

EXPLORING SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' LIVED LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES OF
CREATING HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS IN A SOUTH AFRICAN TOWNSHIP

by

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DECLARATION

Student number: 2008029188

I, Mhlengi Innocent Ntshangase, hereby declare that *EXPLORING SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' LIVED LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES OF CREATING HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS IN A SOUTH AFRICAN TOWNSHIP*, is my original work and has not been submitted to any institution of higher learning for attainment of a degree or diploma. All sources I have consulted have been duly acknowledged and indicated in the in-text referencing and in the reference list. I cede copyright to the University of the Free State.

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I, Brian Naidoo, as the language editor (Professional Editors' Guild, number nai001), declare that I edited *Exploring school principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools*.

See appendix H for the official language certificate.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the involvement of modern-day principals who engage in innovative intervention processes to promote excellence in their schools thus sustaining high-quality learner-performance. This arises out of concern that the DoE Diagnostic Report (2017) depicts a depressing picture concerning learner-performances in South African secondary schools that fail to meet the international benchmark. However, there are those schools that are “high-performing.” Given that there exists a correlation between leadership practices and learner-performances, principals of secondary schools who are held accountable for learner-performances, are now proactive such that they institute strategies to uplift learners’ academic results. The qualitative study’s aim is to explore the practices of “lived leadership” by principals of high-performing secondary schools in an effort to contribute to education that will yield good quality results in South African secondary schools. The research project adopted the theory of transformational leadership which was used as a lens to review the relevant literature and critically analyse generated data. In this study, the researcher adopted an interpretive paradigm. Relevant data from each school principal of four (4) high-performing schools in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District (North-West Province) through the responses and transcripts of from individual-semi-structured interviews focusing on their matriculation results of 2017 and 2018. This led to the acquisition of in-depth knowledge and a better understanding of how high- performing secondary school principals utilise their “lived leadership” experiences in order to generate, promote and maintain their highly productive instructional environments. The multi-case study revealed that in their schools where innovativeness in leadership was in operation, school principals focused on the twinning of schools, and supporting and motivating both educators and learners in reaching a shared vision, in addition to engaging in strong collaboration with school community members. Thus, school principals established mutual relationships on the basis of trust, common decision-making, and freedom of communication – all of which can be implemented at other schools. It is recommended that extensive studies (covering all schools in the North-West Province) be conducted to help and keep us informed about the phenomenon. It was suggested that secondary school principals should also support and promote studies

in functional leadership which entails their involvement in more-advanced vocational training sessions, workshops, conferences, and seminars. The intensification of such training should be done in a modern transformational leadership style which solves serious challenges such as school discipline. Additionally, school principals should collaborate to discuss and minimise challenges at schools. Lastly, it was recommended that educators be recognised, praised, and rewarded by principals for their sacrifices to sustain schools' high-performance rates.

Key words/terms: Lived-leadership, Collaboration, High-performing, Twinning, Transformational Leadership

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

- My late parents Sarah Getrude Thabile Mchunu and Bongani Sikhumbuzo Kubheka (Ntshangase). I wish you were here to celebrate my academic success. Although you are no more, your values spurred me on to be resilient through the hardships of this world. Your spirit lives on in me and my work.
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
AGM	Annual General Meeting
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
LTSM	Learner-Teacher Support Materials
MTTR	Ministers' Task Team Report
NCLB	No-Child Left Behind
NCS	National Senior Certificate
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
WBS	Work-Breakdown Structures

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

There has been an unrivalled attentiveness among researchers, practitioners, and political leaders over the past twenty years, concerning the inquiry of the relation between educational leadership and learners' achievement (Almashard, 2017). Several studies were conducted in different countries (e.g. United Kingdom, China & Ghana, Rwanda & South Africa) using performance assessments to determine the implicit and explicit impacts concerning various school leadership practices (Almarshad, 2017; Gyasi, Xi & Ampoh, 2016; Paul & Toyin, 2017). A study by Day, Christopher, Gu, Qing, Sammons and Pam (2016) found that high performing school principals promote the culture of collaboration for both educators and learners commitment in teaching-learning and improve learner levels of performance through value added benefit of learners progress in national tests and examination results.

Yet, Gyasi, Xi and Ampoh (2016) raise concerns in terms of school principals' lack of knowledge and skills in leadership and thus, it is not easy to know if school principals have an influence on their teaching-learning institutions and learner progress. Paul and Toyin (2017) found democratic leadership style being mostly employed than other leadership styles. In terms of enhancing school effectiveness, Demissie, Kebede and Labiso (2015) emphasise the value of sound leadership to promote teaching-learning curricula of high quality in a secure academic environment. However, principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools in a South African Township context seem to have received less attention. Therefore, this study explores school principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools in a South African Township. This chapter (1) outlines the entire research study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

School principals are anticipated to grasp the dimensions of school leadership to improve instruction and learner performances. They are also involved in innovative and intervention processes which should yield high learner-performance. This may

be through generating and maintaining schools that produce high-quality learner output. Due to compliance with high standards and accountability, the term school principal with regard to their roles has been conceptualised in different ways (Alvoid & Black, 2014; Mestry, 2017). School principals are seen as leaders and vital agents of astutely controlling and overseeing the school's administrative system and successfully directing academic programmes (Wallace Foundation (2013). They lead instruction in the context of evolving educational policies as they work with others to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population (Billingsley, McLeskey & Crockett, 2019). They have to relate to internal and external expectations that arise from different locations, for instance politicians, the press, school-owners, parents, and pupils (Federici & Skaalvik, 2012).

The school principal's changing role is attributed to the innovative leadership styles which are now regarded as being wise if they deviate from the conventional approach. They were entrusted in ensuring that schools operate unhindered while to meeting educational goals (Alvoid & Black, 2014). As a result of this new face in principals' roles, there were also positive changes that stimulated educational advancement precipitated through creative instructional reforms and curriculum transformation in post-apartheid South Africa (Jansen, 1998; Weber, 2008). This changing role in a post-apartheid South Africa necessitates school principals to evolve and display pedagogical leadership with the intention of producing systems for high-quality learner-output (Lunesburg, 2010; Bodnarchuk, 2016). This is because numerous systems and innovative interventions have been instituted to drive educational institutions (schools) towards high-learner performance. However, the existing standard of education in South Africa has been far below expectation (Berg et al., 2011; Modisaotsile, 2012; Spaul, 2013; Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019).

Consequently, Almarshad (2017) argues that Leadership in Education is not powerful enough to bring the necessary changes in terms of learner performances. This is particularly the case in South Africa where leadership in education is a process in which school leaders regard students' learning as their main priority, while education refers to the means of promoting learning in order to reach educational goals. Yet, school principals are entrusted for improving school performances in general (Herrera, 2010).

However, a study by Gehrke (2015) South African township schools face challenges in terms of safety and security for learners and educators. Such challenges hinder the school's success and its effectiveness, and raises questions about the leadership skills of personnel employed at such institutions, especially their ability to raise learner- performances.

Being both a teacher and a HoD of Commerce over the past six years, the researcher had ample experience of teaching in high schools in the township. This was particularly disappointing to the researcher as the researcher had to contend with the incompetence of principals who displayed poor leadership. Each secondary school principal would have different strategies that he/she would implement to reach targets set by the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

According to the observed leadership practices (Diagnostic DoE report, 2017) in a particular school, the measures of ensuring the implementing of policy guidelines and the structuring and monitoring of education practices, were highly inconsistent.

What was thought-provoking were "learners achievement" as a certain number of learners achieved excellent matric results (80%-100%), whereas the rest attained average (50%) or poor (0%-20%) results (Diagnostic DoE report, 2017).

The researcher used the table below (table.1.1) assuming that other secondary dysfunctional schools can still do well when adopting the practices of high performing secondary schools.

Table 1.1: Learner's performance of 4 Secondary Schools Township in the North West province for 2017, 2018, and 2019.

School	Total number of enrolled in the school	Number of candidates who sat for NSC Examinations	Pass %	Number of candidates who did not meet the University requirements for Bachelor study but met the requirements for admission to other Higher Institutions of Learning (TVET Colleges etc.).	% of candidates who did not meet the University requirements for Bachelor study but met the requirements for admission to other Higher Institutions of Learning	Number of candidates who did not pass the NSC Examinations	% of candidates who did not pass the NSC Exams
A	1 250	198	98,2%	35	17,67 = 17,7	3,56 = 3,6	1,8%
B	1 530	231	100%	80	36,63 = 36,6	0	0%
C	1 950	257	89,3%	102	39,68 = 39,7	27,49 = 27,5	10,7%
D	1 050	109	86,4%	20	18,34 = 18,3	14,82 = 14,8	13,6%

Table 1.1 indicates from 2017, 2018 and 2019 the total number of candidates enrolled in the four schools (5 780), 795 of those candidates were Grade 12 learners who wrote the NSC Examinations in four schools, of which 237 did not meet the requirements for Bachelor studies. The figures show that only 70, 1% of candidates met the university requirements for Bachelor studies. Unfortunately, 29, 9% of candidates did not meet the requirements for admission to various other institutions of higher of learning. The admission requirement is based on an APS score of fewer than 27 points. Of concern was that 27, 92% of candidates did not pass altogether.

Moreover, the Grade 12 statistics pass % of 98, 2%, 100%, 89, 3%, and 86, 4 % in four top schools respectively, clearly portray a glorious scenario. These statistics of learner performances questions the status (and commitment of leadership) of secondary schools in South Africa, in particular, schools located in townships.

The effect of school principals' leadership practices, specific to educators' teaching preparedness and commitment and the school's administrative system, is disconcerting and warrants interrogation by researchers (Al-safran, Brown, & Wiseman, 2014). According to Obama, et.al (2016), there is no correlation between a principal's leadership style and learner-achievement. However, school principals' leadership styles are seen as powerful authoritative agents of change in school communities; and as such, they are the key players to uplift mediocre learner-performances at underperforming township schools.

School principals should aim to effect remarkable improvements at schools, particularly in the area of learner-performance (Isaacs, 2014). As agents of change, school principals are required to provide a favourable and safe environment (working conditions) where educators can freely and creatively perform their daily duties to promote high levels of student-performance (Johnson, Kraft & Papay, 2012).

This is possible if school principals mainly focus on their roles and abilities as educational leaders to implement excellent educational processes and productive functional school systems. This could also be possible by promoting a centralised curriculum and a consistent assessment policy in terms of the Department of Education's (DoE's) policy. This is intended to accommodate the needs of all learners in order to improve all-round learner-performance (Mestry, 2017).

While analysing the “disjointed” relationship between learner-achievement and principals’ leadership, it is critical to consider *principals’ lived leadership experiences in terms of creating schools that are high performing in South African townships*.

Despite the general scenario of sub-standard performances in township schools, there are schools that regularly produce high learner-performances especially where there is committed personnel coupled with innovative leadership styles geared to deliver high-quality education. Such schools have been described as “high performing schools.” It is here that the study will be conducted. However, there is much to be learned about “lived leadership experiences” of principals in the South African township context, particularly in terms of turn-around strategies to stimulate and sustain “high performing” school environments.

In this regard, this study explored how high-performing school principals’ “lived leadership practices” are productively shared across the school system (e.g. state, district, school, and classroom). This included factors that stimulate development and sustainability. There appears to be a limited number of studies focusing on “successful school leadership in the South African context.” Literature focused more on the implementation of policy at local, national, and international level; yet the drivers of principals’ lived leadership experiences seem to have received less attention.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

A vast majority of South African learners appear to be disadvantaged by unsatisfactory teaching-learning processes which lead to poor results (Van der Berg & Louw, 2007; Modisaotsile, 2012). A substantial growing body of research (Hansen, 2016:39) has documented a number of leadership best practices that principals employed to achieve the desired results at their schools, such as, “shared common practices related to feedback, professional priorities, communication of these priorities, and their level of involvement within the school.”

There exists a concern on how schools located in the townships utilise principals’ lived leadership experiences in terms of creating positive academic environments that promote high performance (Masitsa, 2011). Other scholars (.e.g. Bush, Kiggundu & Moorusi, 2011) are also concerned about the training of new principals.

These scholars further recommended that the national programme (ACE) becomes an entry-level qualification for new principals as soon as they are sufficient qualified candidates, directly or following the conversation process to meet the new principals” Additionally, Christie and Lingard (2001) stated that South African schools are classified by irregular attendance by both staff and students, conflictual relationships between principals, staff and students, interrupted teaching-learning, poor results, violence, criminality, rape, and substance abuse within and around schools. Also, the problem experienced in most township schools in that school principal in South Africa are completely not perceiving their fundamental role as leaders and managers of teaching and learning but seem to be an obstruction to democratic transition and ‘social justice’ (Mafora, 2013). The above-mentioned stipulates defiance and puts pressure on the effectiveness of the school (Mafora, 2013).

However, despite the insufficient training for school principals and the socio-economic challenges, they are schools that create, sustain, and maintain high performance in providing education of high-quality. Those schools are effective because they are high performing.

As alluded to earlier, a school is considered as effective and high performing if it continuously produces high learner outcomes in terms of the matriculation results, even when the odds are stacked against them.

There is a perception that the quality of leadership has a considerable influence on learners’ achievements (Bush, 2007; Demissie, Kebede & Labiso, 2015; Tableman, 2004). For effectiveness to occur there must be the presence and action of effective leaders (principals) who must be productive and able to manage astutely (Cruickshank, 2017). However,

There exists a dearth of knowledge regarding the experiences of principals in creating high performing schools in a township context. The experiences of those who lead and manage schools in this context are essential for informing policy and research. A growing body of research (e.g. Minckler, 2014; Berkovich & Eyal, 2018 & Andriani & Kristiawan, 2018) suggested that aspects of transformational leadership enactments be utilized by school principals of high performing schools). Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore principals’ lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools in a South African township. This research project was

conducted in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District in the North West Province. Four Secondary high performing schools were selected for this study.

1.3.1 Main Research Question

What are school principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools in a South African township?

1.3.2 Secondary Research Questions

- What are the school principals' views regarding the nature of their leadership in creating high performing schools in a South African township?
- How do school principals' explain their experiences of creating high performing schools?
- What do school principals understand about determinants to school's high performance?

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Research Aim

The aim of the study is to explore the school principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools in a South African township.

1.4.2 Research Objectives

Linked to the main research question, the objectives of the study are:

- To explore school principals' views regarding the nature of their leadership in creating high-performing schools in a South African Township;
- To investigate the experiences of school principals in creating high-performing schools in a South African Township
- To determine the strategies that school principals' implement to sustain a school's high-performance rate.

1.5 VALUE OF THE STUDY

The study may be of great significance in providing innovative and useful information

to principals of secondary schools, in particular, those schools that are underperforming. It may also assist principals in applying effective leadership by adjusting their leadership practices to form a new productive leadership paradigm. This is particularly aimed to create and maintain high-quality learner output. The recommendations (and findings) of the study will be advantageous to most stakeholders in education (e.g. SGB) in applying effective and innovative approaches to school governance; for example, (e.g. whole-school approach, effective leadership, and governance).

Also, other leaders in schools such as HoDs, deputy principals and subject-advisors, can gain introspective insight to their own leadership practices in terms of creating a conducive learning environment, and creating opportunities for learners' learning that necessitate improvement in performances.

The study may benefit policymakers who may adopt findings to refine educational policies that recognise the present context and challenges faced by school leaders (principals), teaching-learning institutions (schools) and the wider community in order to create and maintain high-quality learner output.

1.6 ELUCIDATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

There are several concepts fundamental to exploring school principal's lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township. The following are some of them:

1.6.1 Principal

In keeping with the focus of the study, the principal in this context is an office-bearer accountable for the school's effectiveness. The principal also fosters good leadership qualities in others (as in educators and representatives of the SGB) to execute their own share of responsibilities in order to realise the schools' vision and mission statements. In this study, the term *principal* refers to a person who has been delegated to make provision for leadership and lead by example at his/her school (William, 2011).

1.6.2 Lived-leadership Experiences

In keeping with the focus of this study, *lived-leadership experiences* allude to the practices and approaches that leaders employ are influenced directly and indirectly by their complete patterns of behaviour (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

1.6.3 High-performing Schools

A school is regarded as high-performing if it is effective in terms of producing the desired results based on observable academic performances among its learners (Iyer, 2011).

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Transformational leadership is a form of leadership which identifies change and generates a mutual vision in an organisation. In order to understand transformational leadership, one needs to fully understand the words *transformational* and *leadership*. According to Kruse (2013), leadership is an influential process where the endeavours are directed to maximise the efforts of subordinates, in order to reach set targets.

The underlying qualities of transformational leaders and any other leader of repute are building a common vision, persuading change of “stuck” mind-sets, and accepting individuals’ differing principles and ideas. It aims at the radical transforming of organisational goals pertaining to leadership, accomplishing change through modifying the existing institutional structure, and restoring culture in an organisation (Bush & Glover, 2014, Chia, 2014).

Transformational leadership considers the significance of individuals in the transformational process paying particular attention to building a favourable work-relation with followers, creating positive change, and placing emphasis on morality (To, Tse & Ashkanay, 2015). Assisting and mentoring followers may result in a collaborative leadership (followership) that can be influential in terms of the relations between fellow workers and “leaders.”

This may lead to improved organisational performance (Rost, 2008). However, Yung and Tsa (2013) contend that in the case where followers are not eager to follow, the leadership function may break down. Muijs (2011) define transformational leadership

as leadership that deals transforming of people and institutions over engaging to values formulated in a same vision of the future, one that is restorative followers mentally, and allow the difference of opinion among employees.

Kesumawati and Kristiawan (2018) define transformational leadership as leadership that engages in organizational changes. According to Stevens (2013) transformational leadership is a theory of leadership where a leader initiates changes in certain individuals or group of individuals. One of the most particular attributes of transformational leaders is that they are strategic leaders through their willingness and friendliness, promoting qualities which empower others. In so doing, they communicate the organisation's belief system to inspire their followers. Through self-actualisation and moral conduct (Keskes, 2014), transformational characteristics are strategic and innovative (Hay, 2006).

According to Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2007), strategic leadership is defined as the leader's ability to anticipate, devise, and encourage flexibility through motivating subordinates to accept strategic change as being necessary to uplift learner-performance. In this study, the two major dimensions of transformational leadership, namely innovativeness and strategic planning, will be employed in framing the study. The researcher also included these dimensions in the presenting, analysing, and interpreting of the qualitative data.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH

1.8.1 Research Approach

This study used a qualitative research approach in association with the transformational leadership theory which was found suitable to explore the practices of lived-leadership of secondary school principals in creating and maintaining high-performing schools. Qualitative researchers are concerned with the participants' lived-experiences, the context in which participants' live, and their feelings about their natural surroundings. According to Mills and Gay (2016), qualitative research endeavours to purposely select a small size sample of research participants with a wide range of experience in the area under study. The researcher's role, among others, was to ask the participating secondary school principals of high-performing schools open-ended questions during semi-structured interviews to elicit information

on their lived-experiences concerning the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, cited in Maree, 2019). The descriptive nature of qualitative research is based on the designation of research participants, the context in which participants live, and the “happenings” within a specific context (ibid).

1.8.2 Research Design

A multiple case study research design was utilised to gather and analyse data for this study. The participants who were interviewed were secondary school principals of the top four high-performing schools in the North-West Province (based on their matric results in 2017, 2018, and 2019). This design was deemed appropriate as it facilitated a wider exploration of school leadership enactments from dissimilar environments (Gustafson, 2017).

1.8.2.1 Data gathering techniques

This study attempts to make sense of secondary school principals’ lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township. Therefore, the following data collection method was found to be appropriate.

(i) Interviews

The researcher conducted individual semi-structured interviews with the secondary school principals of the top four high-performing schools in the North-West Province. Through the use of interviews as a data-gathering technique, the researcher collected in-depth and descriptive data using the exchange of direct records with secondary school principals of high performing schools. The researcher did not change the interview questions that were asked to the research participants as shown in Annexure A. The researcher made hardcopies of the interview questions and the principal’s letter of consent that was timeously distributed to them. This allowed the researcher to successfully apply member-checking and to clarify questions where they deemed unclear.

1.9 SAMPLING METHODS

Research participants were chosen using purposive and convenient sampling. According to Babbie (2013), purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling where the researcher handpicks a research sample relying on population knowledge, its components, and the research purpose. Hence, it was appropriate and meaningful to select school principals of high-performing secondary schools in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District (based on matric results) who were serving in the post for a minimum of five years at their respective schools which had an achievement rate of 80% and above for three consecutive years (2017, 2018 and 2019).

According to Etikan, Musa, and Alkassium (2016), convenience sampling is a type of non-probability sampling where the researcher handpicks the members of the target population who meet certain criteria such as accessibility, geographical proximity, availability, and the willingness to participate in the research study.

The main target of this qualitative inquiry was to explore school principal's lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township. For this reason, only secondary school principals were selected. The researcher also selected secondary schools because his interest is on the matriculation results. These secondary school principals were chosen from the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District which is conveniently located where the researcher is based.

1.10 DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, content analysis was utilised. The aim was to understand information conveyed by individuals relating to their daily occurrences (Krippendorff, 2019). In this regard, individual semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and analysed in order to explore lived leadership in the practices of secondary school principals. The main sources of raw data were the transcripts of interviews conducted with the secondary school principals of high-performing schools.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study, the research participants consented to voluntary participation. Firstly, the researcher requested permission from the authorities below the Head of Department of the North-West Department of Education and Sports Development. Secondly, the principle of informed consent was ensured regarding all research participants. This was followed by explaining to them how and what data will be collected, and that it will be used for research purposes.

1.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS

This qualitative study audio-recorded all the interviews in order to ensure that research findings are trustworthy and credible. According to Berazneva (2014), the audio-recorder is a vital instrument in collecting and recording quality data and allows for the interviews to proceed smoothly. During the interviews, the researcher ensured that each of the research participants clearly understood the research questions that the researcher asked.

Therefore, the researcher constantly repeated and clarified the question where it was not clear. After the interviews and audio-recordings, the researcher returned the interview transcripts to research participants to authenticate the accuracy of the research findings. The researcher also afforded participants an opportunity to make comments on the accuracy of interview transcripts. Further, the researcher employed principles aligned to qualitative approaches; namely, credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985 cited in Nieuwenhuis, 2019). These qualitative methods are explained in chapter three.

1.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this study, the researcher located the research fields where the feasibility of the study determined. It is necessary to be armed with knowledge of the research fields to ensuring that it is delimited prior to conducting the research. This research was undertaken in high-performing secondary schools in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District where it was convenient for the collection of data and its analysis thereof. There were four (4) secondary high-performing school principals who participated in this study. The study was limited to only secondary high-performing schools; thus,

the findings of the study cannot be generalised concerning all other secondary and primary (private and public) schools in urban areas, rural areas, and townships.

1.14 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 - It provides an overview of the study, including the aim and objectives, research interest (problem), a brief description of the research approach, and the theoretical framework. It also explains the ethical issues adhered to.

Chapter 2 - This chapter presents a deep understanding of fundamental matters pertaining to educational leadership. It discusses the related literature on educational leadership (principalship), and the theoretical framework. The main themes include principals' innovativeness in leadership, principals' best practices of leadership, and principals' leadership strategies for school discipline.

Chapter 3 - This chapter outlines the research methodology and design of the study. It elaborates on the qualitative research approaches and data collection techniques that were utilised to interrogate the implementation of "lived leadership experiences of principals in high-performing schools." The focus is also on validity issues and study limitations.

Chapter 4 - This chapter explains the analysis of data and interprets the research findings aligned to the primary research question.

Chapter 5 - This chapter summarises the research study, and outlines the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

1.15 SUMMARY

Chapter one provided an overview of the study. This involved the introduction, background of the study, the clarification of terms, and value of the study. The researcher's interest was to understand what makes some schools to high-perform in spite of a number of challenges they face. This interest originated from the researcher's experiences as an educator in these districts where the researcher experienced such phenomena. In this chapter, the researcher outlined his research

interest, the problem, the research purpose, and the rationale for its (the topic's) interrogation. The researcher also discussed the value of the study, the research aim and objectives, and the research questions. Additionally, the researcher defined the key concepts, the theoretical framework, the research design and methodology, ethical and validity considerations, and limitations of the study. In chapter two, the researcher reviewed local and international related literature in terms of principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one, the researcher presented the background of the study, the problem statement, the research questions, the value of the study, the research aim and objectives, and the organisation of the chapters. The purpose of this chapter is to review related international and national scholarly literature. It commences with the clarification of concepts, a discussion on education leadership, and compares the relationship between education management and education leadership. Also, the researcher explained the terms leadership, principal, lived leadership experiences, and high-performing schools in the South African context. Finally, the researcher discussed the transformational leadership theory as the framework of this study and connects it to related literature.

2.2 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

Considering the differences “in “leadership and management” concepts with regard to their role and importance, it is crucial to understand that they are constantly referred to in this study. Its elucidation eliminates misinterpretation and ambiguity.

2.2.1 The Concept of Leadership

Leadership involves individual member’s effort in belonging to an organisation for others with a view to assisting them achieve the target (Almaki et al., 2016). Therefore, leadership involves organisational change through influencing and directing the organisation. The term “educational leadership” implies power, authority, and influence over settings (school) to achieve goals; thus entailing actions to reach targets in learner and teacher performances (Connolly, James & Fertig, 2017).

The growth of an organisation is to a large extent dependent on the leader’s actions (Tafvelin, 2013; Jita & Tsakeni, 2017). However, Piotrowsky (2016) cautions that leadership is not a non-dimensional concept, and therefore school principals need to be circumspect when selecting staff. In a school context, the emphasis is on qualified

educators led and managed by knowledgeable school principals in order to offer curricula of high quality through innovative teaching-learning situations in a secure academic environment (Demissie, Kedebe & Labiso, 2015).

In this study, “leadership” is understood as an influential process which promotes the attainment of successful organisational outcomes or objectives.

2.2.2 Education Leadership

Over the past years, there appears to have been more conceptualisations of education leadership. There is a growing recognition that learning institutions (schools) need effective leaders to devise means that necessitates high performance. This could have the potential of enabling members of the school community and education specialists to be *au fait* in terms of adapting to various challenges (Clarke, 2004).

This implies that principals are constantly considered as innovative and strategic thinkers who are capable of designing innovative approaches. They further recognise and prioritise quality education for learners, which includes choosing appropriate instructional aids and ensuring the sound enactment of educational policies. This is supported by Ediger (2014) who states that school principals are anticipated to employ diversified techniques for high learner attainment, ensuring that the pedagogical (instructional) approaches are appropriate and applicable to learners’ needs, and day-to-day educator classroom observations.

In keeping with the focus of the study, the researcher concurs with the widely held view that creative school leadership (principalship) brings about the desired results concerning learners’ high performance.

2.2.3 Relationship between Education Management and Education Leadership

It is important to discuss the relationship between education management and education leadership because this powerful relationship is operationalized when delegated individual(s) execute a task effectively and efficiently in a responsible manner.

As already stated in chapter one, the concept “education management” involves the delegation of organisational duties extending further than the procedures set out regarding organisational leadership (Connolly, James & Fertig, 2017). According to Tafvelin (2013), leadership is a quality where a leader exercises democratic power, influences subordinates positively, displays fair and reasonable conduct at all times. In keeping with the focus of the study the researcher elucidated and acknowledged the essence of organisations (schools) and further pointed out that schools managed by incompetent managers will not achieve its objective of reaching high-performing results.

It is thus safe to say that “education management” and “education leadership” are structures occupying educational (school) systems’ in terms of functionality. Considering this, Mestry (2017) declares that leadership involves expert curriculum supervision, enhancing schools’ instructional programme, creating favourable working conditions for the personnel, promoting schools’ mission and vision statements, and establishing cordial professional relationships.

Algahtari (2014) regards leadership as a focus on influencing individuals or groups in order to reach desired targets and promote objectives. The major focus of leadership is intentional influence and fostering “activities and relationships in a group or organization (Yulk, 2010).

2.3 THE PRINCIPAL’S CHANGING LEADERSHIP ROLE

The principal in this context is a responsible office-bearer accountable for the school’s effectiveness; and who develops good leadership qualities in others (as in educators and other representatives of the SGB) to execute their share of responsibilities in order to realise the schools’ vision and mission statements.

Previously, principals have been imitated in television and film as distinctly gutless (Alvoid & Black Jr, 2014). The sentiments shared by the public were that principals were like other managers responsible for building schools, having an interest in exercising power, commanding respect other than ‘soaring’ as forefront leaders in the instructional learning environment.

Ediger (2014) advocates that principals, in terms of their roles, were previously envisaged as school managers with their responsibility bent heavily on the

“management of the local schools. There is a concern that principals should occupy themselves promoting instructional pedagogy rather than being passionate about the leadership of the instructional learning environment (Shonubi, 2012) seeing that observable learner-performances are not sufficient in terms of defining a high-performing school (Day, Gu & Summons, 2016).

In keeping to the focus of the study, there is a need for school principals to lead schools rather than manage learning institutions (schools) in order to promote and secure high performance at their schools.

According to Mattson and Harley (2002), school principals in South Africa were expected to lead schools in a race-related environment. It was assumed that school principals (new appointees and those with the potential of being appointed) were equipped for the fulfilment of administrative and daily-routine duties (Williams, 2011).

Thus, the leadership practices of school principals in terms of instructional leadership are recognised as crucial when exploring this “high learner-output.”

In a democratic South Africa, school principals are expected to lead educational reform (e.g. No child left behind, SASA, Act 84 of 1996) using their powers in terms of policy- making and enactment. A growing body of research (e.g. Kuo, Browning, Sachdeva, Lee, & Westphal, 2018) indicates that much has been done in terms of examining educational reform with regard to better learner-performances.

This alludes to several attempts (e.g. OBE) that came into existence with a view to advance the pedagogical climate in schools where members of the school-community (principals, educators, learners and parents/guardians) are accountable in terms of learner-performances. In spite of this, there are concerns that many public schools do not perform well when compared to other countries (Spall, 2013). Thus, the Ministry of Education published guidelines such as the “White Paper on Organisation” on the allocation and distribution of funds, and on school governance in order to promote the management of institutions based on democratic views (DoE, 1996).

The researcher, therefore share the same assertion expressed by Bush and Glover (2016) that school principals are expected to create a conducive pedagogical environment, manage and lead schools, make provision in terms of governance of

the school, review performance (through accountability sessions) and set a solid direction for the school.

2.3.1 The Term *Township* in the South African Context

In the South African context, *township* alludes to “a suburb or city of predominantly Black occupation, formerly designated for Black occupation by apartheid legislation” or in particular the less developed post-apartheid areas (Oxford Dictionary on Lexico.com). The concept of *township* has numerous meanings; there exist no single concept with regards to what it comprises of. Further, *township* is stereotyped by socio-economic challenges such as poverty, crime and violence; and it has been in some cases equated to a “war zone”, where the safety of residents becomes compromised (Mampane & Boucher, 2011).

It is worth mentioning that the term “township” has not significantly changed from the 1960s till today. For instance, a report in the 1980s to 1990s by Seekings (1991) explained the term “township” as being characterised by “political organisation, protest and conflict occurred on an unprecedented scale” and where protesters and other active participants in an organisation [were involved in] overt conflict. Similarly, Rudwick (2008) adds that South African townships are ‘forced’ living spaces.

It is thus clear that although different scholars could not reach agreement of what forms a township, there are common features which may contribute to sub-standard learner-performances in township schools. The most common features include violence and forced living spaces. Pernegger (2007) adds that discriminatory apartheid laws forced Africans, Coloureds, and Indians to reside in demarcated disadvantaged areas in contrast to advantaged “whites only” areas (Black Communities Development Act Section 33 Proclamation R293 of 1962, Proclamation R154 of 1983 demarcating Trust Areas, National Homelands and Independent States).

While the above-mentioned notions of *township* constitute an integral part of the researcher’s very own perception of township, the researcher uses this term in this study to refer to small or scattered settlements in or near urban areas.

2.3.2 A High-performing School

There appears to be a correlation between “effective” and “high-performing schools.” Effectiveness is about how well schools have been managed in terms of their functions to achieve organizational goals and objectives, which is to be a high-performing school (Hutton, 2018). The terms “high-performing” and “effective” regarding a school’s quality has numerous meanings; there exists no distinct single feature separating them.

Leithwood (2008) asserts that districts of high-performing schools engage in practices such as investing in instructional leadership, and building and maintaining good communications. Aploo-Zokufa (2013) offers an explanation of the concept “high-performing school” by stating that such schools perform above the demographic expectation over a significant period of time.

In explaining school effectiveness, the aspects of strategic leadership, management, and instructional approaches are highlighted by scholars such as Edmonds (1979). According to these scholars, effective schools are characterised by sound organisational leadership, a conducive learning-environment, high standards of student-performance, clearly defined learning outcomes, monitoring of students’ progress, and an emphasis on innovative teaching skills (Edmonds, 1979).

Furthermore, Kirk and Jones (2004) highlight the qualities of an effective school by stating that it has a clear school mission, high expectations for success, instructional leadership, opportunities to learn, safe and orderly environment, positive home-school relations, and frequent monitoring of student progress. A school is regarded as high-performing if it is effective in terms of producing the desired results based on observable academic performances of its learners (Iyer, 2011).

However, Day et al. (2016) argue that students’ academic progress and achievement are insufficient in identifying school effectiveness. In support, Nurkolis and Sulisworo (2018) assert that educational progress and the involvement of community members as vital components of effective schools.

Hence, the conceptual understanding of “effective schools” has not significantly changed from the 1970s to the 21st century. As depicted in the above discussion, the common element for effective and high-performing schools is high learner-performance.

In South Africa, the ranking of a secondary school is based on matric results obtained by that particular school. Whilst the above-mentioned concepts constitute an integral part of the researcher's very own perception of high-performing schools, the researcher used the terms "effective" and "high-performing" interchangeably to refer to schools which continuously perform outstandingly (80% -100% pass rate) even when odds are stacked against them.

2.4 PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP PRACTICES: A REVIEW

2.4.1 Defining the Literature Review

A literature review is significant in summarising the findings of a research, as it reveals evidence on a basic-level while unearthing uncovered areas such that further studies are urgently needed; and it also shows a critical component of creating theoretical frameworks and building conceptual modes (Snyder, 2019)

Several studies conducted on principals' leadership practices in the USA (Los Angeles) and lately in South Africa indicate the principals' key role in terms of creating a conducive teaching-learning environment to improve learner-performances. In a further study on "effective principal leadership," Hutton (2018) outlined the five functions of effective principals: shaping a vision of academic success for all students; creating a climate hospitable to education; cultivating leadership in others; improving instruction; and Managing people, time and processes to foster school improvement.

Additionally, Allen, Grigsby, and Peters studied transformational leadership and found that there was a "statistically significant positive relationship between five factors of transformational leadership (idealized attributes, idealized behaviours, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration) and the seven dimensions of the school climate". McCarley, Peters, and Decman (2016) add that transformational leadership is positively related to supportive, engaged, and integrated elements of a school's climate. However, Shouppe (2010) argued that there was no statistical significant correlation between a conducive school climate and a principal's leadership practices in terms of learners' academic performances. In order to enhance school effectiveness and higher learner output, school principals need to adapt to change in terms of recognising their fundamental role. Mafora

(2013) observes that school principals in South Africa do not perceive their fundamental role as leaders and managers of teaching and learning, and thus act as a barrier to constitutional transformation and social equality.

Moreover, Makgato and Mudzanani (2019: PAGE) explored school principals' leadership styles and learners' educational performances by investigating the qualities of high and low-performing schools, and suggested that "school principals from low-performing schools need to strengthen their democratic leadership by not being lenient concerning learners [who misbehave] as this is not conducive for successful teaching and learning". Finnigan (2011) believes that sound school principal leadership is very critical in turning around low-performing schools. However, in Bryat, Ko and Walker's study (2018) titled *Shaping a vision of academic success for all students*, findings revealed that principals engaged in selecting, prioritising and emphasising policies based on well-defined principles, were successful in turning around schools. A growing body of research (Robinson, Lloyd & Rows, 2008; Orodho, 2015; Chidi, 2017) also explored principals' leadership in relation to learner-performance and noted that astute principal leadership is of paramount importance.

According to Jacobson (2011), school leaders engaged in setting the direction, advancing individuals' personal growth, and planning organisational restructuring which were common practices of successful principals in most circumstances including those in challenging, high-poverty schools. Other scholars (Sammons, Day, & Ko, 2011; Li, Hallinger & Ko, 2016) emphasise that leadership has a direct impact on learners' achievements. The fact that school principals are not normally active in teaching-learning situations, the manner in which they support, motivate and twin, could have a positive impact on the teaching-learning environment (Knight, 2011).

However, not much evidence is available in terms of how school principals enact their leadership practices in terms of creating high-performing schools. In this study "how" alludes to the practices and approaches that school principals employ which is influenced directly and indirectly by their complete patterns of behaviour.

2.4.2 Determinants of a School's High-performance

2.4.2.1 Schools' collaboration and educator-outsourcing

An ever-growing demand exists for school principals to collaborate with other schools to outsource educators to upgrade and reach high-performance levels towards implementing an effective school-improvement plan. According to Roschelle and Teasley (1995), collaboration may be defined as mutual engagement of participants in a coordinated effort to solve a specific problem together; while outsourcing refers to the decision to get services or products from an external source (Bekus, 2007; Lok & Baldry, 2015; Phipps & Merisotis, 2005). In a school context, principals should create a collaborative environment, and group teachers into harmonious and effective teams (Bayler, Karas & Alci, 2015).

This is in agreement to Kytle and Bogotch (2000) that for sustaining change at school level, it is important to change the prevailing culture at that particular school. A culture of collaboration means fostering an atmosphere of working together with educators in order to generate unity.

School principals of high performing schools promote collaborative cultures through teamwork and by creating an environment to communicate effectively. They develop a sense of willingness to adapt their colleagues' recommendations towards the common goal of producing quality education at schools.

In their study, "*Excellence in Medical Student Education in Paediatrics*," Bannister, Wicknheiser and Keegan (2014) indicated the "key elements of highly effective teams" as follows:

- They have got shared goals that all team members can completely enunciate
- They ensure openness (speaking, listening, and connecting to one another) by all members.

This implies that creating and sustaining highly productive teams is a complex task.

2.4.2.2 Distribution of leadership

The importance of trust and teamwork in schools cannot be underestimated, as it is an ideal atmosphere for leadership distribution. The leadership distribution principle frequently comes into action when preparing teachers for leadership. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2011) state that "teacher leadership involves allocating applicable and basic ideas related to work in circumstances outside the limits of one's own classrooms for improving the education of students, and one's own capacities in

providing for students. Hence, high-performing school principals engage in the progressive distribution of leadership to yield top results in students' performances.

In a study pertaining to the notion of successful leadership, Day and Sammons (2013) show the following findings in relation to progressive leadership distribution by high performing school principals:

- The pattern of progressive and selective distribution of leadership materialised as a result of:
 - the school leaders' understanding of what would be beneficial to the school;
 - the school leaders' opinion in terms of staff's ability and preparedness to lead;
 - the extent to which trust has been established; and
 - The school leaders' training, practices, and competencies.
- The connection between other forms of distributed leadership and improved leader performances.
- The distribution of leadership occurring through the allocation of relevant duties and responsibilities.

In a study related to high-performing or effective principals, Harris (2011) observed that there was a continuous effort made by school principals to various structures, cultures, and conditions when distributed leadership is likely to happen. The findings of this study also reveal that distributed leadership was recognised because it engenders the necessary changes and growth in the organisation. Thus, it is assumed that high-performing school principals support the cultural and structural conditions for the distribution of leadership.

2.4.2.3 Monitoring and assessment of instructional activities

There is a growing need for the monitoring and assessment of instructional activities. Sound leadership must be executed systematically in order to provide academic and organisational excellence to both learners and educators. Monitoring is recognised as enactments of effective leadership and necessitates the observation of educators at the workplace through class visits and making provision for positive feedback (Bush & Glover, 2009).

Ndungu and Allan (2015) agree that monitoring is an efficient and continuous process, implemented to produce good quality education. Also, there is growing recognition that observation and evidence-based decision-making are fundamental elements in the monitoring and assessment of instructional activities (Bush et al., 2010).

School principals play a significant role by engaging in classroom visits in support of professional development and counselling educators in terms of improving their teaching practices. Kraft and Gilmer (2016), in their study, *Can Principals Promote Teacher Development as Evaluators? A case study of Principals' views and Experiences*, found that educators appreciated the exercise of observation as a professional sharing measure aimed at clarifying and sharpening instructional methods, clarifying that the practice of observation was considered as promoting educator-development instead of being considered as formal supervision (Kraft & Gilmer, 2016).

In terms of improving education for quality purposes, Bush et al. (2010) note that there is a need for systematic practices like classroom observation. This necessitates keeping accurate records, analysing, and reflecting on relations with other educators and learners. Through classroom observation, individuals are capacitated to think in terms of improving education by facilitating the availability of relevant instructional resources. According to Robinson (2007), observation interrogates the quality of teaching and learning aimed at discovering the present root problems.

This practice therefore indicates the importance of school principals engaging in self-reflection, and providing tools for enhancing education to reach quality standards. Most high-performing schools are characterised in a manner that enables school leaders to collect, analyse and use the collected school data. Such data guides them for strategic planning and in the formulation of organisational goals.

For this study, the researcher's aim was to discover how schools from dissimilar environments excelled academically to reach departmental targets. Were school principals working in close collaboration with dedicated educators who offered their services for extended hours of work, which includes teaching on Saturdays, Sundays and National holidays? Did the school principals ensure a high level of educator-

dedication? Did astute leadership and working collaboratively ensure the school's high-performance achievement? The researcher asked these questions when the researcher embarked on this current research.

The majority of high-performing schools in the townships have a shortage of instructional materials (LTSM), yet committed educators effectively utilise the limited resources at their disposal. Most of these schools would set their school's target and after that interact with all role players such as educators, learners and the whole school community to collaborate to reach these goals.

In consideration of the school principal's lived leadership enactments and the school's growth, school principals need to be receptive and show willingness in assimilating change within the school's set targets. Thus, it is imperative for school principals to ask for inputs such as donations and materials from stakeholders during the setting of school targets. The highest rates of learner-achievements were in schools where members of the school community were engaged gainfully in reaching set targets.

2.4.2.4 Organisational staffing

As the researcher sought to understand the relationship between the recruitment of staff and the school's functionality, the researcher realised that school leaders (principals) are mandated to select, recruit, and retain relevant staff members who will assist the school to reach its goals. According to Darling-Hammond (2010), the recruitment and retaining of educators is an important task for school principals to maintain high-performing schools.

2.4.2.5 School community members' involvement

This entails examining processes where members of the school community and other stakeholders collaborate to promote a school's high standard of performance. It is fundamental that principals develop strong relations with parents, educators, learners and other stakeholders, based on mutual respect and trust in order to upgrade a school's performance.

It is generally believed that the involvement of school community members like parents is beneficial for strengthening quality education systems. Kladifko (2013) argues that schools' leaders who engage in communicating with school community members in a well-organised manner intensify the chances of getting better support, less criticism, promoting morals and community priorities, eliciting creative ideas and getting instructional materials in bettering the future of the learners.

The most recommended means of communication could be the use of email, the school website, and parent-learner-educator interaction meetings. It is important that communities become knowledgeable and fully engaged in education matters to support high-performing schools (Hughes & Norris, 2011). This could imply that everyone linked to the school has a role to play in the education of the children.

One reason for this could be that a school is a mirror image of the community, and therefore the business of the school directly impacts on the community and eventually on the learner-performances. In terms of a school's improvement, it is necessary that school principals acquire and apply the necessary experience to improve academic results. Most parents understand their collective interest and responsibility in learners' academic lives; therefore they combine their efforts with other role players in creating a quality education environment by providing various opportunities for learners to thrive (Epstein, 2018). In terms of improving high quality teaching-learning situations, it is suggested that educators connect with learners in a positive manner, as this will have a direct enhancing impact on learner-outcomes.

2.4.2.6 Instructional leadership practices

This practice entails the school principals' support regarding teaching and "supervising" classroom educators in effectively executing their fundamental responsibility of curriculum implementation. This practice is frequently used by most high-performing schools and serves as a major determinant to upgrade academic results. In order to understand pedagogical leadership, one needs to fully understand the words "pedagogical" or "pedagogy" and "leadership."

In this study, pedagogy or pedagogical means anything that is related to teaching-learning and leadership means directing and supporting educators in executing their duties. Davies (1994) indicated that:

Pedagogy involves a vision (theory and/or set of beliefs) about society, human nature, knowledge, and production in relation to educational ends, with terms and rules inserted to understand the practical and mundane means of realisation [of the school's vision].

Most high-performing school principals engage in the practices of school vision through:

- supporting a conducive and secure teaching-learning environment (schools), which incorporates managing and protecting the instructional time, advancing educators' professional growth, and motivating both educators and learners; and
- Leading the instructional programme which incorporates task- delegation, and monitoring of instructional activities.

If school principals are to effectively provide sound leadership, their focus should be on effectively identifying the cause of teaching-learning problems and then strategize to find solutions (Brown & Greany, 2018).

2.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.5.1 Definition of a Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by the Transformational and Distributed Leadership theory. According to Grant (2014), a theoretical framework provides the guidelines to develop and strengthen the study by structuring and directing the research journey. A theoretical framework has an introduction and a description of the theory aligned to the investigated phenomenon.

2.5.1.1 Transformational leadership theory

According to Burns (1978), [T]he transformational leadership model emerged throughout the effective-schools-movement in the 1970s and 1980s. It was mostly bandied by political leaders, and is currently applied in organisational psychology and in research fields. Govender (2012) defines transformational leadership as a

theory that is dispensed all over the organisation allowing everyone to be entirely responsible collaboratively in order to achieve mutual objectives, while leading [followers] or being led [following] by others. It is concerned with recognising the required need for change, generating creativity in order to lead effectively, and effecting the change while teaming up with dedicated members of a group.

The spotlight of transformational leadership is on a better tomorrow. Furthermore, transformational school leaders are recognised by having three core goals:

- helping staff members build and maintain a cooperative, professional school culture;
- promoting teacher development; and
- Helping the school stakeholders solves problems together more effectively (Leithwood, 1992a; Demozie, 2018).

Transformational leaders are obliged to make a difference (transform and influence) to their subordinates. One way of doing this is to motivate subordinates through sensitising them in terms of organisational objectives and through stimulating them to realise self-actualisation (Marks & Printy, 2003).

Furthermore, the principles of behaviour and directives from the organisation should be flexible, while being governed through guidance involving certain representatives (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). These elements can be viewed as having a sense of security in an organisation; in particular, to the followers, as their enthusiasm and commitment to take the school to a higher level of performance is extended by having a fair and creative leader (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). In other words, this could result in a higher output of the organisation due to the dedication by individuals to achieve the set goals of the organisation (Ibid).

Further, Bell and Cordingley (2016) recognise other factors of a high-performing school, such as having a professional learning environment, effective leadership, sound teaching and learning relations with students, active parental involvement, and having a supportive community. As part of the literature review, this theory (transformational leadership) was used as a lens to dissect other theories.

Hutton (2011a) found that transformational leadership is the most effective form of leadership and adds that leaders were dependent on the mutual efforts of the staff and members of the school community to reach their targets. According to Leithwood

and Jantzi (1999) [T]ransformational leadership is a composite of four features linked to leadership; that is, idealised influence (charisma), individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and aspiration. In employing these features, we need to acknowledge their correlations.

In studying these individual considerations, the researcher explored the extent to which the leader (principals) is sensitive to the needs and concerns of each follower. As already stated, strengthening respect and praising staff members may have the desired effect to promote higher teaching-learning performance (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Thus, it is of paramount importance that principals create the correct teaching-learning environment where all stakeholders are sensitised to the follower's anxiety and concerns.

The second feature, Intellectual stimulation, is intrinsically linked to the first feature. It incorporates the extent to which the leader defies assumptions, and accepts and implements critically-thought-out ideas of followers.

Another important feature is inspirational motivation which incorporates the extent to which the school's vision is eloquently outlined by the leader; that is, the vision has to be meaningful, attractive, and motivating to the followers. This might result in more investment by the followers in executing their tasks. Moreover, followers might be inspired by being reassured regarding their future and abilities (Damanik, 2014).

Lastly, the idealised-influence-feature makes provision for a role model who displays ethical behaviour, inculcates pride, and earns the respect and trust of all stakeholders (Ibid). In this study, the idea to influence change is to a greater extent geared towards creating and maintaining high-performing schools in a South African township. This could mean that school principals should transform underperforming, mediocre schools to high-performing ones. The transformational leadership theory was used as a lens to dissect the literature and analyse the generated data.

It is well-known that school principals with transformational leadership styles can efficiently stimulate and inspire educators to go the extra mile in terms of fostering a secure teaching-learning environment to efficiently generate, sustain, and maintain high standards of academic performance. This may have a positive effect in terms of stimulating parents to enrol their children at the school, in addition to attracting and retaining relevant committed educators.

This may result in more educator posts being available as a result of the increase in learner-enrolment. It is also necessary that school principals make various stakeholders understand the value of documents (e.g. school's code of conduct, PAM documents etc.). This may be through ensuring that the contents of such documents are absorbed, implemented, and monitored.

In this regard, it will be easy to implement school discipline strategies and curb indiscipline both from learners and educators. Amongst other skills that school principals are expected to possess is "Individual Consideration." This means that there is a need to understand each educator's limitations and strengths. This is particularly crucial when recruiting and retaining relevant educators to ensure their high standards are maintained.

In sum, the Transformational Leadership theory addressed the main research question, two secondary research questions, the determinants to reach high-performance in schools, and the three themes used to frame this study. Since Transformational Leadership explores the lived leadership experiences of secondary school principals in terms of creating high-performing schools, the researcher found it apt as a theory to frame this study.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter presented in detail local and international related literature regarding *Principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township*. This involved the elucidation of concepts, determinants for schools' reaching high-performance levels, and the theoretical framework. Other determinants of high-performance were collaboration and educator outsourcing, distribution of leadership, monitoring and assessing of instructional activities, organisational staffing, school community members' involvement, and instituting instructional leadership practices. The theory of transformational leadership recommends that school leaders engage in motivation, stimulation, and the professional development educators (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore school principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township, with a view to contributing knowledge in favour of uplifting the standards of numerous underperforming schools by providing guiding principles and strategies for intervention.

This chapter explains the research paradigm, the research approach, followed by the research design. The data collection section highlights the interview technique (individual semi-structured). The discussion on the selection of research participants (sampling), the data analysis, ethical considerations, trustworthiness, including the summary, completes the chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Seeing that the researcher sought to understand *lived leadership experiences* implemented by principals who promote high-performance strategies at secondary schools in the townships, this research is thus situated within an interpretive paradigm.

This paradigm attempts to dissect and comprehend the subject heads' and individuals' responses via a sense-making process aligned to its significance in the particular context of the research area (Creswell, 2007; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Schartz and Olilvy (1979) add that humans can tell a rational story through representing their significant and beneficial world in a culturally subjective manner. Accordingly, Guba and Lincoln (1994) state that perspectives relating to the interpretive paradigm emphasise that there is no single reality or a single truth about the social world, but rather a set of realities or truths which is historical, local, specific, and non-generalizable.

A research paradigm incorporates principles of ontology and epistemology (discussed below).

3.2.1 Ontology

Nieuwenhuis (2019) explains that ontological assumptions deal with what forms reality. The nature of reality, as understood by interpretivists, is about multiple realities (Thanh, 2015). To facilitate research effectiveness and relevancy, the interpretivist approach was applied to uncover in-depth rich information of the phenomenon under study. The contexts in which participants exist were explored through their eyes, and not through the researcher's lens.

Thus, the principals' points of view were analysed (Creswell, 2016). The researcher affirms that people make sense of the world in their own terms, and such interpretation take place in socio-cultural, socio-temporal, and socio-spatial contexts (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The assumption of interpretivist in terms of reality is based on "good natured" perceptions and beliefs that reality endures through social constructs (e.g. common meanings, languages etc.)

3.2.2 Epistemology

There appears to be a correlation among the elements of truth, knowledge, and understanding. In order to discover the truth, one needs to fully understand the phenomenon under investigation while considering *how* and *what* works in a specific setting. Epistemology deals with thought-processes with regard to one's own realities when acquiring new knowledge (Hart, 2010). Consequently, to gain a deep understanding of the research phenomenon, the researcher ensured cordiality while frequently interacting with the participants.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

3.3.1 Qualitative Research Approach

In this study, the researcher adopted a qualitative research approach as it allowed the phenomenon (school principals' lived leadership experiences) to be interpreted in its physical environment that stimulated participants' perspectives on the topic (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Further, a qualitative research approach enabled the researcher to explore and understand how individuals make sense of *school principals' lived leadership experiences* (Creswell, 2016).

Qualitative research deals with collecting, analysing, and interpreting data accurately, and presenting it logically in order to better understand the phenomenon under investigation (Gay & Mills, 2016). This means that the data collected and its significance emanate “originally” from the context of the research. Also, it attempts to understand various cultural and the social environments with dissimilar patterns of behaviour, in addition to being directly “concerned with exploring the *why* questions of research” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Hammarberg and Lacey (2015) add that qualitative research seeks opinions of a specific topic with main participants being the sources of collecting basic data and acquiring a broad view via interviews to probe for a better understanding of a condition, experience or an event. Through the application of qualitative research, the researcher discovered new knowledge about the phenomenon under study, which involved the analysis of texts and the understanding of conditions at schools.

Additionally, qualitative research values smaller groups of research participants because it does not intend to generalise its findings to a wider population (Korstejens & Moser, 2017). Creswell (2009) states that qualitative research is dissimilar from quantitative research as it is constructed in relation to using qualitative instead of quantitative words. Therefore, in adopting the qualitative research approach the researcher’s assumption was that one can only understand the realities of the world from dissecting the lived experiences, that is, in terms of how individuals (participants in this study) make sense of their experiences (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014)

School principals from similar and dissimilar institutional environments demonstrated differing realities. The realities referred to here are “happenings” in terms of leadership enactment based on their experiences they gained.

This study broadly engaged high-performing secondary school principals whose leadership expertise was explored with a view to eliciting themes or patterns in the collected data. Padgett (2016) adds that qualitative approaches favour naturalistic observation and interviewing because ‘they’ signify an intimacy as well as lack of a regulated environment, one standing contrary to ‘the distance’ in controlling historic research-based ‘studies’.

Though the utilisation of qualitative research approaches, the researcher managed to establish a theoretical lens and make sense of school principals' leadership practices as a result of the experiences they gained (Creswell, 2007).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is defined as a plan the researcher uses to collect and analyse data that will enable him or her to answer the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018; Nieuwenhuis, 2019 in Maree, 2019). It indicates the manner or ways in which the research was undertaken, how the participants were selected, the “happenings” about the investigated phenomenon, as well as the data gathering methods used. This study is a multi-site case study, comprising of four (4) schools, concerning school principals' lived leadership experiences, especially those principals who promote high- performance at secondary schools in the townships. The chosen sites for the study were four (4) high-performing secondary schools in four different townships situated in the North-West Province. In order to provide an insight into my data collection sources, the following was undertaken: The researcher selected a purposive sample of four (4) high- performing schools, and the principals of these four (4) high-performing schools in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District of the North-West Province.

Zach (2006) acknowledges that a multiple case study research is a valid tool for attaining a profound understanding of a specific phenomenon; for example, the inquiry of a particular user group. Gustafson (2017) adds that multiple case studies enable the researcher to make an analysis of data in differing circumstances. In the process of conducting this study, specifically related to research design, the researcher managed to discover the “evolutionary” and “sub-research” questions.

Additionally, the researcher made comparisons and this improved the researcher's opportunity to hypothesise (Ridder, 2017). This could mean that researchers are able to achieve incisive knowledge with regards to a particular phenomenon through a comparative qualitative analysis. However, Baxter and Jack (2008) cited in Gustafson (2017), state that utilising a multi- case study approach is very expensive and consumes more time.

The *lived leadership experiences* in each of the chosen schools many differ, so each school was regarded as a separate site.

3.5. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

According to Johnson and Christiansen (2017), methods of data collection involve approaches for physically obtaining data to be analysed in a research study. In this study, the researcher used interviews (individual semi structured) as a method of collecting data.

3.5.1 Interviews

This study utilised the individual semi-structured interview approach for data collection. Interviews are suitable for data gathering when a researcher is required to record participants' (individuals or groups) confidential and sensitive information. In this case, it involves the innovativeness of *lived leadership experiences*. This has afforded the researcher with ample opportunities to effectively engage with the participants thus fostering a trusting relationship to elicit authentic responses to questions. In this study, the interviews were audio-recorded - it avoided the researcher from taking notes thus enabling the research participants to pay more attention to what the researcher were saying, thus creating space for further probing to garner more information to enrich the study (Brenner, 2006).

This also allows for the seeking of clarity with regard to questions or concerns that may be misinterpreted or not well understood. Interviews also provide a platform for both the researcher and the participants to socially construct a matrix of altering diversified identities (Hertz, 1995). In the process of interviewing, the researcher was able to discover accurate information and to identify with the participants in terms of how they see their world (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). As a result, the knowledge in terms of the phenomenon became understandable achievable (King, Horrocks & Brooks, 2018). The qualitative research interview is structured in such a manner that processes and principles are easily adhered to; and thus becomes documented, critically analysed and strengthened.

Accordingly, qualitative research interview attempts to represent the interpretation of main issues from the participants' points of view. While qualitative research interviews are criticised for taking a considerable period of time and for being labour-intensive, they are a far more personal form of research than questionnaires, observations and document analyses (Valenzuela & Shrivastava, 2008). Roulston and Choic (2018) argue that the promulgation of the interview approach as a data primary source for qualitative studies has continued unabated in qualitative research approaches texts. Individual semi-structured interviews took about 50 minutes per session for gathering comprehensive and rich data from the participants. Considering this time factor and the interview-schedule, the researcher conducted individual semi-structured interviews with school principals to explore how their "lived leadership experiences" help in creating schools of high-performing standards in a South African township context.

3.5.2 Sampling Methods

The four (4) secondary school principals who were selected for this study were from the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District. The researcher chose those who were principals serving in the post for a minimum of five years in their respective schools with an achievement rate of 80% and above for three consecutive years (2017, 2018 and 2019).

In choosing the research participants (secondary school principals) for the present study, the researcher considered his resource limitations, the convenient and inexpensive accessibility to research sites, and the expectancy of collecting rich data to boost the validity of researcher's research from hand-picked individuals who suited all the mentioned criteria (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Initially, the researcher requested consent from the Office of the Head of Department (HoD) in the North West Department of Education and Sports Development. Next, the researcher contacted the principals of high-performing secondary schools who afforded the researcher the opportunity to discuss with them on a one-on-one basis the value and procedures of the study. Their responses were overwhelmingly positive. The chosen secondary school principals had to meet the major criteria of being accessible and prepared in terms of engaging in the study. Additionally, owing

to time-constraints and transportation costs, the principals selected were in proximity of between 60-120 kilometres from the researchers' place.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is a method of organising, structuring and interpreting the quantity of data collected (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) add that qualitative data analysis deals with planning, consideration for, and interpreting data in terms of participants' definitions of situations, noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities. This means that it does not attempt to involve statistics or figures, but observational data.

A key focus of the current research was not on the scope of data, but on making sense of collected data. This was achieved through dissecting the message content in terms of commonly used words and expressions which would allow for a better interpretation of individuals' knowledge production. This is connected to what Nieuwehuis (2007) believes; that is, the main research question should always be the foundational element of the research.

In this study, the researcher recorded, analysed, and interpreted the interview transcripts using the content analysis approach. Content analysis is defined as the practice of identifying and summarising textual content into relevant categories and patterns. It entails a systematic reading of a body of texts, images, and symbolic matter not necessarily from an author's or user's perspective (Krippendorf, 2019).

One way of doing this is to analyse written documents and transcripts for interview preparation (Nieuwehuis, 2007). Also, this facilitates the understanding of a recorded body of text gleaned from daily occurrences in individuals' lives, rather than relying solely on a single source. This study only used one source to collect data; namely, individual-semi structured interviews conducted with the secondary school principals of high-performing schools.

During the reading of transcripts and re-playing of the interview recordings, two dimensions of transformational leadership emerged, and these were innovativeness and strategic planning (Hay, 2006). Sub-themes of each were analysed and interpreted to explore the lived experiences and practices of secondary school principals.

3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

Anney (2014) declares that quantitative researchers consider reliability, objectivity and validity in ensuring trustworthiness of quantitative findings, whilst qualitative researchers take into account dependability, credibility, transferability and conformability as trustworthiness criteria in ensuring accuracy of qualitative findings.

In ensuring trustworthiness and credibility in this research, response validation (member-checking) was employed (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Member-checking is an approach employed to scrutinise the trustworthiness of results gleaned from data, where the interview transcripts are returned to the participants to check authenticity (Richards, 2003; Birt et al., 2016).

This implies that the researcher must check or verify the accuracy of the research findings. School principals who were participants can ensure credibility of the findings by seeking clarity on any aspect of the research process. All audiotapes of interviews as well as the interview transcripts were disseminated to the research participants (principals) to afford them an opportunity to critically examine data and its link to findings, and then to express their views in terms of validity and authenticity of the interpretation of the data. In addition, the researcher employed methods of qualitative (individual-semi structured interviews) approaches; namely, credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.7.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the confidence in the authenticity of the study (Korsjens & Moser, 2018). It is the first criteria that the researcher applied to promote trustworthiness. The researcher intended to gather in-depth data during the individual semi-structured interviews with secondary school principals of high-performing schools who assisted in ensuring that the findings were credible.

3.7.2 Dependability

Nieuwenhuis (2019) defines dependability in qualitative research as the stability of data over time under similar conditions. The researcher used the criterion of dependability as the second principle to ensure trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba 1985 (in Nieuwenhuis, 2019) draw attention to the necessity from the researcher to give reasons for any change over which the research develops. In this research,

dependability was realised through the provision of more details in terms of ways in which the study was administered.

3.7.3 Transferability

The next principle utilised to ensure trustworthiness was transferability. According to Guba and Lincoln (1985), transferability refers to the extent to which the research can be transferred to another context. In this research, transferability was demonstrated by providing full details of the background of the study, as well as explaining the significance of the study. This ensured that comparisons could be made regarding other schools in the District, where related studies could be undertaken.

3.7.4 Conformability

Conformability as a criterion of trustworthiness in qualitative research establishes the level of confidence of the study's findings based on the participants' authentic lived-experiences. This is the fourth criterion that the researcher used to ensure trustworthiness. The researcher achieved conformability by ensuring that the interpretation of participants' responses were inextricably linked to real-life experiences which ensured that the participants' views (data) and the research conclusions were authentic rather than that based on the researcher's bias (Creswell, 1994).

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues, problems, or dilemmas could manifest in many practices and professions. Vanclay, Baines and Taylor (2013) suggest that research in social studies be examined by sociologists in order to produce accurate results from authentic data. This implies that ethical distress may occur in each of the stages in the research process.

Hence, the researcher contacted the secondary school principals of high-performing schools in the North-West Province and particularly went through each school's performance - Grade 12 results in the NSC examinations in 2017 and 2018.

Ethics also demanded that the researcher request in writing to get consent for conducting the research from the following authorities:

- Ethics Committee at the University of the Free State;
- Education Department and Sports Development Office in the North-West Province; and
- The secondary school principals of chosen schools.

The researcher sought permission from the Education Department and Sports Development Directorate Office, as all secondary school principals (study participants) are Government employees. The Ethics Committee at the University of the Free State (UFS) granted me permission prior to commencing the research process.

The research process necessitates that confidentiality be guaranteed from the researcher to the study participants. Therefore, the researcher requested the research participants (secondary school principals) to discuss their leadership styles at their own schools. Thus, the researcher assured them of the following:

- Observing the principles of informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity in the strictest terms;
- No compromise in terms of the general functionality of the school; and
- Participation is completely voluntarily and that they may disengage themselves from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

3.8.1 Principle of Informed Consent

Informed consent is defined as the participants' willingness to voluntarily engage in assisting the researcher in the information-eliciting process while being aware of the possibilities of risks (Shahnazarian et al., 2017).

As a pre-research move, the researcher was granted verbal consent from the research participants (secondary school principals) before conducting the process of the interview as a confirmation of their willingness and availability to engage in the research interviews. The researcher also informed all participants that the interviews will be audio-recorded and non-written consent was granted.

However, prior to the commencement of the individual semi-structured interviews, the researcher gave each of them a letter of informed consent that they had to sign, and afforded them an opportunity to ask clarity-seeking questions in terms of the study's processes and aim.

A sample letter of informed consent is attached as Annexure B. The researcher ensured anonymity of all the research participants (using pseudonyms/codes) for the entire duration of the study. The researcher also assured participants that the data collected from them will be used for research purposes only and that records will be password secured and only available to the researcher to access. The researcher again informed them that they may disengage themselves from the study at any point, should they wish to do so.

3.8.2 Participants' Anonymity and Confidentiality

Confidentiality necessitates ensuring the protection of identities, safety and privacy of information, building relations of trust, and displaying sound morals to advance research integrity (Baez, 2002).

3.9 SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher outlined the research methodology and design of the study. The researcher gave reasons as to the appropriateness of the qualitative research approach. The researcher then ensured that all principals of high-performing schools (participants) signed an informed consent letter. The researcher issued interview transcripts to participants for verification purposes. The researcher also explained the research paradigm, selection of research participants, techniques of data collection, observation techniques, and document analysis to explore school principals' lived-leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township context. Lastly, the researcher discussed trustworthiness, credibility, and ethical issues of this study. Chapter four will deal with the presentation of data, data analysis, and interpretations of the qualitative data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA, DATA ANALYSIS, AND DATA INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three, the researcher explained the research design and methodology employed in this study. This chapter (four) focuses on the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data. As previously indicated in chapter three, the main data collection technique was interviews. Considering the ultimate objective of the study (logical presentation, critical analysis, and accurate interpretation), coupled with maintaining clarification and coherence, this chapter presented, analysed and interpreted the information elicited with regards to leadership enactment of the four high-performing school principals. The chapter commences with a description of the characteristics of the four high-performing schools. Thereafter, the researcher discusses principals' innovativeness in leadership, best-practices, and strategies to improve school discipline as the main themes for this study.

4.1.1 The Main Research Question

What are principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township?

4.1.2 The Secondary Research Questions

- What are the school principals' views regarding the nature of their leadership in creating high-performing schools?
- How can school principals' explain their experiences of creating high performing schools?
- What are the school principals' views with regard to determinants of a school's high performance?

4.2 PROFILES OF SELECTED HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

4.2.1 Introduction

The case study approach stresses “the study of modern phenomena as occurring in real-life,” in which various sources of data are utilised (Yin, 1984:23). For this study, the multiple-case study comprised of four high-performing secondary school principals. This is one of the reasons the researcher generated data from four secondary school principals as study participants from each of the chosen school. In keeping with the focus of this study, it was important to identify the context as it has elements influencing the results of the phenomenon being investigated.

4.2.2 Profiles of Schools A – D (2017 - 2018)

Table 4.1: Performance of Grade 12 learners in the four participating schools for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

2017					2018				
School	Quintile	No. wrote	No. achieved	% rate achieved	School	Quintile	No. wrote	No. achieved	% rate achieved
A	3	110	98	89,09%	A	3	114	96	84,2%
B	3	107	98	91,6%	B	3	76	76	100%
C	3	36	31	86,1%	C	3	32	29	90,6%
D	2	53	44	83,0%	D	2	48	48	100%

The four selected high-performing schools are referred to as “MSTA” schools with the majority of learners doing Mathematics, Accounting, and Science. The schools selected are ranked between quintile 2 and 3 being no-fee schools while the fee-paying schools (not mentioned above) are ranked between quintile 4 and 5.

School A is a “township” school, with a shortage of resources such as learner desks, classrooms (with more mobile classrooms for grade 8 and 9 pupils) well-resourced laboratories, and computer facilities. The school was established in 2004 and has been operating for 15 years. They offer subjects from Grade 8 to 12. Grade 8, 9 and some Grade 10 learners are accommodated in mobile classrooms. The majority of learners are residing in close proximity to the school.

The school is easily accessible as it is located next to its feeder primary schools. However, there are no safety and security structures such as fencing and guards at this school. The school has a few sturdy buildings that are well furnished and maintained, except the mobile classrooms. At times, the school would have a shortage of running water and electricity. Despite these challenges, the school maintained an 80% and above pass rate for four consecutive years, with bachelor-degree-admissions increasing from 22-28% in four consecutive years. The school is also a major participant in different co-curricular and extra-curricular activities locally and regionally (e.g. sports, choir, debates etc.)

School B is also a “township” school with adequate infrastructure (learner desks, chairs, educator furniture), yet many of the walls of school buildings are cracking. The school was established in 2 000 and has been operating for 19 years. They have from Grade 8 to 12 with learners being housed in mobile classrooms. Only a few learners live away from school as most of them reside nearby.

The school is also easily accessible as it is located next to two feeder primary schools. However, there are no measures implemented in terms of human safety and security – there was no fencing around the school. The school buildings (mobile classrooms) are not well maintained.

The school is also affected by economic and societal challenges relating to high unemployment, poverty, drug and substance abuse, and illiteracy; yet the schools’ performance in NSC exams increased from 80% to 100% for four consecutive years.

This school does not regularly participate in activities related to extra-curricular events.

School C is also a “township” school, but well-resourced in terms of infrastructure such as computer laboratories and science facilities. The school buildings are two-storeyed and well-fenced. The school was established in 1996 and it has been operating for 24 years.

The school is easily accessible as it is located next to the main road, close to a number of feeder primary schools. However, there are very few measures in terms of safety and security except for the fencing – no security guards were visible. There are a few mobile classrooms. This school is a major participant of extra curricula activities and performs well in sports, choir, and debates.

School D is also a “township” school, well-resourced in terms of infrastructure. There are security cameras in the principal’s office, computer labs, and the campus is well-fenced with a remote-control access gate. The school was established in 1988 and has been operating for 31 years. The school accommodates Grade 8 to 12 in permanently built classrooms.

The school is easily accessible as it is located next to the main road. This school has only one feeder primary school. There are measures put in place in terms of safety and security. The school has a number building with no mobile classrooms. The school participates in different extra-curricular activities and it has achieved accolades in sports, choir, and library-related competitions.

In this study, the researcher assigned pseudonyms for anonymity purposes regarding participants and schools.

Table 4.2: Profiling school principal (School A)

Age	53
Gender	Female
Qualifications	M+4

	Secondary Teacher's Diploma + Advanced certificate in Education
Experience as a post level 1 educator	5 years
Experience as the Departmental Head	5 years
Experience as Vice principal	2 years
Experience as school principal	10 years
Experience as school principal in present school	5 years
Total number of schools worked in	2
Total number of years of experience in education	29 years

Table 4.3: Profiling school principal (School B)

Age	45
Gender	Male
Qualifications	B.Sc. + PGCE (M+4)
Experience as Post Level 1 educator	6 years
Experience as Departmental Head	3 years
Experience as Vice principal	5 years
Experience as school principal	7 years
Experience as school principal in the present school	7 years
Total number of schools worked in	3
Total number of years of experience in education	28 years

Table 4.4: Profiling school principal (School C)

Age	49
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Gender	male
Qualifications	M+4 (Higher Diploma in education) and Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE)
Experience as a post level 1 educator	4 years
Experience as the Departmental Head	7 years
Experience as Vice principal	2 years
Experience as school principal	9 years
Experience as school principal in present school	10 years
Total number of schools worked in	2
Total number of years of experience in education	32 years

Table 4.5: Profiling school principal (School C)

Age	53
Gender	Female
Qualifications	M+4 (Secondary Teacher's Diploma + Advanced certificate in Education)
Experience as a post level 1 educator	12 years
Experience as the Departmental Head	8 years
Experience as Vice principal	2 years

Experience as school principal	8 years
Experience as school principal in present school	7 years
Total number of schools worked in	2
Total number of years of experience in education	30 years

Personal declaration:

I, M. I. Ntshangase, the researcher during the data collection process, am a secondary school educator, and the participants from whom data was collected were school principals in close proximity to my place of work.

4.3 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

What are school principals’ lived leadership experiences in creating high-performing schools in a South African Township?

4.3.1 Participants’ Responses (1)

The principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A responded as follows regarding her lived leadership experiences in relation to the creation of her school’s high-performance in a South African township context:

We would go to the neighbouring schools. We hang around with their educators of respective grades, and view how things are done. They would also come to my school for the same purpose. We have done it with many schools in our circuit. Then, I would have a look at how they have planned their content (curriculum structure).

The principal at school B (**Mr Tomine**) mentioned the following:

We do collaborate with neighbouring secondary schools e.g. private schools. We observe what is it that they are doing differently that makes them to ‘high- perform so that our learners can benefit equally in terms of learning?

At school C, the principal (**Mr Lorie**) said:

I would engage all stakeholders; even ordinary people like the gardener because I do believe that possibly any person can be the president one day. I would try to make educators responsible, being able to do things even when I am not there, making them aware that my office is for everybody. I would also “outsource” educators to teach specific areas in other schools, thus creating a reciprocal cycle of collaboration.

At school D, the principal (**Mr Thumiyo**) indicated:

If you want the school to high-perform, you need to have a hard-working team of educators who cooperate. This is necessary before you start motivating learners. Once you get your staff up-and-running, in terms of educators’ understanding the school’s target (and their personal targets) then management comes with strategies to boost learner-morale.

4.3.2 Interpretation of the Responses

At both schools (A and B) the principals (Ms Rama & Mr Tomine) established a good connection with other high-performing schools and promoted a mutual healthy reciprocal process with all educators. This is related to allowing educators of her (Ms Rama) school to participate in experimental research with regards to emulating the best practices they observed.

It may seem to be clear that these principals succeeded by using the further professional development principle. We recall that both principals (School A and School B) created a strong network with high-performing schools. This was aimed at recognising the practices of astute leadership to upgrade academic results. At school C, the principal was closely linked to establishing healthy relationships with different stakeholders, ordinary individuals that are unified and inspired to reach mutual targets.

It seems to be clear that Mr Lorie (the principal at school C) achieved success in terms of trying his best in creating individuals” (educators, gardeners, etc.) self-identification and used teamwork as a solid collaborative system. He used the words

“my office is for everybody” to affirm that he does not own the school; it’s for everyone to use it responsibly for the school’s benefit.

The data shows that the principal at school c does not engage in twinning with other schools but follows the reciprocal process of “outsourcing” educators in order to create a school that is high-performing. This principal (Mr Lorie) created a conducive working environment to foster a sense of ownership among staff members in order to take the school to a higher level of performance.

In terms of interrelationship between the principal and educators (including Departmental Heads, Deputy Principals etc.) at the respective school, the research findings revealed that the principal at school D (Mr Thumiyo) had a good working relationship with all educators in order to ensure that the school’s target is reached; that is, reaching “high performance”. In relation to educational matters, the principal would disseminate information on a one-on-one basis to all respective educators in order to create high-performing standards.

4.3.3 Conclusions drawn and Themes generated:

Conclusion drawn: School principals should be closely allied to the notion of learning through the best- practices of high-performing neighbouring schools in the Circuit.

Theme generated: Principals’ innovativeness in leadership

Sub-theme generated: Twinning of schools and supporting educators

4.4 PARTICIPANTS’ RESPONSES (2)

The principal (**Mr. Tomie**) at school B expressed the following views:

I normally tell educators – if others can do it, you can also do it - just have faith in yourself and don’t give up on learners (educators). I, with my complimentary words, (you look very beautiful today, you love your family, you love yourself, and you love your job) motivate my staff to overcome difficulties and produce quality teaching-learning situations.

At school C, the principal (**Mr Lorie**) said:

Learners are the toughest ones to motivate. You can have learners with great potential but lazy to work. I motivate my learners by making them understand the importance of being at school and responding positively to curricular activities organised for them. I do appreciate educators who have done well in motivating learners and I express this appreciation during our staff meetings.

At school D, the principal (**Mr Thumiyo**) mentioned:

We would conduct assembly two times a week (Mondays and Fridays). For each and every week, we would issue award certificates to both learners (top ten in each grade) and educators (top ten in each subject). We also encourage those who are lagging behind.

4.4.1 Interpretation of Responses

The above excerpts show that one of the strategies that participants used to create high-performing schools was motivating educators and learners. In the opinion of Ferreira, Cardoso and Abrantes (2011:1707), it is “when learners and educators are motivated that they can identify with the teaching-learning institution and have an improved sense of belonging which ultimately results in the creation of high-performing schools”.

It has been suggested that parents of learners should be actively involved in education in order to create high-performing schools (Bipath, Mfulathelwa & Nkabinde, 2018). The responses indicate that motivating educators and learners is key as it drives them towards promoting the school’s vision to attain high academic standards.

The findings from schools C and D indicate that principals (Mr Lorie & Mr Thumiyo) had major roles to play in motivating educators and learners to create high-performing schools. This is evident by them impressing on learners on the importance of attending school, the issuing of awards, and encouraging those who

are lagging behind.

4.4.2 Conclusions drawn and Theme and Sub-theme generated

Conclusion drawn: Day, Gu and Sammons (2016) concur that in order to create and sustain school-effectiveness, it is necessary that principals understand and diagnose their school's needs. In this study, the researcher refers to school needs as including motivating of both educators and learners in order to create high-performing schools.

Theme generated: Principal's innovativeness in leadership

Sub-theme generated: Motivation of educators and learners

4.5 PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES (3)

Principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A responded as follows:

A child's progress is of paramount importance. Regarding recruitment and retaining of staff members, I don't just recruit. I look at the curriculum needs of the school not for the benefit of certain individuals. As and when I recruit teachers to come and serve the institution, I scrutinise their qualifications.

Principal (**Mr Tomine**) at school B responded as follows:

The first thing you need to do as the principal is to identify the needs of the school. You can match educators profile with the needs of the school; for instance, if the school wants an accounting educator, the school must recruit an educator whose qualifications match the accounting needs of the school.

Principal (**Mr Lorie**) at school C responded as follows:

As the school principal, I firstly identify the curriculum needs of my school. I make sure that recruitment and retaining (temporary educators) of educators matches the profile of the educator whom I intend to appoint. For instance, if the school needs a physical science educator and there is more than one educator who applied for the post, I would go through the

academic transcripts (qualifications plus the academic record) of the candidate's progress from high school to university.

The principal (**Mr Thumiyo**) at school D said:

It is imperative that as the school principal, when you recruit and retain educators, I usually recruit experienced educators and inexperienced educators. I would request them to send me the results they produced in the particular grade they taught. Regarding the inexperienced educators, I would ask them to send me their academic records and qualifications. Then, considering the school's needs, I will decide whether an appointment should to be done or not.

The analysis of the above data enabled the researcher to notice the link between educators' recruitment and the schools' potential to perform. It is imperative to recruit and retain educators based on curriculum needs in order to create high-performing schools. The findings of the study also revealed that one of the methods that the participants used to create high-performing schools was investigating applicants' qualifications, experience, and results attained at previous schools as part of the recruitment and retention process.

4.5.1 Conclusions drawn and Themes generated

Conclusion drawn: A suggestion was made above that school leaders (principals) should utilise educators' skills and abilities as effectively as possible in order to create high-performing schools (Rafiei & Davari, 2015). This indicates that recruiting and retaining educators can assist the school leaders (principals) in terms of implementing departmental targets and therefore create high-performing schools. Furthermore, Travers and Christiansen (2010) emphasise that correct staffing can assist in improving learner- output in secure academic environments.

Theme generated: Principals' innovativeness in leadership

Sub-theme generated: Recruiting and retaining educators

4.6 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What are the school principals' views regarding d the nature of their leadership in creating high-performing schools?

4.6.1 Participants' responses

According to the principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A:

As a school principal you can set the pace at which you would like the institution to function by not being too controlling with regards to the planning within a grade, phase or classroom. You must entrust experienced senior educators (PL 1, Departmental Heads, and Deputy Principals etc.) to buy-in to realise and enlarge the school's vision.

Similar research findings were evident at school B and School C as indicated below:

The PL 3 personnel (deputy principals) would be nurtured and guided by the principal to execute the principal's leadership role in his absence; and the same would be applicable for PL 2 educators who act as deputy principals in their absence...

The principal (**Mr Thumiyo**) at school D said:

I motivate my staff by exploiting their abilities and skills. I do not only utilise their abilities, but I also build them in terms of complementing them for the good work they have done rather than hampering them. I also appreciate their inputs, but I help them overcome their limitations.

4.6.2 Interpretation of Responses

At school A the principal (Ms Rama) recognised the enormity of duties she had to carry out and the necessity of engaging in the practices of distributive leadership. She administered distributive leadership in an astute manner such that her SMT members were assigned such tasks that were geared to promote the school's vision. She gauged their work potential and expertise in order to execute definite duties and functions in leadership. The research findings revealed a broad spectrum of strategies with regards to the distribution of leadership. It also indicated that

principals inculcated a strong morale and confidence in their staff members at all levels. This led to maintaining the level of high-performance. Both principals of School B and School C (Mr Tomie & Mr Lorie) engaged in practices of leadership which included the distribution of duties for recreational activities, financial matters, and quality control.

Such individuals practising responsible duties later became competent and thus were now accountable to principals. It emerged from the findings that one of the strategies that the participants used to create high-performing schools was that of the distribution of leadership. As such, the distribution of leadership contributes positively to higher learner-performances (Bush & Glover, 2012).

Furthermore, Bush (2010) clarifies that the exercise of power is not restricted to the SMT members only, but can be exercised by everyone. In this study, it is clear that the principals had the strategic view of recognising their educators' potential as being central to achieving high-performance levels. These principals anticipated a greater output that staff would produce when they are given responsibilities relevant to their interest and ability. They maintained a conducive working environment for educators to excel to carry out the leadership duties in order to create high-performing schools.

4.6.3 Conclusions drawn and themes generated

Conclusion drawn: Generally, the organisations had so far indicated that much trust, care, and cooperation prevails at high-performing schools as a result of the school principals being involved in distributive leadership.

Theme generated: Principals' innovativeness in leadership

Sub-theme generated: Distributed leadership

4.7 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What is the vision to uplift the school's performance?

4.7.1 Participants' Responses

In order to create high-performing schools, there is a need to bring everyone on board as indicated by the principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A. The response below is from the principal (Ms Rama) at school A:

We need to have a good view of all school community members (teaching and non-teaching individuals, learners, and parents/guardians). We need to have a buy-in mentality approach for the community to see the principal's vision for the school.

The principal (**Mr Tomie**) at school B responded as follows:

The principal is not the school; it's the community's (parents, learners, educators) property.

Principal (**Mr Lorie**) at School C explains:

We work with people (staff), we have to move with them and recognise their completely different personalities they bring to the workplace, I have got to integrate that into the school's culture.

The principal at (**Mr Thumiyo**) School D stated:

We are one big family. I do not just crucify and criticise my staff for nothing. I would consider it very wrong if I cannot find out of what has been the cause leading to people having reacted in the most unethical manner.

4.7.2 Interpretation of Responses

The above-mentioned (for school A) signifies the principal's preparedness to collaborate with school community members instead of being the "solitary individual". These school principals (School A, School B, School C & School D) acknowledged the importance of engaging essential stakeholders for realising targets and the vision in order to create high-performing schools. It is increasingly recognised that effective leadership also drives the school's vision in contributing significantly towards the improvement of learner-performance (Wallance Foundation, 2004). It emerged from the findings that one of the strategies the participants used to create high-performing schools is to understand educators' intrinsically to support the school's vision.

The responses show that principals recognised the importance of cultural diversities involving essential stakeholders to take ownership of the teaching-learning institution. They also revealed that the principals' understanding and support for educators inspired them to go the extra mile to maximise academic activities in order to secure the most optimal learning outcomes. In such schools, higher learner-output occurred.

4.7.3 Conclusions drawn and Themes generated

Conclusion drawn: The data above indicates that high-performing school principals have understood the importance of analysing employees' profile (to recognise potentialities) and engaging all school community members towards the realisation of the school's vision.

Theme: Principals' innovativeness in leadership

Sub-theme generated: Understanding and supporting educators towards a vision

4.8 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What are your best-practices in terms of time-management and protection of teaching-time in ensuring a high-performing school?

4.8.1 Participants' Responses

Principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A responded to this aspect in the following manner:

Preaching it to staff and walking the talk is fundamental in managing and protecting the teaching time is vital. We would also teach in the afternoons from 14:00 to 18:00 according to the special time-table, mostly when learners have to sit for their year-end examinations. Educators would come up with the recovery plans in case one was designed for all grades (8, 9, 10, 11 & 12). The recovery plans would include attendance of extra classes (e.g. morning, afternoon, weekends, and holidays). As this is an MSTA School, we normally give attention to subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Accounting, and Life Sciences. Extra Physical Sciences

and Accounting classes would be attended from 07:00 to 13:00 every Saturday.

Principal, **Mr Tomine**, at school B stated:

Our protection and management of instructional time include having double periods of one hour. Each period being 30 minutes and we would adjust the time-table according to the plan for that specific day. We would reduce each period by five minutes, making it 7 periods being attended before lunch. Learners would go home early (except for those who have arrangements with their subject educators) if there is nothing to be done for that specific day (i.e. Wednesday). In terms of sport, we would give educators (except for those who have planned academic arrangements with the learners) time do other duties such as marking of tasks, and controlling of class registers until the end-of-school-day time of 14:30.

The principal (**Mr Lorie**) at school C explained:

We do plead with our learners to remain behind after school or to come over the weekends to cover subject content. The learners we are teaching are not Afrikaans first language speakers, so we have to spend a maximum of two to three days during the holidays... teach them slowly for them to grasp the content.

The principal (**Thumiyo**) at school D said:

Protection and managing teaching time is not an easy task. Our protection and management of teaching time include extending the knocking-off time (14:30 to 16:30) for marking purposes and extra classes. The conducting of academic camps two times a year is to revise the content already covered. The arriving early in the morning (06:30 instead of 07:30) to work before the commencement of normal teaching and learning hours occurs a couple of weeks before and during examinations.

4.8.2 Interpretation of Responses

In school A, the principal (Ms Rama) applied certain mechanisms (such as the availability of composite time-tables, educators' personal time-table and the period register for each class) in order to ensure that her learning institution performs.

The data revealed that the principal and the other members of the SMT provided effective leadership in creating high-performing schools through the protection and management of instructional time.

It is important to manage and protect the instructional time in order secure and promote high-performance (Fisher, 2009). The above-mentioned scenario was deemed existing in three of the high-performing schools. The research findings from three schools (school A, school B and school C) indicated that there was an astute leadership by the principals and the SMT, except for School D where SMT members could not find it easy to protect and manage the instructional time.

4.8.3 Conclusions drawn and Theme and Sub-theme generated

Conclusion drawn: A successful leadership pattern can be detected by noting the extension of the closing time for marking purposes, arriving early before normal commencement time of teaching and learning during examinations, and ensuring that educators adhere to the recovery plans which includes attendance of extra classes (in the mornings, afternoons and during holidays). These interventions help to create high-performing schools.

Theme: Principal's best strategic practices of leadership

Sub-theme generated: Protection and management of instructional time

4.9 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 4

How do you ensuring that instructional materials are judiciously used?

4.9.1 Participants' Responses

The principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A responded:

We have a challenge concerning limited learner textbooks. We do take good care of the limited textbooks we have. Educators (both class educators and subject educators) would keep a record of the total number of textbooks issued in his or her class per subject to ensure that textbooks are returned

at the end of the year. With regards to Mathematics, Accounting, Physical Sciences, and Life Sciences, we utilise projectors and whiteboards in order to ameliorate learner performances. Although we have very limited projectors and whiteboards, we utilise what we have for the benefit of our learners.

The principal at school B (**Mr Tomine**) indicated the following:

We move from the point of coming up with systems and then embedding them as policy. At times, learners would be staying far from the school or at the farms, and when a learner loses a book, a parent being unemployed finds it difficult to replace it. This results in inconsistencies in terms of applying the policy (issuing and retrieval) that the school has crafted. Sometimes what happens on the left-hand-side would not be applicable on the right-hand-side.

In this regard, the principal (**Mr Lorie**) at school C, indicated:

We have a policy that relates to issuing and retrieval of learner textbooks. We put the parent at the centre of it. Before a book is lent or issued to a learner, a parent has to sign the form to know the type of book given, and the parents would report to the school if need arises.

At school D the principal (Mr Thumiyo) mentioned that:

The money allocated for textbooks is only spent for textbooks. Educators copy only what they are going to use to supplement other teaching resources because the top-up is only done only when urgent.

4.9.2 Interpretation of Responses:

The research findings revealed that School A had insufficient instructional materials as compared to other schools (B, C & D). At times both educators and learners would have to borrow textbooks from other schools to supplement those few they already have in order to create an effective environment for learning. It also emerged

from the findings that one of the strategies that the participants used to create high-performing schools was management, in particular, the effective management of instructional materials.

The findings from school B suggest the absence of strong leadership with regards to proper management of instructional materials. The SMT members were not exercising proper control over the instructional materials and there was no consistency in the enactment of policy (issuing and retrieval) that they crafted. This is evidenced by some unemployed parents not being able to pay for a book that a learner has lost. Therefore, they did not have enough money to buy a wide range of instructional materials as they were dependent on subsidies provided by the Government in order to create a high-performing school.

The findings from school C and school D indicated the presence of strong leadership and management in relation to the management of instructional materials in order to create high-performing schools. This was evident by taking steps to inform parents by making them sign the “loan book form” for the books issued to a learner. Also, allowing particular individuals to be responsible for photocopying, and the proper allocation of funds as per the budget was reserved for purchasing textbooks.

This normally leads to better school functionality which results in the public having confidence in the teaching-learning institutions which leads to the creation of high-performing schools. Lastly, the judicious use of money allocated for textbooks may benefit school D in order to create high-performing school.

4.9.3 Conclusions drawn and Theme and Sub-theme generated

Conclusion drawn: There is wide agreement that the availability of instructional materials is not only important for educators’ and learners’ use; it is also the manner in which these resources are utilised in order to support an effective differential learning system (Awolaju, 2015). This view is corroborated by Boateng (2014) who states the importance technical efficiency in terms of resource-utilisation of the schooling system in South Africa – in other words, although the availability of resources is vital, its judicious and skilful use is crucial for effective teaching-learning to take place.

In the opinion of Hilton (2016), the enrichment of learners’ experiences and better

classroom outcomes, is possible through the use of textbooks. Sedibe (2011) asserted that a teaching-learning culture can only be improved if the DBE provides sufficient instructional resources to each one of the schools evenly.

Theme: Principals' best practices of leadership

Sub-theme: The management of instructional materials (LTSM)

4.10 RESEARCH QUESTION

What strategies do you apply to boost school funds?

4.10.1 Participants' Responses

The principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A indicated that:

We don't have any other form of revenue except the voluntary contribution from parents for their learners, and Government subsidies. We depend much on these revenues for our school to perform at maximum level.

At school B, the principal (**Mr. Tomie**) stated:

I think fees do boost us to perform at a high level. We introduced various forms of fundraising to relieve financial challenges. For instance, learners would retrieve their belongings (e.g. cell phones) at a certain fee. Our committee responsible for this service considers the socio-economic background of the learners.

The principal (**Mr Lorie**) at school C remarked:

I think fees do not boost us to perform at a high level. Parents are aware that they are paying a voluntary contribution and nothing will be done to them if they don't want to contribute. We had a community hall where most entertainment activities (beauty contests, speech contests etc.) would be conducted and we would charge a certain amount for its use. Unfortunately, the hall was burnt down during political unrest.

At school D (**Mr Thumiyo**) the principal said:

I think fees do boost us to perform optimally. We normally use the voluntary contributions (paid by learners) and sponsors' contributions during learner

camps when engaging experts in certain subject areas to assist our learners. The service of these expert educators (“outsourcing”) is pivotal because it helps us to achieve far better results.

4.10.2 Interpretation of Responses:

The above responses indicate that one of the strategies that the participants used to create high-performing schools was the boosting of school funds. The School Governing Body (SGB) must take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the state, (SASA, no. 84 of 1996). The research findings revealed that school D needed money because it had to pay “outsourced” educators to assist the learners in order to get high-performing results.

This is evidenced by “I think fees do boost us to perform ...” (school B and school D) while school A indicated they depended on voluntary contribution from parents and government subsidies. The research findings also indicated that all participants were able to adjust in matters related to school finances in order to create high-performing schools.

However, it is necessary that schools accumulate funds in order to reach targets (“high- performance”). The payment of essential services (e.g. water and electricity) is also possible through school funds.

The findings at school C indicated a different scenario as compared to school A, school B and school D as evidenced by “I think fees do not boost us to perform....” At school D, it is clear that insufficient school funds had no impact on creating a high-performing school. As school D belongs to quintile two, it does not have other sources of income, and therefore depends on subsidies from the Government to pay the school’s expenses.

The majority of poor schools benefit from Government subsidies to cover the cost of general services in order to create high-performing schools. In relation to instructional activities, school D created a harmonious partnership with specialist educators (subject experts). Sponsors would provide tokens of appreciation to these experts who had taught extra classes during out-of-school-hours and at school

campus to create high-performing schools.

Only “outsourced” educators were compensated for transportation costs in school D while educators within the school sacrificed their time without being compensated in order to create high-performing schools.

4.10.3 Conclusion drawn, and Theme and Sub-theme generated

Conclusions drawn: There is a need for financial sustainability for every organisation if they hope to excel. These schools (school A, school B, school C, and school D) are referred to as “no-fee schools”; and regardless of their financial constraints, they still excel.

Theme: Principal’s best strategic practices of leadership

Sub-theme: Strategies to boost school funds

4.11 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 5

What intervention strategies do you implement to ensure content-coverage?

4.11.1 Participants’ Responses (1)

The principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A expressed the following about the intervention strategies they apply for coverage of subject content:

A challenge normally arises when the Departmental Head is not acquainted with the subject matter, as they would be a number of subjects under his or her academic load. In this case, we would go to neighbouring schools and seek help, even in terms of standardisation of the paper.

At school B and school C the principals (Mr. Tomie & Mr. Lorie) mentioned:

I would walk past the classrooms and I would know whether teaching and learning is taking place; and are the teachers doing what they are supposed to be doing, or are the learners conducting themselves in an acceptable manner. This makes us understand the type of individuals you are dealing with.

At school D (**Mr Thumiyo**) the principal said:

I would sit in my office and switch on the cameras. Through this, I am able to monitor any movement in my school. I would know whether teaching and learning is taking place, are teachers doing what they are supposed to be doing, and are learners conducting themselves in an acceptable manner?

4.11.2 Interpretation of Responses

The data at school A shows a dearth of leadership skills in relation to monitoring tools for instructional activities in order to create a high-performing schools. This is indicated via the regular involvement of other schools that help in terms of paper (tests) standardisation. This may affect the functioning of the school in terms of a decrease in learner performances.

The research findings at school B suggested that the principal had an important role in creating a high-performing school. This is evidenced by not believing in “second-hand” information as he is also a subject teacher and does not believe in copying the monitoring and assessment activities as key management tasks are delegated to the Departmental Heads (HoDs) in order to create a high-performing school.

4.11.3 Conclusions drawn and Theme and Sub-theme generated

Conclusions drawn: The above responses show that all the school principals remained committed to these practices. The process of curriculum implementation, and regulation of instructional activities, contributed significantly for a school to excel to reach high-performance standards

Theme generated: Principals’ best practices in leadership

Sub-theme generated: Monitoring tools for instructional activities

4.11.3.1 Participants’ responses (2)

The principal (**Ms Rama**) at school A further indicated:

All schools in our circuit have clusters; teachers would attend cluster

meetings for each subject before the commencement of the next academic year. They would discuss how the curriculum will unfold (i.e. this year for the following year).

The principal (**Mr. Tomie**) responded:

Each educator in the school would be expected to cover every topic in the ATP (Annual Teaching Plan) that efficiently guides the daily instructional activities. Educators would indicate the date on which a topic was covered on the ATP and this would be controlled by the Departmental Head appointed for that specific job.

Despite the participants being located in different environments and interviewed at different times, both principals at school C (**Mr Lorie**) and School D (**Mr Thumiyo**) had the same views:

We have systems put in place. The vice-principal would have a series of meetings at least twice a week in the afternoons (after knocking-off time) with the Departmental Heads who would give feedback to subject educators in their respective departments. This feedback includes what is expected of subject teachers, making provision for time-tabling, structuring ATPs, and outlining examination guidelines so that teachers may plan on time.

The research findings indicated that all four schools (School A, B, C and D) achieved success in relation to curriculum planning and implementation in order to create high-performing schools. At school A, this is indicated by planning in advance before the commencement of the following academic year. At school B, this is evidenced by the continuous updating of the ATP by the educators and monitored by the Departmental Heads in order to create a high-performing school.

At School C and School D, this is evidenced by a series of meetings that would be conducted by the Deputy Principals with the Departmental Heads who will also do the same with subject educators in their department. At such meetings, supplying educators with proper documentation in advance (such as ATPs and examination guidelines) is necessary so that they can plan on time in order to create high-

performing schools.

4.11.3.2 Conclusions drawn and Theme and Sub-theme generated

Conclusion drawn: Curriculum planning is about the processes of making decisions in terms of the significance of education, particularly a person's understanding, knowledge and expertise in realising positive schooling outcomes (Deng, 2019). According to Chaudhary (2015), curriculum implementation necessitates the effecting of formal study courses, and curricular and subject matter.

Theme: Principals' best practices in leadership

Sub-theme: Curriculum planning and implementation

4.12 RESEARCH QUESTION

What strategies to you implement in overcoming challenges in discipline at your school?

4.12.1 Participants' Responses

The principal (**Ms Rama**) said:

We instil a high level of learner-discipline. We would summon boys and advise them of the disadvantages of being involved in gangsterism.

At school B (**Mr Tomine**) the principal remarked:

It takes the whole village to raise a child. I do believe in inviting and involving all stakeholders (e.g. police officers, home-based care people, community patrollers) to assist in dealing with discipline cases.

At school C, the principal (**Mr Lorie**) responded:

Prevention is better than cure; preventing some of the things before they could happen is imperative and such prevention is done through policy-implementation. On the side of educators, the Educators' Employment Act (EEA) guides us in terms of curbing ill-discipline. For learners, we use the

school's Code of Conduct.

The principal (**Mr Thumiyo**) at school D responded as follows:

I work with different stakeholders, and I believe in being close to health services that will help you deal with disciplinary challenges. We do have a problem of discipline but with all stakeholders helping out, we are able to deal with disciplinary challenges; at some point I would bring in the ministers of different churches to preach about discipline from a Biblical perspective.

4.12.2 Interpretation of Responses

The research findings from School A revealed the absence of strong leadership in relation to practices of effective school discipline. This absence of strong leadership is evidenced by the summoning of boys only because it is assumed that girls do not have much cases of ill-discipline. This usually leads to dysfunctional schools which can lead to a lack of trust amongst the principal and his subordinates, which can further lead to a decline in learner performances.

The research findings from school B, C and D suggested that there was a successful leadership in relation to effective school discipline in order to create high performing schools. Successful leadership entails continuously referring to the Educators' Employment Act (EEA) and the school's Code of Conduct by principals, stakeholders, educators, and members of the SMT for curbing ill-discipline in order to create high-performing schools.

The study findings indicate that sound school discipline was the key element that assisted principals to create high-performing schools. School discipline is not only important for educators and learners, but also for the smooth functioning of schools in general, as effective teaching-learning can only take place in a safe and disciplined academic environment (Masitsa, 2011). There is belief that leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008), but it is an "insufficient condition for successful leadership (Day & Sammons, 2013).

4.12.3 Conclusions drawn and Theme generated

Conclusions drawn: It is necessary for schools to have sound leadership to combat disciplinary challenges (Stanley, 2014). This may result in schools attaining high standards of performance since both educators and learners will be free of disturbances that hinder academic progress.

Leadership is defined as a process of social influence in which a person steers members of the group towards a goal. This definition uncovers the central theme of leadership in organisations. Effective strategies to instil discipline may have more benefits for School A, B and C. This usually occurs in functional schools which can lead to improved trust between the principal and the subordinates; hence, the creation of high-performing schools.

According to Kilimci (2009), school discipline is defined as school policies and actions that prevent students from unwanted behaviours, primarily focusing on school conduct codes, security methods, corporal punishment, and teachers' methods of managing ill-discipline in class.

There is growing recognition that in order for learners to benefit in totality from their schooling, discipline is essential (Gibome, Katola, Nyabwari, 2013; Stanley, 2014). The reason for this could be that discipline forms part of the school's image, and also ensures learner-preparedness for future adulthood.

Discipline is not only important for learners and educators, but also for the whole school's smooth functioning, as effective teaching-learning can only be realised in a secure and disciplined academic environment (Masitsa, 2011).

Theme generated: Principals' strategic leadership for school discipline

4.13 SUMMARY

This chapter (4) presented, analysed and interpreted findings on secondary school principals' lived leadership experiences in the chosen high-performing schools. In this chapter, the researcher indicated that the sampled schools were located in dissimilar environments, yet all were township schools. Against this background, strategies that the principals utilised in creating high-performing schools were also

explained. The focus of this study was on exploring school principals' lived leadership experiences in relation to school-performance. Chapter five will deal with conclusions that were gleaned from research findings (explained in chapter four).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter (4) discussed, analysed, and interpreted the empirical data generated through individual semi-structured interviews. This chapter also provides suggestions for future research in this area in the form of recommendations. The study's summary is presented before the discussion of the conclusions. The research objectives were:

- To explore school principals' views regarding the nature of leadership in creating high-performing schools in a South African Township.
- To investigate the experiences of school principals' in creating high-performing schools in a South African township.
- To determine the strategies that school principals' implement to sustain a school's high-performance rate.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

In chapter one, the researcher outlined the introduction and background of the study. The background of the study enabled me to express my interest regarding the phenomenon which motivated me to investigate the topic of creating and maintaining high-performing schools. This study was driven by the dearth of knowledge in terms of the effective communication of strategies concerning school principals' best practices in leadership that would lead to schools improving such that they reach a high-performing level despite the challenges that exist.

In chapter two, the researcher reviewed related literature on educational leadership (principalship). The researcher also examined other determinants of schools' performance based on the literature. The researcher then proceeded to highlight the transformational leadership theory as a theoretical framework that would underpin the study.

In chapter three, the researcher outlined the research methodology and design. Here, the researcher explained that the study employed a qualitative multi-case study approach comprising of four high-performing secondary schools in four different locations (townships).

In chapter four, the researcher presented, analysed, and interpreted the empirical data. This chapter provided the sub-themes which were: twinning of schools and support for each educator, distribution of leadership, understanding and supporting educators towards a common vision, recruiting and retaining educators, protection and management of the instructional time, the management of instructional materials (LTSM), strategies to boost school funds, tools for monitoring, assessment of instructional activities, curriculum planning and implementation, and strategies for school discipline.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this section, the researcher discusses the findings pertaining to leadership practices of high-performing secondary school principals. The researcher divided this section into the following leadership aspects based on the theoretical framework that underpinned this study:

- Idealised influence (charisma)
- Individual consideration
- Intellectual stimulation
- Aspirations

The research findings demonstrate that all four school principals of high-performing secondary schools employed the above 4 aspects of key leadership enactments, although at different levels. This generated finer or discrete leadership strategies that further promoted the creation and maintenance of academic excellence and high learner performances. This is corroborated by Marks and Printy (2003) that transformational leadership strategies positively affect school success and it is often utilised at all high-performing schools. The following discussion outlines how each of these enactments is executed by the school principals of the four high-performing secondary schools in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District.

5.3.1 Idealised Influence

These school principals of high-performing schools prioritised the mission and vision statements of their own schools through effective communicating channels that would reach all role players who would thus internalise them to work for the betterment of the school. These principals were ideal role models for their educators and learners as they led by example - three of them were also subject teachers. The total focus was on the success of the child, and this vision led to the formulation of procedures and strategies that uplifted the whole school community.

This correlates with the research findings of Kitur, Choge and Tanui (2020) that the *idealised influence dimension* of principals' transformational leadership style has a positive impact on the school's success. Such principals strived to understand and support each of their educators' aspirations; and this developed trust and an implicit belief in the vision of the school. Abdullah, Ling, and Sufi (2018) concur with this stating that the best predictor of teachers' motivation is the individual support in transformational leadership.

5.3.2 Intellectual Stimulation

These school principals fully developed, guided, and supported their educators as a part of their role and responsibility as leaders. They systematically planned the distribution of leadership responsibilities relying on the expertise and abilities of their staff (SMT and Senior educators). This is congruent to the findings of Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2009) that transformational leadership has an influence on individuals' innovativeness through inner acceptance. They also ensured that the distribution of leadership responsibilities is consistently administered and supervised.

The school principals successfully utilised the skills competencies of senior educators, members of the SMT within and outside the school, in terms of two-fold moderation which produced standardised (quality) learner assessments (tests, assignments, projects etc.). They continuously evaluated the level of teaching and learning, including assessment records. The principals displayed professionalism and became harmoniously engaged with their educators and SMT – all for the benefit of maintaining a school that performs at a high level.

The principals acknowledged their human failures in themselves, and in others.

Thus, their engagement with their educators and the school community members who have challenges was mostly on a person-to-person basis. This view is supported by Bass and Riggo, (2006) that, in the case when subordinates make mistakes, a transformational leader doesn't reprimand them in the presence of others; even their ideas and inputs are not criticised for not being the same as those of the leader.

Such leaders also inculcated loyalty, respect, professionalism, commitment, innovativeness, team-spirit, openness, and industriousness among their educators.

5.3.3 Inspirational Motivation

These school principals of high-performing schools recognised the diverse cultures in their educators by instilling a sense of "ownership" in school community members and educators. This concurs with the findings of Johnson (2007) who stated that principal' educational ideas and the setting of [a cordial] tone, precipitated success in creating a responsive culture, [while] empowering - via good work-relations - parents and other school community members.

This positive and collaborative working relationship served the purpose of motivating educators and other school community members to share in the institution's organisational goals. High standards relating to both educators and learners are created by principals who profitably engage educators, parents, and learners through learner-interaction meetings, and assemblies where high-performing learners are recognised and rewarded, while underperforming ones are motivated to improve. This would normally take place at the beginning of each term.

However, the findings of Arokiasamy et al. (2016) indicate that the practice of transformational leadership by school principals' in the district of Kinta Selatan, Perak was moderate and the job-satisfaction of primary school teachers was below satisfactory with a significant disparity between the level of transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

The high-performing school principals realised the importance of collaborating with other successful schools to improve their leadership styles. In addition, a feedback

loop circulating from the principal to SMT members, educators and learners, is recommended to improve leadership qualities in all role players.

5.3.4 Aspirations

These school principals of four high-performing schools were committed to change, and the platform for motivational talks helped to improve the quality of teaching-learning situations. Also, the recommended practice of selecting, retaining, and recruiting relevant personnel in order for their schools to perform at the maximum level, was adhered to. Vekeman, Devos and Valcke (2016) add that both instructional and transformational leadership are important to manage new teachers strategically.

The school principals and educators committed themselves to work over and above the normal hours of work, given the time constraints in an ordinary day. They commenced extra teaching-learning sessions early in the mornings and knocked off late in the day, especially when learner assessments tasks were due. Additionally, the weekends were utilised to cover content so that sufficient time is available for performance review and revision for examinations, in addition to meeting set deadlines.

The school principals and educators succeeded in ensuring that instructional materials were used effectively and economically. Most learner textbooks were returned timeously for use in the following year. The principals judiciously and wisely utilised school funds and sponsorships for school purposes, keeping to the planned budget. These principals led their institutions through casually roving around the school campus to informally observe the strengths and weakness of staff; others made use of cameras. They planned in advance and employed good monitoring tools in order to achieve success in terms of set goals.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The high-performing schools worked intensively with regards to reaching Departmental targets and thus reached high-performing levels. The cornerstone of a

school's high-performance index is having dedicated, hardworking and disciplined educators, a "buy-in" community, and innovative, astute, and productive leadership. High-performing schools' dedicated staff and learners prioritise the school's vision and are prepared to make sacrifices by giving up their leisure and family time in the interest of stimulating their school's high-performance potential.

They would cover the content during extra classes, their content-planning would be done in advance, and instructional materials (LTSM) would be properly maintained and wisely administered. Standardisation of learner-assessments (tests, assignments, projects etc.) are moderated and monitored by multi-stakeholders, and disciplinary cases related to the school are handled in a fair, strict, and procedural manner.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS EMANATING FROM THE STUDY

5.5.1 Future Research

This research project employed a qualitative approach to fully understand the phenomenon (lived leadership experiences of school principals in relation to the creation of high-performing schools). However, it does not offer a holistic view about the determinants of a school's high-performance that contribute towards positive high-learner output. This includes the lack of detailed strategic measures that can be utilised to generate, secure, and maintain higher learner-output.

Thus, extensive studies (covering all schools in the North-West Province) are urgently needed to help and to keep us informed about the phenomena. Also, engaging with other school principals of private secondary schools, junior secondary schools, and primary schools, will give more width to the research area.

5.5.2 Promoting Studies on Principals' Leadership Practices

This recommendation is particularly directed to secondary school principals. It is vital to support and promote studies in functional leadership best practices in schools, such that we examine principals' productiveness and their positive strategies to effect sound leadership patterns. Central to exploring the support and promotion of

studies on principals' leadership practices, is creating solutions to turn around dysfunctional schools into functional ones by using models from high-performing schools of RSA. If school principals within the circuit need to support and be supported in efforts that foster the professional growth of new and future leaders, then high-performing schools will proliferate.

5.5.3 Intensifying Training

It is recommended that more workshops, conferences, and seminars be organised because they are much needed to upgrade school leaders, educators, and school community members. This should be done in a modern transformational leadership style that unpacks how high-performing school principals effectively execute their leadership functions. This must include stimulating all forms of development and sustainability to achieve all-round high performance at schools. Also, the DoE should conduct further more-advanced vocational training sessions for principals in a modern transformational leadership style.

Concerning school discipline, principals' success rate here is minimal. The SMT, educators, and SGB are struggling to find permanent solutions for ill-discipline at schools; they seek the assistance of various departmental officials (e.g. circuit managers). Such challenges can be decreased through collaboration with other school principals in the circuit or district.

5.5.4 Recognition and Rewarding of Educators

Provision should be made in terms of organising more platforms, workshops and conferences, where educators are acknowledged, recognised, and rewarded in terms of sacrifices made to stimulate a school's high performance rate. As most schools are trapped in conditions that breed mediocrity, given the horrendous suppressive legacy of apartheid and its policy of "bantu education", it is imperative that such schools be assisted by role models (and other interventions) in order to perform at an optimum level.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: PROTOCOL FOR THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S INTERVIEW

Exploring school principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools in a South African Township.

AIM OF THE STUDY

This study explores the role that lived leadership experiences of school principals play in creating high-performing schools in a South African township.

SOURCES OF DATA

Interviews (semi-structured individual) will be conducted with the school principals of the 2017 and 2018 high-performing schools in the North West Province.

CONFIDENTIALITY ASSURANCE

All participants are assured that they will remain anonymous in order to protect their privacy and identities. Their participation in the study is entirely voluntary. The data collected from them will be confidential and only used for research purposes. If any of the participants wish to disengage from the research study, he or she is free to do so at any stage without being disadvantaged in any way.

Preventative measures will be adopted in ensuring that no participant is exposed to physical or psychological harm during the research process. All participants will be afforded an opportunity to authenticate information on the interview transcripts. All information will be stored electronically in a password-secure file with only the researcher having access.

DURATION OF THE INTERVIEW

This one-on-one interview should take no longer than 90 minutes. There will be audio-recordings and transcription of the discussion.

ANNEXURE B: QUESTIONS FOR THE PRINCIPAL'S INTERVIEW

The following themes: Principal's innovativeness in Leadership, Principal's best-strategic practices of leadership, and Principal's strategic Leadership for school discipline, were informed by the Transformational Leadership theory.

SECTION A: SCHEDULE OF INTERVIEW FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS.

1. PRINCIPAL'S INNOVATIVENESS IN LEADERSHIP

- (a) What are principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township?
- (b) What is the vision to drive the school's performance?

2. PRINCIPAL'S BEST STRATEGIC PRACTICES OF LEADERSHIP

- (a) What are your best-practices of time-management and protection of teaching-time with a view to ensuring a high-performing school?
- (b) How do you ensure that instructional materials (LTSM) are judiciously used?
- (c) What intervention strategies do you apply to ensure content-coverage?
- (d) How do you ensure that effective teaching and learning occurs?

3. PRINCIPAL'S STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

- (a) What strategies do you implement in managing discipline challenges at your school?

ANNEXURE C: PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Ntshangase Mhlengi

101 Saltbush Street

Extension 10

Mableton, Rusloo

1475

23 July 2019

PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

I, Mhlengi Ntshangase, am a research student at the University of the Free State (UFS). In order for the research project to be successful, it is imperative that a study be conducted to elicit information to assist schools that are underperforming in matric examinations. Hence, **the researcher** embark on this study to explore the lived leadership experiences of school principals in creating schools that are high-performing in South African “townships” (Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompato District), in the knowledge that the results will assist other schools that are underperforming and consequently improve their matriculation results.

The researcher wishes to learn more in terms of how school principals’ implement sound leadership based on their positive previous experiences as this will aid the researcher in terms of providing valuable recommendations for improved learner-outcome (Grade 12 matric results). You may participate voluntarily as you are not obliged to participate in the study. If you do not wish to continue participating, you may disengage at any stage. Although, sharing your experience with me would be really valuable and appreciated, your name will not appear in any of the recordings, and no individual will be able to access your information including your responses.

All individual information will not be divulged to anyone and will be shredded or deleted within four (4) months after the submission of the research results. It’s only the researcher who will be assessing and accessing the information you provide. The title of my study is “*Exploring school principals’ lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township.*”

You have been selected as one of the the best high-performing schools in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District. Participants are requested to respond to interview questions (audio-recorded) which will take about 90 minutes. Participants must note the following:

- Answer interview questions verbally and honestly.
- These interviews will be audio-recorded with your permission.
- There will be no interruptions in terms of planned time-schedules.
- Participants will be interviewed in a classroom or space which promotes privacy.
- My supervisor is Dr S. D. Makhasane who can be contacted on 058 718 5214, School of Education, University of the Free State, Qwa Qwa Campus.
- My contact number is 065 719 9829. You are at liberty to contact me or my supervisor should there be any clarity-seeking questions.

DECLARATION

I..... (Full names of the participant) hereby give my consent to take part in the research study “*Exploring school principals’ lived leadership experiences in creating high-performing schools in a South African township*”. I am fully aware that there is no financial incentive or reward that will be offered. I am also aware that I can disengage from the interview at any stage should I wish to do so, and that such a decision will have no negative impact on me. I know the details of the person to be contacted should I see the need to do so at any stage of the interview. I am also aware that my responses will not be divulged to anyone unless I give my permission.

Signature of participant

Date

ANNEXURE D: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

Ntshangase Mhlengi
101 Saltbush Street
Extension 10
Mableton, Rusloo
1475

23 July 2019

Dear Principal

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

I am a student at the University of the Free State (UFS). I am currently conducting a research project aimed at “Exploring school principals’ lived leadership experiences of creating high-performing schools in a South African township” (which is also my research title). This study is being conducted in fulfilment for the requirements of a Master’s degree in Educational Leadership, Management, and Policy.

I hereby request consent to conduct the research in your school. I have selected your school as one of the high performing schools in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District. I wish to learn more about the enactment of leadership based on gained experience (lived leadership experiences) and this will assist me in providing valuable recommendations in terms of improving learner-output (Grade 12 matric results).

Participants are required to do the following:

- Answer interview questions verbally and honestly.
- These interviews will be audio-recorded with your permission.
- There will be no interruptions in terms of planned time-schedules.
- Participants will be interviewed in a classroom or space which promotes privacy.

- My supervisor is Dr S. D. Makhasane who can be contacted on 058 718 5214, School of Education, University of the Free State, Qwa Qwa Campus.
- My contact number is 065 719 9829. You are at liberty to contact me or my supervisor should there be any clarity-seeking questions.

Yours faithfully

.....

Ntshangase Mhlengi

;

ANNEXURE E: ETHICS STATEMENT

GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

15-Oct-2019

Dear Mr Ntshangase, Mhlengi MI

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

Exploring school principals' lived leadership experiences of creating high performing schools in a South African Township

Ethical Clearance number:


UFS-IISD2019/1475

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Yours sincerely

Prof Derek Litthauer

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee



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ANNEXURE F: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



education

Lefapha la Thuto la Bokone Bophirima
Noord-Wes Onderwys Departement
North West Education Department
NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Garona Building, Mmabatho
1st Floor, East Wing,
Private Bag X2044,
Mmabatho 2735
Tel.: (018) 388-3433
Fax.: 086-514-0126
e-mail: motlhabanej@nwp.gov.za

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL

Enq. : Dr T Phorabatho
Tel. : 018 388 3071/3433

To: Dr Sekitla Daniel Makhasane
University of Free State
Faculty of Education

From: Mrs S M Semaswe
Superintendent-General

Date : 17 September 2019

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MR NTSHANGASE MHLengi

Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct research in the department as requested, subject to the following conditions:

- You contact the relevant School Principals for your target schools about your request with this letter of permission;
- Considering that your research will involve both Educators and Learners, the general functionality of the school should not be compromised by the research process.
- The participation in your project will be voluntary.
- The principles of informed consent and confidentiality will be observed in strictest terms, and
- The findings of your research should be made available to the North West Department of Education and Sport Development upon request.

Best wishes

Mrs S M Semaswe
Superintendent-General

18/09/2019
Date



"Towards Excellence in Education and Sport Development"

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EXPERIENCES OF CREATING HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS IN A
SOUTH AFRICAN TOWNSHIP

BY

MTHANGASE MILENGI INNOCENT

Student number: 2018021402

BY

Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION IN

FACULTY OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
STUDIES

University of the Free State, Bloemfontein

JUNE 2020

Supervisor: Dr. S.D. Mafurisa

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University of the Free State

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This certificate confirms that the above-mentioned student submitted his draft master's dissertation to me for language-editing, which included correcting in-text citations and the list of references. This was duly edited by me and sent back to the student for revisions as per suggestions from me. I make no claim as to the accuracy of the research content. The text, as edited by me, is grammatically correct. After completion of my language editing, the student has the option to accept or reject suggestions/changes prior to re-submission to the supervisor who will check the content and instances of plagiarism, if any.

B. Naidoo

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