and was able to compare the teachers' views with what was actually taking place in the lesson presentations. The focus group discussions also helped in verifying truthfulness of the responses the researcher got during interviews. Gay et al.(2011) argues that interviews can cause uneasiness on the part of interviewees when responding to questions. To overcome this limitation, the researcher started the interviews by explaining to the participants the purpose of the study, then requested that they sign a consent form and ensured them of confidentiality and anonymity. This was followed by general discussions on their professional and academic qualifications and teaching experience. This was not only for ethical reasons but was also intended to settle the interviewees and make them feel comfortable to open-up (Yin, 2011). The researcher did not face challenges in having interviewees open-up and voice their opinions because they had experience in conducting research, as all were university graduates. Interviews were conducted after work in the offices of the interviewees, and this further ensured confidentiality about what we were discussing. Each interview lasted for about one hour. In addition to audio taping the interviews, the researcher also took down field notes about salient issues like body language and facial expressions, which could be critical during data analysis. The researcher also ensured that questions were open-ended, which allowed participants to provide explanatory responses (Creswell, 2012; Hancock et al. 2009).

### **3.7.1.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

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The term 'focus group' is often used interchangeably with 'group discussions' focused on a specific topic of interest to the researcher (Flick, 2014). In a focus group discussion, at least four participants are brought together to discuss a specific research topic in which a researcher is interested. In this case, the researcher was interested in their views and opinions about distributed leadership and how effective it is in the supervision of pre-service teachers for professional growth. The researcher conducted one focus group discussion with four out of the expected eight teachers at one of the schools in Masvingo town. This session was aimed at addressing research questions 1 to 4. The venue for the focus group discussion was convenient for participants because of its centrality. The session lasted for one and half hours. The focus group discussion focused on all the items in the interview schedule in order to verify interview responses and gain a deeper understanding of distributed leadership as a tool for supervision of student teachers for their professional growth. The four participants were then asked to sign consent forms before discussions started. The participants for this focus group discussion were purposively sampled on the basis that they had vast experience in mentoring students on teaching practice. This

was deliberate, as the researcher wanted information-rich participants (Yin, 2011). The inclusion of participants who had been interviewed earlier on was deliberate, as the researcher wanted their views to be interrogated by their peers and to allow them to check the accuracy of their transcribed interview responses.

The choice of focus groups as a qualitative data collection technique was appropriate for this study in a number of ways. Flick (2014:196), contends that,

A small group of individuals, brought together as a discussion or resource group, is more valuable many times over than any representative sample. Such a group, discussing collectively their sphere of life and probing into it as they meet one another's disagreements, will do more to lift the veils covering the sphere of life than any other device that the researcher know of.

The focus group discussion was appropriate for my study because it stimulated discussion and utilised "its dynamics of developing conversation in the discussion as a central source of knowledge" (Flick, 2014, pp.196). Participants had the opportunity to interact and interrogate each other's ideas about distributed leadership and its influence on the supervision of pre-service teachers for their professional growth, which this could not have been possible in a one-to-one interview ((Hancock et al., 2009). The focus group discussion provided opportunities for each participant to present his own views and experiences of distributed leadership and gave them an opportunity to hear from colleagues. The focus group discussion allowed participants to listen, reflect on what others said and, in light of this, further reconsider their own standpoints (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). Mumhure, (2017) explains that the moderator during the focus group discussion should be the researcher and his/her major role is to listen carefully and taking down field notes. In the process, he/she should also ask questions to clarify issues. He/she ensures that the discussion remains on course by reminding participants to remember the key aspects to be discussed and each participant should have a copy of the questions to be discussed.

Hancock et al. (2009:18) advise that, "[...] it is a good idea to offer refreshments [...] as people arrive also serves as a good 'ice-breaker' and allows for participants to meet each other before the focus group starts". The researcher provided participants with refreshments as a way of establishing rapport with them and to allow them to familiarise themselves with each other (*Ibid*). The researcher

welcomed all the participants and thanked them for coming and informing them of the purpose of the study. A copy of issues to be discussed was given to each participant before the commencement of discussions.

Focus groups are not easy to convene as some participants may not come and in this case, two did not turn up despite having agreed to take part in the study. Another challenge is that, if discussions are not properly managed, they may result in participants discussing issues not pertinent to the study (Flick, 2014; Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). In order to keep the discussion focused, the researcher used a guide outlining the main issues to be addressed. We laid down house rules acceptable to all members before starting our discussion. At this stage, all the participants had signed consent forms. As the moderator, the researcher ensured that a few participants who were more vocal did not dominate the discussions (Cohen et al. 2011). The researcher provided the four participants who did not participate in interviews with exercise books, and they were given time to go through the questions and write down their own responses to these questions. Those who had taken part in the interviews were given back their interview transcripts, thus providing an opportunity for them to verify the correctness of the transcriptions (member checking). The next step involved participants selecting a secretary to write down their agreed upon group responses. The method was appropriate as it resulted in lively debates. All responses were written down and discussions were audio taped with their permission. Participants had the chance to correct each other in the process. All the group responses were written on a flipchart, and I took down detailed field notes, especially on body language, facial expressions and issues participants failed to agree on. The method was appropriate as it provided me with an opportunity to capture everything we had discussed, including negative responses.

### **3.8 DATA PRESENTATION**

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Data collected were presented as discussed below.

#### **3.8.1 Transcribing**

All the eight interviews were audio taped with my cellular phone, Samsung galaxy J2 (Babbie, 2010). All audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. Sutton and Austin (2015) define transcribing as changing the spoken word to a written form to help analyse data. The researcher listened to teacher leaders describe the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision of students and converted the audio recording into written word. As the researcher listened, The researcher did the following: punctuated the texts, put pauses, laughter and any signs of uneasiness to the text. also

anonymised the transcript to remove identification insinuations linking to names (Merriam, 2002). During the process of listening and transcribing, The researcher got the feel of the influence of distributed leadership on teacher leaders' supervision and this helped me shape the next interviews. In other words, the interview informed the other until the saturation level was reached (Silverman, 2013). My major goal in transcribing was not just to make a presentation of what the teacher leaders' experiences were in their interview.

### **3.8.2 Coding**

After all interviews have been transcribed and checked, the next stage is coding. Glasser and Laudel (2013) define coding as singling out topics, issues, similarities and dissimilarities that are shown through the respondents' narratives and interpreted by the researcher. During interviews with teacher leaders on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision on student leaders, teacher leaders' narratives of similarities and dissimilarities were picked. This process assisted the researcher develop an understanding of the feeling of teacher leaders from their perspective. Coding was done by making notes in the margin of the exercise book (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **3.8.3 Theming**

After coding, the next stage is theming (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Theming refers to putting codes from a single or more transcriptions to represent the findings in a logical and systematic way (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013). One narrative that cuts across teacher leaders' experiences with distributed leadership on demands and expectations during their supervision of student teachers was how they should possess good classroom management skills. The common narrative was themed as 'Teacher leaders' supervision demands and expectations when supervising student teachers.' The significance of going through this process lies in the fact that, at its conclusion, it would be easy to present data from interviews using citations from the individual transcripts to illustrate the source of researchers' interpretation. Each theme became a heading in my presentation. Below each theme were examples from the transcripts and my own interpretations of what these themes were examples from the transcripts and my own interpretations of what these themes meant. Conclusions I drew were supported by direct quotations from the respondents and this made clear themes that emerged from the participants' interview and not my own (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

### 3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

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This section describes how data were gathered and analysed. Mills, Abdula & Cribbie (2010) define data analysis as applying procedures and techniques that help extract and describe information, detecting and describing patterns. All the data collected for research purposes ends up with data analysis, to give the study its order, meaning and worthiness. Creswell (2012:461) views data analysis as “organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of the data in terms of participants’ definition of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities.” In the process of research, volumes of data are collected and unless these data are analysed, they do not have meaning. The crux of any analysis procedure is the link between the data collected and the research questions (Glaser & Laudel, 2013). In this study, collection was done concurrently with data analysis. This approach helped me pick areas that required more clarification and further detail. This approach also kept me focused on the study of the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province teacher education colleges. Since this study adopted a qualitative approach, qualitative data analysis was used.

Creswell and Clark (2015) define qualitative data analysis as a process of deriving meaning from participants’ views and perspectives of situations, patterns and themes. Khumah (2012) corroborates the above idea when he argues that qualitative methods are concerned with meaning of particular events and circumstances. Nieuwenhuis (2012) asserts that qualitative analysis is on-going and interactive.

This research adopted a six-step qualitative analysis. The steps include the following: defining and identifying data, data collection, data reduction and coding. At the defining and identifying stage, I identified data on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges by teacher leaders by soliciting data that addressed the four research questions. The research questions helped defined the data that I wanted.

At the second stage, I collected the data using interviews and focus group discussions as data gathering instruments. Interviews were recorded using Samsung Galaxy J2 cellular phone.

At stage three, the vast amount of data the researcher collected were reduced by sifting irrelevant data from the relevant data. Data which did not address research questions were deemed irrelevant. In other

words, data which did not encapsulate the essence of distributed leadership influence to teacher leaders' supervision were filtered.

The last stage was laying out and coding data. Before transcribing audiotapes verbatim and going over field notes many times, I listened to them repeatedly. Creswell and Clark (2011) emphasise the importance of the researcher carrying transcriptions personally. Transcribed data were sent back to participants for validation (Yin, 2014). Information on distributed leadership influence on teaching practice supervision was captured and correctly transcribed (Attrde- Stirling, 2001). After structuring, data were coded. During coding, vast amounts of texts are given codes that are related to themes that are to be developed (Punch, 2005). In this study on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision by teacher leaders, codes that could be identified include crafting of user-friendly documents, classroom management, teacher leaders' incompetence, school heads' attitudes, and supervision of student teachers from teacher leader perspectives. Data coding was significant in facilitating theming. Data that carried the same meaning were allocated a similar code. Themes that were generated from data categorisation assisted in creating a story about the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision by teacher leaders.

As in most qualitative research studies, data analysis was continuous and an interactive process (Creswell, 2013; 2014; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Nieuwenhuis, 2012). Data collection and analysis for this study were undertaken concurrently. This helped me identify issues that needed further clarification and detail. Conducting data collection and analysis concurrently enabled me to identify and fill in the gaps in the process. This also helped me to keep the study focused on distributed leadership and how it positively influences supervision of student teachers for their professional growth.

The researcher took a number of steps in the process of analysing data. The first critical step was to listen closely to all the audiotapes several times before transcribing them verbatim and reading the field notes several times. This helped me understand them and transcribe them without much difficulty. Creswell (2012) advises that the researcher himself/herself should carry out the process of transcription. The researcher transcribed all the audiotapes personally in order to ensure that all the words were captured, including comments about facial expressions and body language. Transcribed

interview data were returned to interviewees for the purposes of checking content accuracy (Yin, 2011). This process was followed by a thorough search for similar responses and bringing them together through the process of segmentation. Critical segments on teachers' perspectives on distributed leadership were identified from the study's objectives (Cohen et al., 2011; Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

The next step was the coding process, described by Nieuwenhuis(2012:105) as "reading carefully through your transcribed data, line by line and dividing it into meaningful analytical units." The process of coding for this study was done following the research objectives. All data with similar meanings were given the same label. This was intended to facilitate easy tracking and retrieval of information. Data that had similar thematic ideas were examined together and compared (Creswell & Clark, 2010; Flick, 2014; Silverman, 2013). The researcher then embarked on a thorough study of the transcribed data in order to generate meanings through classification and categorisation. This involved the process of grouping similar responses together and ordering units of meanings from the interviews and the focus group discussion.

### **3.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY**

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Trustworthiness is a term used in assessing the quality of a qualitative inquiry and seeks to support the argument that the study was conducted in a transparent manner (Yin, 2011) and that its findings are credible (Loh, 2013). Rayn, Coughlan and Cronin (2007:742) used the term 'rigour' synonymously with the term 'trustworthiness' when referring to "the plausibility, credibility and integrity of the qualitative research process." Lincoln and Guba (1985) provided constructs that can be used as criteria for evaluating the quality of a qualitative research study, namely, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. The researcher used these four constructs to ensure trustworthiness of this study on teachers' perspectives of distributed leadership and how it positively influences supervision of student teachers for their professional growth.

#### **3.10.1 CREDIBILITY**

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Credibility refers to the degree to which a study's findings are an authentic and accurate representation of the meanings of the research participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). This suggests that there should be consistency between participants' views and the researchers'

representation of those views. To achieve this, the researcher employed several techniques such as triangulation, member checking and presenting data in the form of thick descriptions. Triangulation refers to the use of “two or more sources to achieve a comprehensive picture of a fixed point” (Padgett, 2008:186). Data generation for this study involved the use of multiple data sources, namely semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions of distributed leadership in action. The data obtained from these multiple sources were compared to find out if they pointed to the same conclusions. This helped to ensure that the findings were credible from the perspective of the research participants (Loh, 2013). In addition, the researcher involved two authorities on qualitative research, a colleague and my supervisor (observer triangulation), to assist me in analysing the data. This technique ensured that important ideas were not missed out and that ‘completeness’ was achieved (Drisko, 1997).

Another technique the researcher used to achieve credibility was member checking. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe member checking as a valuable strategy for increasing trustworthiness in qualitative research. This involved corroborating the findings of the study by seeking feedback from the research participants (Creswell & Miller, 2000). All transcripts from interviews, focus group discussions, observations and my own reflections were submitted back to five of the eight participants to correct errors (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). Member checking was important for providing an ‘insider’ perspective and checking the accuracy of my interpretations of the data (Anastas, 2012). This helped me to ensure that the findings reflected the participants’ experiences of distributed leadership and its influence on supervision of student teachers for their professional growth.

The researcher used thick descriptions in this study in order to achieve credibility. This involved providing a detailed account of teachers’ experiences of distributed leadership as a tool for supervising student teachers for professional growth, paying special attention to the context in which they occurred. (Creswell & Miller 2000:128-129) explain that,

The purpose of the thick description is that it creates verisimilitude, statement that produce for readers the feelings that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described in a study. Thus, credibility is established through the lens of readers who read a narrative account and are transported into a situation.

In order to come up with thick descriptions, the researcher used prolonged engagement with the participants. Data collection started in September 2021 and ended in October 2021. The researcher had time to interact with participants through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and during observations of distributed leadership practice. The four teachers involved in interviews also took part in focus group discussions. This repeated contact with participants resulted in some information being repeated and this permitted triangulation of data from different participants. All interviews and focus group discussions were audio taped and listened to several times before being transcribed verbatim.

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### **3.10.2 DEPENDABILITY**

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Dependability involves the researcher providing sufficient documentation about how the study was conducted, allowing readers to follow and critique the whole research process (Lietz & Zayas, 2010; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To achieve dependability or auditability criteria, the researcher documented all the research procedures adopted in this study in such a way that readers could follow the trail used and potentially arrive at similar or comparable conclusions (Raynet al. 2007). The researcher provided a rationale for the theoretical and methodological decisions the researcher made throughout this study. All the changes that deviated from my original plan are documented in sufficient detail. This was intended to allow readers to follow my research process. All categories created during data analysis were distinctly labelled, including all revisions made to the categories. The whole data analysis process was documented in detail to enable readers to see decisions made and how the analysis was done, including the processes used to arrive at the conclusions (Nieuwenhuis, 2013; Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

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### **3.10.3 TRANSFERABILITY**

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The transferability criterion refers to the applicability of the findings to situations outside the study and if they are found meaningful (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Raynet al., 2007). This is a qualitative study, and the researcher did not intend to generalise the findings to other settings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that it is not the responsibility of the researcher to generalise results of a qualitative inquiry. The purpose was to understand teachers' experiences of distributed leadership and its influence on effective supervision of student teachers for their professional growth. In addition, the sample for this study was too small and the results cannot be generalised to other contexts (Loh, 2013).

It is acknowledged in the literature that qualitative studies do not seek generalisations (Cohen *et al.* 2011). However, readers can apply findings of this study to similar situations since a detailed description of the context under which the study was conducted is provided. To achieve the transferability criterion, the researcher presented the data using thick descriptions, thus allowing readers to understand how the findings of this study may be applicable to their own settings (Creswell, 2012; Shenton, 2004).

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### **3.10.4 CONFIRMABILITY**

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The confirmability criterion refers to the ability of others to confirm or corroborate the findings of a research inquiry (Drisko, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It involves demonstrating that the study's interpretations and conclusions are derived from the data provided (Raynet al., 207). In order to achieve the confirmability criterion, Shenton (2004:72) advises that, "Steps must be taken to help ensure that as far as possible the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than characteristics and preferences of the researcher." The researcher used a number of strategies, including triangulation, an audit trail, peer debriefing, negative case analysis and a reflexive journal maintained throughout the study to achieve the confirmability criterion.

The researcher utilised the triangulation technique to reduce researcher bias (Flick, 2014; Silverman, 2013). Data were generated from four data sources comprising document analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and observations of lesson presentation in session. Data generated from these sources were compared and contrasted during the data analysis process. Peer debriefing involved consulting with the supervisor and colleagues experienced in qualitative methodology (Padgett, 2008). The researcher discussed all the research decisions and procedures made with peers and the supervisor and received valuable feedback that enhanced the quality of this study (Shenton, 2004). This technique also promoted reflexivity, which was a constant feature for the whole study. In the process, new ideas were generated, and potential pitfalls linked with the methodology of this study were identified and corrected. The researcher used an audit trail in order to provide readers with evidence that would enable them to trace decisions made during the study and procedures I adopted (Shenton, 2004). Negative case analysis was analysed in order to find out contradicting evidence during data analysis (Lietz& Zayas, 2010). This technique helped me to achieve a complete or an

exhaustive exploration of the teachers' perspectives on distributed leadership as a tool for effective student supervision for professional growth in the Masvingo District teacher education colleges.

### **3.11 ETHICAL ISSUES**

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Ethical issues are a critical component in any research study, and I ensured good conduct and respect for participants throughout the whole research process. Ethics are beliefs of what is considered morally right or wrong. They deal with what people consider morally proper or improper when undertaking a research study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher tried to do what is right and to avoid harm to research participants while conducting this study on distributed leadership's positive influence on pre-service teacher supervision for their professional growth (Cohen et al., 2011; Orb, Eiesenhauer & Wynaden, 2001).

Sampling for this study was an ethical issue as the researcher tried as much as possible to come up with participants who are not only information-rich but also representative of the diverse schools and teachers in Masvingo District. Ritchie and Lewis (2013:83) argue that one of the requirements of a qualitative sample "[...] is to ensure that the sample is as diverse as possible within the boundaries of the defined population." Purposive sampling of the research sites and participants ensured diversity of views from multiple data sources. This was critical as it enabled me not to group together participants in a general category. The sample for this study comprised eight participants from eight primary schools in the Masvingo District. The schools included one boarding and day, two urban, one growth point, one mission, church-run day and three rural day schools. These primary schools represented the diverse school types in the Masvingo District, which was the setting for this study.

There is need for researchers to protect the dignity of participants involved in a research study, hence the researcher ensured that ethical guidelines were put in place from the beginning to the end of this study. The researcher applied for permission from the University of the Free State Ethics Committee to conduct this study. In the ethical clearance application, the researcher made an undertaking that I was going to respect and protect the rights of all participants. Principles outlined in the ethical clearance application document guided the administration of this study. The researcher took time to inform participants of their rights before participating in discussions about distributed leadership as an effective tool in supervising pre-service teachers for their professional growth. The participants were

informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without giving any explanation. This was intended to respect the autonomy of research participants (Berg, 2001; Flick, 2013; Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). The researcher respected participants' freedom of choice referred to by (Cohen et al.2011:776) as the right to "self-determination". The consent forms the researcher used for this study contained my supervisor's details such as e-mail address, full name and telephone numbers. The participants were informed to contact my supervisor in case they needed more information and possibly inform the supervisor of any malpractices. The consent form also contained my phone numbers, e-mail and physical address in case the participants needed clarification on any issues or in case they needed to find me.

The participants agreed to participate in this study without being coerced. Closely linked to the principle of autonomy is the issue of 'informed consent'. The researcher provided participants with relevant research information such as the purpose of the study, how data would be collected and used and what was required of them (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). This was intended to provide a basis on which participants could make informed decisions about their choice to take part or not to participate in the study. Cohen et al.pp.2011:777) assert that, "Consent thus protects and respects the right of self-determination and places some of the responsibility on the participants should anything go wrong in the research."

The concept of informed consent has four critical elements to be addressed in any research study when dealing with the issue of ethical considerations, i.e., competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension (Cohen et al. 2011). In order to address the principle of competence, the researcher ensured that participants selected for this study were adults. The research participants for this study were primary school teachers in Masvingo District primary schools and were all above the country's legal majority age of eighteen years. Competence also suggests 'capacity', that is, the ability of the participants to acquire, retain and evaluate information received from the researcher and the ability to make a choice to participate (or not). As stated above, the teachers who participated in this study were deemed competent. In addition, none were cognitively or emotionally challenged at the time data collection was being undertaken. The second element of informed consent, voluntarism, was addressed through participants retaining the power of choice. They voluntarily decided to participate in this study without any form of coercion. This principle of volunteering was maintained throughout the research

process (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell & Miller, 2000) as there was room for participants to withdraw at any time.

Comprehension entails that participants fully understood the nature of the study and its procedures (Cohen et al., 2011). In order to ensure that participants had adequate clarity about the purpose of the study and its intended procedures, the researcher allowed them to ask questions and, in the process, their concerns were addressed. Participants for this study had a minimum of a diploma in education and clearly understood what it meant to be involved in a research study since they had also conducted research studies before. After willingly accepting to participate in this study, each of them signed a consent form.

In most studies, confidentiality and anonymity are often used interchangeably. Berg (2001) defines confidentiality as an attempt to remove from research records any elements that might indicate subjects' identities. In this study, the researcher avoided any attribution of comments to any particular participant. The researcher ensured that all audiotapes and transcripts were only accessible to the researcher and all information and/or identifying labels were removed. Ritchie and Lewis (2013) refer to anonymity as concealing the identities of research participants and making them unknown to outsiders. Throughout the study, the researcher used pseudonyms instead of participants' real names, and the same applies to institutions where the participants worked. The information collected for this study was not exposed to other people who did not participate in this study (Nieuwenhuis, 2012). Instead of their real names, the researcher used pseudonyms and case numbers in reporting data for this study.

Obtaining permission from the relevant authorities is a key ethical consideration to be addressed by any researcher. Cohen et al.,(2011) advise that for easy access into the field, researchers need to obtain permission from the authorities, starting from the top officers. After being granted permission to conduct this study by the University of the Free State's Faculty of Education Ethics Board, the researcher proceeded to apply for permission from the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe and this was granted. The researcher also sought and was granted permission to conduct this study by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development permanent secretary. The researcher sought permission from the principals

of the three teachers' colleges that is Bondolfi, Masvingo and Morgenster. The researcher also sought permission from Masvingo Provincial Education Director (PED). The District Education Officer (DEO) granted me permission to carry out this study in the Masvingo District on the same day. The DEO simply stamped the letter from the PED, signed it and wrote 'Approved'. This was the letter the researcher carried to the identified schools and to teachers who participated in this study.

The researcher's entry into the schools for purposes of data collection was not difficult. The researcher carried the letter from the PED, which was stamped and signed by the DEO, to the school heads of the participating schools. They were cooperative because the researcher had a letter of authorisation to conduct this study from the PED that was also endorsed by the DEO. Visiting the heads' offices as the first port of call during data collection was intended to fulfil the undertaking the researcher made in my ethical clearance application about respect for authority. All the heads were very cooperative and as a formality, they only asked for the letter of authorisation from the PED and DEO. The heads facilitated my easy access to relevant teachers, and they provided me with quiet and separate offices for interviews with teachers. All the teachers were cooperative, as the researcher faced no challenges in obtaining their consent to participate in this study. The researcher first gave each of the teachers the researcher visited the invitation letter to take part in the study. The researcher also explained the purpose of the study, potential benefits and risks for participation and assured all teachers of confidentiality and anonymity. All teachers who took part in this study voluntarily consented to be interviewed and audio taped. Each of the participants then signed a consent form before being interviewed. The researcher verbally requested each of the heads of participating schools for permission to hold a focus group discussion. This was granted, as this was not going to disrupt teaching and learning time for the teachers and students. The focus group discussion was conducted at one of the schools in Masvingo town. This was convenient because all the teachers, including those from rural schools, go to Masvingo town for the weekend. Eight of the expected ten teachers turned up for the focus group discussion. The researcher thanked participants after each interview and the focus group discussion. The researcher also requested their permission to conduct follow-ups by phoning them or visiting them again for clarification and/or asking them further questions.

### **3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

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Chapter 3 has presented the research methodology utilised in this qualitative case study. The study used multiple sources of data that included interviews and focus group discussions. This was intended to gain full insights into teachers' perspectives of distributed leadership and its influence on supervision of pre-service teachers for their professional growth. The chapter specifically focused on the research approach, design, sampling, data generation and analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations. The next chapter presents the data from the various data sources used in this study, such as interviews and focus group discussion.

## **CHAPTER 4**

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### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 OVERVIEW**

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This chapter presents data on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision.

The study used a qualitative research approach and specifically a case study research design. The instruments used to generate data to answer the key research questions for the study included document analysis, interviews and focus group discussions. Data were organised and presented thematically, guided by the study's research objectives. This was critical as it facilitated easy management of the large volumes of data generated for the study.

The research questions for this study were:

- 1) *What are the demands and expectations from teacher leaders in supervising student teachers?*
- 2) *What are the teacher leaders' perceptions on strategies of employing distributed leadership?*
- 3) *What are the challenges of distributed leadership in supervising student teachers in schools?*
- 4) *How can the leadership distributed to teacher leaders be strengthened to enhance teaching knowledge among student teachers?*

## 4.2 DATA PRESENTATION

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Eight teacher leaders from eight primary schools participated in this study. Five of the eight teacher leaders participated in interviews and focus group discussions (see Chapter 3) and all the eight teachers were involved in one focus group discussion. The other three participants who were not interviewed but included in focus group discussions were asked new questions and were identified as information-rich participants (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

For ethical reasons, pseudonyms are used to identify all the research participants and their institutions (Creswell, 2014). All the schools in which the participants worked are given numbers from one to eight, according to the order in which I visited them. This was critical as it provided an easy way for following them up. Each participant was given pseudonym that is difficult for anyone to trace or identify (Flick, 2014). This had a dual-purpose of making it easier for me to track the data and further ensure their security anonymity.

The table below shows the codes assigned to the schools in terms of whether they were rural, growth point or urban schools and the accompanying participants' pseudonyms.

**TABLE 4.1: PROFILE OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND PARTICIPANTS**

School codes	Participant's pseudonym	Location/status
1	Lady teacher leader 1	Urban
2	Lady teacher leader 2	Mission – Church run
3	Lady teacher leader 3	Rural
4	Lady teacher leader 4	Urban
5	Lady teacher leader 5	Rural
6	Sir teacher leader 6	Rural

7.	Lady teacher leader 7	Urban
8.	Lady teacher leader 8	Urban

The eight schools selected for the study represented the various school types actively involved in the supervision of pre-service teachers. Ritchie Lewis (2013:83) argue that a qualitative sample should be as “diverse as possible within the boundaries of the defined population.”

The participants used their school numbers during the focus group discussion and pseudonyms were attached to each by the researcher to further protect their identities, even from the participants themselves. In addition, this facilitated easy management of the large volumes of data generated for this study.

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#### 4.2.1 PARTICIPANTS’ DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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The table below shows the participants’ demographic data relating to their experience in teaching at primary school level and years supervising pre-service teachers as well as qualifications. The information below also provides details about characteristics of the participants from whom data were generated.

**TABLE 4.2: PROFILE OF TEACHER LEADER SUPERVISORS ACCORDING TO THEIR QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Academic qualifications</b>	<b>Professional Qualifications</b>	<b>Teaching Experience</b>	<b>Supervision Experience</b>
Teacher Leader 1	“O” Level	Dip Ed, B.Ed ECD	23yrs	19yrs
Teacher Leader2	‘O’ Level	CE, B.Ed Primary	27yrs	10yrs
Teacher Leader 3	‘O’ Level	CE	10yrs	7yrs
Teacher Leader 4	“O” Level	Dip Ed, B.Ed (Special needs)	16yrs	10yrs
Lady Leacher Leader 5	“O” Level	CE, M.Ed Counselling	28yrs	20yrs
Teacher Leader 6	“A” Level	CE, B.Ed Primary	39yrs	32yrs

		BA Honours English M.Ed Philosophy		
Teacher Leader 7	“O” Level	Dip Ed	10yrs	7yrs
Teacher Leader 8	“A” Level	Dip Ed, B.Ed ECD	20yrs	15yrs

**Key**

“O”Level - Ordinary Level

“A”Level – Advanced Level

Dip Ed - Diploma in Education

CE - Certificate in Education

B.Ed - Bachelor of Education

MEd - Master of Education

ECD - Early Childhood Development

The table above indicates that 4 of the participants had “O” Levels and a minimum of first degree as their highest academic and professional qualifications, whilst only one had “O” Level and Certificate in Education. One had “O” Level and a Master of Education Counselling and two had “A”Level and Master of Education and Bachelor of Education Early Childhood Development.

Accordingly, I deemed these participants to be information-rich and capable of providing me with the relevant data to address my key research questions.

**4.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA**

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I took a number of steps in the process of analysing data. The first critical step was to listen closely to all the audio tapes several times before transcribing them verbatim and reading the field notes several times. This helped me understand them and transcribe them without much difficulty. I transcribed all the audio tapes personally in order to ensure that all the words were captured, including comments about facial expressions and body language. This process was followed by thorough searching of

similar responses and bringing them together through the process of segmentation. Critical segments on teacher leader’s perspectives on distributed leadership were identified from the study’s objectives. The next step was the coding process. This is reading carefully through the transcribed data line by line and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. All data with similar meanings were given the same label. This was intended to facilitate easy tracking and retrieval of information. I then embarked on a thorough study of the transcribed data in order to generate meaning through classification and categorisation. This involved the process of grouping similar responses together and ordering units of meanings from the interviews and focus group discussions. These similar responses were used to create emerging themes.

#### 4.4 OVERVIEW OF THE EMERGING THEMES

The table below presents the summary of the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged from the analysis of data generated for the study. This layout was critical as it guides the presentation of data and discussion of findings.

**TABLE 4.3:1 EMERGING THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES**

Categories	Sub- Themes	Themes
1. Crafting and maintenance of user-friendly records	Demands & expectations for effective supervision .	1. Teacher leaders demands & expectations on supervision of pre-service teachers .
2. Classroom management skills		
3. 3.Professional responsibilities		
.1. Lack of resources	Challenges faced on distributed leadership implementation	2. Challenges faced in distributed leadership by teacher leaders on supervising pre-service teachers
2. Teacher leaders’ incompetence		
3. A changing school culture		
4. School heads’ attitude towards teacher leadership to influence distributed leadership implementation		
1. Teacher leaders’ perception on	Unleashing leadership potentials for	3.Distributed leadership and

unleashing leadership roles	effective supervision	enhancement of teaching knowledge for pre-service teacher professional growth
2. School heads' support on teacher leader empowerment		
1. Supervision from a teacher leader perspective	Supervision strategies for effective pre-service teacher supervision	4. Distributed leadership supervision strategies for improving professional practice on pre-service teachers
2. Supervision strategies for effective teaching practice supervision		
3. Clinical supervision strategy as an effective tool for pre-service teacher supervision		

#### **4.5 DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THEMES**

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##### **4.5.1THEME1: SCHOOL-BASED SUPERVISORS' DEMANDS AND EXPECTATIONS ON SUPERVISION OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS**

Theme one captures the demands and expectations on supervision of student teachers on teaching practice. The theme is further divided into sub themes namely, crafting and maintenance of user friendly records, classroom management skills, and professional responsibilities.

Data collected through interviews revealed that teacher leaders had demands and expectations from pre-service teachers as they supervised them during their teaching practice period. They indicated that they expected them to craft user-friendly objectives in their plans of work as they carried out their preparations for teaching learning situations. They expected classroom environments to be conducive to learning, to have varied and well-presented charts, and also revealed that student teachers lacked professionalism

##### **4.5.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Demands and expectations for effective supervision**

The first sub- theme to be discussed is that of demands and expectations, with its category of crafting and maintenance of user friendly records.

#### **4.5.1.1.1 Crafting and maintenance of user-friendly records**

I began my interview by asking: What are the demands and expectations of teacher leaders from pre-service teachers during teaching practice supervision?

**Teacher Leaders 1, 2 & 3** indicated that student teachers should craft objectives that are specific, measurable and achievable. They should be relevant to the age level of the learners and should fulfil the requirements of the syllabus.

**Teacher Leader 5** was of the opinion that the remediation objectives should be in range of slow learners' capabilities. This means that remedial work is a form of cooperative and supportive learning between learners and teachers aiming at catering for individual differences to help learners have interpreting and critical thinking skills.

**Teacher Leader 6** was looking at words used to craft the objectives and suggested the use of action words which she said were crucial. She seemed to clarify that action words specify the particular intended outcomes in a lesson hence the need for action words within the objectives. Teacher leader 6 expressed this in the excerpt below:

*“Student teachers must use action words to craft specific objectives.”*

Drawing from the idea of crafting objectives, it seems teacher leaders believe that objectives should be user-friendly, that is, student teachers should craft objectives which are explicit, accurate and clear in accordance to the learner's level of ability. It also appears that teacher leaders agreed that objectives should fulfil the requirements of the syllabus. To them supervision trains and educates teachers to be professionals who can make and implement decisions.

#### **4.5.1.2 Classroom Management Skills**

From a classroom environment perspective, **Teacher Leaders 2, 3 and 4** indicated that classroom environments should be conducive to learning, they should have varied and well-presented charts according to subject areas, and also that learning centres should be educative. **Teacher Leader 3** indicated that in their view as school-based supervisors, the beginning teachers struggled consistently with areas on teaching strategies. They indicated that classroom management practice was an on-going activity and that it depended on context.

The purpose of classroom management, as observed by **Teacher Leader 6**, is realising the situation and condition of positive class, removing obstacles that hamper the teaching- learning interactions, providing and arranging facilities and furnishing as well as fostering and guiding learners.

During the focus group discussion, **Teacher Leader 8** bemoaned that most pre-service teachers' lesson delivery procedures did not create an interactive learning environment. Therefore, according to **Teacher Leader 8**:

*“A teacher is expected to be a director. This role will enable the learners to eventually engage in the real life drama of improvisation as each communicative approach brings its own uniqueness.”*

#### **4.5.1.3 Professional Responsibility**

**Teacher Leader 2** also revealed that they had another expectation from pre-service teachers. They expected them to exercise professional responsibility when carrying out their practicum. However, contrary to this, there was dissatisfaction with the professional behaviour of some student teachers as lady **Teacher Leader 2** expressed her views on this critical issue thus:

*“Professional attitude of student teachers should be of a role model. We expect them to lead by example because they are teachers in making. How can a teacher act unprofessionally during the presents of his/her children's parents? The community expects the teachers to act in loco parentis.”*

The above excerpt suggests that student teachers lack professional responsibility and this is likely to affect the quality of teachers produced.

In line with professionalism, the response by **Teacher Leader 2** created room for further views as **Teacher Leader 6** said that:

*“Fulfilling professional standards gives the teacher an identity which makes him/her unique to other sister professions. By so doing, the teaching profession will be maintaining its own standards.”*

**Teacher Leader 8** was of the view that classroom management was a key issue towards professional responsibility of a student teacher. In his view, student teachers were not yet fully developed to be competent teachers since most of them lacked professionalism.

The school-based supervisors in one of the focus group discussion opined that, student teachers had to demonstrate varied teaching strategies including the following: cooperative learning, group work and

think- pair-share, individualised teaching, differentiated teaching, assessment as for and of learning, role play, problem solving and discussions.

From the above responses, a sub-theme emerged:

#### **4.4.2 THEME 2: CHALLENGES FACED IN DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP BY TEACHER LEADERS ON SUPERVISING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS**

Theme Two captures the challenges faced in distributed leadership by teacher leaders on teaching practice supervision. The theme is further divided into categories, namely; lack of resources, teacher leader in competencies, changing school culture, and school head's attitude.

Data collected from interviews revealed that teacher leaders faced many challenges in using distributed leadership during teaching practice supervision. Some of the major challenges were lack of resources, teacher leader incompetencies, changing school culture, and school head's attitude.

##### **4.5.2.1 Sub-theme 2: Challenges faced on distributed leadership enacting**

The second sub-theme to be discussed is that on challenges faced on distributed leadership enacting, with its categories of lack of resources, teacher leaders' in competencies, changing school culture, and school head's attitude.

This theme emerged from participants' responses when they were asked this question:

What are the challenges you meet when using distributed leadership to supervise student teachers on teaching practice?

##### **Category 1: Lack of resources**

**Teacher Leaders 1, 2 and 3** indicated that school leaders should provide abundant resources to teachers, like, time, text books and stationery. **Teacher Leader 8** also had the view that lack of computers and internet connectivity in schools was a challenge. He went on to highlight that schools were finding it difficult to expose learners to Information Technology, especially in rural areas where the major contributing factor is lack of electricity.

**Teacher Leader 1** did not support school leaders' type of administration when she said:

*“School leaders must provide adequate time and abundant resources to teachers for them to start their distributed leadership.”*

From the teacher leader's sentiments, some teachers are unwilling to be part of the leadership circle because of significant reasons, such as lack of knowledge and skills in leadership and micro politics within the school. This was clearly in **Teacher Leader 3's** response when she said:

*“Most of the time teachers are committed to their teaching, no time for leading other teachers.”*

Teacher leaders are of the view that they did not possess the talent and personality of a leader as they felt that being a leader among their colleagues was a challenging task.

**Teacher Leader 4's** observation was crucial to the teaching learning situation in schools since she was of the idea that useful resources that were inadequately provided by school leaders were time and text books. Her sentiment was that teacher leaders in schools teach a comprehension lesson by writing the text on the chalkboard, followed by the questions of which the learners were to copy laboriously.

**Teacher Leader 6** had a different opinion from other teacher leaders when she said:

*“Lack of special needs teachers in schools makes teaching of learners living with disability difficult since the learners are excluded in the mainstream. Inclusive education still remained in the realm of theory and far from practice in Zimbabwean primary schools. One of the serious problems is to prepare a good, effective competent teacher who can lead and practice the concept of inclusive education adequately.”*

The interviewed teachers in the focus group discussion indicated that schools are failing to implement meaningful teaching and learning activities due to shortage of human and material resources.

## **Category 2: Teacher leaders' incompetence**

In addition to lack of resources, teacher leaders were of the view that teachers showed incompetencies in a variety of areas, as **Teacher Leader 1** blamed teacher incompetence in creation of new ideas when she said:

*“Some teachers are incompetent to creating a lot of new ideas; they are not able to do many things and to apply in new skills to progressing widening scope of situations and experiences such as gaining new competencies as well as building new relations.”*

**Teacher Leader 8** looked at past and present approaches in teaching and learning situations. When probed to explain his idea further, he expatiated by revealing that:

*“In the past it was about delivering wisdom, the challenge now is to use foster user generated wisdom among teachers and school leaders. In the past, different learners were taught in similar ways; today’s teachers are expected to embrace diversity with differentiated pedagogical practices. In this view teachers are seen as people who should be innovative and able to apply new skills to different situations.”*

In the focus group discussion session, I probed on whether the teachers were familiar with how distributed leadership could influence teachers into teacher leadership positions. In fact, I wanted to know of the concept had any meaning to them.

**Teacher Leader 3** had this to say:

*“Distributed Leadership is a new idea that is not clear to most teachers, therefore may not be welcomed if teachers do not understand it.”*

**Teacher Leader 4** supported this when she said:

*“The use and application of distributed leadership in school contexts was not an easy task for school leaders to implement since it was a new strategy that needed much study, especially on its effectiveness and the ways in which it constructs new leadership roles with each school. Schools were of the idea that problems and issues of distributed leadership within the educational context can be divided according to problems in the school hierarchical structure, teacher competencies, the willingness to assume leadership roles, the concept of power sharing between school heads with teachers and teachers and school heads versus understanding of the practice of distributed leadership.”*

In addition, **Teacher Leader 6** indicated that teacher leaders believed that most of their time should be committed to their teaching tasks, hence little time remained to lead their colleagues. In addition, she was of the view that teachers were not competent to extend their opportunities to take leadership roles and responsibilities since they were of no benefit to them. She clarified further that it was of no benefit since the extension of opportunities to take on leadership roles and responsibility may not be welcomed by teachers unless there was a clear understanding of the benefits for the school and ultimately, the teachers.

Teachers are not able to adjust and meet the current situation prevailing in the changing world. This was shown in **Teacher Leader 8's** response when he said:

*“Teachers are in competent to positioning themselves in a fast changing world. The past was curriculum centred, the present is learner centred, which means that the education system increasingly needs to identify how individuals learn differently and foster new forms of educational provisions that take learning to learners and allow individuals to learn in the ways that are most conducive to their progress”.*

In one of the focus group discussions, an experienced gentlemen from a school in the urban set up, **Sir Teacher Leader 8**, critically analysing the teaching profession of today, had this to say:

*“The school stakeholders do not have the zeal to improve themselves academically and professionally so that they become agents of innovation, they interpret new ideas through their experience. Teachers needed to possess the values leading to innovation, which are clarity in information transmission, openness to change, consideration of the different perspectives for problem solving and opening up towards the searching for critical assumptions that affect the resolutions of issues. By so doing, teachers need to develop the culture that creates confidence in innovation since it impacts on the behaviour of people towards their empowerment as it generates autonomy. Teachers need to create a culture that instils confidence in their way of thinking and their colleagues' way of thinking too.”*

**Teacher Leader 7** had a different opinion which declared that leadership should be inclusive in the school teaching environment since teaching needed to be in teams. He saw the team being a critical element of work, both in the classroom and in the organisation of the teaching centres and also due to diversity of opinions and vision of educational policies expressed by teaching staff.

In agreement with **Teacher Leader 7**, **Teacher Leader 8** had this to say:

*“A positive school climate culture whereby teachers are qualified with leadership responsibility is not prevalent in schools.”*

### **Category 3: A changing school culture**

**Teacher Leaders 3, 4 and 5** had different views in relation to how school heads managed their schools. They were of the view that school heads should share leadership so as to attract confidence in

their teachers as well as creating platforms for innovation, decision making and sense of responsibility within school context. In support of this **Teacher leader 6** said:

*“The culture of bureaucracy in schools hinders teachers from voluntarily participating in leadership positions. Teachers lack confidence because the monitoring function is mostly done by the school heads. School heads have a tendency of clinching to power because of the traditional views of leadership implementation. They are not willing to share power due to fear that teachers might resist the dominant policy created by the school head him/herself.”*

In pursuing the above idea, **Teacher Leader 7** stated:

*“When school heads are willing to share their power not every teacher is predisposed to assume leadership in administration.”*

**Teacher Leader 5’s** concurred with the above as she had the view that power sharing could be a teacher’s problem and not the school head’s, since teachers may also have a predisposed idea on the way power is shared.

Supporting evidence on school heads not wanting to relinquish power was echoed by **Teacher leader 7** when she said:

*“The superiors are generally respected and are usually the decision markers. By so doing distribution of leadership may not succeed in reinforcing commitment to management agendas, as school heads were held accountable for meeting government targets. Hence, it may be difficult for teachers to lead if monitoring function is mostly performed by the school heads alone.”*

**Teacher Leader 7** ascertained the superiority of school heads being inclined to their legitimacy in decision making.

Sharing the same view, **Teacher Leader 8** had this to say:

*“Teachers lacked support and were not properly monitored by their school heads which affected the teachers’ organisational commitment. Lack of supervision and support initiated and affected the teacher’s self- esteem and commitment to duty.”*

#### **4.4.3 THEME 3: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING KNOWLEDGE**

Theme Three captures how distributed leadership unleashes potentials for effective supervision. The theme is further divided into categories, namely; teacher leaders' perceptions on unleashing leadership roles, and school head's support on teacher leadership empowerment.

Data collected in the interview sessions, revealed that teacher leaders had different perceptions on the way distributed leadership unleashes potentials for effective supervision. Some of the sub-themes are teacher leaders' perceptions on unleashing leadership roles, and school head's support on teacher leader's empowerment.

The theme emerged from participants' responses when they were asked this question:

How can distributed leadership empower teacher leaders to unleash leadership roles in schools?

### **Category 1:Teacher leaders' perceptions on unleashing leadership roles**

**Teacher Leader 1 and 2** had similar sentiments when they were of the view that teachers had to be empowered if they are provided with decision making confidence. They further clarified that this can be done through developing knowledge and skills by attending school-based workshops and participation in demonstration lessons.

According to **Teacher Leader 3**, empowerment could be a result of collaborative communication with relevant stakeholders in schools as she said:

*“Therefore, a teacher should have the empowerment to collaborate with fellow teachers, learners, school administration, parents, the community and the donor agents. Also empowerment can be through creating an atmosphere consisting of social attractiveness, trustworthiness and communication at school. It is by so doing that administrators can focus on establishing trusting relationships and improving meaningful communication in order to empower teachers and develop an environment of collaborative leadership.”*

**Teacher Leader 4** revealed that teachers could be empowered to function as informal leaders who can support other teachers without the formal duty of leading. He further indicated that school heads perceived legitimate appointments to positions as a crucial idea because they may believe that being a leader without having any formal appointment would confuse the issue of leadership among their colleagues.

In the focus group discussion, **Teacher Leaders 6 and 7** shared their sentiments and opined that the empowerment of teachers mediates the innovation culture and innovation capacity. They emphasised that cultural innovation, collaboration and openness to new ideas were highly valued, along with an environment in which people are comfortable expressing their thoughts, eliminating the fear of failure and change.

During an in-depth interview aimed at establishing how teacher expertise could create room for teacher empowerment, **Teacher Leader 8** viewed expertise as an engineering factor for empowerment when he had the following to say:

*“Aaaa! Teachers should be empowered to see the expertise they have, and at the same time use it to improve their relationship trust with colleagues.”*

Teacher leaders’ views showed that teachers could be empowered through shared decision making and that people can comfortably express their thoughts if given a platform that eliminates fear of failure and change.

#### **4.4.4 THEME 4: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP SUPERVISION STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS**

Theme Four captures the distributed leadership supervision strategies employed for improving student teachers’ professional practice. The theme is further divided into categories, namely; supervision from a teacher leader’s perspective, and supervision strategies for effective teaching.

Data collected from interviews revealed that different strategies can be employed during teaching practice supervision. Some of the strategies are artistic, human relation, connieurship, scientific, and clinical supervision. However, clinical supervision was identified as the most effective strategy.

##### **4.4.4.1 Sub-theme 4: Supervision strategies for effective teaching practice supervision**

The fourth sub-theme to be discussed is on supervision strategies for effective student teacher supervision. The theme emerged from participants’ responses when they were asked this question:

How can distributive supervision strategies improve the professional practice of the pre-service teachers?

### **Category 1: Supervision from a teacher leader's perspective**

I found it imperative to find out, from participants, how they viewed supervision as teacher leaders who are responsible for supervising pre-service teachers. In response to the above question, **Teacher Leader 1** was quick to respond and she said:

*“Supervision shapes the student teachers into full-time teachers through highlighting positive comments. It is through supervision that reflective dialogue comes with effect. Reflective dialogue creates an opportunity for openness; hence it instils confidence in the supervisee-cum- supervision scholar through highlighting of positive comments.”*

In the same vein, **Teacher Leader 2**, a lady teacher who was teaching Early Childhood Development (ECD) learners said:

“Supervision helps on the spot- checking of student teachers records. ECD student teachers have a number of records which ought to be crafted and maintained effectively, hence the need for supervisors to constantly spot-check.”

On the same issue, **Teacher Leader 3 & 4** revealed that supervision was essential since it supported, predicted, guided and reviewed the student teacher's progress. They also were of the view that student teachers lacked professional responsibility which could only be achieved through continuous improvement.

As I probed further, lady **Teacher Leader 5**, who seemed to be more conversant on the issue in the focus group discussion session, said:

*“Supervision can be used in order to know the effectiveness of classroom management by student teachers. The pedagogical knowledge and care for other educators, as well as learners, can only be achieved provided classroom management skills are rightfully used by the student teacher.”*

Participants' collective group response on the question was that supervision created a physical, social and psychological environment which improves the methods of teaching.

Further discussions on this issue revealed that aspects of supervision as moral action included promoting meaningful learning, empowering teachers and students, and fostering a democratic community.

### **Category 2: Supervision strategies for effective teaching practice supervision.**

I also became interested in finding out, from participants, which supervision strategy they perceived to be instrumental when supervising the pre-service teachers?

**Teacher Leader 8** was quick to answer and said:

*“Aaah! Right, no one size- fits- all model in the teaching arena and each model has its own specific punch. From my knowledge we have clinical, artistic, connoisseurship and scientific supervision models.”*

Her clarification opened other participants’ views, as **Teacher leader 2** opined that:

*“Artistic supervision emanates from the idea that teaching is an art, hence there is no one way of teaching as teachers are unique. Supervision should take cognisance of the hidden features of event. They should be experts who have the ability to use language well in order to be able to communicate and explain the observations accurately. Also, mutual trust and communication between the supervisor and student teacher should be demanded.”*

The evidence from the group responses shows that the uniqueness of teachers gives them a forum to use behaviours that they are familiar with, hence the need for supervisors to observe the incompetencies of the teachers, responses of the learners and the environment, to appreciate the teaching learning situation.

Responding to the issue of supervision models as instruments to effective supervision lady **Teacher Leader 3** from a school in the rural set up had this to say:

*“Another type of supervision model is the Scientific Supervision Model, influenced by Taylor’s scientific management. Supervision employs scientific measures were teachers use methods of teaching they were trained or prescribed as such learners in turn demonstrate mastery of subject matter by mere regurgitation of facts. There are prescribed mission statements, textbooks, teaching methods, formats and deadlines.”*

Probed further on how the scientific model differed from the artistic model, she had this to say:

*“Scientific supervision is more of judgemental, and inspection oriented rather than supervision is employed. Teachers are hired to conduct prescribed duties in accordance with wishes of the management. As such, there is no flexibility and collegiality in the supervision style. Supervision of this style requires a rigid discipline on the job, concentration is on the task to be performed with minimal interpersonal contacts.”*

The sentiments from the above responses seem to suggest that supervisors of this nature were autocratic in approach. There is no room for novice teachers to participate in manufacturing of own teaching methods suitable to the environment and context of the lesson presented.

Another participant, **Teacher Leader 4**, a lady at a school in the urban set-up, had the following to say:

*“Perhapsaaaaah! A supervision style which brings about and develops in supervisors and supervisees qualities and skills of appreciation, inference, disclosure and description is the Connoisseurship model of supervision.”*

According to **Teacher leader 4’s** opinion, connoisseurship is a much effective approach compared to the scientific model since supervisors are able to draw upon, and make use of, a wide array of information and place their experiences and understandings in a wide context and connect them with the supervisor’s values and commitments.

## **Category 2: Clinical supervision strategies as an effective tool for pre-service teacher supervision.**

When I asked if participants had other supervision models in mind for effective supervision, **Teacher Leader 6** said this:

*“Clinical supervision because the conference held encourages cooperation and engenders a feeling of collegiality among all the stakeholders.”*

In view of the above response, I also wanted to know if any additions could be made to the clinical supervision model.

**Teacher Leaders 7 & 8** concurred when they suggested that the clinical supervision model viewed teachers as unique individuals capacitated with potentials and needs. They opined that the model had the answer because with it, supervisors and supervisees had to hold conferences, the pre- and post-observation conferences. These, according to both teacher leaders, played a pivotal role in allowing

teachers to share information, voices of concern, negotiate understandings, pose questions and express curiosity regarding their own professional growth.

I wanted to know more about clinical supervision, and I had to inquire, through further probing, what each conference constituted. So, I asked the participants to elaborate on each stage, starting with the pre-observation conference.

To add more flesh to this, the lady **Teacher Leader 5** went on to say:

**Teacher leader 5:** *“Eeeh in the pre-observation stage, one has to look at the following things from a pre-service teacher perspective; knowledge of content and curriculum, knowledge of learners, knowledge of learning standards, knowledge of instructional strategies, knowledge of resources and technologies and knowledge of assessment strategies.”*

Having been satisfied with the first stage, I proceeded to inquire on the nature of classroom observation session, **Teacher Leader 4**, who had a painted picture of the model from **Teacher Leader 8**, contributed by saying:

**Teacher Leader 4:** *“Right, classroom observation eeeh, one has to look at teaching instruction and classroom environment. Which means one has to observe, whether the practising teacher has knowledge of content and pedagogy, respect and rapport with learners, culture of learning, management of classroom procedures, management of learner behaviour, organisation of physical learning space, communication with learners, questioning and discussion techniques, engaging learners in learning, assessment in instruction and flexibility and responsiveness”.*

**Teacher Leader 7** also opined that clinical supervision provided supportive feedback and made plans for improvement for future teaching. She had the opinion that a relationship had to exist between supervisors and the supervisees, not just a relationship, but it could also be evaluative in nature as well as being hierarchical and extending over time. She also opined that the two should stay together or a long time.

Finally, I also wanted to gain knowledge on the post-observation phase. Lady **Teacher Leader 2** had this to say:

*“The post observation conference interview session may be also called the (professional development and reflection phase) were by the supervisor analyse learners’ learning by looking at the strengths of*

*the lesson, weaknesses of the lesson, future planning and professional growth of the pre-service teacher.”*

According to **Teacher Leader 2**, one would probably safely conclude that in the post-observation conference, which is an exit conference, the supervisor, with some guided, questions will help the pre-service teacher to make reflections of teaching and work for improvement in the next lesson.

#### **4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In summary, the data suggests that among major challenges to an effective teacher training programme is that of designing and implementing programmes to clinical supervision experiences to bring pre-service teachers beyond intuitive and distinctive teaching practices, to a systematic teaching process. Therefore, teaching practice is a vital component of clinical experience and assessments of pre-service teachers’ performance. This is supported by Al-malki and Weir (2014) who say, “During classroom observation several criteria have been assessed for teaching practice such as professional knowledge and practice in teaching and learning, teaching skills, professional practice relationships, language proficiency, classroom and instruction.”

However, criteria for observation of classroom are different from one teacher training institute to another in Zimbabwe. Hence, commonly these teacher training institutions use their guiding principles for teaching practice to evaluate students on teaching practice at their colleges.

## **CHAPTER 5**

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### **SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 OVERVIEW**

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In a comprehensive review of the literature on distributed leadership, it was identified that distributed leadership was an emergent property of interaction (Du Four, 2014; OECD, 2016; Woods, Benett, Harvey & Wise, 2004). Professional learning communities that combine a focus on instructional and distributed leadership have been advancing as the new model for effective organisational arrangements with schools (Du Four, 2014; OECD, 2016).

However, in the literature reviewed for the study, there is a dearth of information on how distributed leadership can influence supervision on teaching practice by teacher leaders (Ngara & Ngwarai, 2012; Pandey & Chaila, 2013).

To fill the extensive gap in scholarship, this study explored the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe. Utilising a qualitative research approach, case study research design and being informed by the symbolic interaction theory, the study explored how school-based supervisors understand distributive leadership how it influences their role as supervisors, how they determine challenges encountered during supervision of pre-service teachers, how to explore the demands and expectations in supervision of student teachers' and proposing of a distributed leadership supervision model to improve the professional practice of pre-service teachers.

## **5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

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The main aim of the study was to explore the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo province's teacher education colleges. This discussion is organised following the order of research objectives. First, the researcher answered the question: What are the demands and expectations from teacher leaders in supervising pre-service teachers in teacher education colleges? Secondly, the researcher discussed on: What are the challenges of distributed leadership in supervising pre-service teachers in teacher education colleges? Thirdly, the researcher discussed on: How can distributed leadership be used to enhance teaching knowledge among student teachers? Fourthly, the researcher discussed on: What distributed leadership supervision strategies can be employed in an effort to improve the professional practice of pre-service teachers?

### **5.2.1 THEME 1: SCHOOL-BASED SUPERVISORS' DEMANDS AND EXPECTATIONS ON SUPERVISION OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS**

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The findings revealed that participants know the demands and expectations from teacher leaders when supervising pre-service teachers. Their knowledge revolved around the activities expected from pre-service teachers during their teaching practice, such as crafting user-friendly plans of work, classroom management skills and professional responsibilities. The symbolic interaction theory assumes that people respond to elements of their environment according to subjective meanings they attach to those elements (Blumer, 1969). The responses provided some evidence that supervision was clearly a vehicle for improving pre-service teachers' competence and professional growth. This echoes the conclusion

by Zepeda (2017) and Glickman et al. (2018) who view supervision as a distinct professional activity in which education and training aimed at developing science-informed practice are facilitated through a collaborative interpersonal process which involves observation, evaluation, feedback, facilitation of self-assessment, and acquisition of knowledge and skills by instruction, modelling and mutual problem solving. This is supported by the symbolic interaction theory by (Blumer, 1969) which holds that the meaning of things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. According to (Grursoy et al. (2016), supervisors are expected to act as active agents in conflict resolution and problem solving in the practicum. Proper supervision requires the establishment of mutual understanding among all stakeholders involved in the practicum, hence it cannot be a mechanistically routine of series of actions. Grursoy et al. (2016) also opine that supervision ensures that clinical (supervision) is conducted in a competent manner in which ethical standards, legal prescriptions, and professional practices are used to promote and protect the welfare of the client, the profession, and society at large.

The participants assigned various roles to pre-service teachers in their teaching practice for professional growth. The findings seem to suggest that one of the expectations for pre-service teachers is to craft user-friendly documents, supporting the findings by Ebele and Olufu(2017) on supervision in secondary schools in Abuja, Nigeria, which concur that supervision is highly instruction-related and seeks to cooperatively identify weaknesses of the teacher in delivery of instruction to render appropriate remedial action, with the aim of improving delivery.

Although the participants seemed to agree about the expectations and demands of pre-service teacher supervision, the supervision models and approaches tended to differ. In the apprenticeship model (Day, 1999; Kennedy, 2014; Villegas-Reimers, 2003) of teacher induction, the mentor is the master teacher that must be emulated. The evidence from this study seems to suggest that pre-service teachers craft documents which are not user-friendly, with particular regard to plans of work, as noted by lady **Teacher Leader 1**, who said: *When crafting documents, you expect documents to be user friendly, especially plans of work. They should have learning objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable and time framed.*

The statement above is supported by Mohammad (2019), who suggests that planning for teaching requires the selection of learning and teaching activities, in addition to the ability of the teacher to

think and balance the possibilities available to students and their previous experiences. Mohammad further argues that through teaching planning, the teacher can increase the professional and educational growth of the learners, motivating them to face difficulties of learning with confidence and morale, avoid embarrassing situations through their education, and have good ability to identify their learning strengths and weaknesses.

Mohammad (2019) suggests that to help students understand the lesson well, teachers should provide suitable teaching, a set of objectives must be addressed so that all the lesson's parts become consistent in a way that is easy for the student to determine the main ideas of the lesson and connect them smoothly.

He further suggests that for each lesson, there should be some objectives that help students to be more interactive with their classroom friends as well as their teachers, and hence be able create and share new knowledge. Such objectives need to be applied using some educational strategies.

The findings also revealed that supervision of pre-service teachers also looked at Classroom Management Skills, which refers to the actions and strategies of the teachers to maintain, to organise and to control the pupils' behaviours, movement and interaction to keep them constructively engaged in the teaching/learning process. Although Siti,(2019) has the opinion that all aspects of learning to meet and proceed, teachers, pupils, methods, media, materials, learning resources interact in the classroom, not much research on effective supervision models for teacher effectiveness has been done.

Findings suggest that supervision provides a space for supervisors and supervisees for collaboration and learning from each other, sharing experiences and resources. This supports the findings by Moolenaar and Slegers,(2010) who say teachers with high trust towards their colleagues are more open to trying new applications, self-development and change. The symbolic interaction theory (Mead, 1863-1931) supports this when it posits that, the origin of meaning arises in the process of interaction between people.

Participants seem to agree when they say objectives framed should be relevant to the age level of the learners and should follow Bloom's taxonomy, which advocates teaching from the known to the unknown.

The evidence in this study suggests that supervision of pre-service teachers provides a platform for pre-service teachers to solicit and receive assistance on how to teach learners in Zimbabwean schools. The researcher claims that such supervision is critical, especially to Zimbabwe, where the curriculum is centrally designed, with teachers not receiving adequate instructional guidance from educational authorities (Zvobgo, 1998). This challenges the thinking that once pre-service teachers are deployed into the field for teaching practice, teacher leaders will have found helpers in the teaching learning process.

The study findings drew attention to the fact that effective supervision is a key and recurring activity at all supervision sessions carried out by teacher leaders. The researcher also observed this when one teacher leader echoed the suggestion that classroom management is one of the keys to success in teaching and learning activities conducted in the classroom.

A unique role assigned to pre-service teachers seems to be the provision of space for an attractive classroom to motivate children to want to learn, since the environment creates conducive teaching learning atmosphere. Evidence from the response of a teacher leader was that most pre-service teachers' lesson delivery procedures did not create an interactive learning environment. More research needs to be done on how interactive learning creates conducive teaching situations.

Evidence in the study is also in accordance with pre-service teachers' expected roles on professional responsibilities. As evidenced by **Teacher Leader 4's** response on types of professional responsibilities they expected from the student teachers when the participant said: "*...some student teachers are very difficult to handle, some of them abscond from duty willy-nilly and are very lazy. All they want is to be pushed or to be bulldozed to do their work.*" This supports the findings by Ministry of Education Ghana (2017) which states that, "Professional attitudes and values are at the core of teacher standards, and they help to shape the identity of a professional teacher."

Participants in the study had the same feeling that professionalism is key to developing a positive teacher identity. Therefore, student teachers should act as good role models for learners; they should demonstrate growing leadership qualities in the classroom and inner school, and they should also demonstrate familiarisation with the education system and policies guiding it.

Literature reviewed for this study revealed that events and experiences in the personal lines of teachers are directly linked to the performance of professional roles (Olsen, 2016; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998; Richmond, 2016). The participants' understanding of how teachers become professionals is hinged on two aspects, a strong and positive professional identity, and also that to adapt to professional identity teachers need to adopt new roles and responsibilities.

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### **5.2.2 THEME 2: CHALLENGES FACED IN DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP BY TEACHER LEADERS ON SUPERVISING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS**

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Distributed leadership has become the most popular leadership model in international literature in education systems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It provides information needed when school leadership gathers all the expertise of the members in the organisation. However, challenges are also imminent when distributed leadership is put into practice

The study revealed that in the Zimbabwean context, teacher leader supervisors face challenges in the execution of their duties, such as lack of resources, teacher incompetencies, a change in school culture and school head's attitude towards the implementation of distributed leadership.

Literature reviewed from this study revealed that distributed leadership was a risky approach when leadership was designated to incompetent teachers (Tahir, SuiLiang, Musah, Jaffri, Mohammed & Yasin, 2016), and for some teachers, it is perceived as increased workloads and responsibilities (Timperly, 2009; Tahir et al., 2016). Participants in this study partly agree that it increases workloads and responsibilities but differed on the issue of being risky if leadership was designated to incompetent teachers. In actual fact, they perceive all teachers as competent but were not given opportunities to lead. Reviewed literature has also shown that pre-service teacher supervisors

faced several challenges in the execution of their duties (Jacobs, Gordon & Sallis, 2016; Siti, 2019; Schleicher, 2012).

The findings revealed that most researchers that engaged with distributed leadership were cautious of its efficacy in producing effective solutions to issues in school leaders since it was a new idea that lacked clarity. Central to the interaction theory is the assumption that people construct meaning in their social settings through interaction with others (Blasé & Blase, 2000).

The study argues that Zimbabwe has invested very heavily in human resources development in order to improve quality of teaching in schools. However, paucity of material resources is a factor that contributes to ineffective teaching in primary schools (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015). Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) further argue that certain home conditions affect pupils' school achievements, especially children who lack provision of reading materials who are the most affected. Pupils who do not have a background which has resources like books sometimes perform poorly at schools, although they are taught by highly qualified teachers.

Literature reviewed revealed that the most important resource which schools should effectively make use of is time. Time management is raised as a factor that contributes towards ineffective teaching (Delvin, Kitt & Nelson, 2012). This is supported by Mupa and Chinooneka (2015), who say some students in Zimbabwean schools are always out on sports. All play and no work negatively impacts on school performance. It is important for teachers to manage their time and cover the whole syllabus so that pupils gain adequate content to tackle the examinations. School efficiency is a measure of how well resources are being utilised to produce outputs.

A study by Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) revealed that some schools lack textbooks, pupils scramble for textbooks and that practice of having one child reading for the whole class while others are listening does not work. It leads to disaster in performance. Fernandez (2014) supports this when he reveals that, the availability of textbooks appears to be the most consistent factor in predicting teacher effectiveness in primary schools.

Evidence in the study also revealed that teachers are an untapped resource for change and improvement in the schools. Tahir et al. (2016) believed that in order to ensure the success of the distributed leadership approach, school leaders must provide time and abundant resources to teachers for them to start their distributed leadership accountability. Leadership entails influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends and leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations and actions of others (Cuban, 1988). On the other hand, distributed cognition focuses more on social interaction, the context and artefacts in an environment where people's thinking and actions do not happen in a vacuum but through social and environmental interaction (Vygotsky, 1978; Crain, 1992; Hutchins, 1995).

In support, Liljenberg (2015) states that practising distributed leadership is considered a challenge for head teachers since it is a new strategy that needs much study, especially on its effectiveness and the ways in which it constructs new leadership roles with each school. Similarly, Tahir et al. (2016) summarised obstacles based on the following themes in practising distributed leadership: most teachers felt that they have to do more administrative tasks which they felt did not belong to them, lack of motivation based on the past experiences, and no such training to be leaders, hence they lack confidence to lead their counterparts. Some teachers believed that most of their time was committed to their teaching tasks, hence little time remained to lead their colleagues.

Another finding suggests that teacher leaders lacked competencies in improving their role in supervisory practices. This is supported by (Ghana Teacher Education Framework, 2017: 27) which states that, "Teacher education systems face challenges in adequately preparing teachers for the global realities brought about by the rapid pace of economic, social, technological, and environmental challenges." A number of cross cutting issues have been identified to provide a holistic approach to teacher education and development. These are: equity and universality, professional attitudes and values, core or transversal skills, assessment strategies, action research and reflection.

Schleicher (2012: 34) also supports this when he says, "What counts today are the versatilities that are able to apply depth of skills to a progressing widening scope of situations and experiences, gaining new competencies, building relationships and assuming new roles."

This study also revealed that teacher leaders had a key challenge in their day-to-day teaching profession. This is a challenge to strengthen the technical core of its professional practices, as

suggested by Schleicher(2012). He goes on to say that it requires the development of educational ecosystems that support the creation, accumulation and diffusion of this professional knowledge. The ecosystem should be conducive to innovation and constant improvement and draw on sources such as innovation and knowledge inspired by science, innovation inspired by firms(entrepreneurial development of new products and services), innovation and knowledge by practitioners(teachers and school heads) and innovation inspired by users(students, parents, communities).On the contrary, Department of Education (2012) found out that in Zimbabwe those teachers who had been recently trained and are less experienced are more effective than the more experienced. It has the idea that the newly trained teachers have more to offer since they have new knowledge, skills and experiences as compared to those with longer experience.

Evidenced by the study, school heads need to change their attitude towards the culture of schools so that teachers are accepted as leaders among their peers, and those old norms of teachers working in isolation are replaced with new norms of collaboration and teamwork. Distributed leadership has also been explained by Spillane and Diamond (2007) as founded on activity theory and distributed cognition. Activity theory is about how an activity system works (Bedny& Meister, 1997) and this is comparable to the complex leadership activity.

To sum up on challenges encountered, Torrance (2012), and Liljenberg(2015) in their studies revealed that problems and issues of distributed leadership within the educational context empirically can be divided according to problems in the school hierarchical structure, teacher competencies, the willingness to assume leadership roles, the concept of power sharing between head teachers with teachers and teachers and head teachers' understanding of the practice of distributed leadership.

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### **5.2.3 THEME3: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING KNOWLEDGE**

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Scholars define teacher empowerment as involving vesting teachers with the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies as informed by their professional judgement. By empowering teachers, teachers can discover their potential and limitations for themselves as well as develop competence in their professional development. This makes empowerment a crucial

issue (Barley, Ozcan & Yildiz, 2017). In agreement with the literature, participants in this study also conceptualised teacher empowerment as the need to be empowered towards decision making on how to face the future through on-going improvement of competencies. This is supported by Blumer (1969), who suggests that symbolic theory rests on the premise that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meaning things have for them and that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, social interaction involving symbolic communication with others. Participants further revealed, in this study, that empowerment can be through developing their leadership knowledge and skills through in-school professional learning activities, probably by being mentored by senior colleagues.

The literature revealed that an empowered individual has the skills and knowledge to act in a positive way or improve. Through teacher empowerment, teachers develop their own competencies and self-discover their potential and limitations (Kimwari, Chirure & Omindi, 2014). In view of this, Barley et al. (2017) argue that with regard to education, teacher empowerment has correlations to motivation and provides teachers with knowledge about themselves and their colleagues in order to foster student achievement, collaboratively. According to social identity theory, when individuals take on a group-based identity, there is uniformity of perception and action among group members (Haslam et al., 1996; Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994). Participants also agreed with literature by suggesting that a teacher should have the empowerment to collaborate with fellow teachers, learners, school administration, parents, the community, and donor agents.

The study revealed that teacher empowerment is influenced by teacher quality, their background, personality and expectations and the implemented programmes at a school (Barley et al., 2017). Also, Barley et al. (2017) agree that empowered educators believe in themselves and their abilities, understand the system, dedicate time and energy to their work, and respect others. According to role identity theorists, taking on a role-based identity results in different perceptions and action between individuals, as roles interact with counter-roles (Burke, 1980; Burke & Reitzes, 1981).

Participants agreed with the idea by suggesting that teachers can be empowered to function as informal leaders who can support other teachers without the formal duty of leading.

Scholars on empowerment claim that decision making should be exercised more carefully, and that teachers' participation area should be well-defined (Short & Greer 1997; Barley et al., 2017). Hence, Barley et al. (2017) state that providing teachers full participation in critical decisions impacts their quality of work. By doing so, their voice is heard in many areas related to their work. This provision of decision-making platforms enhances the unleashing of distributed leadership qualities among teachers. This is also supported by participants who claim that teachers need to be empowered towards decision making on how to face the future through on-going improvement of competencies.

However, schools should have certain and well-explained rules regarding teacher participation in order to avoid it becoming a privilege for just a few teachers (Moran, 2015).

Literature revealed that professional development facilities that schools provide for teachers increase their professional assets in an uninterrupted fashion, especially in terms of their teaching skills. They can develop their skills and learn more about the work via these professional development activities. In this respect, administrators can enhance teachers' effectiveness by supporting their professional development efforts (Klecker & Loadman 1998; Short & Greer, 1997; Thomas & Barley et al., 2017). Participants agreed when they revealed that school heads can support the expertise in teachers by sharing the wealth of experiences in them as well as seeing them as influencers.

The study also holds that professional development refers to facilities that schools provide for teachers to increase their professional assets in an uninterrupted fashion, especially in terms of their teaching skills. They can develop their skills and learn more about the work via these professional development activities (Barley et al. 2017).

In this respect, administrators can enhance teachers' effectiveness by supporting their professional development efforts (Short & Greer, 1997; Barley et al. 2017). According to Mead, cited in Armstrong and Obholzer (2005), symbolic theory reveals that an institution is meant to be a collective organisation of a certain set of attitudes and behaviour commonly shared and symbolically recognised by each member through her or his mind, hence internalised by means of the me agency which will determine, regulate and control (often unconsciously) the consequent social action and conduct. This is supported by **Teacher Leader 6** who said: "*School heads should support teachers by instilling confidence so that they aspire to be involved in school decision making processes.*"

The study revealed that when teachers feel competent about their abilities, it affects student learning in a positive way. Empowering teachers is believed to influence their feeling of competency. This refers to teachers' perceptions of their knowledge, skills and talents for helping their students and establishing good programmes for their students (Barley et al. 2017). In this regard, school administrators can empower teachers by offering simple compliments and recognizing student achievement which, in turn, rewards the teachers who made the students achievement possible (Kimwari, Chirure & Omindi, 2014). In support of this, Blumer,(1969) argued that people's behaviours in interaction with others in social setting are governed by their conception of themselves. Self-service is a kind of gyroscope for keeping behaviours consistent and in line. Moreover, as has increasingly been emphasised in symbolic interactionist theory, individuals are motivated to verify their sense of self in the eyes of others. **Teacher Leader 4** had the same perception when she said: *“School heads should generate and promote in teachers open minds that encourage people to accept new ideas.”*

It is evident from studies that empowerment is a significant predictor of interpersonal-level trust (Barley et al. 2017). Therefore, another way to empower teachers is to create an atmosphere consisting of social attractiveness, trustworthiness and communication at school. According to Barley et al. (2017), because effective communication skills are crucial in a school setting, administrators must focus on establishing trusting relationships and improving meaningful communication in order to empower teachers and develop an environment of collaborative leadership.

Sheldon Stryker's symbolic interaction theory relates to the study, with the idea of commitment as a means for conceptualising the link between social structure and self. Commitment denotes the degree to which a person's relationship with others depends on being a certain kind of individual with a particular identity. The greater this dependence is, the more a person will be committed to a particular identity and the higher this identity will be in the person's salient hierarchy. Having an identity that is based on the views of others, as well as on broader social definitions, will tend to produce behaviours that conform to these views and definitions. Participants agree with the theory when they say school heads should give way to let teachers develop the culture that creates confidence in innovation since it impacts on the behaviour of people towards empowerment.

The study revealed that teachers' autonomy is their sense of freedom to make their own decisions about living, programmes, books and instrumental planning (Barley et al. 2017). Stryker in his theory suggested that when people reveal such commitment to an identity in a situation, their sense of self-esteem becomes dependent on the successful execution of their identity. Moreover, when an identity is established by reference to the norms, values, and other symbols of the broader society, esteem is even more dependent on successful implementation of an identity.

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#### **5.2.4 THEME 4: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP SUPERVISION MODELS FOR IMPROVING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ON PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS**

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The study has revealed that supervision has emerged slowly as a distinct practice, always in relation to the institutional, academic, cultural, and professional dynamics that have historically generated the complex agenda of schooling (Sergiovanni et al., 2014). Proper supervision requires the establishment of mutual understanding among stakeholders involved in the practicum, hence it "... cannot be a mechanistically routinized series of actions"(Gursory, 2016). This correlates with the constructivist social theory which holds that learning is a collaborative process, and knowledge develops from individuals' interactions with their cultures and society. **Teacher Leader 4** supports this as she says: "*Supervision helps to improve the incompetent teacher.*"

The study has also revealed that supervision, according to Gursory(2016), is a distinct professional activity in which education and training aimed at developing science-informed practice are facilitated through a collaborative interpersonal process. It involves observation, evaluation, feedback, facilitation of supervisee self-assessment, and acquisition of knowledge and skills by instruction, modelling and mutual problem-solving.

The study further revealed, in agreement with Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2018), that there are a number of relational factors that must be presented for a community of leaders to fully develop, including openness to others and to others' ideas, the courage to express one's beliefs, pedagogical knowledge, and care for other educators and students. This is further supported by Arends (1998) who states that the constructivist theory believes in personal constructivism of meaning by

learner/supervisee through experience, and that meaning is influenced by the interaction of prior knowledge and new events. Participants also agreed, when Teacher leader 7 asserted that: *“Ownership of goals and work commitment was enhanced by delegation of responsibilities to supervisees which was some form of empowerment.”*

The study revealed that to really understand and assist in the enhancement of supervision, the supervision scholar must interact with supervisors and teachers on a regular basis, and that interaction should include reflective dialogue on theory, research and practice. It is the nexus of theory, research and practice that we improve supervision, teaching and learning (Gordon, 2019).

Glickman et al. (2018) suggest that working effectively with teachers in a supervisory capacity is anything but a “one-size-fits-all” endeavour. The social constructivist theory supports this when it looks at knowledge involving through the process of social negotiation and evaluation of the viability of individual understanding, and that every conversation or encounter between two or more people presents an opportunity for new knowledge to be obtained, or present knowledge expanded. This exchange of ideas that goes along with human contact is at play. Participants also reiterated that supervision focuses on teaching practice problems and aims at continuous improvement.

It has been established, in the study, that ownership of goals and work commitment were enhanced by delegation of responsibilities to supervisees, which was some form of power equalisation strategies and empowerment (Ngwenya, 2020). The client-centred supervision theory claims that supervisors must have a profound trust in the supervisee, believing they have both the ability and motivation to grow and explore the therapy and themselves. **Teacher Leader 8** supports this when she states that: *“Teachers were viewed as unique individuals capacitated with potentials and needs.”*

### 5.3 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

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The following are the main findings of the study:

- Teacher leaders expected pre-service teachers to craft user-friendly objectives in their plans of work. They also expected them to have good and effective classroom management skills, as well as acquire the expected professional responsibilities.

- The study revealed that supervision provides a space for supervisors and supervisees “to collaborate and learn from each other, sharing experiences and resources.”.
- The study established that professional attitudes and values are at the core of teacher standards, and they help to shape the identity of a professional teacher. Student teachers should, therefore, act as good role models and should demonstrate growing leadership qualities in the classroom and inner school.
- The study revealed that in the Zimbabwean context, teacher leader supervisors face challenges in the execution of their duties, such as lack of resources, teacher incompetencies, a change in school culture and school heads’ attitude towards the implementation of distributed leadership.
- Most teachers felt that they had to do more administrative tasks which they felt did not belong to them, lacked motivation based on the past experiences, and had no such training to be leaders, hence they lacked the confidence to lead their counterparts.
- The study revealed that an empowered individual has the skills and knowledge to act or improve in a positive way.
- The study revealed that teacher empowerment is influenced by teacher quality, their background, personality, expectations, and the implemented programmes at a school. Participants agree with the theory when they say school heads should give way to let teachers develop the culture that creates confidence in innovation since it impacts on the behaviour of people towards empowerment.
- The study revealed that when teachers feel competent about their abilities, it affects student learning in a positive way.
- It is evident, from the study, that empowerment is a significant predictor of interpersonal-level trust.
- The study unearthed that teachers’ autonomy is their sense of freedom to make their own decisions about living, programmes, books and instrumental planning.
- The study has also revealed that supervision is a distinct professional activity in which education and training aimed at developing science-informed practice is facilitated through a collaborative interpersonal process.
- The study revealed that to really understand and assist in the enhancement of supervision, the supervision scholar must interact with supervisors and teachers on a regular basis, and that interaction should include reflective dialogue on theory, research and practice.

- It is evident, from the study, that ownership of goals and work commitments were enhanced by delegation of responsibilities to supervisees, which was some form of power equalisation strategies and empowering themselves. **Teacher Leader 8** supports this when she states that: *“Teachers were viewed as unique individuals capacitated with potentials and needs.”*

## 5.4 CONCLUSIONS

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The study aimed at exploring the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. The study unpacked most of the concerns of teacher leaders who are supervisors of student teachers on teaching practice. As a senior lecturer at one of the teacher education colleges in Masvingo, the researcher learnt several lessons about how distributed leadership influences teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. Teacher leaders are faced with challenges in enacting distributed leadership as a supervisory tool. These include lack of resources, teacher in competencies, poor student teacher classroom management skills, a change in school culture and school head's attitude towards the implementation of DL. The study concludes that teacher leaders can use distributed leadership because it has a positive influence on teaching practice supervision.

## 5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

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5.5.1 The limitations presented here are intended to provide possible improvements when conducting such studies in future. Respondents in the study were drawn from one district; Masvingo District. Masvingo Province has seven districts. Each district may be unique, limiting the generalisation of the findings. The findings cannot, therefore, be generalised to all teacher leaders in the district or the country. Even though the research findings are not generalisable, the research might open up avenues for further research and provide answers to some problems related to supervision of pre-service teachers which can be adapted to and/or provide lessons for other teacher leaders and districts.

5.5.2 This study was a product of two supervisors. The proposal was initiated by one supervisor who left the university before it was approved. It took time before I was reallocated another supervisor, who

then struggled to make sense of my proposal since it was a product of another supervisor. However, my new supervisor soldiered on despite the limitations.

5.5.3 The period of six months of data collection for this study was inadequate and perhaps more time and participants would enable the findings to be generalisable. The limited number of participants, coupled with a limited data collection period, limits the generalisability of the findings of this study.

## **5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

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Despite the limitations of the study outlined in the previous section, I am convinced that this study is an instalment to scholarship on the influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in teacher education colleges. There is paucity of information on the influence of distributed leadership as a tool to effective supervision of student teachers. The area of distributed leadership influence on teacher leaders is largely unexplored and may have a lot of issues that may impact supervision in schools, an area largely unexplored, has its own limitations, as stated above, and being aware that it cannot exhaustively solve all the issues and concerns on a critical issue such as supervising, I do, however, feel that the study will make a modest contribution to the existing scholarship on preparatory teacher development programmes. Hence, the study contributes knowledge to scholarship on supervision using the Zimbabwe context as an example.

The study opens debate on the quality of supervision of pre-service teachers in Zimbabwean schools. Many questions remain unanswered about “what” and “how” distributed leadership supervision should be implemented. Equally important, the study questions the logic of continuing to have incompetent teacher leader supervisors shouldering the bulk of the responsibility in the initial development of the country’s future teachers. Scholars on distributed leadership supervision of student teachers on practicum argue that teacher leaders should lead from an informal position (Gronn, 2008; Spillane et al., 2007, cited in Wing Institute, 2021). This study provides new knowledge on supervision of student teachers on practicum by teacher leaders using the distributed leadership approach.

The study revealed that student teachers released by teacher education colleges for teaching practice are “raw” and that incompetent and unsupported teacher leaders struggle on their own. The study contributes to the on-going debate about teacher initial development and distributed leadership. The

study provides new knowledge on how unsupported teacher leaders almost shoulder the responsibility of developing new teachers as they are with pre-service teachers for the greater part of the training. This is in support with the symbolic interactionism theory by Mead, which suggests that individuals interact with each other. Such critical issues raised by this study beg for answers and require immediate attention. The study suggests that there is need for more research to address these issues and many others raised in this study.

The study brought to the fore the need for teacher leaders to improve their competencies and also to be empowered to lead as it does not only bring about the much-needed and elusive quality in teacher development, but also aligns with international standards as revealed by the literature reviewed for this study (Wing Institute, 2020). More specifically, the study makes a bold statement that it is erroneous to think that any experienced teacher is eligible to become a supervisor. I, therefore, recommend the empowerment of teacher leaders for their teaching practice supervisory role. This is supported by the distributed leadership theory which holds that leadership is not a one man band but should be a collaborative effort.

The study contributed to the debate raging in Zimbabwe about the quality of the teacher development programmes offered in Zimbabwe (Ngara & Ngwarai, 2012). The study established that student teachers released by colleges for teaching practice were incapable of crafting instructional objectives, managing classrooms and let alone lesson delivery. This critical finding makes a modest contribution to the on-going discourses about the best practices in preliminary development programmes. The study makes a modest contribution by initiating debate on the quality of teacher education programmes in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

The study recommends that policy makers consider extending the pre-service teachers' practicum phase three terms to four terms. This allows teacher leaders to expose student teachers to more practising through on-going collaborative supervision. Thus, the study provokes debate on such an important policy issue in the country.

The study contributes new knowledge on how ill-supported teacher leader supervisors help student teachers develop teaching skills. The study revealed that teacher leaders felt short-changed in terms of

support by school heads. Literature on distributed theory is very clear that teacher leader supervisors should receive on-going support from school heads (Leithwood & Louis, 2012; Murphy, 2005). The study, thus, makes a bold statement that distributed leadership needs to be clearly understood by both the teacher leaders and the school heads before it may be put into practice in order to develop effective future teachers for the country.

This study also makes a submission to the relevant authorities to consider how they can appreciate the important contribution teacher leaders are making in the development of teachers for the nation. The study provides a new dimension where teacher leaders should be empowered to lead informal, that is without formal leadership positions.

Finally, yet importantly, on a personal note, this study contributed a lot to me as a budding researcher on influence of distributed leadership to teacher leaders. I had personal contact with my supervisor, post-doctoral fellows, PhD colleagues and teacher leaders. This has led to my growth and development first at a personal level and secondly as a researcher. I am growing in the field of research and with this experience, will never be the same again.

## **5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND POLICY**

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Below are recommendations for the improvement of supervision in schools.

### **5.7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

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- School heads should empower teacher leaders to fully take the position of leading so that they become confident in supervising the pre-service teachers informally. They can achieve this by getting out of the teacher leaders way and leave them to practice supervision using their experience.
- Schools should provide on-going professional development for teacher leaders, especially on distributed leadership. This will help the teachers understand distributed leadership as a new idea which can be effectively used to supervise students on teaching practice. Workshops and in-service courses can be held at school, cluster and district level to give insight on distributed leadership.

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## **5.7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY**

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- The Centre for Teacher Education and Materials Development (CTEMD) at the University of Zimbabwe, as the standards control unit for all teachers' colleges in the country, should consider coming up with a comprehensive document detailing the "what" and "how" of supervising student teachers during teaching practice. The document should also include teacher leader supervisors' selection criteria.
- Policy makers should consider reviewing the whole teacher education programme. The study established that colleges released pre-service teachers who are not sufficiently equipped for the teaching tasks in schools. Teacher leaders felt that their supervisees (student teachers) lacked the basic skills of crafting user friendly objectives in lesson plans, managing of classrooms as well as professionalism. It is suggested that the teacher education development programme should be changed from 3-3-3 to 3-4-2. Such a change is likely going to provide teacher leaders with adequate time to expose themselves to effective collaborative supervision of student teachers. This is likely going to give teacher leaders an opportunity to engage in clinical supervision and give student teachers more time to practice classroom management skills. At the present moment as it stands, are abdicating their responsibility of training teachers, shouldering it on ill-prepared teacher leaders who are not confident of their supervisory role.
- The policymakers should consider incentivising teacher leaders who are playing a critical role in the development of future teachers for the nation. The study established that teacher leaders are pivotal in the preparatory development of teachers as they have student teachers for the bulk of their training programme. At the same time, teacher leaders are expected to teach their learners, and thus overloading their schedules. It is, therefore, reasonable to recommend that they be given a token of appreciation for the work they are doing for the country.

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## **5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

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The following recommendations for further study on this topic are made:

- This study focused on teacher leaders' perspectives on distributed leadership supervision in one province and three teachers' colleges in the country. Further studies may focus on supervision in other provinces and even include more participants to provide a broader view on this vital field.

- The study established that teacher leaders should continuously improve their attitude towards teaching so that they become innovative, critical thinkers and effective decision makers hence a need for ongoing improvement through total quality management.

## **5.9 FINAL REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY**

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There are limited studies in Zimbabwe that focus on teacher leaders' perspectives on supervision of pre-service teachers during their practicum. The study bared and unpacked most of the concerns of teacher leaders who are supervisors of student teachers on teaching practice. As a senior lecturer at one of the teacher education colleges in Masvingo, I learnt several lessons about how teacher leaders perceived their roles, challenges and how best they could be empowered to effectively supervise student teachers. The study revealed that teacher leaders require on-going support in the form of empowerment and clear understanding of distributed leadership to enhance effective supervision. I was, however, surprised with the zeal and willingness of teacher leaders to assist in developing essential skills despite unfavourable conditions in which they operate. Teacher leaders should be provided with sufficient authority to lead from an informal position.

This study has actually changed my thinking about supervision of pre-service teachers. I used to believe that teacher leaders, as qualified and experienced teachers, could have the competence and empowerment to supervise student teachers from an informal position. This proved me wrong as those in the field clearly advised me that there was need for teacher leaders to understand distributed leadership first then they would be enhanced and supported to lead from an informal position. The study revealed that the three terms for practising teaching by student teachers on teaching practice was not enough to enable full collaborative supervision. I am now aware that teacher leaders and school heads need to collaborate in the development of teachers for the nation. I was guided by the philosophy that learning can be best achieved through empowerment and continuous improvement.

This study taught me that teacher leader supervision was not all about problems, but those teacher leaders had immense opportunities to learn and grow professionally if they are given a platform to lead from an informal leadership position. They also could create more knowledge to be competent teachers leaving in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This has taught me that school heads should support their subordinates and

appreciate the good work done by teacher leaders. This proved to me that people could not be experts in everything and hence, the issue of collaboration and working as a team becomes critical.

Equally important were the interactions I had with my supervisor, fellow doctoral students, school heads and teacher leaders as well as ministry officials that were instrumental in helping me to grow professionally. I have come to appreciate the simple logic that in life every human being has a role to play.

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## **APPENDICES**

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### **APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE**

## **GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)**

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22-Nov-2020

Dear Mr John Musarega Mak

asi

### **Application**

**Approved** Research Project

Title:

**THE INFLUENCE OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP ON TEACHING PRACTICES SUPERVISION IN MASVINGO PROVINCE'S TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES.**

Ethical Clearance number:

**UFS-HSD2020/1446/1911**

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any change that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

**DR ADRIDU PLESSIS**

**Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee**



Address

205 Nelson Mandela Drive  
Park  
West Bloemfontein 9301 South  
Africa

## **APPENDIX B: APPLICATION LETTER TO MINISTRY TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH**

Morgenster Teachers College

P.O. Morgenster

Masvingo

12 October 2020

The Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

P. O. Box 89

Causeway

Harare

Dear Sir/Madam

### **RE: Request for permission to carry out research in Masvingo Province**

I hereby request for permission to carry out research in selected primary schools in Masvingo Province, specifically in Masvingo District. The schools are: Dikwindi primary, Runyararo primary, Shakashe primary, Coronation primary, Sikato primary, Nemanwa primary, Don Bosco primary and Murabwiprimary .

My name is John Makasi and I am presently studying for PhD degree with the University of the Free State. As part of my Doctoral programme, I am required to conduct a research on an aspect of interest with a view to making a contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the issue under study. The title of my research project is:

**The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo province's teacher education colleges.**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on improving the supervision and professional practice of pre-service teachers during their teaching practice. I am particularly interested in how the school based supervisors perceive the role of distributed leadership in developing pre-service teachers' professional growth, challenges of distributed leadership to supervising pre-service teachers, the demands and expectations from teacher leaders as core supervisors of student teachers as well as their contributions in

discerning a supervision model in effort to improve student teachers' professional practice in Zimbabwe. The study has the potential to benefit Principals of teachers colleges, lecturers, school heads, teacher leaders, student teachers, the University of Zimbabwe, the two ministries and policy markers by pointing out demands and expectations, the challenges as well as needs for supporting teachers in their professional growth.

The study will involve (i) Interviews with 8 teacher leaders/ mentors at their school.(ii) Focus Group discussions with 8 teacher leaders (iii) Analysing the teaching practice supervision documents for the teachers colleges with teacher leaders. The interviews will take 30-45 minutes, the focus group discussions will take 1 1/2 hours and document analysis will take 1 hour.

I undertake to observe confidentiality and to protect participants from physical and/or psychological harm. No names of the schools and/or persons shall be used in any reports of the research. All participants will be asked to participate voluntarily in the study and may withdraw at any time should they so wish.

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide written reports to The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, The University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education, The standards control department.

I will also share my research findings with primary School teachers and school heads in Masvingo district, and possibly with other districts as well.

I attach a letter of recommendation from my research supervisor regarding the study and my progress.

If you need any further information and/ or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me and/ or my research supervisor Doctor NtombizandileGcelu on [GceluN@ufs.ac.za](mailto:GceluN@ufs.ac.za) or +2772 377 3177

Thank you for your kind consideration to my request

Yours Sincerely

John Makasi

Cell: 263774051326 (e-mail: makasij80@gmail.com)

**APPENDIX C: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

*All communications should be addressed to  
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary  
Education"  
Telephone: 799214 and 795153  
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"  
Fax: 791923*



**Reference: C/426/3  
Ministry of Primary and  
Secondary Education  
P.O Box CY 121  
Causeway  
ZIMBABWE**

23 October 2020

John Musarega Makasi  
Morgenster Teachers College  
P. O. Morgenster  
Masvingo

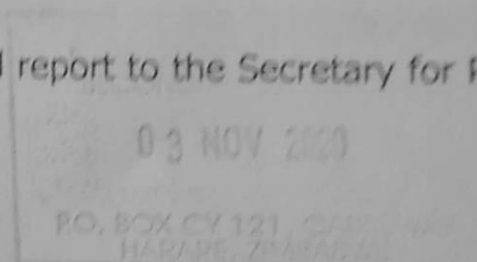
**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MASVINGO PROVINCE;  
MASVINGO DISTRICT: DIKWINDI; RUNYARARO; SHAKASHE; CORONATION;  
SIKATO; NEMAMWA; DON BOSCO AND MURABWI PRIMARY SCHOOLS**


Reference is made to your application to carry out a research in the above mentioned schools in Masvingo Province on the research title:

**"THE INFLUENCE OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP ON TEACHING PRACTICE  
SUPERVISION IN MASVINGO PROVINCE'S TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director Masvingo Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. Where students are involved, parental consent is required.

You are required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.



  
T. Thabela (Mrs)  
**SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**APPENDIX D: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR**

*ALL communications should be addressed to*  
**"The Provincial Education Director for Primary and Secondary Education"**  
**Telephone: 263585/264331**  
**Fax: 039-263261**



**Ref: C/426/3**

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education  
P. O Box 89  
Masvingo

07 March 2021

John Musarega Makasi  
Morgenster Teachers' College  
P. O. Morgenster  
Masvingo

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH AT RUNYARARO, SHAKASHE, CORONATION, SIKATO, NEMAMWA, DON BOSCO AND MURABWI PRIMARY SCHOOLS: MASVINGO DISTRICT: MASVINGO PROVINCE**

Reference is made to your application to carry out a research at the above mentioned schools in Masvingo District.

**"THE INFLUENCE OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP ON TEACHING PRACTICE SUPERVISION IN MASVINGO PROVINCE'S TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES."**

Please be advised that the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education has granted permission to carry out your research.

You are also advised to liaise with the District Education Officer who is responsible for the schools which are part of the sample for your research.

*S. Mhike*  
S. Mhike  
Acting Provincial Education Director  
**MASVINGO PROVINCE**



## **APPENDIX E: APPLICATION LETTER TO SCHOOL HEADS.**

Morgenster Teachers' College

P. O. Morgenster

Masvingo

05 May 2021

The Head

..... primary school

Masvingo

### **Re: Request for permission to carry out a research at your school**

Dear Sir/Madam

I hereby request to carry out a research at your school . My name is John Makasi, and I am presently studying for a PhD with the University of the Free State. As part of my studies, I am required to conduct research on an aspect of interest and I am interested in the influence of distributed leadership in supervision of student teachers. The title of my research project is:

### **The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo province's teacher education colleges.**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of distributed leadership on improving the supervision and professional practice of pre-service teachers during their teaching practice. I am particularly interested in how the school based supervisors perceive the role of distributed leadership in developing pre-service teachers' professional growth, challenges of distributed leadership to supervising pre-service teachers, the demands and expectations from teacher leaders as core supervisors of student teachers as well as their contributions in discerning a supervision model in effort to improve student teachers' professional practice in Zimbabwe. The study has the potential to benefit Principals of teachers colleges, lecturers, school heads, teacher leaders, student teachers, the University of Zimbabwe, the two ministries and policy markers by pointing out demands and expectations, the challenges as well as needs for supporting teachers in their professional growth.

The study will involve (i) Interviews with 3 teacher leaders/ mentors at their school.(ii) Focus Group discussions with 3 teacher leaders (iii) Analysing the teaching practice supervision

documents for the teachers colleges with teacher leaders. The interviews will take 30-45 minutes, the focus group discussions will take 30-45 minutes and document analysis will take 30-45 minutes..

I undertake to observe confidentiality and to protect participants from physical and/or psychological harm. No names of the schools and/or persons shall be used in any reports of the research. All participants will be asked to participate voluntarily in the study and may withdraw at any time should they so wish.

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide written reports to The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, The University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education, The standards control department.

I will also share my research findings with primary School teachers and school heads in Masvingo district, and possibly with other districts as well I attach a letter of recommendation from my research supervisor regarding the study and my progress.

If you need any further information and/ or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me and/ or my research supervisor Doctor NtombizandileGcelu on [GceluN@ufs.ac.za](mailto:GceluN@ufs.ac.za) or +2772 377 3177

Thank you for your kind consideration to my request

Yours Sincerely

John Makasi

Cell: 263774051326 (e-mail: [makasij80@gmail.com](mailto:makasij80@gmail.com))

**APPENDIX F: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY**

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY**

I, .....(participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study. I understand that my participation I voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/ or conference proceedings.

I agree to the recording of the insert specific data collection method.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Full Name of Participant:.....

Signature of Participant: ..... Date .....

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): .....

Signature of Researcher :..... Date.....

## **APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL /SCHEDULE**

**Topic:** The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo province teacher education colleges.

Responses will be audio taped and transcribed, field notes will be written as well.

1. Name and background; How long have you been teaching? How long have you been supervising pre-service teachers? Where?
2. How is it to be like a supervisor of pre-service teacher? (Probe, is it demanding/ In what ways is it demanding? Can you tell me 2 or 3 challenges you face in supervising pre-service teachers?
3. For how long have you been involved in supervision of pre-service teachers? Can you tell me 2 or 3 things you like about supervision and why?  
Can you tell me 2 or 3 things you do not like about supervision and why?
4. Let us talk a little bit about the Masvingo teacher education supervision role.
  - a) What can you tell me about the teacher education college that deploys student teachers at your school?
  - b) Can you tell me what supervision of pre-service teachers by teacher education colleges means to you?
  - c) Can you tell me 3 or 4 roles of teacher leaders in supervision of pre-service teachers?
5. Let us talk a bit about distributed leadership and its influence on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo teacher education colleges.
  - a) In your own opinion what can you tell me about distributed leadership?
  - b) Can you tell me how distributed leadership can influence supervision of pre-service teachers?
  - c) Let us talk about the differences between distributed leadership and other forms of leadership styles that you know or that you witnessed.  
(e.g. being used by School heads, Deputy heads/Teacher in charge, College lecturers and External assessors). Probe did you benefit from their way of supervision? In what way?
  - d) Did you see the influence of distributed leadership in their supervision style? If so how? If not why? Give suggestions for improvement.

6. Let us now talk on how distributed leadership can be used to enhance teaching knowledge among student teachers.
  - a) Can you tell me 3 or 4 expectations from teacher leaders/supervisors to enhance effective supervision of pre-service teachers?
  - b) Who should initiate for there to be harmony in the supervision methods by stakeholders in teacher education colleges?
  - c) Can you suggest what issues have to be looked into/discussed when these stakeholders are brought together. Give 3 or 4 issues.
  - d) As a supervisor of pre-service teachers, what is your overall assessment on the influence of distributed leadership towards supervision in teacher education colleges? Can you explain a little bit more giving example?
7. I wish to focus a little on how you regard the viability of distributed leadership in supervision of pre-service teachers in teacher education colleges.
  - a) What 3 or 4 things do you think Masvingo province teacher education colleges use in their supervision which is of benefit to student teachers?
  - b) Which 3 or 4 ineffective ways are being used by teacher education colleges in supervising pre-service teachers? Can you explain by giving examples for each of them?
8. Lets now focus on the challenges supervisors may face in using the distributed leadership approach in teaching practice supervision.
  - a) What are the advantages/benefits of using distributed leadership in supervision in general and in supervision of pre-service teachers in particular? Can you explain giving examples?
  - b) What challenges do teacher leaders face in using distributed leadership style when supervising pre-service teachers? (Probe: How? Can you explain giving examples?)
  - c) Do you have opportunities to collaborate with other teacher leaders from other education colleges mentoring student teachers? Probe for: How it happens, How the collaboration is facilitated? Who facilitates? Around what issues or topics do teacher leaders and other stakeholders deliberate on. If not suggest ways of initiating it.
  - d) In your opinion, how can there be opportunities of collaboration among teacher leaders mentoring student teachers in Masvingo teacher education colleges?

- e) If you were in charge of all teacher education colleges, what would you do differently that you think would make people say “Wow, a new broom in town.”  
Probe: Give me some examples and tell me why you would take this approach.
- f) Are there any other issues that you think we did not cover in our conversation about supervision that you think are important for me to know?

Thank you very much for participating in this study. I will phone or call again if I may need any further clarification.

God bless you!!!

## **Appendix H: Focus Group Protocol**

### Focus Group Discussion -Teacher Leaders

Topic: The influence of distributed leadership on teaching practice supervision in Masvingo province teacher education colleges.

Introduction and setting ground rules for the proceedings.

#### 1 Background

- May you tell me how long you have been a teacher? Of these years how many of these have you been supervising the pre-service teacher?
- Which year group students have you supervised?

#### 2 Let us discuss the challenges you meet in your role as a supervisor of primary pre-service teacher during the time they are attached to you.

- May you identify at least four challenges.
- How can you overcome these challenges?

#### 3 Let us talk about distributed leadership and its influence in developing pre-service teachers' professional growth.

- What do you understand by the term distributed leadership?
- How can distributed leadership be used to enhance effective supervision of pre-service teachers by you?

#### 4 You supervise students of different levels during teaching practice.

- What will be your focus for primary for primary pre-service teachers who will be in? a) First year (b) second year (c) third and final year.
- Tell me, do you think distributed leadership can help give to the student teacher considerable help?

#### 5 Let us talk about supervision models to be discerned in an effort to improve the professional practices of pre-service teachers in Zimbabwe.

- What do you understand by the term model of supervision?
- What model is your school using to supervise pre-service teachers?
- Is the model clear to you?
- Can you correctly interpret the college supervision form used to supervise the pre-service teacher attached to you?
- Give some challenges you face in interpreting this form.

- What elements can be included in this form so that it becomes user friendly?
6. As a supervisor you have a good number of stakeholders you work with in supervising pre-service primary teachers during teaching practice. Can we discuss your expectations from the following stakeholders: a) The primary pre-service teacher b)The School head/Deputy head, Teacher in Charge c) College lecturers d)The external assessors?
  7. What are your major recommendations can you give to improve the quality of student teacher supervision during teaching practice?
  8. What do you perceive as your opportunities when using distributed leadership to supervise pre-service teachers during their teaching practice time? Give three or more opportunities.
  9. Would you like to think about how you were trained as a teacher?
    - Discuss how it prepared or not prepared you for supervision
    - What would you give as most training programme to equip teachers with distributed leadership qualities?
  10. Let us discuss the supervision forms for your respective colleges. If you were to come up with a form which is user friendly to you:
    - Which items would you delete from the form and why?
    - Which items are of influence to distributed leadership?

Thank you, colleagues, for such a wonderful experience.

Good day!!!                      God bless!!!

## **APPENDIX I: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL**

### **SUPERVISION FORM**

1. Demands and expectations for supervisors
  - a) Comparing and contrasting lesson preparation expectations by pre-service teachers from the three teachers, colleges supervision forms.
  - b) Giving the teaching practice documents expected to be maintained by the pre-service teachers from education teachers' colleges
  - c) Identifying the lesson presentation procedures expected from pre-service teachers in their endeavour to be qualified teachers.
2. Distributive leadership and the enhancement of teaching knowledge among student teachers.
  - a) Analysing how the supervision forms can instil distributive leadership skills in teacher leaders
  - b) Identifying items in the supervision form which might empower teacher leaders to practice distributed leadership skills.
3. Challenges that may be faced by teacher leaders in interpreting the supervision form
  - a) Different format design for the supervision form as per each college in Masvingo teacher education colleges
  - b) How teacher leaders interpret the supervision form and how to come out with uniform make allocation to student teachers.
4. The model for distributive leadership supervision that can be discerned from the supervision forms

## APPENDIX J: TRANSCRIBING AND CODING OF RESPONSES

### THE INFLUENCE OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP ON TEACHING PRACTICE SUPERVISION IN MASVINGO PROVINCE TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES INTERVIEWS

#### Question 1

**What are the demands and expectations of teacher leaders from pre-service teachers during supervision?**

Transcribing and coding data: Theme 1

Answers

Teacher leader 1: One expects to see documents which are user friendly, especially plans of work. They have to have objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable and time framed. The student teacher's should establish good rapport with the class. The professional attitude of student teachers should be of a role model and exemplary.

Teacher leader 2: The crafted Objectives should fulfil the requirements of the syllabus. Student teachers should also be familiar and adhere to the code of professional ethics. When it comes to classroom management, the classroom should have varied and well presented charts according to subject areas.

Teacher leader 3: When framing objectives, Objectives framed should be relevant to the age level of the learners. Teachers should be given professional responsibilities that will enrich our nation with a learned and effective citizenry. The classroom environment should be conducive to learning and class control should be effective.

Teacher leader 4: Crafting of objectives should follow Bloom's taxonomy which considers known to unknown criteria. The classroom learning centres should be educative. A student teacher should have a strong and positive professional identity to be effective teachers.

Teacher leader 5: Remediation objectives should be in the range of the slow learners' capabilities and those for extension should be challenging. The Classroom should constitute a hive of activities during the learning process and group work practised. To adopt professional identity student teachers need to adopt new roles and responsibilities

Teacher leader 6: Student teachers must use action words to craft specific objectives. The classroom should be a work shop in which learners work and shop through play and discovery. Pre-service teachers should take note of the professional responsibility of continuously learning and inspiring learning.

Teacher leader 7: A lesson should constitute not less than two objectives. The classroom chalk board work should be exemplary so student teachers should practice chalk board work. Professionalism to student teachers should mean being good at one's job, fulfilling the highest standards and achieving excellence

Teacher leader 8: The test objectives should be in line with the concept taught that week. Learners' work should also be displayed in the classroom. Classroom management is a crucial professional responsibility of a student teacher

From the above responses the similar patterns are:

Teacher leader 1: Objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable and time framed

Teacher leader 2: Objectives should fulfil the requirements of the syllabus

Teacher leader 3: Objectives framed should be relevant to the age level of the learners.

Teacher leader 4: Crafting of objectives should follow Bloom's taxonomy which considers known to unknown criteria.

Teacher leader 5: Remediation objectives should be in the range of the slow learners' capabilities and those for extension should be challenging.

Teacher leader 6: Student teachers must use action words to craft specific objectives.

Teacher leader 7: A lesson should constitute not less than two objectives

Teacher leader 8: The test objectives should be in line with the concept taught that week.

From the above similar codes I categorised them as: Crafting of user friendly objectives.

The second group of similar patterns from question 1 were:

Teacher leader 1: The student teacher's should establish good rapport with the class.

Teacher leader 2: When it comes to classroom management, the classroom should have varied and well presented charts according to subject areas.

Teacher leader 3: The classroom environment should be conducive to learning and class control should be effective

Teacher leader 4: The classroom learning centres should be educative.

Teacher leader 5: The Classroom should constitute a hive of activities during the learning process and group work practised

Teacher leader 6: The classroom should be a work shop in which learners work and shop through play and discovery.

Teacher leader 7: The classroom chalk board work should be exemplary so student teachers should practice chalk board work

Teacher leader 8 Learners' work should also be displayed in the classroom.

From the above similar codes I came up with the theme:

Classroom management skills

Another group of similar excerpts from question 1 are below

Teacher leader 1: professional attitude of student teachers should be of a role model and exemplary

Teacher leader 2: Student teachers should also be familiar and adhere to the code of professional ethics.

Teacher leader 3 Teachers should be given professional responsibilities that will enrich our nation with a learned and effective citizenry

Teacher leader 4: To adopt professional identity student teachers need to adopt new roles and responsibilities

Teacher leader 5: A student teacher should have a strong and positive professional identity to be effective teachers

Teacher leader 6 Pre-service teachers should take note of the professional responsibility of continuously learning and inspiring learning.

Teacher leader 7: Professionalism to student teachers should mean being good at one's job, fulfilling the highest standards and achieving excellence

Teacher leader 8 Classroom management is a crucial professional responsibility of a student teacher

From the above excerpts I came up with category:

Professional responsibilities

Theme 1: School- based supervisors' demands and expectations on supervision of pre-service teachers

The sub-theme: Teacher leader's views on demands and expectations for effective supervision of pre-service teachers for professional growth

## Interview question 2:

**What are the challenges you meet when supervising student teachers on teaching practice?**

Transcribing and coding data: Theme 2

## Responses

Teacher leader 1: Schools lack adequate textbooks, revision books and resource books to extent children's knowledge. Some teachers are incompetent to create a lot of new ideas, they are not able to many things and to apply in new skills to a progressively widening scope of situations and experiences such as gaining new competencies as well as building new relations. School stakeholders do not have a culture and the zeal to improve themselves academically. School heads avoid using the untapped teacher resource, for change and improvement in schools deliberately.

Teacher leader 2: Ohoh! Paucity of material resources is a factor that contributes to ineffective teaching in primary schools. Teachers again lack competencies in Information and Technology since most of us were born before technology. Teachers do not have positive school culture that empowers them through distributed leadership. School heads fail to realise that teacher leaders can take on a key role of bringing teachers to work and develop together rather than as isolated teachers within the walls of their classrooms.

Lady teacher leader 3: Material factors such as income plays a part in determining pupil's performance in schools. Therefore lack of resources like money to provide children with some educational opportunities hinders pupil performance in schools. Teachers do not want to gain new competencies and building relationships as well as assuming new roles. Teachers in schools lack favourable school cultures such as positive climate of teacher collaboration. The school heads cannot utilise effectively the human capital by bringing it together so that teachers work together harmoniously.

Lady teacher leader 4: Other useful resources that are not adequately provided are time and text books. Schools do not have enough textbooks for the learners. One book can be shared among five pupils or there is only one text book provided for the teacher. Teachers have no school culture that evokes school wide decision making. Teachers are not competent to be critical thinkers and problem solvers. School heads face challenges of adequately preparing teachers for the global realities brought about by economic, social, and environmental changes.

Teacher leader 5: Teachers lack time and management skills to cover the syllabus adequately. Teacher leaders are incompetent to share relationships, encourage cooperation and foster a professional culture of collaboration with existing hierarchical structures and leadership systems. Teachers lack a school culture of exercising influence within and beyond classroom walls so that they work towards whole school and organised change. School heads do not give teachers an opportunity for them to be accepted as leaders among their peers.

Teacher leader 6: Lack of special needs teachers in schools make teaching of learners leaving with disability difficult since they are included in the main stream. Student teachers are not competent to socially situate themselves and develop deep levels of social and professional exchanges. Teachers are not able to develop a school culture were by opportunities for teachers to reflect on their instructional activities collaboratively. The system were by teachers persist in old norms of working in isolation should be replaced by a change in attitude by the school heads and replaced by with new norms of collaboration and team work

Teacher leader 7: Classrooms are inadequate in urban schools set up and hence children are involved in hot seating. School cultures which are elicit for peer support for instructional improvement do not exist in our schools. Teachers in today's world are incompetent to practice current skills of living in the world with personal and social responsibility. School heads have hidden agendas that limit teacher leaders to influence in decision making processes at school.

Teacher leader 8: Lack of computers and internet connectivity in schools makes it very difficult to expose learners to information technology especially in rural set up. Teachers are incompetent to positioning themselves and repositioning themselves in a fast changing world. A positive school climate culture were by teachers are equipped with leadership responsibility is not prevalent in schools. School heads have the attitude of getting people to follow them and not working through them.

Similar excerpts from responses

Teacher leader 1: Schools lack adequate textbooks, revision books and resource books to extent children's knowledge.

Teacher leader 2: Paucity of material resources is a factor that contributes to ineffective teaching in primary schools.

Lady teacher leader 3: Therefore lack of resources like money to provide children with some educational opportunities hinders pupil performance in schools.

Lady teacher leader 4: Other useful resources that are not adequately provided are time and text books. Schools do not have enough textbooks for the learners

Teacher leader 5: Teachers lack time and management skills to cover the syllabus adequately.

Teacher leader 6: Lack of special needs teachers in schools make teaching of learners leaving with disability difficult since they are included in the main stream.

Teacher leader 7: Classrooms are inadequate in urban schools set up and hence children are involved in hot seating

Teacher leader 8: Lack of computers and internet connectivity in schools makes it very difficult to expose learners to information technology especially in rural set up

From the above similar patterns I came up with a category:

#### Lack of resources

Coded similar responses

Teacher leader 1: Some teachers are incompetent to create a lot of new ideas , they are not able to many things and to apply in new skills to a progressively widening scope of situations and experiences such as gaining new competencies as well as building new relations.

Teacher leader 2: Teachers again lack competencies in Information and Technology since most of us were born before technology.

Teacher leader 3: Teachers do not want to gain new competencies and building relationships as well as assuming new roles

Teacher leader 4: .Teachers are not competent to be critical thinkers and problem solvers.

Teacher leader 5: Teacher leaders are incompetent to share relationships, encourage cooperation and foster a professional culture of collaboration with existing hierarchical structures and leadership systems.

Teacher leader 6: Teachers are not competent to socially situate themselves and develop deep levels of social and professional exchanges.

Teacher leader 7: Teachers in today's world are incompetent to practice current skills of living in the world with personal and social responsibility.

Teacher leader 8: Teachers are incompetent to positioning themselves and repositioning themselves in a fast changing world.

From the above similar excerpts I came up with category:

#### Teacher leaders' in competencies

Similar excerpts from responses

.Teacher leader 1: School stakeholders do not have a culture and the zeal to improve themselves academically.

Teacher leader 2: .Teachers do not have positive school culture that empowers them through distributed leadership

Teacher leader 3: Teachers in schools lack favourable school cultures such as positive climate of teacher collaboration

Teacher leader 4: Teachers have no school culture that evokes school wide decision making.

Teacher leader 5: Teachers lack a school culture of exercising influence within and beyond classroom walls so that they work towards whole school and organised change.

Teacher leader 6: . Teachers are not able to develop a school culture were by opportunities for teachers to reflect on their instructional activities collaboratively.

Teacher leader 7: School cultures which are elicited for peer support for instructional improvement do not exist in our schools

Teacher leader 8: A positive school climate culture were by teachers are equipped with leadership responsibility is not prevalent in schools.

From the codes above a category was formulated

#### A changing school culture

Teacher leader 1: School heads avoid using the untapped teacher resource, for change and improvement in schools deliberately

Teacher leader 2: School heads fail to realise that teacher leaders can take on a key role of bringing teachers to work and develop together rather than as isolated teachers within the walls of their classrooms.

Teacher leader 3: The school heads cannot utilise effectively the human capital by bringing it together so that teachers work together harmoniously

Teacher leader 4: School heads face challenges of adequately preparing teachers for the global realities brought about by economic, social, and environmental changes.

Teacher leader 5: School heads do not give teachers an opportunity for them to be accepted as leaders among their peers

Teacher leader 6: be replaced by a change in attitude by the school heads and replaced by with new norms of collaboration and team work

Teacher leader 7: School heads have hidden agendas that limit teacher leaders to influence in decision making processes at school.

Teacher leader 8: School heads have the attitude of getting people to follow them and not working through them.

The above similar excerpts were categorised as:

School heads' attitude towards teacher leadership to influence distributive leadership

### Interview question 3

**How can distributed leadership empower teacher leaders to unleash leadership roles in schools?**

Transcribing and coding data for Theme 3

Lady teacher leader 1: Teachers need to be empowered towards decision making on how to face the future through ongoing improvement of competencies. They need to improve their

knowledge, skills and attitudes. School heads should open up and show that professional attitudes and values are at the core of teacher standards

Lady teacher leader 2: Okay, if given an opportunity teachers can bring out very fruitful suggestions on issues pertaining to professional development in teaching. Their empowerment can be through developing their leadership knowledge and skills through in-school professional learning activities probably by being mentored by senior colleagues. School heads should ensure that teachers are depicted as committed or resourceful enough to cope with working

Teacher leader 3 :Aaaha! Being a class teacher is not the only duty for the teacher. His/her work does not end in the classroom but extends outwards into the people that matter most on students learning. Therefore a teacher should have the empowerment to collaborate with fellow teachers, learners, school administration, parents, the community and Dona agents. School heads should also assist to open up and let teachers accommodate the view that high trust towards colleagues creates room for trying new applications.

Teacher leader 4: The teachers has several functions in the school that is, they can be empowered to function as informal leaders who can support other teachers without the formal duty of leading. School heads should generate and promote in teachers open minds that encourage people to accept new ideas.

Teacher leader 5: A teacher is a community liaison representative. Teacher empowerment can also come into effect through sharing and presenting their work outside their school by presenting at conferences. School heads should give way to let teachers develop the culture that creates confidence in innovation since it impacts on the on the behaviour of people towards empowerment.

Teacher leader 6: Teachers should be empowered to develop the culture that creates confidence in innovation. School heads should support teachers by instilling confidence so that they aspire to be involved in school decision making processes.

Teacher leader 7: Teachers should be empowered to grow professionally and take responsibilities of their actions. School heads can support the expertise in teachers by sharing the wealthy of experiences in them as well as seeing them as influencers.

Teacher leader 8: Teachers should be empowered to see the expertise they have, and at the same time use it to improve their relationship trust with colleagues. School heads that share or distribute leadership responsibilities perform better on a variety of measures.

Similar pattern responses

Lady teacher leader 1: Teachers need to be empowered towards decision making on how to face the future through ongoing improvement of competencies.

Teacher leader 2: Their empowerment can be through developing their leadership knowledge and skills through in-school professional learning activities probably by being mentored by senior colleagues.

Teacher leader 3: Therefore a teacher should have the empowerment to collaborate with fellow teachers, learners, school administration, parents, the community and Dona agents.

Teacher leader 4: they can be empowered to function as informal leaders who can support other teachers without the formal duty of leading.

Teacher leader 5 : Teacher empowerment can also come into effect through sharing and presenting their work outside their school by presenting at conferences.

Teacher leader 6: Teachers should be empowered to develop the culture that creates confidence in innovation.

Teacher leader 7: Teachers should be empowered to grow professionally and take responsibilities of their actions.

Teacher leader 8: Teachers should be empowered to see the expertise they have, and at the same time use it to improve their relationship trust with colleagues.

From the above similar codes I came up with a category 1

Teacher leaders' perception on unleashing leadership roles

Similar responses coded:

Teacher leader 1: School heads should open up and show that professional attitudes and values are at the core of teacher standards

Teacher leader 2: School heads should ensure that teachers are depicted as committed or resourceful enough to cope with working

Teacher leader 3: School heads should also assist to open up and let teachers accommodate the view that high trust towards colleagues creates room for trying new applications.

Teacher leader 4: School heads should generate and promote in teachers open minds that encourage people to accept new ideas

Teacher leader 5: School heads should give way to let teachers develop the culture that creates confidence in innovation since it impacts on the on the behaviour of people towards empowerment.

Teacher leader 6: School heads should support teachers by instilling confidence so that they aspire to be involved in school decision making processes.

Teacher leader 7: School heads can support the expertise in teachers by sharing the wealth of experiences in them as well as seeing them as influencers.

Teacher leader 8: School heads that share or distribute leadership responsibilities perform better on a variety of measures.

From the above similar responses I came up with a category:

School heads' support on teacher leader empowerment

Theme 3: Sub-Theme 3: Teachers' perception on how to unleash leadership potentials.

Theme 3: Category 1: Teacher leaders' perception on unleashing leadership roles..

#### Interview question 4

(a) How can distributive supervision models improve the professional practice of the pre-service teachers?

(b) Which supervision model can you consider to be instrumental for effective use when supervising pre-service teachers on teaching practice and why?

(c) Why in your own opinion is clinical supervision an effective tool for supervision?

Teacher leader 1: It shapes the student teacher to a full time teacher through highlighting of positive comments. Collegial supervision model because it empowers supervisees as they work jointly in pre-observation, observation and feedback conferences. It is a professional interaction between stakeholders (in this case, teacher and observer) to help teacher's professional development.

Teacher leader 2: It helps on the spot checking of student's records. Artistic supervision model because it considers that there is no one way of teaching as teachers are unique. It focuses on planning, observation, and feedback.

Teacher leader 3: It is used for measuring students' progress. Scientific supervision is more of judgemental and inspection oriented rather than supervision is employed. Teachers are hired to conduct prescribed duties in accordance with wishes of the management. It helps teachers develop and improve through cooperative planning, observation, and feedback.

Teacher leader 4: Supervision, supports, predicts, guides and reviews pre-service teachers. a supervision style which brings about and develops in supervisors and supervisees qualities and skills of appreciation, inference, disclosure and description is the Connoisseurship model of supervision. one has to look at teaching instruction and classroom environment. Which means one has to observe, whether the practising teacher has knowledge of content and pedagogy, respect and rapport with learners, culture of learning, management of classroom procedures, management of learner behaviour, organisation of physical learning space,

communication with learners, questioning and discussion techniques, engaging learners in learning, assessment in instruction and flexibility and responsiveness

Teacher leader 5: To know the effectiveness of classroom management by the teachers. Human relations supervision model because it considers the welfare of the teacher which makes him/her keen to participate collaboratively in school work.

Even in the pre-observation stage, one has to look at the following things from a pre-service teacher perspective; knowledge of content and curriculum, knowledge of learners, knowledge of learning standards, knowledge of instructional strategies, knowledge of resources and technologies and knowledge of assessment strategies.

Teacher leader 6: To improve the methods of teaching and learning. Clinical supervision because the conference held encourages cooperation and engender a feeling of collegiality among all the stakeholders. A meeting is organised with the Teacher Trainee and Cooperating Teacher prior to teaching to provide a plan for future observations,

Teacher leader 7: To create a physical, social and psychological climate or environment. Clinical supervision model because teachers were viewed as unique individuals capacitated with potentials and needs. Clinical supervision provides supportive feedback and make plans for improvement for future teaching

Teacher leader 8: Supervision helps direct and oversee the job of subordinates. Clinical supervision model because Its focus on teaching problems is premised on continuous improvement of the total quality management During the conferences the Supervisor and the Cooperating Teacher provide constructive feedback, support, and guidance.