

**THE ROLE OF SMT'S IN ENSURING IMPROVED LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN
THE
JOHANNESBURG EAST DISTRICT OF GAUTENG**

By

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DECLARATION BY THE STUDENT

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Exact wording of the title of the dissertation as appearing on the electronic copy submitted for examination:

The role of SMT's in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

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DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR ON ORIGINALITY REPORT

I, Dr MT Lekalakala, declare that I have considered the originality software checking report submitted by S. Rikhotso. I confirm that the thesis meets suitable standard of originality.



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ABSTRACT

To redress the inequalities of the past, Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights states that everyone has the right to basic education. Since this is a constitutional right, it is the responsibility of the schools to ensure that there is a retention of learners and those in Grade 12 achieve good results. Senior Management Teams (SMTs) are the accounting officers of results in their schools, therefore, their mandate is to ensure that the school is run smoothly. The study focused on the role of SMT's in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. The study adopted a purposive sampling whereby 12 participants from three township schools in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng were sampled. Each school was represented by a principal, one deputy principal, one head of departmental (HOD) and one teacher. In-depth interviews were used to collect data from each sampled participant.

The findings revealed that SMTs are aware of their roles, but are faced with challenges that hinder them from implementing those roles effectively due to the socio-economic factors affecting the communities where the schools are situated. Therefore, the study recommends the empowerment of SMTs that will enable them to execute their roles effectively. Furthermore, the government needs to educate the community on the importance of education. Finally, the government needs to address the socio-economic factors in townships, as such factors have a direct, negative impact on learner performance in township schools.

KEYWORDS

Academic achievement

Improved learner performance

School Management Teams (SMT)

Roles and responsibilities

Teaching and learning

Motivation

Professional development

Communication

Attitude

Monitoring

Teachers

Interests

Township schools

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATP:	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS:	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CASS:	Continuous Assessment
DBE:	Department of Basic Education
DoE:	Department of Education
ELRC:	Education Labour Relations Council
FET:	Further Education and Training
GDE:	Gauteng Department of Education
HOD:	Head of Department
ICT:	Information and Communications Technology
IQMS:	Integrated Quality Management Systems
OECD:	Organisation for Economic cooperation and Develop
PAM:	Personnel Administrative Measures
PPE:	Personal Protective Equipment
QMS:	Quality Management Systems
SACE:	South African Council for Educators
SASA:	South African Schools Act
SBA:	School Based Assessment
SGB:	School Governing Body
SMTs:	School Management Teams
SSIP:	Secondary School Improvement programme

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CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Over the past decades, school leaders in Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries have evolved from practising teachers with added responsibilities, to head teachers and bureaucratic administrators, to professional managers and, in some countries, to leaders of learning (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008:19). The organisational arrangements for schools have changed significantly over time due to profound changes within the societies they serve (Pont *et al.*, 2008:19). Sibanda (2017:567) asserts that one focus area for educational reform has been the quality of school leadership in schools. After South Africa gained its democracy, its mandate was to redress all the inequalities of the past in terms of the education system.

Educational management is defined by Botha (2015:4-5) as the process of working with and through individuals, groups and other resources, whether they are learners, educators, administrative staff, parents or other stakeholders, to accomplish educational goals or outcomes. Botha further asserts that educational management is the application of management theory, principles and skills in the education environment. It is imperative that all educators on all post levels should have at least a basic knowledge of education management. Through staff development, educators acquire knowledge and skills leading to improved learner performance.

Educational management is a shift from centralisation to decentralisation, which entails a shift to the distribution of decision-making authority (Botha, 2015:117). Decentralisation of leadership and school management can be viewed as an element of educational reform in the South African education. Botha (2015:117) identified four dimensions in order to bring a meaningful decision-making in key areas of finance, personnel, resource allocation, curriculum and assessment. These key areas are power, information, knowledge and reward. Internal stakeholders of the school must have decision-making powers over policies and practices in the school, as they affected directly by them. It is the responsibility of schools' SMTs to make sure that the correct information is disseminated to different stakeholders.

There are certain management areas that the senior management teams (SMTs) need to be equipped with. Botha (2015:22-23) states that the management areas of the

principal include namely, teaching and learning issues, teacher, parent and learner affairs, physical resources, administrative and financial affairs and the community at large. For them to be managed effectively, the principal will require the expertise of members of the SMT who will represent their respective departments. The SMT will work together, having the principal as the driver of the team. The responsibility of the principal is to combine, allocate, coordinate and deploy resources in such a way that the aim of the school is achieved as effectively as possible. Also, the principal is expected to perform certain management tasks.

Botha (2015:21-22) states that the principal has to perform certain managerial tasks in order to achieve the educational goal. These tasks include planning, organising, leading and control. Planning involves defining the school's goals, establishing an overall strategy for achieving those goals, and developing plans for the school's work activities (Botha, 2015:21). This task will help everyone to understand the school's objectives so that they are aware of where the school is heading. Planning may include planning for curriculum delivery, assessments to be given, excursions for learners, and planning as well as how funds will be allocated and used.

Educational managers need to be equipped on how to organise the planned task, making sure that a proper hierarchy is followed. This task also involves motivating subordinates, influencing individuals or teams as they work (Botha 2015:21). In schools there is a hierarchy of reporting, for instance, learners report to teachers, teachers report to the d HODs, HODs report to the deputy principal and the deputy principal reports to the principal. If responsibilities are distributed amongst SMT members, monitoring of staff will be effective. According to Bush and Glover (2013:22), school leadership becomes influentially when it is distributed accordingly. HODs are aware of strengths and weaknesses of all educators that report to them; hence it will enable them to come up with activities that will lead to improved learner performance, at the same time giving educators an opportunity to explore their capabilities.

The last main task is control. Botha (2015:22) states that control is done to determine if the set objectives have been realised. However, it is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that all resources are fully used and well monitored. The SMT with the leadership of the principal must agree during the planning sections on the measures that will be taken in controlling all the academic activities for the realisation of the school objectives.

For example, in a school environment, each school allocates days whereby all staff members will discuss whole-school evaluation. All set objectives are analysed to check if they have been met, challenges faced are identified, and lastly the team comes up with different ways of mitigating those challenges.

In addition to what has been discussed above, Botha (2015:9) argues that there is a clear distinction between leadership and management, whereby management is about giving direction and inspiration as far as the mission is concerned and management is about ensuring that the mission, vision and objectives are carried out as planned. Jones and George (2014:436, cited in De Beer & Rossouw, 2015:41) defines leadership as the process according to which a person exerts influence over others by inspiring them, motivating them and guiding their activities to help achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation. In schools, management and leadership work is carried out by the principal and the senior management team (SMT) to enable educators to perform their functional (educating) task (Van Deventer, 2003:66-67). Furthermore, it is significant that effective and quality leadership have a positive impact in the performance of learners. Atkinson (2013:4) asserts that school leaders must be knowledgeable and be aware of current policies and external forces that influence an organisation.

According to Bhengu and Mkhize (2013:34), it is the responsibility of the principals to ensure that teaching and learning is facilitated effectively. This is supported by Vogel (2017:5) who state that one of the leadership requirements that principals as managers should possess is to develop strategies on employee's job performance. The most critical components of leadership involves selecting the most appropriate employees and creating conditions for effective teaching and learning. The purpose of this study was to examine the role that SMTs plays in improving learner performance.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

As a former educator from the Johannesburg East District working in one of the Alexandra Township schools, I observed that most under performing schools lack leaders who possess good leadership skills and styles. Even though such schools have SMTs, as one of the educators then, I felt that some schools would have performed better if they were to be involved in decision-making and this is evident that the poor leadership skills of principals demotivated educators, as their capabilities were not fully utilised.

In line with the above, Sibanda (2017:567), maintains that distributed leadership has the potential to make the school leaders' demands successful, contribute to classroom achievement because decisions are done collaboratively, and affect the overall school reform in a positive way. The principal can distribute leadership to SMTs by delegating some duties to them for the effectiveness of teaching and learning process in+ the school. Surana, Suhardini and Hayati (2018:397) also make this point that leadership is about who uses influence, how to use influence, the objectives to be achieved by that influence, and the results of using influence. Therefore, for an organization to be successful, school leaders need to make use of effective ways of leading and managing the school.

This study therefore, sought to investigate the SMT's role in improving learner performance in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng. Management can be understood as caretaking, while leadership is custodial by nature. It is important to understand leadership as a process, and to develop human relations skills and promote joint action to ensure school improvement and effectiveness (Mestry, 2017:1). From the above observation, the significance of investigating the role of SMTs in improving learner performance was required. My experience as an educator who once taught in a township school prompted my study on how SMTs roles impact the improvement of learner performance.

1.3 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Snyder (2019:333) literature review is defined as a way of reviewing the findings of the other researchers to show the evidence on a meta-level and to identify gaps that need further research. As mentioned earlier, the aim of this study was to determine and explore how SMT roles improve learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. Furthermore, this study focused mainly on township schools. The Provincial departments have an interest in how schools are performing and have to follow the guidelines provided by the Department of Education. According to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document (2016), Provincial departments are required to adhere to the intent and spirit of these norms. Where a province deviates from any of these norms it needs to justify such deviation to the DBE. The DBE may require information from provinces from time to time in order to ensure that these norms are implemented. Provinces are thus required to comply with these requests. Each district office needs to identify performing and underperforming schools. Potgieter and Zuma

(2019) assert that underperforming schools, which essentially include underperforming learners, have major consequences for all, including the school management teams (SMTs).

Schools are managed by SMTs, with the principal as the accounting officer when it comes to school performance. SMTs comprise the principal, deputy principal(s) and HODs. According to the Act called *Employment of Educators Act: PAM* (2016) indicates that each SMT member has main aims for their existence; therefore, it is the SMTs' responsibility to develop ways of improving academic performance. According to Setlhodi-Mohapi and Lebeloane (2014:481), SMTs at underperforming schools need to develop guidelines for improvement on performance, which include the principal requesting of the SMT to set achievable targets, SMTs ensuring that teaching and learning happen in a supportive environment, and the continuous review and evaluation of activities so that there is accountability.

The importance of leadership and school management has been looked into through a number of studies. The significant role of the SMTs is to ensure that the school is effective and that will lead to improved school performance. SMTs need to manage their roles effectively for schools to function properly. Additionally, Ramalepe (2015:636) argues that the vision of the school should not only focus on learner achievement but the learners' background, teachers' commitment, effective teaching and assessment and constant regular feedback to learners. This is supported by Mampane (2015:148), who state that the acquisition of leadership and management skills by HODs for effective teaching and learning is positively related to improving learner performance and teacher commitment. Furthermore, Ramalepe (2015:638) is of the notion that SMTs should foster teamwork, as the sharing of ideas will allow the school to have a variety of problem solving methods than depending on the principal only (Mathipa *et al.*, 2014:372). The STM makes sure that it communicates with staff, parents, learners and circuit officials to ensure that there is proper cooperation, teamwork, coordination and control of all activities taking place in the school (Mathipa *et al.*, 2014:372).

According to Masha and Bipath (2017:16), effective learning takes place when there is a cyclical and reciprocal link between the SMTs, the community and the parents. Therefore, SMTs need to share the child's barriers that are a deterrent to the effective learning of the child. Ramalepe (2015:639) suggests that it is not easy rather hard to improve learner

achievement without involving parents. Therefore, learners require parental support in order to achieve academically. Torres (2021:483) is of the opinion that parents are obliged to maintain, protect and care for their children, taking responsibility for the physical and emotional needs of their children, and protecting the fundamental rights of their child to education, food, clothing, shelter, and healthcare.

The DOE is responsible for ensuring curriculum delivery in schools. According to Mathipa *et al.* (2014:372), there is a need for regular monitoring by curriculum implementers who are stationed in the circuit office, because the curriculum is changed almost every year and teachers are left confused, as they are unable to master and consolidate their content knowledge as a result. As a curriculum changes, teachers require training. Mathipa *et al.* (2014:372) advocate that teacher growth and development to become an on-going thing, because changes occur at all times and affect teachers in many ways. As discussed, SMTs need to execute certain roles in ensuring academic achievement in schools.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

My experience as an educator who once taught in a township school prompted me to conduct this study with the aim of examining the SMTs and their role in improving the performance of learners. In most township schools SMTs do not adhere to their roles. For example, if a new educator joins a school, proper induction does not take place, and this makes it difficult for new educators to adapt to the new environment. SMTs have a big role to play, especially in underperforming schools. According to Setlhodi-Mohapi and Lebeloane (2014:475), underperformance is a thorny issue in previously disadvantaged schools that serve learners from predominantly poor communities. It is stated that the role of SMTs at such schools is to check the attitudes, beliefs and/or practices that keep entrenching underperformance tendencies (Setlhodi-Mohapi & Lebeloane, 2014:475). The main criteria for evaluating principals' performance are learners' results (Yakavets, Frost & Khoroshash, 2017: 348). In schools, learner performance is usually rated by using Grade 12 results. The accounting officers of performance, i.e. the SMT with leadership of the principal, must know their roles that they play in improving learner performance hence the study sought to examine SMT's role in improving learner performance.

1.5 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

The main research question of the study was:

What is the role of SMT's in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng?

The following sub-questions directed the empirical research of this study:

- What is SMTs' role in understanding improved learner performance?
- How do SMTs support learners for improved performance?
- Which activities are organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance?
- What are the challenges SMTs face in ensuring improved learner performance?

1.6 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to explore effective ways that can be used to implement leadership and school management. In attempting to address the research problem, the following objectives were formulated:

- To determine whether SMTs understand what improved learner performance is;
- To establish ways in which SMTs can support learners for improved performance;
- To determine activities organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance; and
- To determine the challenges faced by SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.

Three schools were sampled and in all these schools semi-structured interviews were used in collection of data. The study was done in an effort to contribute to the improvement of learner performance, SMTs distributed leadership styles, and the effective use of resources.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 Research approach and research design

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:20), a research design stipulates the processes to be followed when conducting a study. Furthermore, methods to be used to collect data are identified and described. To investigate the phenomenon, a quantitative research approach was used in the study. A qualitative approach is research that is concerned with the subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour (Kothari & Garg, 2015:4). Therefore, this enables the researcher to state the participants' views and perspectives. Additionally, McMillan and Schumacher (2014:23) state that qualitative research gathers data in the form of words rather than numbers. In general, the researcher must search and explore a variety of methods until a deep understanding is achieved. In addition to what has been discussed, a qualitative approach enabled the researcher to understand the perspectives of SMTs and educators on leadership and school management in ensuring learner improvement.

A case study was used in ensuring that appropriate information was understood. McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 24) state that a case study examines a bounded system, or a case, in depth over time, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting. A case study enabled the researcher to focus on a small sample; however, in-depth information was collected from the few selected schools in Johannesburg East district Gauteng.

1.7.2 Population and sampling

According to Wild and Diggines (2013:183), population is the aggregate of all the units of the analysis that form the population and it consists of a comprehensive number of individuals, units or items that can become objects of observation. In this study, the researcher opted to focus on three high schools in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng, of which 12 participants were sampled to be part of the study.

Sampling is defined by Wild and Diggines (2013:183) as the process used to draw the sample from the population. A purposive/non-probability sampling method was used to get participants who are knowledgeable about the topic at hand. According to Kothari and Garg (2015:13), purposive/non-probability sampling is a method that involves the

purposive or deliberate selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample that represents the universe. Therefore, the researcher adopted a purposive sampling method whereby each sampled school was represented by one principal, one deputy principal, one HOD and one teacher. The purposive sampling method enabled the researcher to sample relevant participants based on the research question that sought to identify the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. Items for the sample were selected deliberately by the researcher, of which the majority of the sampled participants were part of the SMTs in schools and were able to give out information pertaining to their role as leaders.

1.7.3 Instruments and data collection techniques

For the selected participants the researcher used interviews to obtain data. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:205), the interview involves direct interaction between individuals. To obtain the information required, the researcher interacted with the sampled participants, enabling the researcher to observe non-verbal communication from the participants. Non-verbal communication during the interview alerted the researcher to either rephrase the questions or not. Semi-structured interviews were used and are defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:206) as questions which allow respondents to give their individual responses. Therefore, the researcher is able to observe non-verbal communication from the participants. Participants were interviewed individually at the schools where they are based to obtain their individual responses. Furthermore, participants were interviewed in their respective offices during their break and or lunch time, which is between 30–45 minutes, which minimised compromising the contact time of learners.

As stated above, data were collected through the use of semi-structured interviews, and a pilot study was conducted prior to interviews to test the semi-structured interviews. This is supported by Kothari and Garg (2015:97), who assert that testing of the semi-structured interviews will bring to light the weaknesses (if any) of the semi-structured interviews so that improvements can be made to them. Recordings were done using a tape recorder and the researcher also took down notes during the process. This enabled the researcher to capture the exact responses of the participants. Standardised questions were used during the interview in order to gather adequate information from the participants. As

supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:96), the researcher conducted a literature search to get a better understanding of what is observed and heard.

1.7.4 Data analysis and interpretation

After the collection of data, the researcher analysed the data. Research questions served as a guide for conducting the analysis. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:96), define analysis as a way of coding, categorizing and interpreting data so that explanations are provided of a single phenomenon of interest. The researcher familiarized herself with the data collected, which enabled the formation of data codes and categories. Kothari and Garg (2015:17) concur by stating that raw data must be classified into purposeful and usable categories. From the formed categories, the researcher was able to search for themes that were defined. If the researcher had felt that some information was not captured correctly, the research was supposed to seek permission to return to the field. This concurs with McMillan and Schumacher (2014:367), who state that for data analysis to proceed smoothly, if there are missing elements, the researcher negotiates permission to return to the field to seek additional data and validate emerging elements. Fortunately for this study, the researcher captured all the information correctly.

After the data had been analysed, interpretation of the data took place. Interpretation, according to Kothari and Garg (2015:407), is the device through which the factors that seem to explain what has been observed by a researcher in the course of the study can be understood better. It also provides a theoretical conception, which can serve as a guide for further researchers. The researcher used the findings obtained to compile a report that created a sense of credibility and trustworthiness.

1.8 CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Methods used to generate data must be trusted in order to obtain valid data. To build data credibility, the researcher needs to create a sense of trustworthiness. This statement is supported by Yin (2016:85) who defines a credible study as one that demonstrates that one was consistent in the collection and interpretation of data properly, thereby enabling findings and conclusions to accurately reflect the world which was studied. Research is therefore required to select the best methods that will be used so that the findings obtained will be what is actually happening on the study site.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:330), validity is the degree of congruency. Additionally, Yin (2016:88), states that a valid study interprets its data properly so that the conclusions can accurately reflect and represent the real world which was studied. It is imperative for the report to be credible, as no variables being measured as qualitative research study a phenomenon in-depth. The researcher captured and displayed reality as seen by sending the captured information to participants so that they could check if the information recorded was what they had said during the interview.

To ensure that the information for this study is credible, there was triangulation of data sources whereby principals' responses were triangulated with those of the deputy principals, HODs and teachers. Triangulation is defined by Yin (2016:160) as a method that is used to prove that different sources used to collect data can lead to the same finding. The principle of triangulation rests on the assumption that particular events are investigated and that, if they can be investigated in a number of different ways and those ways concur, then the researcher may believe that their account is a true account of those events (Scott, 2007:11, cited in Briggs, Coleman & Morrison, 2012:84). The researcher tested the interview questions on non-sampled participants to ensure that they are interpreted the same. During all the above-mentioned stages, ethical issues were considered.

1.9 RESEARCH ETHICS

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016:239) define ethics as standards of behaviour that guide one's conduct in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of one's work, or are affected by it. The researcher considered the following as ethical guidelines: policies regarding informed consent, deception, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy and caring (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:338). Ethical considerations were observed during the research. Such considerations included seeking permission from the GDE, district, schools and from each participant. The researcher applied for ethical clearance from UNISA. Also, the study followed these ethical considerations by making sure that it does not cause any harm to the image of the schools or participants studied. For ethical purposes, real names of participants and schools were not used. This concurs with McMillan and Schumacher (2014:339), who state that the researcher has a dual responsibility to protect the individuals' confidences from other persons in the setting and to protect the informants from the general reading public.

It was explained to participants that participation was voluntary; that they had the right to withdraw anytime during the study, as well as the fact that the researcher would adhere to guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher sought the consent of participants who took part in the study. Participants were issued with a voluntary participation consent form that was explained to them before agreeing to take part in the study, and they had to sign it. Ethical treatment of participants was followed. This is supported by Wild and Diggins (2013:21), who state that when respondents are treated in an ethical manner, they will give the researcher precise and truthful responses to questions.

1.10 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The researcher identified the limitations that affected the study. Time and financial constraints limited the sample size of the study. For this research, the sample was very small, whereby the focus was on South African schools in Gauteng from one selected district focusing on three township schools. However, in-depth information was collected from a few participants. This limited the study, as other districts were not covered. The main aim was to obtain in-depth information, not numbers.

Another limitation was time constraints, which also limited the study, as the researcher is a full-time lecturer at a TVET college. It was not easy to get an appointment for meeting all participants from each sampled school in one day.

1.11 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following key concepts was used in the study and they are defined as follows:

Leadership

According to Jones and George (2014:436, cited in De Beer & Rossouw, 2015:41), leadership is defined as the process according to which a person exerts influence over others by inspiring them, motivating them and guiding their activities to help achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation. Bush and Glover (2014:554) concur by stating that leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Furthermore, leadership involves the function that the manager performs to enable others to carry out their tasks effectively (Coetzee & Van Niekerk, 2015:450). In this study, the

people in leadership are the school leaders, who consists of the principal, deputy principal and HODs. They are the leaders at their schools and they ensure that improved learner performance happens.

Management

Robbins, Decenzo and Coulter (2013:28, cited in De Beer & Rossouw, 2015:32) explain management as the process of getting things done effectively and efficiently, with and through other people. It is the duty of the SMT in the school to make sure that they plan how the school must be managed by making sure that any planned tasks are performed effectively and efficiently.

Educational management

According to Farah (2013:13), educational management is connected to different approaches and established disciplines, which include economics, general, management, psychology, sociology and political science. Each school develops a plan as a whole on how they will achieve the set objectives. Such a plan is derived from each department. For example, in schools, the following departments, namely languages, sciences, commerce and mathematics departments, submit their departmental plan, which is then compiled to come up with the school plan.

School management

According to Pretorius and Lemmer (2004:40), school management is the execution of management functions by principals, SMT members and other educators within particular areas of management, with the aim of ensuring that teaching and learning is done effectively. The SMT is the one responsible for making sure that other members of staff adhere to different policies, which may include curriculum delivery policy and assessment policy.

1.12 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1 introduced the study by giving out the background of the study. The chapter presented the research aims and objectives of the study and a brief literature review was discussed. The research methodology, research paradigm, research design, sampling,

data collection, data analysis, credibility and trustworthiness, ethical issues and limitations were outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 2 deals with an in-depth literature review whereby literature was reviewed focusing on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng.

Chapter 3 presents the research design and methodology, research approach, research population, sampling, data collection instruments, data analysis and interpretation, credibility, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 consists of findings of the research that were analysed and presented. Topics, themes and categories that emerged during the analysis of the data are discussed in detail.

Chapter 5 presents the summary, limitations, and conclusions of the study, and recommendations are made.

1.13 CONCLUSION

A study on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng was conducted. From literature which was reviewed, it is evident that proper implementation of distributed leadership amongst SMTs is still required in schools and stakeholders need to be well equipped in order to implement it. The study also explores the role of SMTs as well as the challenges faced by SMTs. The study adopted a purposive sampling whereby 12 participants were part of the study from three township schools in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. Structured interviews were used for data collection. The researcher took into account ethical issues in the process of gathering data from participants. The study will consist of five chapters. A detailed review of literature pertaining to the study is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

For a school to run smoothly, one of the important aspects is the presence of an effective SMT to ensure improved learner performance. This chapter discussed the literature on educational leadership and management in schools by SMTs and education management theories and models that based this study. Furthermore, in this study different roles that SMTs play in improving learner performance and challenges that they face were broadly discussed. As the aim of this study was to determine the SMT roles in improving learner performance, it was significant that the importance of leadership and school management was looked into in a number of studies. It is imperative that the roles of SMTs are determined to ensure improved learner performance. The researcher noted that limited study has been conducted on the topic.

2.2 EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Educational management is defined by Botha (2015:4-5) as the process of working with and through individuals, groups and other resources, whether they are learners, educators, administrative staff, parents or other stakeholders, to accomplish educational goals or outcomes. Botha further asserts that educational management is the application of management theory, principles and skills in the education environment. It is imperative that all educators on all post levels should have at least a basic knowledge of education management. Through staff development educators acquire knowledge and skills leading to improved learner performance.

Educational management is a shift from centralisation to decentralisation, which entails a shift to the distribution of decision-making authority (Botha, 2015:117). Decentralisation of leadership and school management can be viewed as an element of educational reform in the South African education. Botha (2015:117) identified four dimensions in order to bring a meaningful decision making in key areas of finance, personnel, resource allocation, curriculum and assessment. These key areas are power, information, knowledge and reward. Internal stakeholders of the school must have decision-making powers over policies and practices in the school as they are directly affected by them. It is the responsibility of schools' SMTs to make sure that correct information is

disseminated to different stakeholders. Therefore, for teaching and learning to be effective, teachers will require adequate resources. Curriculum and assessment are also mentioned by Botha (2015).

Leading and managing are distinct, but both are important for influencing people, working with people and for the achievement of common goals (Mampane, 2017:146). In addition to what has been discussed above, Botha (2015:9) distinguishes leadership and management whereby leadership relates to mission, direction and inspiration, whilst management involves designing and carrying out plans, getting things done and working effectively with people. Jones and George (2014:436), cited in De Beer & Rossouw, (2015:41) defines leadership as the process according to which a person exerts influence over others by inspiring them, motivating them and guiding their activities to help achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation. In schools, management and leadership work is carried out by the principal and the senior management team (SMT) to enable educators to perform their primary (educating) task (Van Deventer, 2003:66-67). In schools the SMT must come up with ways of motivating members of staff and learners so that the school can improve its academic performance. Thorough training is needed for SMTs to be able to execute their roles effectively. Mampane (2017:144) makes the point that it is essential that training in leadership and management be part of lifelong learning for leadership and management in schools, as the skill develops self-confidence resulting in improved performance during teacher leadership.

According to Mampane (2017:144), leadership is determined by the quality of leadership that the SMT employ. Moreover, leadership by SMT has an impact on teachers and how they teach. Effective leadership and management are required to promote the best education for learners. Atkinson (2013:4) asserts that school leaders must be knowledgeable and be aware of current policies and external forces that influence an organisation. The theoretical framework is discussed below.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework will be used, as it will make findings meaningful. Jr and Mertz (2014) state that a theoretical framework in educational research allows the authors to present a unique view of the studied phenomenon. This study was informed by the capital theory of school effectiveness and improvement and educational management models

as framework for this study. The capital theory will help to understand the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.

2.4 CAPITAL THEORY

The study was informed by the capital theory of school effectiveness and improvement of educational management models as framework for this study. The capital theory helps to understand the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance. Hargreaves' (2001) Capital Theory of School Effectiveness and Improvement identifies four master concepts, which are outcomes, leverage, intellectual capital and social capital. All the overt goals that are achieved by the school and consequences of the processes involved are the outcomes that are represented by the schools. These outcomes are divided into two broad kinds that is the cognitive and moral kind. Therefore, the capital theory states clearly that the schools outcomes are dependent on the quality of intellectual and moral lives of learners.

Leverage is about the relation between teacher input and educational output. It may be defined as the quality and quantity of effected change on learners' intellectual and moral state as a function of the level of teachers' invested energy. The theory states that high leverage signifies a desirable relation between input and output, leading to a large impact on effectiveness or improvement from relatively low levels of teacher effort. The theory further states that teachers in effective schools share and regularly apply combinations of high-leverage strategies avoiding low-leverage works. Leverage is illustrated as follows:

Table 2.1: Leverage strategies

		Output Quality and Quantity	
		Low	High
High Input energy		Exhausted Frustration	Short-term effectiveness by burn-out
Low		Cynical Tokenism	High Leverage

Source: Hargreaves' (2001)

Intellectual and social forms are forms that are central to the capital theory. Intellectual capital is defined as the sum of the knowledge and experience of the schools' stakeholders that they could deploy to achieve the school's goals. Its common processes are to create new knowledge and new capacity that will enable them to transfer knowledge between situations and people (Hargreaves, 2001).

According to (Hargreaves, 2001) social capital is defined in two components that is cultural and structural components. Cultural components are the trust level between the people and the norms that are the generation of reciprocity and collaboration whilst in structural components are positive networks that keep people united. Therefore this theory ultimately indicates that whenever levels of trust are positively developed, collaborative relations amongst members become strong. In schools, social capital is needed most to strengthen its intellectual capital. From this theory it is evident that all its components need to be taken into consideration to determine the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance. The research also explored the education management models.

2.5 EDUCATION MANAGEMENT MODELS

Botha (2015:12) identified five educational management models, i.e. formal models, democratic models, political models, subjective models and conflicting models. This study will focus on two of those models that can lead to effective leadership and management. The two models are formal models and democratic models and must be merged.

2.5.1 The formal model

This models pertains to education systems, which can be a school that has different departments that are part of management. This study focused on the decentralised of school management, which can lead to school effectiveness. This model has a clear hierarchical organisational structure that defines the interrelationships between people. For example, in a school setting, from bottom to top, there are learners who report directly to their class teachers; class teachers report to HODs; HODs report to the deputy principal; and the deputy principal reports to the principal. With this hierarchy, certain functions are allocated to certain posts and work is divided in accordance with the rules and regulations. A school is a formal setup; therefore, this model will be suitable for it, as

managerial duties are delegated to the HODs who must manage their departments effectively whilst being accountable to the principal.

2.5.2 The democratic model

Botha (2015:13) states that this model is characterised by staff which are highly trained professionally and have a certain expertise. If the staff has such expertise they should be involved in decision-making, which is in line with distributive leadership. This model is characterised by a sound relationship between staff who agree on decisions made unanimously. This model can be used together with the formal model whereby this model is characterised by shared authority between different participants in decision-making processes. In a school setup the SMT can involve educators in decision making, which can motivate educators to perform better if they are recognised.

2.6 ORIENTATION ABOUT SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMTs)

School management team is defined by Nwangwa and Omotere (2013:162) as staff members who occupy senior or top management positions at an institution. They further support the definition, as it implies that the SMTs are the decision makers in the school system. Management and leadership are both implemented in schools and must be implemented effectively in order to improve learner performance. Ahmad (2017:3) postulates that leadership is about being able to influence individuals or groups for them to be influenced to take a particular desired direction. So in a school setting, school principals and SMT should be able to identify educational tasks and challenges on those tasks which will enable them to set standards. Therefore, this should be done by ensuring that people are briefed clearly about the standard of behaviour, academic performance, and monitoring and progress evaluation. Different SMT members are expected to perform certain tasks for the school to function effectively, led by the principal of the school.

Botha (2015:21-22) states that the principal has to perform certain managerial tasks in order to achieve the educational goal. These tasks include planning, organising, leading and controlling. Planning involves defining the school's goals, establishing an overall strategy for achieving those goals and developing plans for school's work activities (Botha, 2015:21). This implies that the task will help everyone to understand the school's objectives so that they are aware of where the school is heading.

Planning may include planning for curriculum delivery, assessments to be given, excursions for learners, and planning on how the allocated funds will be utilised. To ensure school effectiveness, there is a need to be effective leaders and managers in the school environment. In addition to the management areas of the principal, Botha (2015:22-23) argues that the management areas of the principal include staff affairs, issues relating to teaching and learning, learner affairs, physical facilities, school administration affairs, financial affairs, parents, the business community and non-governmental organisations. For them to be managed effectively, the principal will require the expertise of SMT members who represent their respective departments.

It is further noted that not only one person have full authority to lead but, leadership can be distributed amongst different people in the school. As school leaders work mainly outside the classroom, their impact on learner learning is largely mediated through other people, events and organisational practices and school climate (Pont *et al.*, 2008:18). Delegation of authority must not only end with the SMT members, but must be extended to the teachers as well. This is supported by Ahmad (2017:3), who postulates that teachers can be empowered to act as this builds their self-confidence and make them willing to be involved in problem solving, decision making and some school policy development. Furthermore, as they are involved in the whole process of problem solving and decision making, they do not resist change.

All schools have SMTs who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, which can only be achieved when they work together. Nwangwa and Omotere (2013:161), supports the above statement as they state that the SMT represents the school structure, which is responsible for implementing the education policies of the country in their schools. As leaders, the SMTs ensure that all policies are implemented in their schools. Shore and Walshaw (2018:316) point out that for SMTs to work together well, there should be good values of trust and loyalty. Furthermore, managers should ensure a school is run in an orderly manner. The strategies that can be used to ensure smooth running of the school are planning and budgeting, organising and staffing and controlling. Planning includes two major plans, the year plan and the timetable (DoE, 2008:43-43). The year plan includes all activities that affect the operation of the school, e.g. public holidays and/or examination dates. The SMT will work together, the principal being the driver of the team. The responsibility of the principal will be to combine, allocate, coordinate and deploy resources in such a way that the aim of the school is achieved as

effectively as possible. Also, the principal is expected to perform certain managerial tasks (Botha, 2015).

To ensure improved learner performance, the SMT must have necessary leadership skills. Ahmad (2017:3) asserts that strong professional leadership contributes to school effectiveness. Professional leadership enables SMTs to identify the professional goals of the school. With what has been said, it is very important that the SMTs of the school be trained so that they are able to lead the school effectively while executing their roles.

2.7 COMPOSITION OF SMTs

According to Benoliel (2017:59-60), at schools the SMT comprises the principal, deputy principal and HODs. The principal is the one who leads and manages the school with the help of other people in the school; hence the formation of a school-based management team whereby authority and responsibility would be shared. Shore and Walshaw (2018:316) state that effective principals create conditions in the team that allow free debate, disagreement, laughter and fun, which enables the development of processes to resolve any conflict that might occur. The deputy principal is the next person in the hierarchy and he or she reports directly to the principal. Shore and Walshaw (2018:310) point out that the deputy principal has close daily contact with the principal, playing a supporting role in the various management and administrative responsibilities that are delegated to the principal by the school board. After the deputy principal, there are HODs. Botha (2015:148) illustrates the SMT structure as follows:

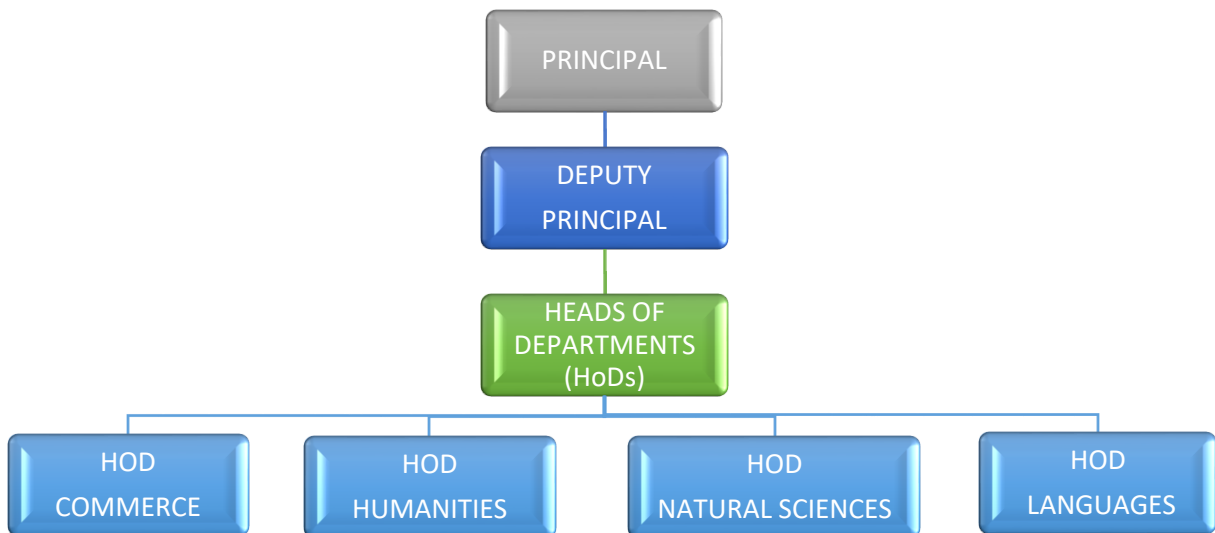


Figure 2.1: SMT Structure (Source: Rikhotso 2023)

With reference to Botha’s SMT structure, there are several HODs, depending on the academic subjects that are offered by the school. For example, in addition to the list of HODs listed by Botha (2015), there can be HODs for Mathematics, African languages, Creative Arts, Life orientation and or Engineering Graphics and Design. Each HOD is responsible for teachers reporting directly to them. For example, a Commerce HOD will be responsible for teachers teaching Grade 10–12 Accounting, Business Studies, and Economics, and for Grade 8 and 9 Economic and Management Sciences. According to Botha (2015:148), members of the SMT assist the principal with decision-making, curriculum coordination and enrichment programmes. In Hong Kong, middle-level leaders are referred to as key staff who are highly experienced (Hallinger & Ko, 2015:22). There are certain roles that the SMTs need to adhere to.

2.8 THE ROLE OF SMTs IN IMPROVING LEARNER PERFORMANCE

2.8.1 General and administrative role

The SMTs in schools play several roles to ensure a smooth running of the school. The principal is the one who leads the SMT members in accomplishing those roles. According to Ozgenel and Karsantik (2020:3), principals play a significant role in the effectiveness and success of the schools as decision makers. SMTs offer assistance through planning for the school. Furthermore, Amanchukwu, Stanley and Ololube (2015) conducted research on a review of leadership theories and styles and their relevance to educational

management focusing on Nigerian schools. Amanchukwu *et al.* (2015:12-13) state that educational management processes involve the arrangement and deployment of systems that ensure the implementation of policies, strategies and action plans throughout assets of integrated practices in order to achieve educational goals. It is stated in their study that effective educational leadership and management of schools create structures and processes and establish relationships that enable teachers to engage fully in teaching. Their study concludes that effective educational leadership style is fast, easy and cost effective, if applied effectively.

Surana *et al.* (2018:398) state that the educational leader of the school should have the ability to organise and assist the department in formulating a programme that may improve the quality of the school. Similarly, Graves and Moore (2018:264) point out that school leaders engage in research on how children learn to be able to understand and teach them. The understanding of how children learn will enable the school leaders to enhance learner performance in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng.

Principals lead schools with the help of SMTs. Although they lead and manage the schools in collaboration with the SMT, they still remain the accounting officers of the schools. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the principal to delegate duties to his team and also to monitor that those duties are executed effectively. Each SMT member must be held accountable for the department they head. This is supported by Benoliel (2017:77), who states that managing the SMT environment is associated with the school outcomes whereas principals' internal activities provide the SMT with better outcomes. The principal must maintain a tight boundary around the SMT, promoting the team identity so that the members know who is accountable for what in the school.

Principals work with other SMT members in ensuring that the school runs smoothly. The deputy principal works closely with the principal. According to Shore and Walshaw (2018:310), the deputy principal has close daily contact with the principal, supporting the principal in numerous management and administrative tasks allocated to the principal by the board. To ensure the tasks are executed effectively, the principal delegates some of those tasks to the deputy principal who reports directly to him/her. Mwesiga and Okendo (2015:95) concur by pointing out that the heads of schools delegate power to their immediate supervisors in the school activities, as delegation is the main factor of an effective leader. This is also supported by Benoliel (2020:290), who points out that close

interaction with SMT members increases the principal's capacity to share experiences, facilitating team tasks, fostering teamwork, aligning team efforts with school goals, and showing consideration for senior members. According to Bektas, Kilinc and Gumus (2020:8), distributed leadership yields to a school climate in which teacher collaboration and participation in decision-making processes are promoted and therefore, teachers accept a more responsibility to engage in leadership work. Teachers work closely with their principals to promote the quality of instructional practices and strategies to enhance learner learning and achievement.

Furthermore, delegation of duties is a way of empowering subordinates. Francis *et al.* (2020:23) point out in their study that principals are expected to ensure that teachers work as one group so that objectives of education are achieved. To improve collaboration in schools, principals can create small committees and put others in charge. If the delegation of duties is done effectively, teachers will feel a sense of belonging and be motivated to do better. This is supported by Ramalepe and Zengele (2014:4), who assert that the ultimate goal of motivation is to keep teachers working towards the attainment of goals and outcomes by energising, directing and maintaining their behaviour.

Mpungose and Ngwenya (2017:6) point out in their study that focuses on good leaders that a good leader has the capability to persuade his/her followers to share his/her vision and to inculcate ethical behaviour among them to strengthen effectiveness and efficiency in the organisation. They further assert that the school leader is responsible for taking care of the interests of the "whole child" and to develop capacity among teachers for self-determination and continuous improvement. Graves and Moore (2018:264) concur by stating that school leaders conduct a study on how children learn to understand and how to teach them. As leaders, principals must be able to provide moral support when problems arise in the school. This is supported by Francis *et al.* (2020:22), who state that principals are expected to be leaders who can fight for the rights of the school in accomplishing the school goals. They need to apply this characteristic to settle conflict that may arise among staff and among learners, between staff and learners and even with the community as a whole. SMTs need to manage the curriculum properly in order to achieve improved learner performance.

2.8.2 Managing the curriculum and teaching

Schools have a high degree of responsibility in decisions related to curricular issues (Point *et al.*, 2008:45). In addition, the role of the principal as a school leader will be the capability to organise and assist the staff in improving the learning programmes. Whenever there are changes in the curriculum, the Department of Education (DOE) trains all individuals who are supposed to implement it. Therefore, SMTs are responsible for ensuring that it is properly implemented at school level. They are also responsible for monitoring that teaching programmes are developed and implemented. This is supported by Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:95), who state that leaders are vested with the overall responsibility of ensuring successful implementation of curriculum and school programmes, supervising and monitoring teachers and ensuring their commitment and school performance among other responsibilities. According to Ramalepe and Zengele (2014:5), monitoring and support remain a critical issue in ensuring that the implementation of Continuous Assessment (CASS) is successful. School managers' constant monitoring and support will ensure that the assessment standards are not compromised and an increase in the level of learners' achievement is realised.

Point *et al.* (2008) argue that school leaders generally have a range of discretion on how they design curriculum content and sequencing, organise teaching and instructional resources and monitor quality. In schools teachers use the policy document when developing lesson plans. It is the responsibility of the SMT to monitor if educators comply with the policy documents. Mogashoa (2013:140) notes that for SMTs to be able to implement and manage a curriculum, they need adequate teaching and learning support material, training of SMTs with regard to assessment policies and training on how to monitor, evaluate and support teachers in terms of new teaching methodologies. This is supported by Benoliel (2017:78), who state that principals are encouraged to perform external activities by placing great focus on the procurement of needed resources. Therefore, the success of the implementation of the curriculum lies with the provision of adequate resources to the curriculum implementers.

Mogashoa (2013) further asserts that SMTs are supposed to give full support to educators in their departments through in-service training. The school environment must be conducive to teaching and learning to take place and the availability of resources for educators to be able to implement the curriculum successfully. Tapala, Niekerk and

Mentz (2020:13) argue that if HODs are not sufficiently established, they may be unable to deal with the country's frequent curricular revisions. Graves and Moore (2018:266) also make this point that teachers can be sent to share good practices with other teachers and also discuss how things are done at their respective schools. Furthermore, Graves and Moore (2018:268) assert that social media networks are used in setting up large meetings that are teacher led, rather than school led, to share individuals' practices and ideas. This will yield good results and also enable the SMTs to know how to monitor and evaluate educators.

2.8.3 Teacher monitoring and evaluation

It is the responsibility of SMTs to monitor and evaluate educators, Monitoring may include checking the lesson plans prepared by educators as well as conducting class visits or class observations. According to Nobile (2019:50), the supervisory role involves monitoring and evaluating the performance of staff and the staff development role concerns building the capacity and competence of staff members so that they can do their jobs more effectively. To achieve academic performance, SMTs need to assess the learner performance, check if effective teaching and learning is taking place and meeting the developmental needs of teachers. Evaluation of teachers' performance must be accompanied by support to them. Ndungu, Allan and Emily (2015:11) argue that teacher evaluation is aimed at the improvement of teaching in aspects, which may include preparation of teaching, creation of a positive classroom environment, and whether effective teaching of all learners is assessed. Therefore, evaluation and monitoring should continuously take place in schools. Setlhodi and Lebeloane (2014:481) concur by stating that the SMTs should continuously review and evaluate activities so that there is accountability and incorporate shared values into the system. It is the responsibility of the principal to set achievable targets and concentrate on the principles that seek to support stakeholders in ensuring that teaching and learning take place in a supportive environment.

According to Milondzo and Seema (2015), the SMT is responsible for monitoring lesson planning and presentation by educators in their departments. HODs are expected to check the lesson plans done by educators according to a work schedule in their respective departments and also to conduct class visits to provide support to educators. Mampane (2017:146) states that HODs develop the ability to enforce policy during their

leadership of teachers while giving support to teachers' areas of need. Support can include developing educators through workshops so that educators are kept abreast of the changes in the curriculum. Therefore, the purpose of class visits should be to give support rather than being used as a fault-finding mission and also to monitor the academic performance of learners. HODs are also expected to ensure that educators meet deadlines, e.g. for submission of tests, marks and any reports that may be requested.

Mogashoa (2013:136) argues that the expectation of SMTs is to provide full support to educators in their departments through in-service training. Milondzo and Seema (2015) concur by stating that HODs are supposed to provide in-service training to educators. Milondzo and Seema (2015) support this view because, as support is given by HODs to educators, they are also expected to monitor subject content coverage regularly. Where an educator is lacking, it is the responsibility of the HOD to give support to the educator concerned. Similarly, Mampane (2017:147) points out that the HODs have to coordinate intervention strategies as well as approaches within the subject department to ensure that teachers teach accordingly. Extra classes and catch-up programmes can be planned to cover the work that has been lost. An educator joining the department needs guidance on how things should be done. If training is not done properly, the educator may not be able to be an effective educator. Therefore, HODs are expected to keep up with developments in teaching and learning and must share information with other professionals that will enable them to develop educators in their departments. Proper planning and time management must be done effectively to ensure improved learner performance.

2.8.4 Providing sound planning and time management

According to Miroj, Saputra and Gunawan (2020:87), the success of learning in schools is defined by the principal's performance in planning activities as effectively and efficiently as feasible. The SMT should ensure that all activities are well planned for the smooth running of the school. Schools set their own goals that they need to achieve. Then, during the course of the year, an evaluation is done to check if goals are achieved or not through the Whole School Evaluation. It is responsibility of the SMT to implement the Whole School Evaluation (WSE). Milondzo and Nsimbini (2013:96) argue that it is the duty of the DOE to empower the SMT so that they can realise that WSE is a crucial part on the

effects on human development and academic performance. It is highlighted in their study that SMTs need to realise the importance WSE by distributing learner teacher support material on time, adhere to teacher-pupil ratio and also attend workshops organised by the DOE.

Literature reveals that the role of learning is critical in realising that the role does not only belong to the teachers who are directly involved in the learners' activities, but the principal must give direction on the learning activities that must be carried out at his/her school (Miroj *et al.*, 2020:86). As expected by the district office, to ensure improved learner performance in schools, each school should have plans that it ought to implement in order to improve its results. Mpungose and Ngwenya (2017:13) state that at the beginning of every year the education district offices take stock of Grade 12 examination results in order "to identify low performing schools and develop comprehensive school improvement plans".

2.8.5 Supporting teacher professional development

According to Bektas *et al.* (2020:4-5), teacher learning has been regarded as a chain of externally provided courses or training in which teachers are systematically mandated to participate and learn to teach effectively. Furthermore, findings from several reviews of this domain clearly revealed the emergence of teacher professional learning as an important path linking school leadership to learner learning and achievement. The SMT must make sure that there is professional development of teachers. Schlebusch (2020:86) postulates that teachers must express clearly to subject advisors and HODs what assistance they require in relation to the Personal Growth Plan for each individual teacher and lack of skills be addressed through training and development. Teachers need to be well equipped with knowledge pertaining to curriculum changes, interesting and technological ways of delivering lessons. When the Department of Education introduces a new curriculum, it is their responsibility to ensure that all relevant stakeholders receive the necessary training. The study of Tapala *et al.* (2020:12) reveals that in the face of the new curriculum, HODs must be brought on board through training and development in order to avoid hardship and failure during implementation. Tapala *et al.* (2020:13) further assert that if HODs are not sufficiently established, they may be unable to deal with the country's frequent curricular revisions.

According to Ramalepe and Zengele (2014:4), the new assessment policy provides the opportunity for teachers to use different methods and learner-centred techniques. Teachers will only function when trained and have received follow-up support in order to implement the methods successfully. This is supported by Yakavets *et al.* (2015:350), who state that the capacity of continuous assessment can be fostered by providing training programmes to keep teachers up to date. Literature suggests that educators require support as they try to find their feet in the profession, therefore requiring educator support that mainly takes place during training workshops organised by subject advisors. However direct educator support is obtained internally from the SMTs and Development Support Groups (DSG) (Nkambule & Amsterdam, 2018:1-2). Even if training is provided, it does not need to disrupt the operation of the schools. The operation of the school includes class attendance by teachers; therefore, all scheduled workshops should not be scheduled during contact time in order to minimise the disruption of classes. This is supported by Nkambule and Amsterdam (2018:9), who further note that a concern was raised that offsite workshops disrupt classes and must be scheduled during the school breaks.

Point *et al.* (2008) emphasises the importance of developing people to improve teaching and learning. This is supported by Nwangwa and Omotere (2013:166), who state that the SMT has the responsibility of training and equipping teachers with knowledge and skills so that they can be better teachers. It is the duty of the SMT to include training and professional development in the school budget. Teachers must be given equal professional learning opportunities. Yakavets *et al.* (2015:350) concur with Point *et al.* (2008) by stating that the capacity for continuous improvement can be built by providing training programmes to ensure that teachers are updated. Therefore, SMTs must allocate tasks and responsibilities to teachers to empower and develop them, for example, giving teachers an opportunity to head a certain committee.

According to Sibanda (2017), distributed leadership determines the motivation of teachers in South African Schools. However, there are some people who see it as a way of exploiting other members who are not formal leaders. The study further states that distributed leadership has been misused by teachers at other schools to undermine the authority of the principals. In this case, distributed leadership is not promoted. In addition to this, teachers are now affected by the above challenges as they do not have the

opportunity to demonstrate new skills and lack confidence in using the insufficient skills they have. They are not empowered to lead (Sibanda, 2017:571).

Francis *et al.* (2020:19) argue that the principal as a leader should have the ability to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute towards the success of an organisation. Teachers must be motivated and be provided with support systems. This is supported by Ramalepe and Zengele (2014:4), who assert that the ultimate goal of motivation is to keep teachers working towards the attainment of goals or outcomes by energising, directing and maintaining their behaviour. The SMT must be able to recognise and reward good performance. This is supported by Nobile (2019:5), who state that the simplest acts are offerings of encouragement, praise or support for work being done, the aim of which is to keep teachers and other staff motivated to develop their abilities and reach their full potential. Furthermore, Bhengu and Mkhize (2013) concur by stating that those who produce good results must be praised and recognised in public. It is evident that recognition and reward of good performance is a source of motivation; the educators should not only focus on the good performance of the teachers, but also on that of the learners.

2.8.6 Supporting collaborative work cultures

Teamwork must be fostered among teachers to ensure improved learner performance. The SMTs should come up with ways of motivating the staff. For example, teachers can belong to certain committees in the school. Distributive leadership motivates the staff as their efforts and abilities are recognised. According to Sibanda (2018:788), when teachers share responsibilities, they teach better than they do when they are overloaded with responsibilities. Teachers must be given an opportunity to use their skills, abilities and expertise; therefore, it is the responsibility of the SMT to promote a positive ethos and culture that support quality education.

Higham, Hopkins and Ahtaridou (2007, cited in Bush & Glover, 2013:22), investigating leadership in OECD, attest to that typical school leadership is shared amongst the school staff whereby the process allows for diversification within leadership teams in terms of different backgrounds and expertise of the members. This type of leadership is shared within, between and across organisations as distributed leadership. Harris (2010:55, cited

in Bush & Glover, 2013:22) further defines distributed leadership as the expansion of leadership roles in schools and beyond those in formal leadership or administrative posts.

According to Bhengu and Myende (2016:1), the underlying principle for open-participatory leadership (OPL) is guided by the principals' belief in 'multilateral wisdom', where a need exists to draw from various perspectives by using a management style that involves everyone. It has been researched that all people are given a chance to participate and lead in various committees that have been established. Additionally, allowing teachers to participate in school leadership has advantages. Firstly, involving them in leadership and decision taking may transform the school. Teachers tend to commit to the tasks given willingly rather than following instructions imposed to them by their school leaders. Secondly, another advantage of this approach is that it instils a sense of ownership of the schools' vision and mission. Furthermore, where OPL is used, a friendly environment characterized by creativity and innovation, which are the pillars of adaptive leadership, prevails (Bhengu & Myende, 2016:7). This is supported by Sibanda (2018:790), who points out that if teachers collectively discuss how to assist learners, the learners benefit, because different ideas put together can be very powerful. Therefore, this will lead to academic achievement.

Francis *et al.* (2020:25-26) state that the principal as the head of the school needs to demonstrate humanity towards his/her deputy head, HODs, staff, learners, parents and the community at large. Their study reveals that principals need to demonstrate a character of humanity that will make teachers know that their leaders respect their own ability and decision and regard teachers' contribution in the school as important. Mpungose and Ngwenya (2017:6) concur by stating that in progressive humanistic leadership, the key elements that are emphasized are developing the human potential of both learners and teachers, encouraging the participation of all stakeholders in decision making and problem solving, and promoting professional learning communities that produce empowered and resourceful citizens who can deal with any challenges.

2.8.7 Goal setting, assessment and accountability

Hallinger and Ko (2015:20), in their study on Hong Kong schools, assert that school leaders are responsible for integrating education reforms into the existing platform of the school practices and are accountable for school results. Similarly, Benoliel (2017:77)

points out that the principal must maintain a tight boundary around the SMT, promoting the team identity so that the members know who is accountable for what. The SMT is responsible for setting goals and monitoring them, as well as accounting for them when the results are out. To improve learner performance, the SMT needs to set departmental targets, which are derived from the school targets, to be able to evaluate the school performance. The SMT members are held accountable of the results or the performance of learners in their respective departments. They are held accountable by the SGB, parents and the DOE. If results are not desirable after the assessment of learners, the SMT must identify all obstacles and then come up with intervention strategies to mitigate those challenges.

Principals are the schools' accounting officers in terms of the overall performance. Mpungose and Zengele (2017:13) assert that principals do performance reporting in the form of school results that are compared with other schools and principals have to account for poor performance. Principals are not only held accountable for results, but also for everyone at the school. Teachers too tend to blame the principal for poor results. This is supported by Schlebusch (2020:84), who states that teachers blame their learners' poor academic achievement on their principal's lack of leadership and focus. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that the school environment is conducive to teachers to work to ensure improved learner performance. Francis *et al.* (2020:19) supports this by stating that for a principal to influence teachers to be effective depends on how he/she demonstrates his/her leadership attributes.

Bush and Glover (2014:564) also make this point that school leaders face unprecedented accountability pressures in many countries. There are certain management areas that the Senior Management Team (SMT) need to be equipped with. In England head teachers are held accountable for school performance and are under considerable pressure to demonstrate the contribution of their work to school improvement. This has resulted in the creation of a wide range of literature which addresses leadership within the context of school improvement (Day & Sammons, 2016:14). Their research concludes that extending leadership responsibility beyond the principal is an important lever for developing effective professional learning communities in schools. Francis *et al.* (2020:24) further assert that principals are expected to know that they are held accountable for their followers' (teachers) actions. Therefore, principals of schools are expected to take active responsibility and action on the feedback from the teachers on

their daily duties by giving credit to good performance and share the blame for deficiencies to provide room for improvements.

Day and Sammons (2016:53) argue that even if distributed leadership is implemented, there are barriers that may hinder its success. It is argued that distributed leadership can be considered threatening to those in formal power positions, placing teachers in vulnerable positions by relinquishing direct control over certain activities. For example, if leadership is distributed to an educator and they produce quality results, it might be misinterpreted as a threat to the principal. Also, it is argued that top-down approaches to distribute leadership, when not executed properly, can be interpreted as misguided delegation. This is common practice of most leaders whereby certain duties are delegated and not properly explained how they must be executed. Therefore, it is the role of the SMT to train all stakeholders on distributed leadership.

Educational managers need to be equipped with how to organise the planned task, making sure that a proper hierarchy is followed. This task also involves motivating subordinates, influencing individuals or teams as they work (Botha, 2015:21). For example, educators report to their departmental HODs; HODs report to the deputy principal (academic) and the deputy principal reports to the principal. If responsibilities are distributed amongst SMT members, monitoring of staff will be effective. According to Bush and Glover (2013:22), distributing leadership has a positive impact on the school and its learners. Therefore, HODs know the strength and weaknesses of educators reporting to them; hence it will enable them to come up with activities that will lead to improved learner performance, at the same time providing educators with an opportunity to explore their capabilities.

The last main task is control. Botha (2015:22) states that control is done to determine if the set objectives have been achieved. The principal has to ensure that resources are appropriately allocated and their utilisation monitored. The principal and the SMT must agree on control measures to be taken if organisational objectives are not met within a prescribed period. For example, in a school environment, each school allocates days whereby all staff members will discuss whole-school evaluation. All set objectives are analysed to check if they have been met, challenges faced are identified and lastly the team comes up with different ways of mitigating those challenges.

2.8.8 Strategic resource management

According to Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:94), an effective school leader should monitor teachers, learners' teaching and learning activities, and motivating teachers and learners by providing them with proper teaching and learning materials. Decisions are made by the SMT to determine how the school funds will be utilised. The SMT is part of the committee that drafts the school budget. It is the responsibility of each SMT member to identify the needs in their departments so that these can be included in the budget based on the availability of funds to ensure that there is implicit teaching and learning. This is supported by Horsley and Sikorova (2014:46), who state that different teaching and learning resources provide different forms of scaffolding, they support learners' learning in different degrees and ways. SMTs must ensure that all resources are distributed effectively and efficiently to all teachers in order to improve learner performance.

Milondzo and Seema (2015) state that SMTs are expected to manage learner and teacher support material (LTSM) by making sure that the resources are distributed adequately among educators in their respective departments. These resources may include learning materials and resources and the physical structures in the school, e.g. classrooms and toilets. Before the procurement of these materials, HODs are expected to assist the school principal in planning for such materials to be purchased. A school financial plan is drafted by the SMTs. This will enable educators to teach effectively. Surana *et al.* (2018:398) asserts that the effectiveness of an educational organisation means that there is correspondence between human resources that carry out tasks and the stated goals. For example, at the beginning of each day, before classes commence, resources must be distributed to both educators and learners. An educator might not be able to teach effectively if textbooks for subjects they teach have not yet been delivered.

2.8.9 Human resources

SMT must ensure that there is enough staff in the school by making sure that all learners have teachers for all the subjects. It is the responsibility of the SMT to be able to recruit suitably qualified teachers for different subjects. Tapala *et al.* (2020:5) argue that the shortage of teachers is an area of concern to HODs, as it leads to overwork of some members of staff, a situation which the HOD must manage. Point *et al.* (2008) state that school leaders must be involved in teacher recruitment decisions in order to improve the match between the school and the selected candidates. Laws and policies still need to

be adhered to when making recruitment decisions. According to Surana *et al.* (2018:398), the success of an educational organisation indicates that there is a fit between human resources that carry out the activities and the stated goals.

According to Bhengu and Mkhize (2013:34), the principal and the SMT must give direction with regards to teaching and learning processes being carried out properly in schools. Vogel (2017:5) asserts that one of the leadership requirements of managers is to develop strategies that make experimentation and risk taking key components of an employee's job performance. Therefore, the most critical components of leadership will involve selecting the most appropriate employees and also creating conditions for effective teaching and learning. The purpose of this study is to examine the wider context of school leadership and the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.

2.8.10 Organising the workload

According to Mpungose and Ngwenya (2017:13), the principal should be seen applying and complying with the education laws and regulations to prevent any wrongdoing. This calls for the ability and capacity of the school leader to interpret the new policies correctly and to make decisions that will benefit all stakeholders. This is supported by Francis *et al.* (2020:21), who state that the principals need to build trust and be honest in all communication with the teachers in their absence, being consistent with ethical standards and school policies. Mampane (2017:146) postulates that HODs should develop the ability to enforce policy while providing support to teachers' areas of need through their leadership of teachers.

Granston and Ehrich (2009, cited in Benoliel, 2017:60) state that school operations are guided by the SMTs who give direction on the school policy, planning and monitoring of the work of other school staff. Thus, the SMT is responsible for distributing workload amongst teachers. The distribution of workload must be done by taking into consideration the areas in which teachers are qualified to teach, as well as the knowledge that the teacher has on the subject and grade. Milondzo and Seema (2015) further assert the role of the SMT to ensure that the teacher-learner ratio is considered. If the ratio becomes high, the SMT will have to recommend that additional educators be employed and occupy the additional post. After the allocation of classes to educators has been done, the SMT is also responsible for designing a timetable that will ensure that effective teaching and

learning can take place. Planning and organisation of educational excursions by adhering to the school policy are further roles of SMTs (Milondzo & Seema, 2015). As curriculum is delivered to learners, they also need to do educational tours in order to have a picture of what is happening in the real world.

2.8.11 Communication

In a school environment, effective communication needs to start with the managers and leaders of the school (SMTs) by allowing the members to work as a team. Benoliel, (2020:290) postulates that close contact with the SMT members improves the principal's ability to communicate their experiences, facilitating team tasks, work by promoting teamwork, aligning team efforts with the school goals and showing consideration of senior members. Literature suggests that principals propose the internal actions in ensuring that SMT is effective. This is done by organising team building, empowering SMT members and strengthening internal team corporation and all these contribute to the effectiveness of SMT. An improved information flow can facilitate a shared cognitive system among school facilities, promoting an open exchange of opinions that can contribute to the SMTs' ability to address learners' cognitive and behavioural issues positively (Benoliel, 2020:297-298).

The principal needs to help the SMT to maintain an ongoing information exchange within the environment in which it operates (Benoliel, 2017:77). Interaction between SMT members and between the SMT and members of staff assist both parties in sharing information. Effective communication is integral in any part of an organisation; hence it is a requirement in schools as well. This is further supported by Benoliel (2020:298), who states that positive social interactions among SMTs enables them to share knowledge and improve interpersonal relationships amongst staff members in schools, therefore allowing teachers to employ different teaching methods and school development.

According to Surana *et al.* (2018:398), the principals' leadership should develop reciprocal relations between leaders and those who are led by depending on interpersonal communication abilities in order to establish understanding and collaboration among staff. Through external activities, the principal can help the SMT to maintain an ongoing information exchange with the environment within which it operates (Benoliel, 2017:77). For the school to run smoothly, there is a need for effective

communication and respect amongst the members of the team; therefore the HODs are expected to create a healthy working relationship in the departments they head.

Surana *et al.* (2018:398) recommend that the leadership of the principal should foster reciprocal relationships between leaders and those who are led by relying on interpersonal communication skills so that understanding and collaboration among personnel are established. Similarly, Kin and Kareem (2018:409) point out how leaders in Malaysia interact with teachers to deliberately make them behave in a particular way towards change so that they can take initiatives to gain their support for any change. Effective communication will reduce conflict and resistance to change.

Milondzo and Seema (2015) state that another role of the SMTs is the ability to combine skills and talents, which can be achieved through team teaching. Educators tend to be motivated if their abilities are recognised and utilised. HODs can delegate some duties to educators in their departments so that they can feel that they are recognised. This will in turn create a positive organisational atmosphere. For SMTs to be able to fulfil their roles, they need to be trained. This is supported by Tapala *et al.* (2020:11), who state that HODs must be part of the information flow inside the school and the SMT must share that information with the HODs before the teachers.

2.9 PREPARATION FOR SMT MEMBERSHIP (TRAINING)

According to Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:96), the quality of school achievement depends largely on the competence of school leadership, implying the importance of leadership training before holding such positions. Everyone who is a member of an SMT requires adequate training so as to be able to function effectively. Kin and Kareem (2018:395) recommend training of the principals, since the Malaysian education system entered an intensive period of change with the launching of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013–2025, principals as transformational leaders were therefore expected to motivate others to change. The training provided will enable the principals to guide other members of the SMT in implementing the change. According to Mampane (2017:148), being a HOD does not mean that one has the required skills of leadership and management, as each position requires keenness to learn and develop. This is supported by Mogashoa (2013:140), who postulates that proper teaching and learning support material, training of SMTs in assessment policies, and training on how to monitor, evaluate, and support teachers in

terms of innovative teaching methodologies required of SMTs to be able to implement and manage the curriculum.

In England, head teachers (principals) are held accountable for school performance and they are under considerable pressure to demonstrate the contribution of their work towards school improvement. This has resulted in the creation of a wide range of literature which addresses leadership within the context of school improvement (Day & Sammons, 2016:14). Their research concludes that extending leadership responsibility beyond the principal is an important lever for developing effective professional learning communities in schools. Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:96) concur by stating that acquiring leadership skills is to enable leaders to solve educational challenges, and deal with stakeholders, especially teachers and their professionalism, effectively.

Day and Sammons (2016:53) argue that even if distributed leadership is implemented there are barriers that may hinder its success. It is argued that distributed leadership can be considered threatening to those in formal power positions, placing teachers in vulnerable positions by relinquishing direct control over certain activities. For example, if leadership is distributed to educators and they produce quality results, it might be misinterpreted as a threat to the principal. Also, it is argued that top-down approaches to distribute leadership, when not executed properly, can be interpreted as misguided delegation. This is common practice by most leaders where certain duties are delegated and not properly explained how they must be executed. The focus must be on training stakeholders on distributed leadership.

Mestry (2017) explored a study on empowering principals to lead and manage schools effectively in the 21st century whereby the focus was on the growing concern that public schools did not function optimally and that the standard of learner performance was low. The study states that principals must understand the concept of leadership, which should be seen as a process of developing the capacity to connect with others so that the school can achieve desired results. Mestry (2017:2) asserts that principals must have authority and be ready to execute their roles by developing their skills, attributes and competences through structured, continuing professional development (CPD) programmes. Mestry's study focuses on the empowerment of principals to lead and manage public schools effectively in the 21st century. Teachers are given the opportunity to develop their

knowledge and skills therefore, enabling them to develop professionally (Yakavets *et al.*, 2017:348).

From Mestry's study it is established that before principals distribute leadership, they themselves must acquire necessary knowledge that will enable them to lead and manage schools. Principals can make significant contributions to schools achieving the educational goals and improving learner performance if they are adequately prepared for their leadership role. The study recommends that principals need to participate in continued professional development programmes so that they are able to make autonomous decisions, adapt teaching programmes to local needs, promote teamwork among teachers and engage in teacher monitoring, evaluation and professional development.

Just like the principal, other SMT members need to undergo professional development training, as they are the curriculum drivers in schools. Research has been done about the importance of training middle managers (HODs) on leadership and management in South African public schools. According to Mampane (2017:144), schools require experienced leaders who have the ability to create a school environment that encourages cooperation and communication among staff members, education stakeholders and learners. Her study's emphasis is on training middle managers in public schools on leadership and management so that schools can operate effectively.

Mampane (2017:145) states that the training ensures effective leadership and management, focusing on teaching and learning, assessment of teaching, implementation of the law and policies and educational administration matters in school at all levels of education. If middle managers are properly trained, they will be able to lead educators and learners, as well as ensure improved learner performance. Mampane further asserts that the formal training of HODs involves problem solving. HODs, being leaders, must be able to make sound decisions, and solve problems as they arise in their different respective sessions. Trained leaders may become expert leaders to newly appointed teachers at schools (Mampane, 2017:145). HODs, as teacher leaders, play a dual role function; they are teachers as well as leaders/supervisors of particular phases or subject areas in the school (Mampane, 2017:146). From what has been studied on leadership and management, it is evident that distributed leadership has been studied,

but training of stakeholders still needs to be conducted, especially for middle managers and educators.

In the study of leadership and school management, the focus was on the distribution of leadership to senior management teams (SMTs) in Mpumalanga Province (Bush & Glover, 2013:21). Even though the principals can delegate some duties to other stakeholders, they are still held accountable for all the areas that they manage. Distributed leadership enables educational progress, as schools will be provided with guidelines to increase positive perceptions regarding the role of distributed leadership in school improvement (Botha & Triegaardt, 2014:309).

A study was conducted on teachers' reflections on distributive leadership in public primary schools in Soweto (Naicker & Mestry, 2013). The emphasis was on teacher leadership whereby they take on greater leadership responsibility. Opportunities for teacher leadership, teacher workload, lack of professional development and power relations between teachers and SMT members were identified by Naicker and Mestry (2013) as barriers to teacher leadership. The case recommends that principals be developed on how to share power and decisions with all stakeholders. The shortfall of the study is that it does not focus on the development of leaders and managers on distributed leadership. The study has reviewed the concept of leadership and management, focusing mainly on distributed leadership, and it is evident that stakeholders in South African schools require the knowledge on the role of SMTs as well as training on how to implement distributed leadership.

2.10 CHALLENGES FACED BY SMTs

2.10.1 Lack of clarity with regard to their roles and responsibilities

Principals of public schools are under pressure to acquire new sets of skills and knowledge, and activities associated with the business of the corporative world to account for their performance (Mpungose & Ngwenya, 2017:12). Principals and SMT members are the accounting officers of schools and blame for poor performance is directed to them as leaders. According to Schlebusch (2020:84), teachers blame their learners' poor academic achievement on their principals' lack of leadership and focus.

School SMTs need to be aware of their roles and responsibilities for them to lead schools effectively. If SMTs are not aware of the rules and policies governing them they will not be able to come up with institutional policies, making it difficult for them to operate as expected. If such policies are not adhered to, it may result to poor academic performance of learners and members of the SMT being held accountable by the Department of Education.

Some of the challenges faced by SMTs are planning and budgeting, thus creating systems for operational efficiency, organising and staffing by making sure that everyone knows what is expected of them, as well as control and problem solving by ensuring stability. Additionally, the SMT must ensure that teaching and learning improves the academic results (DOE, 2008:42). On the other hand, principals feel that they are not given enough freedom to decide on how to run their schools and allocate the school budget, which leads them to perceive that their roles and responsibilities are cut out for them (Yakavets *et al.*, 2015:350).

Hallinger and Ko (2015) conducted a study that explored the nature and effect of leadership for learning within the context of Hong Kong primary schools. The focus was channelled to leadership and school management, exploring how school leadership practices impact school capacity and learner achievement. In view of their study, learner achievement seems to be of great concern for schools around the world. The findings of their study suggest that the principals in Hong Kong schools find it difficult to manage expectations from above and below. Notably, the negative effect of their type of principal leadership was perceived by Hong Kong teachers as weak leadership. In addition, it is noted that few head teachers may be confident enough to challenge official policy, since school leaders are also given government prescriptions pertaining to curriculum and content (Bush & Glover, 2014:555).

According to Zulu, Bhengu and Mkhize (2019:4), leadership and management of the school are not easy, as principals in township schools are faced with a mammoth tasks of leading schools that have inherited problems of the past. It is evident that township schools are faced with a lot of challenges, which tend to affect the performance of learners. Zulu *et al.* (2019:15) further state that principals in township schools grapple with multifaceted challenges like drugs, poverty, burglary and vandalism of schools. The SMT and staff have to do the work of policemen, social workers, nurses and counsellors

so as to keep order in the school. It is very important that the Department of Basic Education does something to help schools in eliminating the challenges face by the schools.

The study of Schlebusch (2020:87) suggests that subject advisors must ensure that teachers' professional development focuses on developing the necessary material and pedagogical knowledge, skills and competences to assist them to achieve district and school goals. Furthermore, these can be achieved by the taking time to empower teachers by expanding their understanding of the significance of the academic knowledge they deal with in the classroom and learning to convert it into the information needed to improve learner outcomes.

2.10.2 Professional development of both SMTs and teachers not promoted

According to Simpson *et al.* (2016), SMTs encounter challenges in the delivery of their responsibilities as HODs, due to lack of support from the school head, lack of funds to run the department and insufficient professional development. The study highlights that due to the low level of empowerment HODs have, this may be used to measure their performance, which therefore, is already a challenge to them. It is revealed in their study that insufficient empowerment may translate into poor performance as a result of poor quality of work and poor employee satisfaction. Principals are said to be focusing on meeting procedural requirements rather than to develop professional learning communities, which are viewed as a struggle for compliance with system requirements and survival in the competitive environment (Hallinger & Ko, 2015).

Hallinger and Ko (2015) postulate that teachers in Hong Kong do not perceive their principals as strong instructional leaders and their leadership dimensions do not have an impact on support for learners. Furthermore, principals in Hong Kong schools find it difficult to manage expectations from above and below. Notably, the negative effect of their type of principal's leadership was perceived by Hong Kong teachers as weak leadership. The focus was channelled to leadership and school management exploring how school leadership practices impact school capacity and learner achievement. In view of their study, learner achievement seems to be of great concern in schools around the world.

Professional development is supposed to be an ongoing process to promote the professional growth of teachers. As the curriculum changes, teachers – being the curriculum implementers – need to be developed, as they are the ones who have direct contact with learners in class. Simpson *et al.* (2016) highlight the challenges faced by the HODs. According to their study, most HODs lack sufficient professional development, which may be used as a yardstick to measure their performance. Lack of professional development leads to poor learner performance. If HODs are empowered, they will in turn empower educators who report to them, which will lead to improved learner performance. Nkambule and Amsterdam (2018:9) raise a concern about the off-site workshops that disrupt classes and need to be scheduled during school breaks.

2.10.3 Too much workload for SMTs

The SMTs' position also comes with a lot of responsibilities, which might shift the focus to administration work instead of focusing on effective teaching and learning. As discussed by Simpson *et al.* (2016), most HODs complain about the workload that comes with their position. They have a lot of paperwork, reports to write and submit. They need the conditions of the HODs' work to be improved so that they can perform effectively. Tapala *et al.* (2020:8) concurs by stating that HODs lack the time to complete all the activities they have responsible for, because they have so much to do, which forces them to work beyond school hours.

Tapala *et al.* (2020:12) point out that the HODs may struggle with the workload and how to distribute work equitably and fairly among their educators. They may also struggle to manage time, finding it difficult to adapt to the school culture and deal with poor learner discipline. In some areas, schools are faced with overcrowding of classes and a heavy workload. Therefore, this tends to hinder good academic achievement of learners. Due to the heavy workload that HODs have, they tend not to have enough time to attend to both instructional and non-instructional issues (Simpson *et al.*, 2016; Yakavets *et al.*, 2017:355). Similarly, Shore and Walshaw (2018:317) point to the fact that there are areas that have a negative impact on the job satisfaction of SMTs, especially the deputy principals, as they have to work extended hours.

2.10.4 Poor communication skills

According to Ramalepe (2015:638), most SMT members are not equipped with good communication skills, which prevent them from developing their understanding of working together as a team promoting respect and patience. Most schools tend to lack SMT and staff meetings, which are instruments for ensuring team communication. The study further asserts that for a school to be successful, there should be teamwork, sharing of ideas and consultation and not undermining others. Also, there is poor communication between educators and learners. This challenge might lead to poor performance of learners. According to Mathipa *et al.* (2014:372), SMTs in schools need to ensure that there is a flow of communication between staff, parents, learners and circuit officials about all the activities that take place in the school.

2.10.5 Lack of discipline among educators and learners

According to Bipath (2017), one of the challenges faced by SMTs is the lack of knowledge regarding to school safety and the skills to manage safety issues. The study postulates that the school drafts policies on safety without having a baseline from the DOE. Bipath (2017) also highlights the lack of guidelines for weapon searching. The concern is that learners smuggle weapons into the school which are then used by learners when they are fighting and they also use the weapons to attack teachers.

When discipline is addressed, the focus is not only directed at learners, but also at educators as well. Some educators tend to lack discipline, which affects the school negatively. Late coming and non-attendance of classes by educators reflect a lack of discipline. It is not only the educators, but some learners are also ill-disciplined. According to Ramalepe (2015:638), SMTs are faced with disciplinary challenges in the cultivation of moral purpose, and factors encouraging these disciplinary problems amongst learners are the abuse of intoxicating substances such as drugs and alcohol. Social factors are also a contributing factor to lack of discipline. SMT members are challenged by not being able to reach out to parents who can help them in addressing disciplinary issues of learners at their schools. Lack of discipline amongst educators and learners reflects that they have lost a sense of purpose, which can lead to poor performance.

Disciplinary problems affect the schools negatively. According to Ramalepe and Zengele (2014:3), learners' behavioural problems such as absenteeism can have a negative

impact on the smooth implementation of CASS in the Further Education and Training Band, since there are many tasks or activities to be administered to learners on a daily basis. Therefore, the responsibility lies with the SMT to communicate policies regularly during staff meetings and parents meetings.

2.10.6 Lack of suitable resources

According to Magesa and Mtebe (2022:14), not having sufficient resources prevents the SMT and teachers to perform their functions adequately. For improved learner performance to take place, teaching and learning resources must be made available in schools. SMT members usually face challenges when it comes to the acquisition of resources for their respective departments. Schools have inadequate teaching materials, which makes it impossible for teachers to use sound teaching methodologies. For these challenges to be mitigated, the SMT must be given adequate support.

Lack of classrooms leads to overcrowding in classrooms, which makes it difficult for effective teaching and learning to take place. This is supported by Magesa and Mtebe (2022:14), who assert that shortage of classrooms results in learners being more than the capacity that each class can take therefore making the classroom environment unfavourable for learning.

2.11 TYPES OF SUPPORT PROVIDED FOR SMTs

According to Simpson *et al.* (2016) empowerment may mean regular in-service training, pre-service training, enough funds to run the department, the power to sanction recalcitrant and non-performing teachers, and personal development, amongst others. For SMTs to perform well, they need to be empowered. SMTs must be satisfied with their conditions of work. Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2014, cited in Simpson *et al.*, 2016) assert that a good working environment brings about an increase in employee loyalty, commitment level, efficiency and effectiveness, productivity and develops a sense of ownership amongst employees.

In respect of underperforming schools, the Department of Basic Education is committed to improving school performance. Heystek (2015:1) states that leadership as an important function is reflected in the financial support the Department of Education (DBE) provides so that principals, deputy principals and HODs can register for the Diploma in Education

Leadership (ACE). Furthermore, ACE was introduced to equip school leaders with the necessary knowledge and skills that will enable them to run schools effectively. Principals and SMTs deal with different issues in schools, which include learner discipline, parents, administering the internal and national examinations, professional development of educators and maintenance of the physical environment of the school. This professional development will empower them with the necessary knowledge and expertise that they will use to tackle the challenges faced by the school.

According to Nwosu, Bechuke and Moorosi (2018), the DoE make specialist support staff available to support educators, as well as assistive devices, specialized equipment and LTSM, and the delivery of initial and ongoing training, orientation, mentorship and guidance for educators. If both the SMT and educators are empowered, it will lead to improved learner performance.

2.12 RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF AND LEARNERS

The study of Nwosu *et al.* (2018) focuses on the effective management of the training of teaching and learning of Accounting in Secondary schools, which directly affects the staff and learners. The HOD supervises the teaching process in classrooms so that they can give support to teachers. Some HODs offer educators support by assisting with teaching of difficult topics in the subject. Support is given to educators while, at the same time, they constantly motivate learners to work hard. Similarly, teachers are willing to change their teaching after attending professional development training, as they are concerned with building a professional culture that is favourable to the children's learning (Yakavets *et al.* 2017).

The staff and learners are directly affected by the leadership style used by the SMT. Educators need professional development to be able to handle learners from racially diverse backgrounds. According to Tapala *et al.* (2020:11), many learners come from low-income homes, with some coming from child-headed families where the learners are the parents and the SMT must go above and beyond to ensure their success. Naidoo, Pillay and Conley (2018) note that there are poor interrelationships between learners and educators from different racial groups. In their study some educators did not see a learner's colour; hence treating all learners equally.

2.13 SMT PRACTICES OF TEACHER AND LEANER SUPERVISION

Hallinger and Ko (2015:23), in their study on Hong Kong schools, state that there are items used to measure capacity in support of learners. These items include the atmosphere in the school that encourages learners to learn, after-school academic support activities for learners, access to teaching resources and providing a broad range of extracurricular activities for learners. One of the duties of the SMT is to monitor and support instruction, minimising disruption to teaching time and providing sufficient LTSMs (Bhengi & Mkhize, 2013). The HODs conduct teacher and learner supervision, which includes class visits, observation of how teachers teach and by giving them feedback. Therefore, the responsibility of the HODs is to monitor that proper teaching is taking place.

One of the roles of the SMT is to improve communication and establish good relations between the school and parents so that procedures to learn are explained to them (Bipath & Nkabinde, 2018). It becomes easy to instil discipline amongst learners if educators and parents work together.

SMTs also make use of the attendance register, which can be used to monitor attendance. Both learners and staff are supposed to sign the register on a daily basis. If a teacher is not at the school it is the duty of the HOD to make the necessary plans so that learners are not left unattended. Learners are also searched when they enter the school to ensure safety in the school environment. Alcohol, drugs and weapons are not permitted on school premises; therefore, all learners are subjected to searches. The SMT can also invite the police to conduct random searches.

2.14 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to review literature on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance. The researcher started by explaining what educational management and school leadership is to gain an understanding of what will be discussed in this chapter. A theoretical framework was followed and the researcher explained the theory and models that have been followed in the study. The researcher defined what an SMT is and stated all members who form part of the team. SMT roles were explained that ensure improved learner performance in schools.

The researcher explored on the challenges faced by SMTs as well as the support that is required by them. The relationship of SMTs with staff and learners was discussed. Lastly, it was explained how the SMT supervises and monitors staff and also provides the support required by staff.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 presented the theoretical framework and literature review based on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance. Furthermore, Chapter 2 explored different aspects that influence learner performance focusing on the SMTs.

This chapter focuses on the research approach and methodology that were used in the study. An account of how the study was designed and conducted is explained to enable the researcher to obtain information on the SMTs roles in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. The researcher identified the research approach that was suitable. This chapter also states how the study population was identified and how sampling was done, as well as the reasons for selecting the chosen population and sample. Data gathering instruments used are identified in this chapter. The researcher states the steps that were followed in the analysis of data. Limitations of the study are identified and discussed. Lastly, ethical issues will be another component that form part of this chapter.

3.2 RATIONALE FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Empirical research refers to providing evidence acquired by using research methods, rather than by opinions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:9). Therefore, the research findings, conclusions and recommendations will be based on the data and evidence that are collected by the researcher. The data may be obtained by using quantitative methods, qualitative methods and or mixed methods, which is a combination of the first two. The researcher followed a qualitative research approach. The researcher's main aim was to investigate the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. The researcher once worked in the same district at one of the schools in the township for about six years, which has prompted the researcher to conduct research in the same Education District. Data were obtained from sampled schools, by analysing documents and conducting interviews.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN APPROACH

3.3.1 Introduction

According to Briggs *et al.*, (2012:107) a research design refers to the schema or plan that constitutes the research study. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:20), defines a research design by stating that it is the steps that must be followed when conducting a study, which is a plan for interventions and describes the methods that will be used to collect data. Similarly, Creswell (2009:54) states that a research design is a plan of selecting subjects, research sites and data collection procedures that span the decisions, from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The researcher focused on public township high schools when selecting the sample. Each selected sampled school was represented by members of the SMT, namely the principal, one deputy principal and one HOD. One teacher was also interviewed from each school as teachers are the ones who have direct contact with learners.

The study followed a qualitative research approach in order to investigate the phenomenon. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:102) further assert that a research design refers to a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research question(s). The main research question for this study was to investigate the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East of Gauteng.

3.3.2 Research paradigm

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009:121), an interpretive paradigm is a way in which we as humans try to make sense of the world around us to understand the fundamental meanings attached to organisational life. The study followed an interpretive paradigm whereby the role of the researcher was to interpret what the participant said. The researcher was concerned with exploring and understanding the social world using both the participant and the researcher's understanding (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:17). The stated paradigm enabled the researcher to obtain information pertaining to ways in which schools are led and managed by the SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.

3.3.3 Research methodology: Qualitative research approach

Different research methods can be used in research. Research methods are the ways in which one collects and analyses data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:8). As highlighted before, a qualitative research approach was used in this study. A qualitative approach is research that is concerned with the subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour (Kothari & Garg, 2015:4). Qualitative research provides the researcher with the ability to represent the views and perspectives of participants. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:23) state that data obtained from qualitative research are in the form of words rather than numbers. In general, the researcher must search and explore a variety of methods until a deep understanding is achieved. In addition to what has been discussed, a qualitative approach enabled the researcher to understand the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003:7), a qualitative research approach makes use of methods that attempt to provide a holistic understanding of research participants' views and actions within the context of their lives overall.

Lune and Berg (2017:12) define qualitative research as the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things. They further assert that qualitative research seeks answers properly by examining various social settings and the groups or individuals who inhabit these settings. Mack *et al.* (2005:1) postulate that qualitative research seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspective of the local population it involves. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2014:142), qualitative researchers rarely try to simplify what they observe; instead, they recognise that the issue they are studying has many dimensions and layers and they try to portray it in its multifaceted form. Based on what has been said, the researcher selected participants who work in the sampled schools. Mack *et al.* (2005:4) highlight several advantages of using qualitative methods. The advantages are as follows:

- The respondents are given the opportunity to elaborate on their responses in greater detail.
- For researchers to obtain detailed information, they have the opportunity to request the participant to give clarity to the answers that they give.

- The use of open-ended questions and probing gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses.
- Qualitative methods allow the researcher the flexibility to probe initial participant responses encouraging them to elaborate on their answers.

The advantages stated above will assist the researcher in obtaining in-depth information. Leedy and Ormrod (2014:142) argue that qualitative studies do not allow the researcher to identify the cause-and-effect relationships to determine what caused the problem and/or reasons why the problem occurred. Such questions can only be answered through a quantitative research method. The researcher probed follow-up questions to ensure that participants provided the appropriate information, also prompting them to speak on some aspects that were not mentioned in their responses to the original question (Mack *et al.*, 2005:42). For the researcher to have a better understanding of the role of SMTs to ensure improved learner performance, a case study was used.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014:24) state that a case study examines a bounded system or a case over time in depth, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting. Furthermore, a case is defined by Leedy and Ormrod (2014:143) who state that a case study of a particular individual, programme, or event is studied in depth for a defined period of time. Saunders *et al.* (2009:146) argue that, within a case study, boundaries between the phenomenon being studied and the context within which it is studied are not clearly evident, but a case study is ideal if the researcher wishes to gain a rich understanding of the context of the research.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2014:147), a phenomenological study attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation. A phenomenological study will enable the researcher to focus on a small sample. However, in-depth information was collected from the few selected schools in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. Briggs *et al.* (2012:226), supported this by stating that qualitative research studies use a small number of individuals and cover material in depth. Since the researcher once worked at one of the schools in the same district and has had personal experience related to the phenomenon in question, a phenomenological study helped the researcher to gain a better understanding of the experiences of others (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:142). The researcher conducted interviews

with sampled participants with the aim of understanding their perspectives on their everyday lived experience with the phenomenon, as stated by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:24).

3.3.4 Research problem and aims

The main research question of the study as stated in Chapter 1 is as follows:

What is the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng?

The following sub-questions were derived from the main research question in order to help in answering the main question:

- What is SMTs' understanding of improved learner performance and how can they support learners?
- What are the roles of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance?
- What are the challenges faced by SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance?

3.3.5 Objectives with the research

The aim of the study is to explore effective ways that can be used to ensure improved learner performance. In attempting to address the research problem, the following objectives were formulated:

- To determine whether the SMTs understand what improved learner performance is and how they can support learners.
- To determine the role of SMTs to ensure improved learner performance.
- To determine the challenges faced by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance.

From the three sampled schools, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to gather data from participants. This study was done in an effort to contribute to the improvement of learner performance mainly focusing on township schools.

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.4.1 Sampling technique

According to Wild and Diggines (2013:183), sampling is a process used to draw the sample from the population. Therefore, a sample was selected from the population. The researcher adopted a purposive/non-probability sampling method, which was used to get participants who are knowledgeable about the topic at hand. Kothari and Garg (2015:13) define purposive/non-probability sampling as a method that involves the purposive or deliberate selection of particular units of the universe to constitute a sample that represents the universe.

3.4.2 Population and sampling for the study

Population is defined by Wild and Diggines (2013:183) as the aggregate of all the units of the analysis that form the population, which consists of a comprehensive number of individuals, units or items that can become objects of observation. According to Briggs *et al.* (2012:143) population refers to the group of people a researcher wants to reach a conclusion about. Ritche and Lewis (2003:78) note that in purposive sampling, sample units are chosen because they have characteristics that will enable a detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and puzzles which the researcher wishes to study. Similarly, Elo *et al.* (2014:4) assert that purposive sampling is suitable for qualitative studies where the researcher is interested in informants who have the best knowledge concerning the research topic.

The targeted population for this study was the principals, deputy principals, HODs and principals. The mentioned individuals form part of the SMT and therefore the researcher purposefully chose them as the best participants to respond to questions pertaining to school leadership and management. Teachers were also involved in the study as participants. This is supported by Ritche and Lewis (2003:79), who note that members of a sample are chosen purposefully to represent a key criterion.

Dependability must be considered when sampling participants. Dependability is defined by Elo *et al.* (2014:4) as reliable data that can be used under different circumstances. In this study, the researcher focused on three township high schools in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng, of which 12 participants were sampled to be part of the study.

3.4.3 Informed consent

The researcher also sought permission from the participants. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:118) state that informed consent is achieved by providing subjects with an explanation of the research, an opportunity to terminate their participation at any time with no penalty, and full disclosure of any risks associated with the study. The researcher outlined intentions of the research before seeking consent from participants. Saunders *et al.* (2016:246) state that declaring one's real intentions after interviews may be seen as unethical regarding the real purpose of the research, which may lead to being banned on site where data will be collected. Similarly, Wild and Diggins (2013:21) assert that ethical treatment of respondents will enable them to provide honest answers and to answer questions truthfully if they feel that they are treated in an ethical manner.

Leedy and Ormrod (2014:107) postulate that any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary. Participants cannot be compelled or forced to participate in research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:118). For voluntary participation to be fulfilled, the researcher sought consent from participants who took part in the study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2014:108), a researcher must present an informed consent form that describes the nature of the research project, as well as the nature of one's participation in it. Participants were issued with a voluntary participation consent form with a clear explanation on how research was going to be conducted. Participants read the consent forms and signed them as an agreement that they were willing to take part in the study.

According to Saunders *et al.* (2016:243), harm may occur through risks to emotional well-being, mental or physical health, or social or group cohesion. Therefore, the researcher must disclose all information about their research to participants. Leedy and Ormrod (2014:107) state that research participants must not be exposed to any form of unnecessary physical and psychological harm. Additionally, informed consent involves ensuring that those involved in the research are given sufficient information, the opportunity to ask questions, and time to consider without any pressure, in order to be able to reach a fully informed, considered and freely given decision about whether to take part or not (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:251). Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2014:108) argue that if people are given too much information, they may behave differently from what they would under normal circumstances. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:119) concur with Leedy and Ormrod by stating that one of the challenges of informed consent

is that too much information is included and potential participants may not take the time needed to understand all aspects of informed consent.

3.4.4 Anonymity and confidentiality

The researcher also considered that all participants had to be treated in a courteous and respectful manner (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:107). Since every human being has the right to privacy, the researcher made sure that such a right was not violated during the study. The researcher explained to the participants their rights as well as the purpose for collecting data and also how the data would be used. Confidential information disclosed by the participants was kept confidential. According to Briggs *et al.* (2012:275), confidentiality makes it difficult for participants to be identified or presented in identifiable form. Lune and Berg (2017:48) define confidentiality as “an active attempt to remove from the research records any element that might indicate the subjects’ identities”. The researcher guaranteed participants that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained.

The study followed ethical considerations by making sure that no harm was caused to the image of the participants and schools studied. Confidentiality and anonymity were not violated by the researcher. Briggs *et al.* (2012:275) highlight that anonymity is a promise that even the researcher will not be able to tell which responses came from which respondent. For ethical purposes, real names of participants and schools were not used. Schools were named as School A, School B and School C. This concurs with Lune and Berg (2017:48), who advocate that for anonymity, the subjects remain nameless and this requires that the researcher changes each subject’s name to a pseudonym or a case number when reporting data. In the study, the names of the schools and participants were not mentioned; only codes were used, e.g. Principal A, Principal B and Principal C. Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2014:339) state that the researcher has a dual responsibility to protect the individuals’ confidences from other persons in the setting and to protect the informants from the general reading public. The researcher sought permission from the informants for information to be given to the public.

3.5 INSTRUMENTS AND DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

3.5.1 In-depth interviews

For the selected participants the researcher used interviews to collect data. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:205), an interview involves direct interaction between individuals. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:355) further assert that in-depth interviews use open response questions to obtain data on participants' opinions. To obtain the information required, the researcher interacted with the sampled participants, which enabled the researcher to observe non-verbal communication from the sampled participants. Non-verbal communication during the interview alerted the researcher to rephrasing the questions, where necessary. This is referred to as semi-structured interviews, which are defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:206) as questions that have no choices from which the respondent selects an answer; rather, the question is phrased to allow for individual responses.

The researcher decided on a distant interview method because of the recent outbreak of the Covid-19 virus, which was a highly infectious virus that resulted in the deaths of many people worldwide, including South Africa. Covid-19 pandemic safety protocols were followed, which required health screening, checking of temperature, observation of social distancing, sanitisation and constant washing of one's hands. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to obtain detailed and in-depth answers (Briggs *et al.*, 2012:252). The researcher posed follow-up questions to get detailed responses. According to Briggs *et al.* (2012:252), there should be consistency in questions asked by the interviewer and probes will differ in response to the detail given by the interviewee. Standardised questions were used, but where necessary, the researcher probed questions during the interview so as to gather adequate information from the participants.

The researcher conducted a literature search so that the researcher could understand better about what was observed and heard (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:96). Participants were interviewed individually at the schools where they are based at to obtain their individual responses. Furthermore, participants were interviewed during their break and lunch times in an office that the school had made available for the process to unfold.

As part of seeking consent from participants, the researcher requested permission from the participants to voice record the interviews digitally. Recordings were done using a digital tape recorder for capturing of exact responses from participants. This is supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:360), who state that digital recording of an interview ensures completeness of the verbal interaction and provides material for reliability

checks. In addition, the researcher took down notes during the interviews. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:370) highlight that field and interview notes must be made in short summaries that can be expanded immediately after the interview. Standardised questions were used, but where necessary, during the interview the researcher probed questions to gather adequate information from the participants.

3.5.2 Document analysis

Document analysis is defined by Ritchie and Lewis (2003:35) as the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or illuminate deeper meanings which may be revealed by their style and coverage. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:361), the functions of an organisation are described in documents and those documents reveal how different people define the organisation. The following official documents, memos and minutes of meetings, timebook and learners' attendance registers were amongst the documents that the researcher checked on arrival at the sampled schools. Additional documents that were also checked were the school policy, assessment policies, departmental circulars, policy documents and reports.

The checking of the documents enabled the researcher to obtain additional information and also the process complementary information obtained from interviews. The stated documents were of help to the researcher in determining the effectiveness of the leadership and management style employed at each sampled school. Also, they contributed to the information required on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The first step that the researcher took was to obtain an ethical clearance certificate from the university that permitted the research to be conducted at the sampled schools in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. The second step was to request permission from the Gauteng Department of Basic Education (GDE). Once the GDE had granted the researcher permission to conduct the research, the concerned district office was also approached with the same request. The approval from the GDE and Johannesburg East District made it easier for the researcher to access the sampled schools, as sampled schools were requested to allow the researcher to collect data. When the researcher

arrived at schools, consent was sought from the principal to include the school in the research. Participants were also given consent forms and the research procedures were explained to all participants.

The researcher outlined their intentions of the research before seeking consent from participants. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, participants were given an opportunity of selecting a distance face-to-face interview or virtual interviews. In all the sampled schools, a distant face-to-face interview was selected. The researcher made sure that Covid-19 protocols and safety procedures were followed to ensure that the researcher and participants' health was not compromised. Health screening was done at the entrance of each school, temperatures were taken, hands were sanitised, everyone wore their face masks and social distancing was maintained during the interviews in a room that had proper ventilation.

For the selected participants, semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher to collect data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:205). In such interviews, there is direct interaction between individuals. To obtain the information required, the researcher interacted with the sampled participants, enabling the researcher to observe non-verbal communication from the participants. The researcher sought permission from the participants to voice record the interview digitally. Participants were interviewed individually at the schools they are based at. Furthermore, as already highlighted, participants were interviewed in an allocated office during their break and lunch times which vary between 30–45 minutes.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.7.1 Data analysis and coding

After the collection of data, the researcher analysed the data by using research questions as a guide for conducting the analysis. Analysis is defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:96) as a systematic process of coding, categorizing and interpreting data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest. Briggs *et al.* (2012:391) note that coding involves putting tags or labels against large or small pieces of data in order to attach meaning to them and to index them for further use. The researcher familiarized herself with the data collected so as to be able to form data codes and categories. Kothari and

Garg (2015:17) state that raw data must be classified into purposeful and usable categories.

From the formed categories, the researcher searched for themes that were defined. After the data had been analysed, interpretation took place. According to Kothari and Garg (2015:407), interpretation is the device through which the factors that seem to explain what has been observed by a researcher in the course of the study can be understood better. It also provides a theoretical conception that can serve as a guide for further researchers. The researcher used the obtained findings to compile a report that would create a sense of credibility and trustworthiness.

3.7.2 Data presentation

Transcription of data took place after collecting the data. Interviews were transcribed reflecting verbatim accounts of the interviews. Non-verbal communication was observed during face-to-face interviews and was included by the researcher. After organising the data, the researcher presented the obtained data in a narrative form, supported by a qualitative research method. Information obtained from interviews was compared to information discussed in a literature review.

3.8 CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

3.8.1 Credibility of the study

Methods used to generate data must be trusted in order to obtain valid data. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:330) define validity as the degree of congruency. According to Yin (2016:88), a valid study should interpret its data so that conclusions can accurately reflect and represent the real world which was studied. To ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial, as stated by Golafshani (2003:601). Therefore, to build credibility, a researcher must create a sense of trustworthiness. This is supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:102), who define credibility as the extent to which the results approximate reality and are judged to be accurate, trustworthy, and reasonable.

Yin (2016:85) defines a credible study as one that gives guarantee that the researcher collected and interpreted the data properly, so that the findings and conclusions reflect

the world which was studied accurately. A researcher should therefore select the best methods to use so that the findings obtained give a true reflection of what is actually happening on the study site. It is imperative for the report to be credible, as no variables are measured, because qualitative research studies a phenomenon in-depth. According to Noble and Smith (2015:34), qualitative researchers aim to design and incorporate methodological strategies to ensure the 'trustworthiness' of the findings. Similarly, Anney (2015:276) asserts that there are several credibility strategies that must be adapted by the researcher. These strategies are:

- Prolonged engagement in the field or research site, which helps the researcher to gain an insight into the context of the study to understand the core issues that might affect the quality of the study;
- Use of peer debriefing whereby the researcher seeks support from other professionals willing to provide scholarly guidance to improve the quality of the inquiry findings;
- Triangulation, which will help the investigator to reduce bias as it cross examines the integrity of participants' responses;
- Reporting on negative cases, as it improves the credibility of the study as the researcher accounts for contradictions that emerge from the data, helping the researcher to reformulate the research questions and improve the rigour of the study;
- Member checks whereby the researcher includes the voices of respondents in the analysis and interpretation of data and then sends back the analysed and interpreted data to participants for them to evaluate if it was done accurately; and
- Lastly, persistent observation, which will help the researcher to discover participants' qualities and unusual characteristics, which will minimise the field work.

These above stated strategies assisted the researcher when checking the credibility of the study. The researcher captured and displayed reality as seen by sending the captured information to participants so that they could check if the information recorded was what they had said during the interview. According to Noble and Smith (2015:35), qualitative

researchers must integrate different strategies to enhance the credibility of a study during research design and implementation.

To ensure that the information is credible, triangulation of data sources took place. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 26), triangulation is used when strengths of one method offset the weakness of the other, so that they both provide a more comprehensive set of data to ensure credibility in the findings. Briggs *et al.* (2014:84) concur with McMillan and Schumacher by stating that triangulation refers to comparing many sources of evidence in order to determine the accuracy of information or phenomena. To ensure that the information is credible, there was triangulation of data sources whereby principals' responses were triangulated with those of the deputy principals, HODs and teachers.

Yin (2016:160) and Saunders *et al.* (2009:154) state that triangulation is used to compare data from two or more sources to determine if they converge or lead to the same finding. Pandey and Patnaik (2014:5749) highlight that using multiple methods can help to facilitate a deeper understanding. The principle of triangulation rests on the assumption that particular events are being investigated and that, if they can be investigated in a number of different ways and those ways concur, then the researcher may then believe that their account is a true account of those events (Scott, 2007:11, cited in Briggs *et al.* 2012:84). The researcher tested the interview questions on non-sampled participants to make sure that they were interpreted the same.

3.8.2 Transferability

Anney (2015:278) defines transferability as the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents. Anney (2015) further explains that when the researcher provides a detailed description of the inquiry and participants are selected purposively, it facilitates transferability of the inquiry. To achieve transferability of the study, it is suggested that the researcher must provide a thick description and also do purposive sampling (Anney, 2015:278). A thick description helps other researchers to replicate the study with similar conditions in other settings, whilst purposive sampling helps the researcher to focus on key informants who are particularly knowledgeable about the issues under investigation (Schutt, 2006, cited in Anney, 2015:278).

3.8.3 Dependability

According to Anney (2015:278), dependability involves participants evaluating the findings and the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants of the study. To ensure dependability, the researcher obtained information by conducting interviews, as well as through the use of document analysis. Anney (2015:278) further asserts that dependability involves participants evaluating the findings and the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants of the study. The findings obtained must be consistent as per data collected and could be repeated.

3.8.4 Conformability

Conformability is another way of assessing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings to ensure that findings are indeed obtained from the data collected by the researcher. Baxter and Eyles (1997, cited in Anney, 2015:279) assert that conformability refers to the degree to which the results of an inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers. This means that other researchers or readers must be able to prove the researcher's findings. During all the above-mentioned stages, ethical issues must be considered.

3.9 RESEARCH ETHICS

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:117), research ethics are focused on what is normally proper or improper when engaging with participants. Ethics are defined as standards of behaviour that guide one's conduct in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of one's work, or are affected by it (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:239). The researcher considered the following as ethical guidelines, i.e. the policies regarding informed consent, deception, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy and caring (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:338). Ethical considerations were observed during the research. Such considerations included obtaining ethical clearance from UNISA by the researcher. After permission from UNISA had been granted, the researcher sought permission from the GDE and the Johannesburg East District. A request to be permitted to conduct research using interviews was sent to sampled schools. Finally, the researcher obtained written consent from each participant.

3.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a detailed description of the research methodologies used was discussed. The researcher explained the research design that was employed. The study followed a qualitative research method whereby interviews were used as a means of collecting data. The study also shows how population and sampling were employed. A detailed discussion on the importance of credibility and trustworthiness took place and ethical issues were also dealt with in this chapter.

The chapter that follows will present findings obtained from the participants who were interviewed and the document analysis will be included. These findings will be presented in the next chapter (Chapter 4).

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the data gathered through face-to-face interviews at three selected township schools in Gauteng's Johannesburg East District. Data were gathered from principals, deputy principals, heads of departments, and teachers. Document analysis was also performed by the researcher to collect extra data. The researcher's goal was to identify the impact of SMTs in assuring enhanced learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng, with an emphasis on township schools. It is considered that learner performance in township schools is influenced by a variety of circumstances, with one of the obstacles being the areas in which the schools are located. Despite township schools' efforts to bridge the divide between the school and the neighbourhood in which learners live, learner achievement remains poor.

The purpose of the questions was to determine the role of SMTs in guaranteeing improved learner performance. In addition, the questions provided insight into the support that SMTs provide to improve learner performance. The study investigated the issues that affect township schools in order to find out what factors influence learner achievement. The following topics were discovered while analysing the study.

Table 4.1: Summary of themes derived from data

Themes
Theme 1: Monitoring teaching and learning
Theme 2: Support towards teaching and learning
Theme 3: Engagement through meetings and reports
Theme 4: Challenges faced in township schools (learner attendance, parental involvement, crime) and dealing with challenges
Theme 5: Motivation through incentives
Theme 6: Training through workshops
Theme 7: Developmental in leadership and management
Theme 8: Organised workshops for teachers
Theme 9: Communication channels
Theme 10: Varying roles played by different stakeholders (DoE, teachers, learners)

The above-mentioned themes were discussed considering the study's topic. Principals, deputy principals, HODs, and teachers were the primary targets of the study. The researcher acquired data from the documents supplied by the sampled schools, as well as from interviews. Interview questions and document analysis were used to develop themes. The main study topic was divided into several components, allowing for easy data gathering through interviews.

The Covid-19 guidelines were followed, as well as ethical considerations. To protect the identities of both the schools and the participants, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the data collection process. The names of the schools and participants were omitted to achieve this. The Covid-19 protocols included health screening, mask wearing, temperature checks, hand sanitization, and social distancing. The Johannesburg East District of Gauteng was chosen as the study location, which is described below.

4.2 JOHANNESBURG EAST DISTRICT AS A STUDY SETTING

The Johannesburg East District has grouped schools into different categories. The schools are grouped as follows, Alexandra township schools, Ivory Park township schools, public schools, independent inner-city schools, independent schools and LSEN schools. Three schools were deliberately selected from the five Alexandra township schools. The table below shows how schools are categorised and the number of schools in each category in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng.

Table 4.2: Johannesburg East District secondary schools

Category	No. of secondary schools
Alexandra township schools	5
Ivory Park township Schools	10
Public Schools	24
Independent inner-city schools	25
Independent schools	14
LSEN	3
TOTAL	81

4.3 TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS AS A STUDY SITE

Township schools are attended by learners of several ethnic groups, the majority of whom being Black Africans. These schools are located in places where the majority of learners live in informal settlements, with some schools located within the informal settlements. The bulk of residents in those townships are from low-income families, have children, and are impacted by socio-economic circumstances. Most families' primary sources of income are government social subsidies, informal commerce, and earnings from part-time work. The researcher gathered Alexandra township school results in order to assess the performance of each sampled school. The table below shows the matric results for the last five years. The final two shaded schools are not included in the study.

Table 4.3: Matric results for 6 years (2015-2020)

School	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
School A	76.5%	75.4%	74.1%	89.7%	60.4%	49.0%
School B	64.7%	60.9%	82.0%	91.4%	80.0%	80.0%
School C	90.9%	92.9%	89.6%	92.5%	92.9%	82.93%
School D	89.1%	92.0%	86.2%	85.3%	78.7%	87.0%
School E	66.5%	62.9%	71.9%	80.9%	76.5%	80.8%

According to Table 4.3 of Matric results between 2018 and 2019, School A's grades decreased by 29.3% between 2018 and 2019. School B decreased by 11.4%, while School C increased by 0.4%. It is clear that only one of the selected schools managed to enhance learner achievement, while the other two schools saw a reduction in learner achievement. The researcher was required to determine the features of the sampled schools as highlighted in the table below.

Table 4.4: Characteristics of sampled schools

School	Principal's tenure (Years)	Location	Economic status	Feeder area	School fees	Language offered
A	7 years	Township	Disadvantaged	Township	No fee	Setswana Sesotho IsiZulu
B	10 years	Township	Disadvantaged	Township	No fee	Tshivenda Sepedi IsiZulu
C	13 years	Township	Disadvantaged	Township	No fee	Xitsonga

						Sepedi IsiXhosa IsiZulu
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Schools A, B, and C are all located in Alexandra Township, with School B being in the heart of the township, surrounded by informal settlements. Because all the sampled schools provide a service to a low-income community, learners do not pay school fees at those institutions. Each of the three schools studied had more than 1 000 learners. The schools provide a variety of home languages in order to accommodate the many cultures of the Black African community. The study included participants from three schools, each represented by the principal, one deputy principal, one HOD, and one teacher. Their biographical information is provided below.

4.4 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

The researcher gathered information on the biographical details of the participants, who included the principal, deputy principal, HOD, and one teacher. Table 4.5 provides a summary of the principals' personal information.

4.4.1 Biographical data of principals

Table 4.5: Biographical data of principals

School	Participant	Gender	No. of years working as a principal
School A	Principal A	Male	7 years
School B	Principal B	Male	10 years
School C	Principal C	Male	13 years

The researcher was able to gather personal information from all three sample schools' principals. All principals had between 7 and 13 years' experience working at township secondary schools. Their experience working in the sampled schools qualified them to be held responsible for the matric results shown in Table 4.3. They have gained knowledge on how to increase learner performance at their schools because of their work experience. The survey included deputy principals as well, and the table below provides a summary of each.

4.4.2 Biographical data of deputy principals

The study included one deputy principal from each school. The table below provides a description of deputy principals.

Table 4.6: Biographical data of deputy principals

School	Participant	Gender	No. of years working as a deputy principal
School A	Deputy Principal A	Male	10 years
School B	Deputy Principal B	Male	15 years
School C	Deputy Principal C	Female	5 years

All deputy principals who took part in the study had between 5 and 10 years of experience. Their experience as deputy principals has provided them with enough knowledge of the role and responsibilities of SMTs in improving teaching and learning. They also know how to provide support to SMT members as well as all other members of staff, thanks to their experience.

4.4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF HODS

One HOD from each sampled school took part in the study. The following is a list of the HoDs who took part in the study.

Table 4.7: Biographical data of HODs

School	Participant	Gender	No. of years working as an HOD
School A	HOD A	Male	7 years
School B	HOD B	Female	4 years
School C	HOD C	Male	3 years

All HODs engaged in this study had worked in township secondary schools for between three and seven years. The number of years they have spent on the SMT has aided them in getting the requisite experience in both teaching and learning support. Two of the HODs that took part in the study oversee departments that teach critical subjects, as defined by the Department of Basic Education. They have expertise and understanding on how to interact with teachers in their departments as a result of their experience. They have been given enough knowledge to enable them to carry out their responsibilities in

improving effective teaching and learning. It may be concluded that they are aware of their roles because of their experience, which should lead to increased learner performance.

4.4.4 Biographical data of teachers

At each sampled school, one teacher participated in the study. Table 4.8 provides a description of the teachers who participated in the study.

Table 4.8: Biographical data of teachers

School	Participant	Gender	No. of years working as a teacher
School A	Teacher A	Male	13 years
School B	Teacher B	Female	3 years
School C	Teacher C	Female	5 years

All teachers who took part in the study had been working in township schools for between three and thirteen years. This group of participants comprise those who work directly with learners in the educational system. The number of years they have worked as teachers has aided them in finding appropriate teaching strategies to use in class. As a result, they are well-versed in how to communicate with and collaborate with learners from township communities. They usually use teaching approaches that are appropriate for the learners in their schools. Due to the difficulties that learners face because of socio-economic issues affecting learner progress, teachers have attempted to devote their time to supporting learners in their schools. Extra morning and afternoon lessons, the Secondary School Intervention Programme (SSIP), and school camps are some of the tactics they use.

When preparing to collect data, there are processes and procedures that need to be followed. These procedures are discussed as follows.

4.5 THE DATA COLLECTION PREPARATION PROCESSES

4.5.1 Gaining access at sampled schools

The researcher obtained authorisation from the Gauteng Department of Education to visit the sampling schools (GDE). When the researcher received authorisation, they then

sought approval from the Johannesburg East District, which included the sampled schools. The researcher was granted access to the schools by the Johannesburg East District office. It was now the research's obligation to approach schools and arrange interviews. The researcher wrote to the principals of the sampled schools, asking for their permission to participate in the study. The researcher next approached each school and explained the research's goal and scope. The principal, one deputy principal, one HOD, and one teacher from each school were among the participants in the study. All the participants were made aware of their position in the research. Yin (2016:49) agrees, stating that a planned study should be presented in a straightforward manner so that participants understand what they are agreeing to undertake and are fully informed. By signing informed consent papers, the researcher ensured that participants' understanding of the study was confirmed.

The three principals who were interviewed were all friendly. They put together a group of participants who would represent their respective schools. Participants were chosen based on their schedules. On 3 November, the principals made sure that all participants at their schools were aware that they would be participating in the study. The researcher was provided an opportunity to explain the study's objective to all participants. Those who did not want to participate in the study were excused and replaced with those who were willing to participate.

In all three sampled institutions, appointments to conduct interviews were planned for 3 November 2020. School C was the first to choose a date for their interview, which was planned for 13 November 2020. School A set its interviews for 6 November 2020. Finally, School B set its interviews for 9 November 2020. All negotiated interviews took place on days when Grade 12 learners were not in school and volunteers were not scheduled to invigilate assessments in other grades. There should be no disruptions or disturbances during the matric examinations, according to the department's rules.

On the planned interview day, the researcher reviewed the requested documents, which included the school policy, SMT meeting minutes, and staff meeting minutes. The timebook and a few randomly selected class registers were scrutinized.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION THROUGH DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Data were gathered by analysing documents from randomly selected schools. Because the request was submitted on the day of the scheduled interviews, the researcher was able to obtain the relevant documentation from the three sampled schools. Official documents contain data that are pertinent to the research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:361), documents describe the functions and show how different people define the organization. During the data collection procedure, the researcher obtained school policies, minutes of meetings, instructor timebooks, and class attendance registers from all three sampled schools.

4.6.1 School policy

A school policy is there to guide the school on how it is supposed to operate. Several aspects may be included in the school policy and these may include attendance policy, dress code policy, learners' code of conduct, and learners' discipline and language aspects. School policies furthermore include a wide range of topics. Access to schools, school management policies, school finance policies, and policies on curriculum and evaluation are only a few of the topics that are included in the school policy. To ensure that all the information in the school policies reaches the parents, the school policy is communicated to them as well as the learners at the start of the year, so that both parents and learners are aware of what is expected of them. Communication of the school policy to parents is normally done by the sampled schools at the beginning of the year during the parents meeting. One participant raised a concern pertaining to learners' parents who do not attend parents meeting where the school policy is communicated to parents. Principal C stated:

We have a small percentage of parents who are not attending the parents meetings. The learners of the parents are those who are failing to adhere to the school code of conduct.

The communication of the policy during parents meetings was not the same with the other two participating schools. These schools were not happy about the number of parents who attend parents meetings. This was alluded to by participants from the two different schools who stated:

Our school is one of the biggest in the province but when we call a parents' meeting, we have fewer than 200 parents who come in. (Principal B)

The attendance of parents is poor when comparing it with the number of learners enrolled in the school. (Principal A)

Upon analysing the documents in the sampled schools, Schools A, B, and C had policies in place and were putting them into action. The schools presented minutes of parents' meetings and registers of learners who were present when the school policies were communicated by the class teachers in their respective classes. School B and C were pleased with how they were carrying out the school policy. School A, on the other hand, claimed that they required assistance in implementing the school policy efficiently. The school policy is evaluated every three years at all three sampled schools.

4.6.2 Year plan and timetable

All three sampled schools have a year plan outlining all the scheduled activities for the academic year. The developmental seminars are among the programmes included in the year plan. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 virus, which resulted in school closures for an extended period of time, all three sampled schools were unable to implement their 2020 academic year plan properly. Nonetheless, prior year plans had been implemented effectively. Deputy Principal B stated:

I make sure that the HODs have the school calendar, management of the Annual Teaching plans, subject policies and the assessment policies.

School A, B, and C offer morning, afternoon, weekend, and vacation classes to all their Grade 12 learners. The researcher was given timetables and signed attendance records for teachers and learners who attended these extra classes. This is evidence that such programmes are implemented in township schools in order to improve learner performance. This is supported by different participants who state:

The Department of Education gives support by ensuring that they hold extra classes for learners. (HOD A)

The Department of Education organises SSIP which focuses on Grade 12s. (Deputy Principal B)

4.6.3 Minutes of meetings

SMT meetings are held at least once a week at Schools A, B, and C. Because SMTs are the leaders and managers of schools, they must meet on a regular basis to deal with the difficulties that the school faces. SMT meeting minutes were presented as proof that SMT meetings were held at least once a week. Some of the items which were common in the minutes of sampled schools is the progress of the school, results analysis, administering of assessments, developmental workshops, discipline of learners, submission and capturing of marks, as well as reporting to parents through learners' reports.

Upon analysing the minutes of meetings of sampled schools, the researcher obtained the information that staff meetings are held at least once a term for SMTs of Schools B and C, and once a month for SMTs of School A. The objective of staff meetings is to discuss or handle staff challenges, and they also serve as a platform for information sharing. When meeting minutes were examined, the researcher discovered that most of the issues on the agenda were discussed, and solutions to difficulties were suggested for execution.

The schools also had the minutes from the morning briefings, which are held at least twice a week for the entire staff. As previously noted, the majority of the scheduled sessions for the school year had been postponed due to school closures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In the 2020 academic year, all three sampled schools attempted to reduce the number of meetings in accordance with the Covid-19 pandemic safety standards. For hosting meetings, all three the schools in the sample used virtual technology.

Other meetings involving internal stakeholders are well attended by staff members. When the researcher examined the minutes of meetings between the SMT and staff members, she discovered that staff members of all three schools participate fully throughout the sessions. That was not the case during parent-teacher meetings.

According to Lara and Saracostti (2019:2), families and schools are the main actors in the construction of their roles and forms of involvement, generating new and varied actions to relate to one another according to the specific educational context. The researcher analysed the school documents to check the attendance of meetings by parents, which is parental involvement. Parental involvement in their children's schools is defined by elements such as attending conferences with teachers, attending Parent

Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, visiting the classroom and volunteering at school (Sengonul, 2022:46). Jaiswal and Choudhuri (2017:111) state that parental involvement is any interaction between parents and children at home or with the school to ensure that the children's academic performance is going in a positive way.

To verify if parents of sampled schools were involved in the education of their children, the researcher first had to check if the sampled schools had scheduled parents' meetings. The researcher analysed documents from each School A, B and C to check if they do hold parents' meetings. The attendance and participation of parents in the meetings were checked as well. As per the documents analysed at Schools A, B and C each year, four parent meetings are scheduled in accordance with School A's year plan. The majority of parents attending parent-teacher meetings at School A are only parents of Grade 8 and 12 learners. According to Principal A:

Parents are active when Grade 8 learners are new and when we call parents meeting the hall is full. As soon as they go to Grade 9, the numbers reduce and they re-emerge when learners get to Grade 12. As for the other grades, their parents do not bother attending meetings.

When parents are involved in the education of their children at school, it is believed to have a positive impact on the development of children or learners in achieving their educational goals in schools, both academic and non-academic, which include moral, spiritual and attitude (Waluyandi, Trihastuti & Muchtarom, 2020:1687). Therefore, parents' inadequate attendance of meetings makes it difficult for a school to collaborate with parents in addressing disciplinary issues. The school needs to collaborate with parents to ensure that learner performance improves. Parents must be actively involved in their children's academic lives and be educated about all the programmes given by the school in order to ensure increased learner achievement.

When it comes to School B, the principal said that the majority of the time, parents were not present. School B's principal stated:

Our school is one of the biggest in the province, but when we call parent meetings, we have fewer than 200 parents who come in. When we call a meeting to elect the SGB, you might find that only 7 or 9 parents are here.

That is why our SGB members is not elected, but they become SGB members because they are the only ones who came for the meeting.

As a result, the school is unable to manage the disciplinary issues that it is experiencing. The school and parents must work together to reduce disciplinary difficulties. The school and the parents has no relationship.

When it comes to School C, it was a different case from School A and B. Besides the four general meetings per year plan for School C, other special meetings are also held at the school for the benefit of the school and the parents of Grade 12 learners. According to the school, they have a good relationship with their learners' parents. In contrast to Schools A and B, attendance at parent-teacher conferences is very high at School C. Most parents are actively involved in enforcing the school code of conduct on learners. According to Principal C:

We have a small percentage of parents who are not attending the parents meetings. The learners of these parents are those who are failing to adhere to the school code of conduct. The majority of parents do attend meetings whenever they are invited.

Participation of parents in meetings is very important, as certain decisions affecting their children are made during those meetings. According to the minutes of the parent meetings, the schools organises four parents' meetings per year. Due of the Covid-19 epidemic, parents' meetings scheduled for the 2020 academic year were cancelled. The schools had to follow the Covid-19 pandemic's safety requirements. The researcher was required to review the 2019 meeting minutes. According to the minutes of School A and B, most parents do not fully participate in meetings by raising their voices. Only a few people speak up during meetings. The few parents who attend parent-teacher conferences are the parents of Grade 12 learners. When compared to the number of learners enrolled in the School A and School B, parent attendance is very low.

In School C, participation of parents is very good. The majority of the parents actively engage in the meetings. During the meetings, the majority of parents express their thoughts and ask questions. They are also provided a platform to ask questions and make comments for possible solutions to any problems that the school may be experiencing.

Parents of Grade 12 learners fully participate in the meetings of the school and the parents of Grade 12 learners. They also express their views and are given a forum to ask inquiries. Parents of Grade 12 learners are notified of all planned extra classes for Grade 12 learners, as well as all intervention techniques implemented to improve learner performance. Because parents are aware of all these intervention measures, the school has been able to enrol nearly all of its learners in these programmes. The school also keeps in touch with the parents of Grade 12 learners on a regular basis.

Boonk *et al.* (2018:12) grouped a parental involvement indicator into the two main categories which are home-based involvement and school-based involvement. Home-based involvement is what parents do at home to promote their children's learning, such as monitoring school progress, guidance in learning activities at home or helping with homework, whilst school-based involvement are the activities and behaviours parents engaged in at schools, such as attending parent-teacher meetings and attending school events. For that reason, it is very important that parents are involved in the education of their children to enhance improved academic performance of the learners in schools.

4.6.4 Code of conduct

According to Allen, Reupert and Oades (2021:2), it is a requirement for schools to have supporting policy; that is, at a minimum, known and accessible to parents, staff, and in some circumstances, learners. The sampled schools had a code of conduct which was in place; therefore, a disciplinary commission is in effect at Schools A, B and C. The committee keeps a record of all matters referred to them. When a case is referred to the committee, an investigation is launched. Following the completion of investigations, the committee records the actions taken and ensures that all records are in place in all three sampled schools. The social worker station in School C assists learners with disciplinary issues that are exacerbated by their socio-economic origins. The principal of School C stated:

Some of the cases that we deal with require us to refer the learners to the social workers. Fortunately enough, we have a social worker that is stationed in our school.

All three examined schools have written vision and mission statements that are prominently posted in the reception area. The strategic placing of the vision and mission statements makes them simpler to view and read for everyone visiting the schools.

The code of conduct is created by the school administration in collaboration with the teachers. It is then forwarded to the SGB, who signs and approves it. School A, B, and C all make certain that all members are completely aware of and familiar with the school code of conduct. The staff at Schools A and B discuss the school code of behaviour. At School C, they not only talk about it, but they also make sure that every teacher has a printed copy of the code of conduct.

At the start of each academic year, School A, B, and C make all learners aware of the school code of conduct. The school verbally communicates the code of behaviour to the learners. Furthermore, during the first parent-teacher conference, School A, B, and C transmit the school code of conduct to the parents. Schools A and B have few parents attend parents' meetings. However School C always has the majority of parents attend all parents' meetings. Because the school and parents are working together and are aware of the agreed-upon code of conduct, it is simpler for learners at School C to maintain a high level of discipline. The degree of discipline in Schools A and B is not as high as it should be.

Some of the topics addressed in the code of conduct to which learners are expected to follow are discipline, correct school uniform wear, punctuality, and attendance. Learners are encouraged to appreciate self-respect as well as respect for others. The communication of the code of conduct to both learners and the majority of parents has made it easier for School C to lead and govern the school effectively. School A and B are still attempting to manage the school properly by minimizing the disciplinary concerns that they are now experiencing.

Allen *et al.* (2021:7) further states that school policymakers should ensure that learners and staff have sufficient buy-in to the creation and implementation of policies that most concern them. Schools must consider how their school policy will be adapted, shared, understood, enacted, used and reviewed.

All stakeholders, which include parents, teachers, and administrators must adhere to the policy to encourage children to live lives that reflect positive values (Novianti, 2017).

Therefore, it is the responsibility of SMTs in schools to ensure that a proper code of conduct is in place for the school to function properly.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION BY MEANS OF FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

The researcher questioned participants at each school after analysing the documents given by the sampled schools. The interviews were conducted primarily to gather information on the function of SMTs in guaranteeing enhanced learner performance in township schools. Data and the material to be presented based on the participants' voices were collected in this study. The data were transcribed verbatim, and the researcher generated themes and sub-themes. The following established themes are discussed:

4.7.1 Theme 1: Monitoring Teaching and Learning

School Management Teams (SMTs), as school leaders and managers, have certain functions and responsibilities. Their roles vary according to the position they hold. There are distinct roles for the principal, the deputy principal, and the HODs. According to Benoliel (2017:77), the principal must be clear on what role each SMT member plays so that each SMT member knows who is accountable for what.

The researcher probed a question on what the roles and responsibilities of SMTs in ensuring improved performance are. Responses from different participants indicated that the SMTs at different schools have similar roles and responsibilities. Different SMT participants gave their responses to the probed question. Principals stated that they were the accounting officers; they monitor how teaching takes place. To have effective teaching and learning, the SMT ensures that when drawing up the timetable, subjects are correctly allocated to teachers. Thereafter, the deputy principal ensures that there is curriculum delivery and assessments are conducted as per management plan and results analysed each term. The deputy principal also manages the leave forms of all staff members. The HOD monitors the attendance of teachers. SMT members, facilitate communication between the principal and teachers. The well-being of learners is also taken into consideration. Since the sampled schools are from disadvantaged communities, the schools offer a nutrition programme to learners and the deputy principal manages the programme.

Making sure the school runs smoothly is one of the principal's duties. Due to its critical role in attaining the intended goals of education, school leadership is a major component of the educational system. The success of school leadership will always be a factor in the programmes, policies, and strategic plans for education's execution (Mwesiga & Okendo, 2018:94). Additionally, Bush and Glover (2014:564) note that there are severe accountability restrictions for school administrators in many countries. This is what Principal A said:

I am the accounting officer. When learners fail, I am the first person to be blamed as if I teach. My role in this school is to see that everyone does what is expected of them.

According to their statements, Principals B and C are also accounting officials. The SMT, especially the principal, is held accountable when the school performs poorly. Schlebusch (2020:84) claims that teachers attribute the low academic achievement of their learners to the ineffectiveness and lack of concentration of their principals. As stated by Miroj *et al.* (2020:87), the effectiveness and efficiency with which the principal plans instructional activities determine the success of learning in schools. As accounting officials, principals are required to confirm that SMT members are achieving the goals set forth to raise learner performance. This was highlighted by Principal C, who said:

My basic role is to coordinate the responsibilities of the SMT members. I ensure that I monitor that they are achieving the goals we set together as a team. I also advise them when they are facing challenges in their departments.

The importance of the role of learning, according to Miroj *et al.* (2020:86), is crucial in realizing that the principal must set guidelines for the learning activities that must be carried out in schools and that the role does not only belong to the teachers directly involved in the learning activities. Principals are accounting officials, as was previously said, and it is their responsibility to guarantee good teaching and learning. This can be achieved by giving subjects to teachers who possess the necessary knowledge and abilities. Principal C alludes to this when he stated:

The first thing that we do when doing allocation is to ensure that we allocate correctly in terms of subject understanding. In that way, as SMT, we minimise the challenges that teachers might encounter in class.

Principals play a vital influence in the efficacy and performance of schools as decision-makers in the administrative procedures at their schools (Ozgenel & Karsantik, 2020:3). You can encounter challenges that keep you from achieving your goals. Principal C noted that it is essential for principals to encourage other SMT members. Since the principal is in charge of managing every department in a school, they must be informed of what is happening there. Management of nutrition programmes helps schools make sure that no learner is denied a school lunch. Learners are fed nutritious meals in addition to being given food to satisfy their basic entitlement to eat. School officials, according to Graves and Moore (2018:264), perform research on how children think in order to teach and comprehend them. Principal B supported this assertion by stating:

Besides ensuring that learners perform, I'm also responsible for monitoring the nutrition programme by being responsible in appointing and managing food handlers. (Principal B).

It is essential for competent leaders to possess appropriate knowledge and skills, to be aware of their leadership roles to perform their duties effectively, and to influence followers' attention to commitment (Mwesiga & Okendo, 2015:95). Furthermore, Mwesiga and Okendo (2015:95) argue that a leader's ability to delegate power to his or her immediate supervisor is the main attribute of a successful leader. Additionally, principals meet with SMT members and ensure that they meet with their employees. The principal presides over all SMT meetings, staff meetings, and morning briefings. On the other hand, deputy principals have their own jobs and responsibilities.

According to Shore and Walshaw (2018:310), the deputy principal works closely with the principal and assists the principal in the many managerial and administrative responsibilities entrusted to him or her by the school board. The effective delivery of curricula is expected to yield positive results by the end of the year. Each school has two deputy principals. The duties of the deputy principal for curriculum and the deputy principal for administrative work are separate. The primary responsibility of the deputy principal (curriculum) is to ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively at the school. Reasons for monitoring are highlighted by Ndungu *et al.* (2015:10), who state that monitoring and evaluation are carried out in the education sector to monitor programmes such as the quality of education. Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:95) posit that leaders can set clear goals, manage the curriculum, monitor, and evaluate lesson and work plans,

and oversee daily school activities and teacher duties. Based on the information provided by Deputy Principal A:

My role is to support SMT members by making sure that there's curriculum delivery. I need to monitor if different departments are doing what they must do in terms of teaching.

The above is supported by Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:95), who state that leaders have overall responsibility for ensuring the successful implementation of curricula and school programmes, overseeing day-to-day teaching and learning activities, motivating teachers and ensuring this carry commitment and academic achievement among other responsibilities. The deputy principal's office oversees support to various departments.

According to Mampane (2017:146), HODs develop the ability to enforce policy while providing support to teachers in areas of need during their leadership of teachers. As a result, it is still the role of the SMTs to help teachers for the school to increase learner achievement. When taught effectively, this leads to effective learning in learners, which reflected in as good performance in exams (Ndungu *et al.* 2015:1). At School C, the deputy principal expressed his deep concern about the quality of the outcomes, stating:

The departmental heads have to ensure that each department has quality results at the end of the year. I don't need results but I look at the quality in the results as one of the top performing schools in Alexandra Township.

Deputy principals are also responsible for curriculum development, with the support of the principal and HODs. Before creating a teaching timetable, schools are obliged to assign subjects to teachers properly. The office of the deputy principal (curriculum) takes care of everything related to teaching and learning. According to Mogashoa (2013:140), appropriate teaching and learning support material, training of SMTs in assessment guidelines, and training to monitor, assess and support teachers on innovative teaching practices are necessary for SMTs to implement and manage curricula. Certain documents are required by HODs and teachers in order to execute the curriculum efficiently and improve learner performance. This is supported up by Deputy Principal B, who stated:

I make sure that HODs have the school calendar, management plan for assessments, curriculum for each department, and management of Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs), subject policies and assessment guidelines. It is my responsibility to make sure that all these documents are also forwarded to the teachers.

The fundamental goal of all schools is to ensure that the school achieves high outcomes by guaranteeing that all their learners pass. Assessments are used to evaluate learners, and it is the deputy principal (administration)'s role to oversee all School Based Assessments (SBAs). The deputy principal creates the timetable for conducting the SBAs. The HODs in their various departments ensure the quality of all the set SBAs, and the deputy principal ensures that the HODs have done their part. According to Deputy Principal A:

It is my responsibility to check if all set SBAs are quality assured by the HOD, there's proper marking, SBAs are moderated and then marks are captured correctly in the South African School Administration Management System (SASAMS).

Capturing marks in the SASAMS helps schools to report to parents at the end of each term. Another responsibility of the deputy principal is to ensure that parents receive reports at the end of each term. Teacher attendance is tracked at Schools A, B, and C since it has a direct impact on learner performance. It is tracked by the timebook, which is signed by all employees upon arrival each morning. Teacher monitoring is one of the SMTs' roles in schools; hence it is done by department, with each SMT responsible for all teachers reporting directly to their office.

Teacher absence was also observed at all three sampled schools. If an employee is missing from work, they are expected to notify their management. They are expected to fill in a leave form upon their return from absenteeism. Some leaves require that the absent employee attaches the relevant attachments as verification of their location while away from work. This helps with the processing of leave forms. The leave forms are managed by the deputy principal (administration). Other aspects of school administration are also the responsibility of the deputy principal. According to Deputy Principal B:

As a deputy principal (administration), I have to make sure that all administration issues are well attended to. I monitor absenteeism of learners by ensuring that registers are marked regularly and captured. I manage leave forms for teachers and make sure that I submit them to the District.

As Deputy Principal B indicated above, it is critical for the school to monitor teacher and learner attendance to improve learner performance. All administrative work is controlled by the deputy principal and all work must be signed by them as confirmation that it has gone through his office. The HODs are members of the SMT and report directly to the deputy principals. HODs ensure that communication flows across their various departments. Effective communication informs teachers of what is expected of them. According to Benoliel (2020:290), close interaction with SMT members increases school leaders' ability to share experiences, facilitate team tasks, work by encouraging teamwork, aligning team efforts with school goals, and being considerate of older members. Circulars and other educational material must be sent to the teachers in good time. This is confirmed by HOD C who said:

One of my key responsibilities is communication on behalf of the principal and the deputy principal. I make sure that I convey the messages from my managers.

The heads of departments are appointed to handle duties for their respective subjects and the workload of the teachers in the subjects they teach, and they are given supervisory duties to the academic masters to deal with the teaching activities of the teachers (Mwesiga & Okendo, 2018:95). Another feature of HODs is that they must be subject-matter experts. They look after the departments in their specialist area. As subject librarians, they have the essential knowledge and skills of the subjects in their department and can therefore lead teachers effectively. According to Mogashoa (2013), SMTs are expected to provide full support to educators in their departments through in-service training. HODs must guarantee that their departments' teaching and learning are effective to improve learner performance.

Head of departments are appointed to handle duties for their respective subjects and the workload of the teachers in the subjects they teach, and they are given supervisory duties pertaining to academic masters to deal with the teaching activities of the teachers

(Mwesiga & Okendo, 2018:95). Another function of HODs is that they must be subject-matter experts. They look after the departments in their field of expertise. They have the essential knowledge and abilities of the subjects in their departments as subject specialists, allowing them to manage teachers effectively. According to Mogashoa (2013), SMTs are expected to provide full support to educators in their departments through in-service training. HODs must guarantee that their departments' teaching and learning are effective to improve learner performance.

My responsibility is to manage the department thus teachers and ensure that allocation of duties is done for the educators. I also ensure that the learners are being taught. (HOD A)

Ndungu *et al.* (2015:11) state that the teacher evaluation is aimed at improving teaching and ultimately improving learners' results. When teachers' evaluation is done, the SMT should create a positive classroom environment that is conducive for teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of the HODs to guarantee that learners attend lessons and that the curriculum is delivered in class to increase learner performance. Annual teaching plans (ATPs) must regularly be checked to verify that teachers teaching the same subject and grade level are on par. According to HOD B:

I ensure that learners are always in class and there's curriculum delivery. I give curriculum support to the teachers.

HOD C concurred with HOD B by stating that:

My role is to get engaged with learners even those in classes that I do not teach and ask about the areas they feel they have gaps. I need to be hands-on rather than leading from the side.

As subject specialists, HODs must guarantee that subjects are taught and learned effectively in their departments at all grade levels. As HOD C mentioned, other subjects are completed by all learners in the school, and it is not possible for the HOD to teach every class. HODs should undertake class visits to identify problems that may impede increased learner performance, as well as provide instructors with the required support. The most important factor is that the HOD collaborates with the teachers to achieve the desired results at the end of the year. Class visits also allow the HOD to identify the

strengths and weaknesses of various teachers in their departments. Sibanda (2018:788-789) states that when teachers share responsibilities, they teach better than they do when they are overloaded with responsibilities. She highlights the importance of empowering teachers who do well in the areas where they are talented and skilled to take decisions, which promotes learner achievement. Below is a response from one of the HODs:

I encourage team teaching in my department which has led to good results. Teachers assist each other in topics where they feel that they are not able to teach them effectively. One who understands the topic better, offers assistance to teach it. (HOD C)

The above is supported by Sibanda (2018:790), who asserts that, when teachers collectively discuss how to assist learners, the learners benefit, because different ideas put together can be very powerful. SMTs have various tasks and responsibilities, one of which is to engage with teachers on a frequent basis. Teachers are extremely important, since they have direct contact with learners and know them better than the SMT.

4.7.2 Theme 2: Support towards teaching and learning

In the case of teaching and learning support, SMTs were asked about their supporting role in teaching and learning. Roles mentioned included overseeing lesson plans and the annual teaching plan (ATP), as well as overseeing timesheet signing and class registers. Most participants mentioned that their schools have a development team that trains new teachers who join the school. Workshops are offered to schools by the Department of Education and some are run by outsourced facilitators. Meetings are held at schools to ensure effective communication and minimise conflict. The SMT takes care of any problems that arise. Instructional materials are provided to teachers to ensure that teaching and learning are effective. The DOE conducts a Secondary Schools Improvement Plan (SSIP), which focuses primarily on the Grade 12 learners and aims to improve their outcomes, especially in the disadvantaged communities. Teachers also offer extra classes to learners over weekends and holidays.

The success of implementing learning activities cannot be separated from the school leaders' success in influencing all parties involved in learning activities in schools, especially teachers (Miroj & Gunawan, 2020:86). One of the roles of SMTs is to help teachers improve learner performance. All staff must be trained regularly to keep up with

changes and innovations in the curriculum. At one of the participating schools there is a development committee. It is a norm in the education system to ensure that teachers receive adequate training according to the curriculum. This is supported by Nobile (2019:50), who states that the oversight role involves monitoring and evaluating staff performance and the staff development role concerns building the capacity and competence of staff to enable them to do their jobs more effectively. According to Principal B:

We have a developmental team especially for these new teachers. We train them on how to manage the class and on how to approach these learners. We train them on how to deal with problems in class. Even with those that have been in the field for so long, we keep on revising the policies.

Principal A also does something for the school in relation to teacher development seminars. According to Principal A:

We organise different workshops for example subject workshops for teachers. We once called officials for a safety and security workshop which was run by the Head Office for two Saturdays. We also called labour to guide teachers on their do's and don'ts.

The above is supported by School A's HOD A, who stated:

Normally the principal does have some workshops whereby he organises people from outside to come and assist.

According to Mogashoa (2013), SMTs are expected to provide full support to educators in their departments through in-service training. The HODs are responsible for helping the instructors they supervise in their particular departments. As SMT members, this is one of their responsibilities. Deputy Principal C and Teacher C both stated:

The type of support that we get internally is that they give us information that they get from the facilitators. (Teacher C)

Internally, we encourage different departments to have their own departmental meetings whereby the departmental heads can share information. We share the frustrations that we have and we resolve them in brief meetings and staff

meetings. If we have personal issues, we address them in the principal and deputy principal's offices to resolve some of the challenges. (Deputy Principal C)

Teacher B at School B expressed similar views on the role of SMTs, stating:

Each department is assigned to an HOD, they manage a small department. If you are successful it means the HOD is giving enough support to them.

Some participants felt that staff were not adequately supported. Teacher A felt that School A did not receive adequate support. When asked if they received help as teachers, the answer was:

No, there's nothing like that except if an individual wants help, it would be given to them. As for saying it's a collective planning, it's a no.

At School B, the SMT recognizes and addresses problems as they arise. HOD B stated:

We try to get teachers' grievances so that we can address them and challenges are dealt with at an earlier stage.

Effective school leaders should be responsible, accountable and committed to communicating the school's vision, mission, and goals, developing strategic plans for the school, overseeing teaching, and learning activities of teachers and learners, and motivating teachers and learners by providing them with suitable teaching and learning material (Mwesiga & Okendo, 2018:94). According to Milondzo and Seema (2015), SMTs are tasked with managing Learner and Teacher Support Materials (LTSM) by ensuring that the resources are appropriately disseminated among educators in their respective departments. Another task and responsibility of the SMT are to ensure that suitable resources are available for successful teaching and learning. This is supported by Horsley and Sikorova (2014:46), who state that the sociocultural approach to classroom teaching and learning resources emphasizes that resources will be crucial tools in the learning process and expects that different classroom teaching and learning resources will be different cultures and communities are evaluated. One participant emphasized this, stating that the availability of resources leads to higher learning performance. According to Principal C:

We give them all what they need in terms of resources. If its material that the school needs to buy, we buy it.

School leaders are aware of the importance of ensuring that teaching and learning resources and also the consequences of not having adequate resources, are addressed. These consequences are highlighted by Magesa and Mtebe (2022:14), who state that school heads and teachers are affected by the shortage of resources which hinder the operations of the school. Therefore, the quality of secondary education becomes compromised. Infrastructure can also hinder effective teaching and learning. Magesa and Mtebe (2022:14) further assert that inadequate classrooms would mean that there is overcrowding and hence it will become difficult for teachers to conduct classes in an unfavourable learning environment.

In township schools, many methods are put in place to increase learner performance. The Department of Education funds one of the intervention programmes. One is the Secondary School Intervention Programme (SSIP). It usually takes place during the school holidays and over weekends, and it caters for essential subjects in Grade 12. Learners from several neighbouring schools would participate in an SSIP programme at one of the chosen schools. HOD A stated:

The Department of Education gives support to schools by ensuring that they hold extra classes for learners. The Department of Education does SSIP for those critical subjects like Maths, Science and Accounting.

Deputy Principal B agrees with HOD A, stating:

The Department of Education organises SSIP, which focuses on Grade 12s. The Government is now investing more on these programmes. The Department also funds these programmes which also includes camps and holiday classes. These programmes have improved the results of the learners. The Government supplies the school with the exam relate material. Parents are also supporting the programme as they are a big yardstick to the results of the country. Learners focus on these co-exam-related areas during these programmes. Learners attend their extra classes in the afternoons and over weekends.

School C goes above and beyond to ensure that they provide high-quality outcomes at the end of the school year. The school guarantees that all required support is provided to Grade 12 learners in order for them to do well at the conclusion of the year. According to Principal C:

We do not normally open when others are opening but we open a few days before other schools can open so that learners can adjust from being in Grade 11 to being in Grade 12. When other learners come in, they have already adjusted and know themselves as matriculants and are able to push harder.

Teachers' commitment is possible when leaders have the ability to influence them. This could mean that teachers normally become what head of schools make them to be (Mwesiga & Okendo, 2018:96). Schools make certain that the teachers who participate in these intervention programmes are motivated. School leaders avail themselves and give support to the teachers. Those teachers who use money from their pockets to attend extra classes are re-reimbursed by the school. This was stated by a Head of Department at School C:

When educators come for extra lessons, they are compensated as little as R100 per lesson besides the money they get for transport. (HOD C)

These programmes are extremely beneficial to learners in township schools. Most learners come from underprivileged circumstances, where there is not enough space to study and the surroundings are overcrowded. It is difficult for learners to find a peaceful place where they can concentrate on their studies. Principal A was impressed by some of the learners at School A's dedication. According to Principal A:

If you stay until 5pm, you will still find some learners studying. Some of the learners that are studying are the ones that I talk to in class and tell them that if they leave at 2pm, what are they going to do at home, because I know they stay in one room with no space to study and you cannot control what your neighbours do, they have their music blasting and so on.

It is reflected that the teachers at the sampled schools make an effort to ensure that they provide the learners with all the necessary support they require to improve their academic performance. Learners are involved in extra classes which are conducted in the

mornings, afternoons, and weekends as well as during the school holidays. According to Aningsih *et al.* (2022:374), schools, as a medium for learning, play a significant influence in the character formation of children and schools need the involvement of all members of the school community, including parents. Both the school and the parents need to work hand in hand to ensure improved academic performance of the learners.

4.7.3 Theme 3: Engagement through meetings and reports

Employee engagement is related to the psychological experiences of people who shape their work process and behaviour (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017:54). A question was asked about how SMTs interact with teachers. At all three sampled schools, collaboration with teachers happens through meetings and reports. According to Mafa (2019:62), a staff meeting is the perfect time to cultivate curiosity, creativity, learning, sharing and growing in teachers, traits which teachers must encourage and demand from their pupils. Secondly, staff meetings help to establish the school culture. Schools use morning briefings and staff meetings to interact with teachers. SMTs hold their own meetings and HODs hold meetings in their respective departments. SMT members are expected to provide reports to ensure compliance with the management plan.

Principals must routinely gather information regarding learner achievement in the classroom and utilise that information to have discussions with teachers and department leaders about modifying and improving their teaching strategies to improve performance (Schlebusch, 2020:87). The SMTs' duty as administrators and leaders in the school is to see to it that they collaborate with the district officials to improve learner achievement. Tapala *et al.* (2020:11) assert that HODs must be included in the flow of information inside the school and that the SMT must communicate with the HODs before communicating to the teachers. At Schools A, B, and C, morning briefings and staff meetings proved to be the most popular occasions for SMTs to speak with teachers. According to School A's principal,

I meet the HODs on Mondays, then the rest of the staff on Tuesdays. In between, the HODs must make sure that they meet their teachers so that they can give genuine feedback to teachers as well as the principal. (Principal A)

The principals of Schools C and B reported that they also used morning briefings to engage with teachers.

We meet the staff every Monday and Thursday for morning briefings so that the issues can be dealt with on time. I also encourage the HODs to hold their departmental meetings. (Principal C)

We conduct meetings with HODs to give us problems that they are encountering. We then see how we can assist teachers. (Principal B)

People often learn at meetings how to work better together and how to manage conflict more productively, as well as to show professional respect to their colleagues (Mafa (2019:62). Deputy principals are crucial in ensuring that the SMT member and the teachers who report to their department both receive the proper support. Through their partnership with teachers, SMT members can spot potential obstacles to learners' achievement. This is what Deputy Principal C said:

We recover challenges every day, the first one is absenteeism. Most learners, you will find out that they don't come to school every day. Second one is a challenge of bullying, especially senior phase.

Members of the SMT must make sure that the right curriculum is in place to improve learner achievement. Mogashoa (2013:140) asserts that in order for SMTs to implement and manage the curriculum effectively, they must receive training in assessment policies, as well as instruction on how to supervise, evaluate, and support teachers in the use of cutting-edge teaching approaches. The deputy principal (curriculum) ensures good curriculum delivery, stated before. Only by monitoring the teachers' progress towards their ATP goals will be possible. Deputy Principal A claimed:

Usually there's a management plan whereby the SMT members must submit their reports for their departments. Those reports will enable us to see the gaps and followup with the SMT member to see how we can close the gaps together. For example, when monitoring the ATP and we see that they are behind with it, strategies to catch up are derived.

The preceding is also corroborated by HOD C, who stated:

Okay, actually, we have got a year planner, I have got a year planner in which on specific date which I'm meeting the educators. Each and every time we

have a monthly meeting I will give an exampl. Besides the monthly meeting that we meet with the whole department, I make sure that I collect books on a weekly basis to see the gaps where they are struggling on each and everything.

The leadership of the principal should foster reciprocal relationships between leaders and those they lead by relying on interpersonal communication skills in order to foster staff understanding and cooperation, according to Surana *et al.* (2018:398). Only if the SMT meets independently before engaging the teachers more frequently can the SMT engage the teachers. Additionally citing the earlier, a teacher at School B stated:

They engage with teachers more often because they will first have their own meetings and thereafter we have morning briefings at least once a week. We also have departmental meetings where we discuss issues. (Teacher B)

HOD A agreed with Teacher B on meetings held in schools, first by the SMT and then by HODs in their various departments. HOD A said:

Uh, normally it, we take it to ou,r uh, respective departments, but as SMT, we meet every week on Tuesdays. And from there, we need to go back to our educators and respective departments, but normally we have our briefings twice in a week just to make educators aware of what they need to do, just to remind them of their duties. (HOD A)

Educators shared their perspectives on the SMTs' ability to engage learners. It is clear that the SMT interacts with teachers in some schools. Teacher A had to speak the following at School A:

In most cases, the engagement by SMTs happens during meetings whereby it's just one on one not necessarily meetings. (Teacher A)

In the example of School C, the educator felt that the SMT did not engage with them as much as they should.

I would say that the SMT does not engage with us as teachers more often to check what teachers need. We don't usually have staff meetings, we have

maybe one, once a year but there is a suggestion box where we put our concerns and suggestions. (Teacher C).

Better decisions are often made in meetings because differences arise that set the stage for creative solutions to be developed that would not otherwise be discovered and differences can be explored in a professional and productive way (Mafa, 2019:62). As meetings have been stated as one of the ways in which SMTs engage with teachers, everyone gets an opportunity to contribute on ways that can lead to improved academic performance. This is supported by Osborne and Hammoud (2017:60) who allude that organizations attract employees who are willing to be engaged, which leads to an increase in employee engagement that results in high profitability and the organization is less effective when employees are not motivated to do their jobs.

4.7.4 Theme 4: Challenges faced in township schools

A question was asked that aimed to explore the challenges faced by township schools. Several challenges hamper effective teaching and learning and result in underperforming schools. Researchers focus primarily on (i) learner participation, (ii) parental involvement, and (iii) delinquency. First, participants expressed concerns about poor learner attendance, which hinders improved learner performance. Participants raised concerns about other social factors contributing to high absenteeism rates. Most learners come from child-headed families where there are no adults to look after these learners. Learners take care of themselves and their siblings. In other homes, parents go to work early in the morning and come back late at night, which prevents parents from monitoring their children's school attendance. At some of the sampled schools, learners' attendance as well, but the challenge was that they came late.

Learners are required to follow the learner attendance policy. Schools A, B, and C all had an attendance policy. Each teacher is assigned a class as the class teacher. One of the duties of the class teacher is the daily entry in the attendance register of the learners. The researcher analysed the documents provided by the sampled schools, and the class registers were present and up to date at all three sampled schools. If a learner does not attend school for three consecutive days, all three schools also conduct follow-up examinations. The subject teachers also have their own registers which they keep during their lessons. Subject registries have helped schools identify learners who attend school

but do not attend classes. Schools encounter numerous obstacles. These difficulties affect the overall success of learners negatively. Participants were asked if they encountered challenges that might impede improved learning performance. Below are their responses to support the above theme.

We discover challenges every day. The first one is absenteeism of learners and this affects our results. We have tried to engage with parents who try and assist us as a school by making sure that learners attend school. (Deputy Principal C)

Most participants expressed dissatisfaction with the presence of learners, which they associated with being late. Participants went on to discuss some of the reasons why learner attendance in township schools is so low. Several people repeated the following:

Attendance is poor as most learners come from single-parent households where they end up having responsibilities of taking care of their siblings. We have a high rate of dropouts as early as Grade 8. Another challenge contributing to non-attendance is poor support from the community. No-one asks a learner why he or she is not in school. Everyone is minding their own business in the community. (Deputy Principal B)

Yoh! Most learners come from disadvantaged homes. Parents leave for work early in the morning and come back very late. Parents will assume that the child has gone to school. There is no parent that pushes the learners to come early to school and there is no one who is pushing them to do their work. (Teacher B)

Yah! We are affected by learner attendance due to pregnancies, due to challenges the learners experience at home. Some will tell you that the parents were fighting or they did not have water or electricity. (Teacher C)

According to Tapala *et al.* (2020:11), many learners come from low-income households, some even from child-headed families, where the learner is the parent, and the SMT must do everything possible to ensure their success. This was evident from the schools surveyed, and many people agreed that most learners are influenced by socio-economic reasons that contribute to their absenteeism. One participant indicated that some of these

learners attend school so that they can use the classroom and washing facilities, which seems to be a problem in the townships.

For attendance, I don't want to lie to you, Alexandra learners they don't attend. It seems some of these learners' families are headed by these learners. Let me say 90% of the learners are just coming to school to use the toilets, to use the small space to play football. (Principal B)

Most of these constantly absent learners are also aware of the 10-day rule for absenteeism, which stipulates that a learner must be rematriculated if he/she is absent for 10 consecutive days without a valid reason. One person raised this, as some learners preferred to stay at home and would not return until they were deregistered. The following is what HOD B said:

Learner attendance is bad. There are learners who are absent for no apparent reason. We do have a policy in place that states that if you are absent for 10 consecutive days, you will be deregistered. So they become absent for nine days and then will be present on the 10th day. (HOD B)

While schools are striving to improve attendance, they also face the problem of learners coming to school, but not attending classes. This is one of the elements that contribute to low performance. According to Teacher A:

It's also a challenge, there is too much absenteeism. Dodging of classes even if they are within the school premises, they hide in the toilets. (Teacher A)

Even if some participants were dissatisfied with their attendance, this was not the case for those who considered their attendance was adequate. The following participants referred to this:

With us we don't have a huge problem in terms of learner attendance. On a monthly basis when we analyse, we have 3% absenteeism, which is not bad. On a bad term a maximum of 5%. (Principal C)

It's not a challenge, especially at the beginning of the year. We only have a challenge towards the exam where attendance is 80-90%. (Deputy Principal C)

In terms of attendance, I would say 90% do attend. Learner attendance is not much of a problem. (HOD A)

According to one of the participants, learners are driven to attend school because of the awards they receive when they pass. The prizes encouraged the learners to be self-motivated. This is backed up by HOD C, who said:

Kids are self-motivated. The external partners who give the top 6 Grade 12s laptops, full scholarships with pocket money, other grades get incentives such as money. With that in mind, they are driven to come to school every day. (HOD C)

Learner attendance at School A fluctuated. According to Deputy Principal A:

It fluctuates, some moments you have good attendance, some moments the attendance is very low. We don't have the reason why learners are not in school. The main problem that we have is late coming. (Deputy Principal A)

Secondly, participants expressed concerns about low levels of parental involvement, which hampers improved learning performance in schools. Participants expressed concerns that parents were not fully involved in their children's education. It was also pointed out that schools did not get the support they needed from parents. When parent meetings are called, few parents attend the meetings. From the three schools studied, the researcher analysed the attendance registers signed by the parents during the parent meeting, and only a few parents attended the scheduled parent meetings. Only the parents of Grade 12 and some from Grade 8 attended the parents' meetings. Other participants complained that parents did not respond to school invitations sent to them.

It was also pointed out that members of the community do not value education, as they do not give schools the necessary support that is asked of them. One of the roles of SMTs is to improve communication and build strong relationships between the school and parents to explain learning practices to them (Bipath & Nkabinde, 2018). Parents are critical stakeholders in schools, who must help keep the school running smoothly for the school to deliver the desired outcomes. Only at School C the parents are actively involved and there is good interaction between school and parents. School C participants reported the following:

Fortunate enough we have the support from the parents. SGB is more involved than any other stakeholders. They are the ones who initiate the parents meeting. Every time when we issue out reports they are always there. Like right now when you go to the gate, we have the chairperson of the SGB who always help us with the screening and checking of uniform. They usually search these learners, they come early in the morning and during lunch as we have challenges with learners smoking in the toilets. (Deputy Principal C)

We have a small percentage of parents who are not adhering to our code of conduct. You will still find their kids being late, then you call them, they are not coming. We encourage parents that when they see the learners at home, they must report to us so that the learners can be aware that it's the school and the parents who can assist the learner and this changes the learners' behaviour to become better. (Principal C)

The positive remarks about parents made at School C differed from what Teacher C thought about the parents. It appears that it is difficult for teachers to engage with parents about issues that affect learner achievement:

Parental involvement is bad because if you give a learner a call letter, the parents do not come. We don't know if the learner gave the parent the call letter or not. When we phone the parents, they tell you that they are going to work, their bosses don't want to give them leave. Parents only come to school during December when they have to fetch the report. (Teacher C)

Teacher B agrees with Teacher C, stating:

Parents take their work more seriously than the child's educational activities. We do not get random visits from parents coming to check learner progress. We only see them when they come to collect reports. When you invite parents, only 10% come or they just send somebody to stand in for them. (Teacher B)

Deputy Principal A was also concerned about parental participation, which has an impact on learners' overall results at the end of the year. Deputy Principal A stated the following:

Parental involvement is not there, as a result parents will wake up and go to work and a child is left alone. The child decides if I should go to school or not and nobody will make a follow up in terms of the child going to school. Parents do not monitor the books, there is no parental involvement at all and that is our downfall. You call them to a meeting; they do not come. (Deputy Principal A)

Other schools in the sample face significant challenges in terms of parental involvement. One participant stated that when they called parents meetings, the parents did not attend.

Our community is too hard. Some don't even know our school. Parents just ask other people to enrol their kids. They make affidavits that they are guardians of the kids so that they can be in the SGB. To them being in the SGB is like coming for money. Since I came here, our school is the biggest in the province but parents who come are less than 200. Parents don't care about the education of their children. We can have a meeting for SGB election only to find that 7 parents are here. That is why our SGB members are not elected but are just elected because they are the ones who came for the meeting. (Principal B)

This is not the case at School C, where there is always a large number of parents present at parent-teacher meetings. According to the following participant:

Attendance is always above 50% when we call parents' meetings and executive members from the SGB always take part. (Deputy Principal C)

Parents are only actively involved at School A when the learners are new in Grade 8 and also when they are in Grade 12. They do not participate actively between grades. Some parents also only show up at the end of the year to pick up their children's report cards. Principal A and HOD B emphasized the following:

They are active when Grade 8 are new and when we call meetings, the hall is full, Eeeh! As soon as they go to Grade 9, the numbers are little and they re-emerge when they get to Grade 12 because now they are interested because their children are completing. (Principal A)

Parental involvement is poor. We only see them at the end of the year when you are giving out reports. They only come to ask how their child failed, but it will be the first time seeing them. (HOD B)

HOD A agreed with HOD B, stating:

Yah! Our parents we only see them at the end of the year. We call a meeting, they don't attend. We don't know whether because they don't stay with their kids but come end of the year, they are all here.

Finally, schools have difficulty contacting the actual parents of their learners. Whenever a learner is asked to accompany a parent, the learner chooses to let other people pretend to be their parent. This has made it harder for schools to assist learners and instil discipline in troubled learners.

Most learners come from child-headed families, or do not have father figures and most parents fear their children. When they are invited to school, they do not come, for example, one invited a parent and ended up having three parents coming before the real parent came. Learners rent parents to stand for their parents. (Deputy Principal B)

It is a great concern that parents do not seem to be concerned about the education of their children. There are several factors which may be the cause for that. Sengonul (2022:36) states that parents with low levels of education feel less confident about communicating and talking with teachers, administrators and other staff at schools, because they have a lack of, or less information about the school system and familiarity with educational language or conversations and have their own negative educational experiences. Hence, lower-educated parents can be less involved in the schooling of their child. The responsibility now lies with the schools to ensure that parents become involved in the education of the learners, even if it is by providing emotional support to the children.

Thirdly, the sampled schools reported that their schools were attacked by criminals who stole educational resources, which affects teaching and learning negatively. Even when schools try to use resources, criminals break in and steal them. Learners play in the schoolyard and bullying is very common, resulting in some learners dropping out of school. The sampled schools raised concerns about gangsterism in the community and

at schools. Learners are said to have brought arguments to the school that started outside the school. In addition, learners are reported to be using and abusing drugs and substances, and some learners are said to have been abused as drug couriers. The schools included in the sample did not feel sufficiently supported by the police. Most township schools are affected by crime. Criminals attack schools and steal all valuables designed to promote teaching and learning. The following panellists discussed how crime hindered good teaching and learning in township schools. When asked how crime affected school, they gave the following answers:

Yah! There's a lot of burglaries. Whenever we buy, they break in and steal. We are even afraid to invest on resources. Like our computer lab was emptied, they took everything. They took computers with all the information, yes, we are affected. (Principal A)

Yah! We have a lot of burglaries in the school like for example we don't have enough smartboards which were installed. All Grade 12 classrooms they don't have smartboards as we speak because they were stolen. Admin block, they broke in and stole the monitors. (Teacher A)

This is serious. Most of the times we buy our resources, they come and take. The break-ins which have been happening has cost us a lot. Your laptops and computers will just be stolen. We try to involve the Community Policing Forum (CPF) but it's like they are not able to deal with crime, they are trying but they are not winning. They steal the computers and it says you must buy new ones. The information is lost and the money you were supposed to use for something else, you direct it to buy what has been stolen. It has a negative impact on what we are doing. (Principal C)

Oh yes, we have been affected by burglaries, they used to steal the computers and the laptops. We also have a workshop where we put tools for Civil Technology, they steal those tools, and break the alarm and we had to repair and buy the instruments again. (Deputy Principal C)

Some interviewees mentioned widespread criminal activities harming township schools. Township schools encounter several problems including gangsterism. This was repeated with reference to gangsterism:

In this community and this school, crime is very high. There's a lot of gangsterism. One of the learner was beaten because she was saying that she just wanted to leave this gangsterism style. She was beaten for that to say how she could leave when they had already protected her. Sometimes these learners are not attending. As we are speaking you might find that they are outside the gate now, and there may be three groups waiting for our learners. (Principal B)

There is a lot of gangsterism in the community. Our learners are part of the gangsters. You find learners in the same school belonging to different gangsters and fight within the school premises. (Deputy Principal A)

There's a high rate of gangsterism from girls and boys. Some start fighting from outside the school and they get stabbed or end up being arrested by the police. Learners are not safe amongst one another. (Deputy Principal B)

According to Ramalepe (2015:638), learner discipline is a difficulty for SMTs in cultivating moral goals, and elements that foster a lack of discipline among learners include the use of intoxicating substances such as drugs and alcohol. Participants also expressed concerns about the high rates of drug and substance addiction among learners. They mentioned the following concerns:

Our learners are used as drug mules by some members of the community. There's too much drug and alcohol abuse. These learners are selling and also using drugs. A lot of female learners are now taking drugs more than male learners. Behavioural problems are now emanating from girls than boys. Overall performance of the school is affected by these challenges. (Deputy Principal B)

There's a lot of drugs around here. There's drug and substance abuse. Learners are used by others to sell drugs to other learners. (Deputy Principal A)

Another thing, since the Government has legalised marijuana, the learners are using and even selling drugs. (Principal B)

While schools are already facing the challenges of drug and substance addiction, there are processes that can be used to address these problems. Employees at the schools surveyed feel helpless. According to Deputy Principal B:

The system is not giving any support for example the learners abusing dagga, if they are caught with it, they cannot be executed because of the kilogrammes that makes a person to be arrested.

Principal B claimed that:

Our yard and the police station are one, but criminals don't care. I don't see any support from the SAPS; that is another thing which is making our learners to be rude.

The issues of stealing and bullying were also mentioned by the attendees. Participants agreed on the following points:

There is a lot of stealing among learners. If you have a nice bag, they steal it and sell it to learners in other schools. Learners' cellphones are taken by people who sell them. (Deputy Principal A)

With the crime in the township it's a problem. We on a daily basis are resolving issues of stolen things. Theft within the classes, theft of teachers' cellphones, teachers' laptops and the smartboard components which are stolen by learners. We also have cases whereby the community has stolen from the school. We always have a shortage of chairs and we always buy. The number of broken chairs and number of chairs is not the same way. Other chairs are probably in the township. (HOD B)

Learners are gambling inside the school. Bullying is very high in the school and some learners end up resorting to dropping out of school. Because of the behaviour of learners, teachers fear them. (Deputy Principal B)

Finally, the participants were asked how their schools deal with the challenges discussed. Because most of the learners come from poor social backgrounds, the sampled schools provided all learners with a feeding programme, which included porridge in the morning, a meal with fruit during recess, and the Grade 12 learners who stayed after school were

also given other meals so that they could concentrate in the afternoon classes. Some of the sampled schools go a step further by distributing food packages to learners from childcare households. This is said to have tripled the high absenteeism rate of these learners. During parent meetings, schools stress the importance of parents being involved in the academic activities of their children. The schools receive support from external stakeholders such as police officers, the Community Policing Forum (CPF), social workers, nurses and counsellors to keep the school in order. Despite the obstacles that township schools face, there are some strategies that participants use to address the issues raised. To reduce absenteeism, one participant noted that they use the feeding programme to try to keep learners in school, particularly those from child-headed families. Principal B explained:

Every Friday we make sure that we distribute some food parcels to boost the learners. Those who can't get food just come to get food and attend for the sake of lunch. That is why even after school from 3 o'clock to 5 o'clock, we will be busy dishing out food to these learners, only to find those who were absent from class are now coming for late nutrition.

Given the foregoing, it is clear that the majority of learners in township schools come from low-income families. Principal C approaches absenteeism in a unique way at School C. He had the following to say:

In terms of attendance, when we call parents meetings, we emphasize on the issue of attendance and the importance. That has assisted us in ensuring that it is not that bad. We remind parents during parents meeting about our code of conduct, issues of discipline and issues of attendance. If teachers come to school and learners are not at school, it ends up being a fruitless exercise, so we need all of them to be part of this occasion, coming on time and teaching.

The question of attendance is also influenced by the attendance of the teachers, as has already been said by Principal C. When teachers do their part to ensure that they participate in class, learners are also motivated to participate in class. Teachers can also use different teaching methods to keep learners engaged. School C is also trying to solve the problem of crime at school. Principal C said:

We are trying, we have even hired the community members to guide the school as a way of trying to combat crime.

These are just some of the methods used by the sampled schools to deal with the problems they face. These difficulties are now in the hands of the SMT and teachers who must work together to find solutions to improve learning in township schools. This is suggested by Zulu *et al.* (2019:15), who note that as principals in township schools face multiple challenges such as drugs, poverty, school burglaries, vandalism, the SMT and its staff now fulfil the duties of police officers and social workers, nurses, and counsellors to maintain the school rules. The SMT and the teachers are working hard to keep the schools in order.

4.7.5 Theme 5: Motivation through training and incentives

Respondents were asked what was done to keep staff engaged and learners interested in learning. Schools have been said to encourage teachers to do more and are appreciated for their hard work. Incentives are said to be given to teachers; teachers are taken out to lunch and at some schools gifts are given to them. Appraisals take place in schools as a motivational tool for teachers. Some of the participants felt that schools do not do enough to motivate teachers, instead, the centre of interest is usually on the learners. Some had different views whereby in their schools focus was not only on the learners but also on teachers. Motivational speakers are invited to motivate employees and learners. Schools organize awards ceremonies to recognize the best learners. There are sponsors who sponsor high achievers by giving gifts to these learners and sponsoring their education until they graduate from colleges. In addition, selected schools operate a nutrition programme that ensures all learners receive a decent meal and do not go to class on an empty stomach.

According to Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:96), school administrators are an important factor in decisions about teacher retention, in the sense that teachers' retention in the profession is limited to their leadership role in terms of motivation, job recognition, job satisfaction and safety, training and the like. Nobile (2019:5) states that the simplest acts are offers of encouragement, praise, or support for work done, aimed at keeping teachers and other staff motivated to develop their skills and reach their full potential. Keeping learners and staff in township schools motivated is crucial to increase learner

achievement. The SMT must be able to recognize and reward excellence. Those who perform well need public applause and recognition (Bhengu & Mkhize 2013). There are benefits that come from motivating employees and one of them is keeping one's employees on the job. First of all, when it comes to employee motivation, the following participants agreed that employees need to be excited and that something was already being done at their schools.

We encourage our educators to do more. (Principal C)

We take out teachers to enjoy themselves that we have made it. Every year the SMT and the SGB takes the school out to have lunch and the school is sponsoring that. Since we are always number 1, we have most NGOs and supporters. They supply the school with ingredients for tea and we share amongst ourselves as a school. (Deputy Principal C)

The motive described above is also present at School B. According to Principal B:

Each term when we close we have a small party to appreciate them, then a bigger party at the end of the year. We take them to buffet. We once gave them USBs of up to 16GB. Also, we normally keep on appreciating them in assembly for the great work they have done. (Principal B)

There are appraisals which are happening, for example certificates are being issued to teachers who perform well. Each and every year, when we become number 1 in Alexandra schools, the SGB organises a function for celebration. (HOD C)

Some participants believed that there was little motivation for employees, thus they stated:

Eish, I'm going to be honest on that one. We don't look at the side of the teachers, we only focus on motivating learners. (Deputy Principal A)

Nothing much is done for the teachers. We only have the National Teachers awards whereby only 12 teachers are recognised nationwide. I think the district should start recognising great teachers in their districts. Nothing is being done

to praise teachers for their work. It's just a matter of fear when you have a deadline and then you have to meet it. (HOD B)

According to Aminu *et al.* (2018:129), learners who are intrinsically motivated engage in academic tasks because they enjoy them and those who are extrinsically motivated engage in academic tasks to obtain rewards (e.g. good grade, approval) or to avoid punishment (e.g. bad grades, disapproval). Looking at the learners' perspective, motivation of learners is already taking place at all three sampled schools. Learners are motivated in a variety of ways. The most popular method of incentive was to recognize learners by holding awards ceremonies for them. Certificates, trophies, and other presents are presented to the learners during these events.

We promote competition in the school. We have awards each term that are encouraging the learners to compete so that they can be amongst the Top Ten who are going to be recognised. (Teacher B)

The Top Tten from each grade, each term are given awards in order to motivate them and the most improved learners are also given a token of appreciation to motivate them. (HOD C)

At School A, the practice of bestowing rewards on learners differs. This is not something they do on a regular basis. Teacher A stated:

They only try to motivate learners by giving them awards for recognition. They have tried but it's not sustainable. Learners were once awarded and given certificates of achievement.

Learners are also given the opportunity to participate in additional mural activities. Most learners are encouraged to come to school because they will have the chance to explore their abilities and skills. Deputy Principal C had the following to say:

We do not only concentrate on teaching and learning; we give them leisure time where they can have extra mural activities. (Deputy Principal C)

As previously stated, the sampled schools are located in a disadvantaged community, and the schools are already attempting to fill a number of gaps that can impede improved learner performance in township schools. Most schools have nutrition programmes that

serve all learners. Learners do not attend courses if they are hungry. Food is prepared for them, and they are served breakfast and lunch. According to HOD C:

Because we are a disadvantaged community, the school looks out for our learners. Early in the morning, they have breakfast to make sure that they kept motivated.

There is a bursary fund in the community where the schools are located. It primarily targets learners in Grades 9–12. This bursary recognizes and rewards high-achieving learners with various presents. This bursary fund supports Grade 12 learners who achieve well in their matriculation by transporting them to any university of their choice and covering all of their tuition fees. According to the following participants:

We are part of a sponsorship trust fund. They normally award our learners based on their results. The bursary only focuses on Grade 9–12 learners.
(Principal C)

There is a sponsorship bursary scheme that starts recognising the learners from Grade 10–12. They identify them and give them gifts from Grade 10. In Grade 12, they take them to any university they want and pay for everything. They even give them laptops. (Educator B)

There are external partners who give the Top 6 Grade 12s laptops and full scholarships with pocket money. Other grades get incentives such as money. With that in mind, they are driven to come to school every day. (HOD C)

Finally, the schools organize motivating speakers and foster team development in the school setting. Deputy Principal B at School B stated:

We take the educators for mind reflection courses. We invite motivational speakers for both teachers and learners.

For academic achievement to occur, both teachers and learners need to be motivated. The SMT must come up with different ways of motivating teachers and learners. Aminu, *et al.* (2018:134) state that learners' motivation have a positive effect upon their scores. Therefore, it could be suggested that motivation has an important effect on academic achievement.

4.7.6 Theme 6: Training through workshops

Osborne and Hammoud (2017:56) state that the organizational leaders have the responsibility of providing training to employees as a way of satisfying the needs of employees and building a meaningful workplace environment. Therefore, in turn, it is the responsibility of the employees to provide a meaningful contribution to the organization. The researcher asked the participants a question about any training they had ever received at their schools. When a new curriculum is introduced, the Department of Education ensures that all teachers receive the training and support they need to implement it effectively. Participants confirmed that they received training on the currently used curriculum, which is the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), whilst some indicated that they received the training at university during their teacher training course. The participants also received follow-up training. The DOE is said to organize professional training through the district office, with some of the training including a weekend away and accommodation booked for all participating teachers. Some participants expressed concerns that while the Department of Education offered pre-implementation training, no follow-up training was organized after the implementation of CAPS.

According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), it was implemented as follows: 2012 The Foundation Phase (Grades R–3) and Grade 10 (FET), 2013 Grade 11 (FET) implemented in January 2013 and 2014. The Senior Phase (Grades 7–9) and Class 12 (FET) introduced in January 2014. When the above curriculum was adopted, the Department of Basic Education ensured that all teachers received all the essential training to implement it. This is suggested by Tapala *et al.* (2020:12), who claim that, given the new curriculum, HODs need to be brought on board through training and development to avoid difficulties or failures in implementation. Most participants agreed that training was provided for them and some even received certificates of attendance. The participants listed below alluded to the following:

You are talking to a national examiner. I have been trained and we developed the CAPS document at DBE. After that I came and trained the whole GDE educators. After that I trained my teachers at school level where they don't understand. (Principal B)

Yes, I was trained for CAPS and we received certificate of attendance and follow-ups took place as we went on. (HOD A)

The department did give us training. It was not specifically for the school but for the entire district. Each facilitator from the district received the training for their particular subjects, for example, Maths facilitators trained Maths teachers on CAPS. (Teacher A)

Some participants reported that they had never received CAPS instruction. Teachers not only need to be trained in technology, but also on the curricula they are expected to implement. When the curriculum was introduced, some teachers received training, while others were still studying towards a teacher's degree and were trained at university on the same curriculum. One of the participants had just acquired it at university level.

I was trained at university and there was no follow-up training. (Teacher B)

I was trained at university. The department trains teachers on content, they organise workshops twice per quarter where teachers are booked out for a weekend. Training is on content delivery, developing assessments and assessing learners. (HOD C)

The information provided by HOD C differed from that of Teacher C, who had never received CAPS training. Teacher C said:

No, I did not get any CAPS training. There were some training for subject workshops.

Despite completing the CAPS course, one of the participants reported that he continued to receive support in using CAPS:

Training was provided. We do have a secondary improvement plan for educators where they go for a weekend away. They are mostly assisted in particular topics of the term. Support is given to teachers when it comes to how CAPS curriculum and content must be implemented. (HOD B)

Additionally, training should be an ongoing process that reminds employees of what is expected of them. Follow-up training can help integrate new teachers into schools.

According to Nkambule and Amsterdam (2018:12), support for educators in South Africa is mainly provided through training workshops organised by topic advisors, but direct support for educators is sourced internally through SMTs and Development Support Groups (DSG). When asked if there was any retraining, several participants admitted that the Department of Education did something for them in the form of retraining. This is clear from the statements of the following participants:

All teachers went for training and then from time to time the district calls teachers for meetings so that the new developments can be given to Teachers.
(Deputy Principal A)

Yes, we did go and there are a number of follow up trainings which are provided by the department. This year the department had to suspend a number of training due to Covid-19. The department still did that by integrating what we have in terms of CAPS and in terms of ITC so that the educators can know what they can be able to offer to learners. (Principal C)

According to Yakavets *et al.* (2015:350), the ability to continuously improve can be fostered by providing training programmes to keep teachers up to date. These training sessions help teachers remember what is expected of them and keep them abreast of any changes that need to be implemented. Regarding the training, Deputy Principal C stated the following:

Yes, there was training through workshops. Follow-ups are there whereby the training is a weekend away on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. They book a hotel for them and they have phases. We also make sure that new teachers coming from universities fill in a form that they were not trained and all the new members do the workshop. (Deputy Principal C)

Some participants complained that they did not receive any follow-up training on CAPS:

Mmmh! I don't remember if there was follow-up because from that training we were supplied with the book, manual to assist if you forgot on what is supposed to be done in terms of assessments. (Teacher A)

Training was provided to teachers but not to the new intake. No follow-up trainings were made and certification to those who were trained. (Deputy Principal B)

With the frequent policy changes in education and also in the evolving new knowledge and technology-based society, retraining teachers can help to reduce mistakes and improve innovations in the teaching profession (Kilonzo, Were & Odhiambo, 2018:53). Development and training of employees are two of the important aspects that must be provided in schools if improved academic performance is required. As policy changes, training need to be provided to the affected parties. Kilonzo *et al.* (2018:53) further assert that the training and retraining of teachers can be done in the following ways: in-service training, conferences, workshops, seminars and demonstrations.

4.7.7 Theme 7: Development in leadership and management

In the case of the required development programmes, participants felt that leadership and management development training was required for SMT members. It was said that some of the SMT members were unfamiliar with their roles and responsibilities, so training was needed. Such training courses should be offered from time to time. SMT members must be familiar with the system used by schools to record learner grades, so SASAMs are required. As the world changes and new technologies are introduced, ICT training is required for schools to keep lessons interesting. The teachers also indicated the various training courses they needed. These include classroom management, PowerPoint presentation, ICT training and accounting training for economics and management science teachers.

According to Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:96), the quality of academic achievement largely depends on the competence of school leadership, implying that leadership training is required prior to assuming such positions. Teachers must be given the appropriate support so that they can be able to teach effectively. In-service training programmes should be organized for teachers in the education system to keeping them abreast with any changes in the curriculum. Both the SMT and the teachers need to be trained. This is suggested by Tapala *et al.* (2020:13), who argue that if HODs are not sufficiently established, they may not be able to cope with the country's frequent curriculum revisions. Therefore as stated by Mwesiga & Okendo, (2018:96) if SMT acquire leadership skills,

this will enable them to solve educational challenges and deal effectively with stakeholders, especially teachers, and their professionalism. The following people indicated that development courses should start with SMTs:

Some SMTs do not hold meetings as they should, and maybe a leadership course will do. (Principal A)

Deputy Principal A agreed with Principal A, stating:

SMTs need support and guidance. From time to time, they need to be reminded of their responsibilities. (Deputy Principal A)

Educator C believes that development programmes are also necessary to improve teaching and learning in township schools. According to the participant:

Yes, I think there are developmental programmes needed especially on content delivery. In E.M.S., development is needed on the financial part and the Economics part in Grade 9; also, on discipline, classroom management and how to discipline learners.

According to Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:95), a change in the complexity of education can no longer be avoided. It is now forcing everyone in this field to reconsider the implementation of educational goals now and for the future and to compare the requirements of what everyone knows and should learn and hold, for revolutionary changes in education. Unlike the other schools that participated in the study, School B already had development programmes in place. HOD B explained:

As we are moving to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we are very fortunate that we have smart boards and we get training regularly every week. Each and every teacher has a laptop, which they are also given support on how to use those laptops. Those who can't use technology, can go to the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) committee and they can assist with that.

Although School B is already using several technologies, additional training is required for other employees. This is supported by Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:95), who state that it is a matter of mandate for education stakeholders to consider changes in education that involve teacher and managerial capacity building, collaboration, and recognition of

the use of technology in the teaching and learning process. Smartboards can be in place, but if employees are unable to use them, they will not have an impact on teaching and learning. Principal B backed this up by saying:

Our teachers require training on PowerPoint presentation.

Most schools use technology to move away from traditional teaching methods. As the globe transitions to the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR), schools must also adapt to technological advances. Most participants agreed that more needed to be done at their schools to ensure a smooth transition from traditional to modern teaching methods. Regarding the use of technology, the following people stated:

Teachers and managers require an ICT training. (Deputy Principal B)

One of the most important training we need is ICT training as technology changes. For example, during Covid time, at other schools they were able to complete the syllabus but us we were only able to rely on WhatsApp. So we really need training on the use of virtual classes. (Teacher B)

The Covid-19 virus opened our eyes and made us realise that we cannot rely on old things. At the current moment, we are working on making sure that we develop communication between learners, educators and the SMT. Some staff have been trained but some still require training. (Principal C)

One of the training that we require is SASAMS training. Some of my colleagues need that training for the school timetable. (HOD A)

Some participants stated that their school was lucky in that they had already been trained on how to use technology to improve learner performance in township schools.

We need development, like Panyaza Lesufi has introduced the use of smart boards and tablets. We need Wi-Fi so as to use those gadgets. As a school, we also appreciate all teachers to have laptops so that we move away from old methods and use technologies. Fortunately, we have people from a sponsorship are being sent to school through the district. They come every Term 2 to train teachers. People from Rain Logistics are also sent by the department to train teachers about technology. (Deputy Principal C)

Teachers get motivated to perform better in class if developmental programmes are provided to them. Kilonzo *et al.* (2018:53) note that teachers get involved in staff development programmes, particularly pursuing higher education and training motivate them to take their teaching roles more seriously.

4.7.8 Theme 8: Organised workshops for teachers

Career growth and empowerment are key determinants of job performance and engagement whereby changes in empowerment, training, and developmental programmes can affect employee engagement (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017:56). Respondents were asked if their schools had ever organised workshops for teachers. According to the participants, most of the workshops were said to have been organised by the district office and some of the schools only relied on these workshops. Some of the sampled schools had organised internal workshops for their staff. These workshops included ICT training, supervisory training, Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) training and LTSM training. One of the tasks of SMTs is to increase learner achievement, so it is their responsibility to organize development seminars for trainers. Some participants said their schools had not planned any workshops for them. The following people said:

Most workshops are facilitated by the District. (Deputy Principal A)

There are no workshops, the only workshops that have been organised are relying on the District which are 3–4 times in a year. (Teacher A)

Most workshops are organised by the Department of Education and they vary with different subjects and they are held 1st, 2nd and 3rd Term, quarterly for Grade 12s. We organise the whole-school evaluation workshop. (Deputy Principal B)

Teachers must communicate clearly to the subject advisers and HODs what support they need in relation to each individual teacher's personal growth plan. The lack of skills must be addressed through education and training (Schlebusch, 2020:86). Individual teachers must now apply for any training or development they need. One of the participants mentioned that a workshop is only offered at his school if a staff member asks for it.

Internally, if a second workshop is needed, we offer the second workshop, depending on the needs within the school. (HOD B)

Some participants believed their schools were doing something to help them develop. The workshop on ICT was one of the workshops offered at the selected schools. The following participants agreed:

There are workshops organised for teachers like the ICT workshop. They are not that enforced like CAPS workshops where we have to implement in classes. They are attended by choice and the attendance is poor. (Teacher B)

We have been having workshops fortnightly on Thursdays. Specifically it was dealing with ICT to be able to be at the level where other companies and communities are moving in. We organised and were given a person to conduct training who comes in every Thursday and is able to assist our staff members. (Principal A)

Other training offered at some of the sampled schools is supervision workshops. Teachers must be trained to conduct the supervision process, particularly for Grade 12 learners who take a national test that is closely overseen by the Department of Education.

I will be training them on how to invigilate the internal classes, I'm talking about Grade 8-11 who will be starting tests that should be formal so that education should not lose its value. I was also training teachers to be invigilators of Grade 12 classes. (Principal A)

Mmmh, I think there was a workshop on invigilation, I only remember this one for now. (Teacher C)

The IQMS programme is another workshop designed to help teachers. Teachers must firstly understand how to complete the IQMS documents before they can conduct the IQMS. School C indicated that they offered IQMS workshops to their staff. This was confirmed by two participants who stated:

We do have workshops for the teachers through the IQMS done by the senior for example, if it's the teacher, it will be done by the Departmental head. (Deputy Principal C)

Internally, workshops are done departmentally for example workshops on IQMS and LTSM. (HOD C)

To make good decisions, teachers must be aware of the many ways in which learner learning can unfold within the context of development, learning differences, language and cultural influences, and individual temperaments, interests, and approaches to learning (Kilonzo *et al.*, 2018:53). This can only unfold if teachers have received the necessary training. The school facilitates some of the training by using one of the SMT or staff members who may be experts in a certain fields. Also, delegating members of staff to facilitate workshops tends to motivate the members of staff as their knowledge and expertise are utilised by their schools.

4.7.9 Theme 9: Communication channels

Effective communication results in the creation of a good school climate and an environment of trust where teachers feel secure and confident to put across their ideas without fear of being victimized (Mafa, 2019:62). Participants were asked a question about how the SMT communicated with teachers. Schools use various communication mediums to get in touch with teachers. The WhatsApp group appeared to be a popular platform at all schools surveyed since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Other communication media used were newsletters, e-mails, and social media platforms. Although different media were allegedly used, some participants expressed concerns that there was poor communication at their schools, particularly from the SMT to teachers. It was said that as teachers they would receive information in the corridors rather than through formal channels through a headmaster. Effective communication is essential in any organization to avoid conflict.

To get in contact with the employees, each of the three schools tested uses its own communication mode. They share information through morning briefings and staff meetings. They also resort to using WhatsApp groups at all three participating schools to reach everyone easily in a short time. When asked how the SMT communicates with staff, the following answers were given by various people:

We have morning briefings every Monday and Thursdays where we share and we have staff meetings once a month. We use circulars, we have a

communication book where everyone signs as proof that they have received the information. (Principal A)

In 2020 we have a challenge of Covid-19 where we have to respect social distancing. Previously, we usually have staff meetings once a term and briefings on Monday and Friday. We have an informal one where we have a school group chat, especially for when we have emergencies we use a WhatsApp group chat. We also have a suggestion box that we put up in front of the admin block. (Deputy Principal C)

We normally send a memorandum through WhatsApp for educators and for the whole staff and a WhatsApp for the SMT. We also make use of the Facebook page of the school. (Principal B)

We also have emergency briefings, if there's a matter at hand that needs to be discussed. (HOD B)

Due to Covid-19, the sampled schools have safety standards and practices that must be followed. They resort to methods of communication that do not require personal meetings of the staff. The following was stated by the participants:

We have moved to the times. We have got a WhatsApp group for the entire school, formed by the principal. All the SMT and the teachers are supposed to be there. When the principal receives information, circulars are sent immediately to the group. (HOD B)

Previously, we used to rely on the book where we write the message and the message is circulated by a book. Now, due to Covid-19, we have resorted to technology and we have a WhatsApp group for staff and another one for the SMT. We have a noticeboard at the entrance of the admin. (HOD C)

We use circulars, social media, e-mails, the WhatsApp group of the school, teachers and departments. The school is abreast with each information. (Deputy Principal B)

In addition to the morning briefings for the entire workforce, one of the SMTs' responsibilities is to maintain efficient contact with the employees who report directly to

them. SMT members are also expected to share all relevant information with employees. SMT members are encouraged to attend department meetings at designated sampling schools. Teacher C and Deputy Principal A explained:

The SMT communicates with us by using morning briefings at least once a week. They also encourage departmental meetings. The school also makes use of a WhatsApp group to communicate with us. (Teacher C)

We have created a WhatsApp group for the school but their communication mainly should be through their departmental meetings. (Deputy Principal A)

In terms of effective communication, I think there is no effective communication here at school. Some of the things we hear them in the corridors. Like now, the setting of exams to be submitted, there was no formal communication pertaining to it. Information was heard in corridors. The school needs to improve on effective communication. (Teacher C)

According to Mafa (2019:62), if tasks are given in a meeting, employees have a better sense of why their individual contributions are important and how they fit into the bigger picture. They also have a better sense, based on seeing what other people were assigned to do, of knowing whom to go to for help or collaboration. Poor communication inevitably leads to trouble. This is supported by Tapala *et al.* (2020:10), who states that poor communication creates an information bottleneck that is an obstacle for any staff member, and they occasionally hear information in the school halls, putting them in a position of ignorance. One of the participants indicated that their school needed to improve communication. There is communication, but it is not considered effective.

4.7.10 Theme 10: Varying roles played by different stakeholders

A question was asked about the roles played by different stakeholders, namely the DOE, teachers, and learners. Various stakeholders play an important role in ensuring improved learning performance, particularly in township schools. The necessary teaching and learning materials must be made available to the schools in good time. Firstly, as a stakeholder, the DOE is expected to provide the resources and monitor that the schools are using them correctly. The following participants stated:

The role of the DOE is to provide learner material and also monitor those materials in terms of being used correctly by the schools. (Teacher A)

The role of the DOE is to make sure that they are giving enough resources to the schools. (Principal B)

The DOE should ensure that resources are available, either they fund or supply the resources. The resources that I'm looking at are the material ones and the human resources. The moment we have all that, it becomes easy for the school to achieve better results. (Principal C)

For effective teaching and learning, there must be a good infrastructure in terms of buildings, furniture, and sanitation. Due to high enrolments in township schools, they do not have enough classes and furniture to support all enrolled learners. Therefore, it is the DOE's responsibility to ensure schools have the proper infrastructure to accommodate all enrolled learners. The following participants echoed their concerns pertaining to infrastructure.

We have a challenge of infrastructure. Our enrolment is too big and we don't have enough classes. Automatically, we are going to have a challenge of classrooms, furniture and textbooks. These challenges will be around the first term of the year where you will find that learners are sharing desks. This problem is because our school is the only school that is offering Xitsonga; hence we are forced to admit those learners at the beginning of the year. (Deputy Principal C)

Teachers complained that classes were overcrowded, making it difficult for them to respond to the individual needs of all learners.

In relation to curriculum delivery, district facilitators provide guidance on how to implement the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP). Participants also indicated that they needed in-service training from the DOE. One of the participants suggested that the district director should always visit schools to support the school director and SMT members. Participants echoed the following:

The DoE have people called the subject experts, they always come to school and when we need help they are always available to provide it. The DoE

guides and mentors some of the teachers who may be struggling in certain topics. They also make resources and materials available for example study guides and materials. The DoE also conducts workshops to make sure that all teachers in the district are on the same page. (Principal A)

The subject facilitators assist the teachers with teaching, monitoring and giving guidance on how to implement the Annual Teaching Plan, for example, how many tasks must be given. (HOD C)

The Department of Education must provide training in different subjects and that assists our educators' in terms of in-service training. This training will make educators to understand the content of what is expected of them. This will assist in terms of learner achievement. (Principal C)

They must assist in developing teachers thus training them. The Department of Education must also give curriculum support. (Principal B)

Since the country is faced with the Covid-19 pandemic, schools are one of the places which required Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). The DOE is responsible for ensuring that both members of staff and learners have the necessary equipment that will protect them from contracting the Covid-19 virus. One participant said:

During the Covid-19 time, their role is to make sure that all schools have the Personal Protective Equipment to ensure that schools are in line with the regulations of the Covid 19. (Deputy Principal B)

Teachers, considering the next stakeholder to be discussed, are expected to make the syllabus available to learners and cover the ATP according to the established timeframe. This was supported by the following participants:

Teachers have direct contact with learners, they deliver the curriculum, assess the learners in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of learners. Teachers also give support to learners, identifying interests of the learners. They make sure that learners excel in extramural activities. Some of these learners end up having a career in sports. (Deputy Principal B)

Teachers must make sure that they implement the curriculum and make sure that they cover the Annual Teaching Plan. (Teacher A)

Teachers must just honour their periods to ensure that they are on time, they try to cover the syllabus and even go an extra mile assisting learners that can be classified as slow learners. (HOD A)

Their job is to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses and give them the support they need. In addition, teachers are expected to honour their class times to promote effective teaching and learning. Teaching and assessing learners are the most important task of teachers. To ensure improved learner performance, teachers are said to go one step further by offering learners additional classes and vacation classes.

Teachers should teach, assess and do corrections thoroughly with learners. They must make extra classes with learners who are struggling. Teachers give learners formal and informal tasks. From these tasks, educators start to see the learners' weak points and start working on improving in their performance. (Principal C)

Teachers should teach, assess and also do corrections thoroughly with learners. They must make extra classes with learners who are struggling. (Teacher C)

Finally, learners, as stakeholders of schools, are expected to be disciplined in the classroom for effective teaching and learning to take place. Wearing a school uniform is part of discipline, so learners must wear a proper school uniform and come to school on time. Participants said learners needed to attend school and class and be responsible for their work and be willing to go the extra mile in their studies. Below are responses from participants:

They must come and do their work. In my experience, I have learnt that there is no learner that is incapable. They can pass if they are dedicated to their work and come to school. (Teacher B)

They need to make sure that whatever concept they have been taught, they need to study them and continue studying all work done in all terms. (HOD C)

Learners are supposed to learn, be supported and be assessed. Where they don't understand, they must inquire. We expect good results from learners.
(Deputy Principal B)

It is the responsibility of the learners to know the reason why they are in school. The school code of conduct is explained to learners at the beginning of the year so that they can be aware of what is expected of them in terms of discipline. These participants said:

Learners should be disciplined in class for effective teaching and learning. Learners have to show discipline, determination and know what it is that they are here for is. Discipline starts with uniform wearing and learners know what is expected of them. They need to cooperate with educators. If they are given tasks either informal or formal, they need to do them. (Principal C)

Learners have to show discipline, determination and know what is it that they are here for. There must be commitment for example if a teacher has given the something to do, they must do it. (Deputy Principal C)

According to Torres (2021:482), schools are considered as places which provide an appropriate learning environment for learners, but the importance of stakeholders cannot be ignored. If the DOE, SMT, teachers and learners fulfil their roles, schools will excel in academic achievement. Furthermore, the school and the stakeholders have the significant responsibility of leading and supporting the learners and in creating an enjoyable environment so that the latter's potential and self-confidence can develop well. (Torres, 2021:482).

4.7.10.1 Resource provision by Department of Education (DoE)

The Department of Education is the first stakeholder to ensure that learners deliver quality outcomes. To achieve such achievements, many requirements must be met by the schools. Horsley and Sikorova (2014:46) note that different teaching and learning resources provide different forms of scaffolding; they support learners in learning in different ways and in different ways. Teachers use and interpret the resources to develop intersubjectivity, establish common learner goals, and create a zone of proximal development. Schools must therefore be equipped with teaching and learning materials. According to Principal C, Principal B, and Deputy Principal B:

The DoE should ensure that resources are available, either they fund or supply the resources. The resources that I'm looking at are the material ones and the human resources. The moment we have all that that, it becomes easy for the school to achieve better results. (Principal C)

The role of the DoE is to make sure that they are giving enough resources to the schools. They must make sure that the teachers are teaching the relevant syllabus. (Principal B)

They are the main stakeholder of the schools. They give us the whole support in terms of resources, to Section 21 schools. They must provide funds to be utilised by the LTSM. (Deputy Principal B)

The Department of Education's duty should not end with the provision of resources. It remains their responsibility to ensure that all resources made available to schools are fully utilized by schools. Teacher A emphasized the need to monitor resource consumption at School A, stating:

The role of the DoE is to provide learner material and also monitor those materials in terms of being used correctly by the schools. (Teacher A)

The schools face numerous problems that hinder improved learning performance in the township schools. The issue of infrastructure deficit was raised as a challenge by one of the participants. The large number of learners admitted each year contributes to this deficit. According to Surana *et al.* (2018:398), the success of an educational organization indicates that the human resources carrying out the activities match the stated goals. A prerequisite for successful teaching and learning is an environment conducive to learning. The classrooms in most township schools are overcrowded, resulting in a higher teacher-to-learner ratio. This was emphasized by Deputy Principal C, who stated:

We have a challenge of infrastructure. Our enrolment is too big and we don't have enough classes. Automatically, we are going to have a challenge of classrooms, furniture and textbooks. These challenges will be around the first term of the year where you will find that learners are sharing desks. This problem is because our school is the only school that is offering Xitsonga

hence we are forced to admit those learners at the beginning of the year.
(Deputy Principal C)

This was reiterated by HOD B, who expressed concerns about overcrowded classes, making effective teaching and learning in township schools impossible. According to Marais (2016), overcrowded classrooms in most township and rural schools in South Africa are an obstacle to effective teaching and learning. Milondzo and Seema (2015) further elaborate that the function of SMTs is to consider the teacher and to ensure the learner relationship. If the ratio is too high, SMT must push for more instructors to be hired. HOD B explained:

I think the Department of Education needs to be hands-on in township schools. Most schools must be built as classes are overcrowded. It becomes difficult for the teacher to assess and give feedback to a class of 60 Learners within the three days mentioned. Teachers are not only faced with overcrowded classes but they are also overloaded with work. The DOE needs to employ more teachers to solve this problem of overcrowding. It is difficult for teachers to teach effectively when classes are overcrowded. Remember we deal with different kids from different backgrounds, so it becomes difficult for the teacher to give the learners individual support to have effective teaching.

Teacher C agreed with HOD B, stating:

The DoE must reduce the number of learners in classes because we have so many learners in a class. If they can bring assistant teachers who can help the teachers with marking and doing one on one sessions with learners, I think that can improve learner performance.

As one of the Covid-19 regulations, HOD C was pleased with the reduced number of learners in a class. HOD said they found a significant difference and if the same numbers could be maintained post-Covid-19, most township schools would improve learning performance. HOD C said:

It's only now during Covid-19 when teachers are able to see learners on one on one where the ratio is now 1:20. Before Covid it was 1:45, which was highly impossible to improve learner performance. When you go to such classes you

are only thinking about covering topics in such a short space of time and we don't get enough time interact with each and every learner. Now, during Covid-19, we can see them in their spare time and also have smaller groups to assist.

It is also the role of the DoE to provide schools with the necessary curriculum support to achieve better learner performance. Each district office employs professionals known as subject experts whose primary role is to support schools in the areas in which they are experts. In terms of curriculum delivery, they must constantly be ready to give help and guidance. According to Schlebusch (2020:87), subject advisors need to take the time to empower teachers by expanding their understanding of the importance of the academic knowledge they engage in the classroom and learning to transform it into the information needed for improvement of learning outcomes are required. This is supported by HOD C who said:

The subject facilitators, assist the teachers with teaching, monitoring and giving guidance on how to implement the Annual Teaching Plan, for example, how many tasks must be given.

The Department of Education has already provided the necessary support to several participating institutions. According to Principal A, the Department of Education had already provided the necessary support to several participating institutions. According to Principal A:

The DoE have people called the subject experts, they always come to school and when we need help they are always available to provide it. The DoE guides and mentors some of the teachers who may be struggling in certain topics. They also make resources and materials available for example study guides and materials. The DoE also conducts workshops to make sure that all teachers in the District are on the same page.

Another role of the Department of Education is to make sure that schools receive the appropriate training and development workshops through district offices. Subject advisors must ensure that in-service teacher training focuses on developing the necessary physical and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and competencies to support them in achieving district and school goals (Schlebusch, 2020:87). According to Principal C:

The Department of Education must provide training in different subjects and that assist our educators in terms of in-service training. This training will make educators to understand the content of what is expected of them. This will assist in terms of learner achievement.

In relation to the development of teachers by the Department of Education, Deputy Principal B stated:

They must assist in developing teachers thus training them. The Department of Education must also give curriculum support.

Support should be directed not only at the teachers in the schools, but also at the SMTs who need support from the Education District Office. Deputy Principal C expressed his belief that the Department of Education should provide greater support, adding:

The District Director must always come and support the principal and the SMT with challenges that we are facing. For instance, shortage of furniture due to high enrolment, which requires assistance for the Department of Education to provide us with mobile classes, furniture and also employ more educators.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Department of Education played an important role in ensuring that all health and safety Covid-19 protocols were followed at schools. According to Deputy Principal B:

During the Covid-19 time, their role was to make sure that all schools have the Personal Protective Equipment to ensure that schools are in line with the regulations of Covid-19.

4.7.10.2 Curriculum delivery by teachers

According to Bhengu and Mkhize (2013:34), principals with the support of the SMTs must invest their time in assisting teachers so that the teaching and learning process runs smoothly in their schools. Not only does the Department of Education play a role in ensuring increased learner performance, teachers are particularly important because they have directly interact with the learners on a daily basis. Teachers should play a significant role in the school environment if schools want to improve learner achievement. To ensure teacher effectiveness, teachers must organize their lessons thoroughly and

use different teaching styles. This supported by Mwesiga and Okendo (2018:93), who state that the teacher's commitment influences effective performance in education. According to Deputy Principal B:

Teachers have direct contact with learners, they deliver the curriculum, assess the learners in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of learners. Teachers also give support to learners, identifying interests of the learners. They make sure that learners excel in extramural activities. Some of these learners end up having a career in sports.

For teachers to teach effectively, intervention efforts must be provided by HODs in their respective departments (Mampane, 2017:147). Deputy Principal C emphasized the importance of teacher attendance in promoting good teaching and learning.

Teachers need to know their role and know that they are here to teach the learners. If teachers can go to class every day and don't miss their periods in class, that will help these learners to have good performance. (Deputy Principal C)

Teacher A backed up the above statement, stating:

Teachers must make sure that they implement the curriculum and make sure that they cover the Annual Teaching Plan. (Teacher A)

According to Schlebush (2020:86), teachers are classroom leaders must organize the implementation of the curriculum that must be finished so that learners are ready for assessment on a quarterly basis. Teachers must teach and assess learners to ensure that they understand the material presented to them. Before going on to the next topic, an assessment must be completed. The results of the assessments will also allow teachers to identify whether the learners require additional lessons or support. According to Principals C and B, HOD A, and Teacher C:

Teachers should teach, assess and do corrections thoroughly with learners. They must make extra classes with learners who are struggling. Teachers give learners formal and informal tasks. From these tasks, educators start to see

the learners' weak points and start working on improving in their performance.
(Principal C)

Their responsibility is to teach these learners and go an extra mile by identifying different types of learners. This will enable them to cater for all the learners in class. (Principal B)

Teachers must just honour their periods to ensure that they are on time, they try to cover the syllabus and even go an extra mile assisting learners that can be classified as slow learners. (HOD A)

Teachers should teach, assess and also do corrections thoroughly with learners. They must make extra classes with learners who are struggling.
(Teacher C)

According to what the four participants indicated, it is critical for teachers to assess and help learners. The majority of learners in township schools come from low-income families who cannot afford to hire private tutors. Teachers can be of tremendous assistance to these learners by providing them with free supplementary classes on the school grounds. This can lead to increased learner performance in township schools. Learners who require assistance must be recognized in order for such assistance to be delivered. HOD C stated:

Teachers need to identify learners who are struggling and must teach learners according to their strengths and abilities.

Once such learners have been identified, the necessary steps must be taken. Different teaching methods can be employed enabling all learners to be catered for in class. Involving learners can be another way of improving the performance of learners. According to Kumari *et al.* (2020:385), active learning will encourage learners to interact more deeply with course content as it is a two-way process whereby learners share their knowledge and thoughts instead of just listening to the tutor. Opportunities must be created for learners to get involved. Furthermore, teachers must make themselves available to learners in order to assist them. This was backed up by Educator B and Deputy Principal A, who stated:

Teachers should start by engaging the learner, then engage the parent, then engage the HOD before escalating the problem to the Department. (Teacher B)

Teachers need to prepare their lessons and teach the learners. Teachers need to be available to learners all the time to give them assistance. (Deputy Principal A)

Sengonul (2022:36) postulates that parents with low levels of education feel less confident about communicating and talking with teachers, administrators and another staff in schools, because they have less or lack of information about the school system and familiarity with educational language or conversations. Their own negative educational experiences lead to them being less involved in schooling of their child. Not being educated should not be used by parents as an excuse for not being involved in the education of their children. Parents can be involved in many ways. As stated by Jaiswal and Choudhuri (2017:118), parents' home-based and school-based involvement have been found to be positively related to academic performance. Home-based involvement strategies such as checking homework or helping with homework has been found to be consistently associated with academic achievement, compared to other types of home-based involvement. Parental involvement is required for the achievement of learners. According to Kelty and Wakabayashi (2020:2), family engagement ensures that parents play an active role in developing their child's learning, that parents are actively involved in their child's education at school.

Finally, one of the participants mentioned a problem that most township schools have with some of their teachers. It is claimed that some people do not understand the unions' roles and hide behind it when they do not want to complete their task, which has a negative impact on good teaching and learning. According to Principal A:

We have great challenges in township schools. I will be blunt with you. The problem we have is unionism and some people misunderstands the functions of the union. You find that some teachers do not care much about the learners. They feel it's their right to be protected by unions even if they bunk classes. If teachers could just teach and recognise learners that are weak and bring them on board, eehh, I think we will have better results in the townships. We still

have good teachers who will voluntarily come on Saturdays and Sunday to teach learners without expecting any extra payment.

As highlighted above, even though teachers exercise their right of belonging to a union of their choice, they must not ignore their teaching and learning duties, as this can have a negative impact on the academic achievement of learners.

4.7.10.3 Classroom discipline and learning

Learners are significant stakeholders in a school. To ensure enhanced learner performance in schools, learners must be disciplined for teachers to accomplish their jobs efficiently. Schlebusch (2020:86) agrees, stating that learners should be encouraged to attend lessons, finish their homework, and participate actively in the classroom. The learners have the right to learn, and it is their responsibility to complete all the work allotted to them. Principal C agreed with the following:

Learners should be disciplined in class for effective teaching and learning. Learners have to show discipline, determination and know what it is that they are here for is. Discipline starts with uniform wearing and learners know what is expected of them. They need to cooperate with educators. If they are given tasks either informal or formal, they need to do them. (Principal C)

The following participants agreed with Principal C and stated:

Learners need to come to school early and attend all classes. (Principal B)

Learners must come to school regularly, do their work and submit assessments on time. (Teacher C)

They must come and do their work. In my experience, I have learnt that there is no learner that is incapable. They can pass if they are dedicated to their work and come to school. (Teacher B)

Learners are unable to perform things on their own. One of their responsibilities is to guarantee that they are learning. They require assistance from the SMT as well as their instructors who have direct contact with them. Learners' performance can be improved by providing them with assistance. Deputy Principal B agreed with the following:

Learners are supposed to learn, be supported and be assessed. Where they don't understand, they must inquire. We expect good results from learners.
(Deputy Principal B)

One of the participants thought that most learners in township schools do not comprehend why they are required to attend school and that there is no accountability for their activities. This is one of the factors that could be influencing poor performance in township schools. The following information was supplied by the participant:

Learners, it's mostly understanding the reason why they are in school and be accountable of anything that they do. Some learners are just here because their parents said they should be here. Our learners do not have accountability, which is why independent schools are different from the Government schools. At Independent schools, if the child is at home, they know the reason, but in our township schools it's a different story. (HOD B)

Despite the obstacles and challenges that confront learners in township schools, it is the learners' responsibility to work hard in order to improve their performance.

Learners need to go an extra mile in terms of their studies. They need to adapt a culture of learning and studying on their own. I always encourage learners to remain behind after school in groups of 4 or 5 to study. These learners who remain after school excel. Some get up to 5 distinctions in matric. Most of these learners stay in one room and there's no enough space for studying. That's why we preach to them that they must also go an extra mile in their studies. (Principal A)

For learners to succeed, they require all the necessary support from all stakeholders.

Schools must develop a partnership with families for learner achievement by reaching out to children's primary caregivers, who may not necessarily be parents, to jointly support children's learning and development in ways most effective yet comfortable for families (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020:1). For learners to succeed, they require the necessary support from all stakeholders.

4.8 CONCLUSION

Several stakeholders must play their part for a school to guarantee enhanced learner performance. The SMTs, teachers, learners, DOE, and parents are some of these stakeholders. The researcher examined the information collected from the sampled participants and schools in this chapter. The analysis was carried out using the data gathered from the document analysis and face-to-face interviews. The information gathered on the role of SMTs in ensuring increased learner performance yielded ten themes. To learn more about the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance, the themes were examined.

The study's results are included in Chapter 5 to provide a summary, suggest recommendations, and draw conclusions.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to present the summary, findings and recommendations. The aim of the study was to determine the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng. The sub-research questions of the study were:

- What is SMTs' role in understanding of improved learner performance?
- How do SMTs support learners for improved performance?
- Which activities are organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance?
- What are the challenges faced by SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance?

These sub-research questions will be discussed in the research conclusions of this chapter.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 introduced the study by providing the background of the study. The rationale of the study was to find out the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng.

When SMT execute their roles properly, it helps schools to improve their academic performance. Part of their roles is to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place; teachers are aware of the curriculum; adequate resources are provided; teachers are developed and trained; there is effective communication; teachers are motivated; and there is good attendance and discipline among the learners.

The main research was to find out whether SMTs in the sampled schools are aware of their roles in ensuring improved learner performance. The study included the principals, deputy principals, HODs and teachers. The main research question of this study was phrased as follows:

What is the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng?

Sub-questions

- What is SMTs' role in understanding improved learner performance?
- How do SMTs support learners for improved performance?
- Which activities are organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance?
- What are the challenges faced by SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance?

Chapter 2 provided a literature review pertaining to the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance. The research gave the composition of SMTs and the SMT structure was discussed. Different roles of SMT were also discussed. This was followed by the challenges faced by SMTs.

Chapter 3 reported on the research methodology used to conduct this study. The researcher followed a qualitative research methodology. The research problem was stated together with the sub-problems. Purposeful sampling was followed in this research. The research comprised three schools in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng. SMT members, which include the principals, deputy principals and HODs, were the best participants to respond to research questions pertaining to school leadership and management. Teachers were also included in the study as they have direct contact with the learners. The researcher obtained clearance from the UNISA Ethics committee. Furthermore, before data were collected, the researcher obtained consent from all participants through letters that were sent to them. Participants confirmed their willingness to participate in the study by signing and returning the consent forms to the researcher. Participants received copies of signed consent forms as evidence that they were taking part voluntarily in the study.

Data was collected using face-to-face interviews and documents were also analysed for each sampled school. For data to be captured correctly, the researcher used a digital voice recorder during face-to face-interviews. The researcher analysed all data that were collected and came up with different themes. To ensure that anonymity was not violated, the researcher coded the collected data.

Chapter 4 presented data that were obtained from document analysis as well as face-to-face interviews. Data obtained from document analysis were discussed, analysed and interpreted. For face-to-face interviews, data were analysed by stating verbatim quotations given by participants to ensure trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of findings in relation to the research question. This chapter also shows how the study was aligned with the main aim. Recommendations are discussed and lastly conclusions drawn out of this study are made.

5.3 THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The researcher discussed the roles and responsibilities of the SMT. Most participants stated that the principals are the accounting officers at schools. As accounting officers, their role is to monitor and evaluate the SMT members by checking if they are achieving the set goals. The SMT assigns subjects to instructors based on their level of subject knowledge in order to ensure increased learner achievement. This tends to minimise challenges that teachers may encounter in class in terms of curriculum delivery. Schools run a nutrition programme for learners that is monitored by the principal, who ensures that learners get a proper meal. The principal monitors the people employed to cook for these learners.

Schools have two deputy principals, a deputy principal (curriculum) and a deputy principal (administration). The delivery of the curriculum is ensured by the deputy principal for curriculum. They are responsible for creating the lesson plans and making sure that learning and teaching happen for the best possible outcomes. Additionally, they guarantee that HODs have access to the academic calendar, management plan guidelines, and teaching materials. They check to see if completion dates are met after receiving everything. The deputy principal oversees the quality of School-Based Assessments (SBAs) and makes sure that tests are given, marks are recorded, and assessments are marked so that learners may obtain their reports at the end of each term.

The school's administration is overseen by the deputy principal (administration). By making sure they sign the timebook each day, learners are in charge of keeping an eye on the teachers' attendance. Additionally, they oversee the leave form that each employee who is absent from work must submit. An employee who misses work is

required to complete a leave form. Proof must be offered for leave that needs to have evidence attached, depending on the type of leave taken. The district office receives the completed leave form, thereafter it is captured in the personnel system. The principal receives direct reports from the two deputies.

HODs report to the deputy principals. Their role is to manage teachers in their respective departments, ensuring that there is a communication flow between the principal and the teachers. Another responsibility of the HODs is to ensure that duties are allocated to the teachers that will enable them to monitor teaching and learning. Curriculum support is given by the HODs to teachers. Teachers are also encouraged to do team teaching, which enables effective teaching and learning to take place. Class attendance by learners is monitored so that the school can obtain the desired results at the end of the year.

Teaching and learning support are provided by SMT members through the organization of workshops for teachers. New teachers are trained when they come to the schools. HODs are encouraged to hold their own department meetings to identify the gaps and fill them in a timely manner. Learners are supported by providing additional classes, vacation classes and SSIP to improve learning performance.

The SMT engages with the teachers through meetings. Staff meetings and morning briefings are popular meetings at all the sampled schools. HODs are expected to submit regular reports to the deputy principal, who also reports to the principal about the issues pertaining to teaching and learning. In addition to the stated ways of engaging with staff, a suggestion box is used at one of the sampled schools as another way of engaging with staff members.

Township schools have to deal with several challenges that affect their academic performance. The discussed challenges are high rates of absenteeism, poor parental involvement and crime. Most learners are from child-headed families whereby they have to look after their siblings. Their school attendance is very poor, as they have to find ways of taking care of themselves and their siblings during the time that they are supposed to be at school. One of the schools was happy about the attendance of their learners as their parents are actively involved in the education of their children. This was not the case at other sampled schools, as parental involvement was poor. Schools lack support from parents in guiding the learners to perform better.

When invited to parent meetings, the majority of parents did not attend those meetings. The few who attend meetings do not participate during the meetings.

Schools suffer under crime; they experience several break-ins, whereby teaching and learning resources are stolen by those criminals. Gangsterism, bullying, drugs and substance abuse were also stated as challenges that affect the sampled schools. The schools try to mitigate the challenges they face. All the sampled schools run a nutrition programme for all the learners, as the majority of the learners are from disadvantaged homes. This programme is helpful, as it tries to keep the learners at school. The principals encourage the parents to be actively involved in the education of their children. As a way to combat crime in schools, schools get assistance from the Community Policing Forum who send their members to guard the schools during the day and the night.

As a way of improving learner performance, sampled schools stated that they ensure that their teachers and learners are motivated in different ways. This encourages both the teachers and the learners to put in an extra effort so that the school gets the desired results at the end of the year. To ensure effective teaching and learning, when a new curriculum CAPS was introduced, the teachers received the necessary training and development. Newly qualified teachers received training at university as part of their teacher training. After the implementation of CAPS, teachers expected that the DOE would organise follow-up meetings.

Teachers were asked about the developmental trainings they required. The following training was requested by the participants: ICT training, PowerPoint presentation, SASAMS, classroom management and teaching specific topics. The sampled schools relied on the DOE to provide training to them. IQMS, invigilation, LTSM and ICT training were the only training that the schools had provided to their teachers.

Communication is essential to every organisation. Participants said that the SMT engaged with staff using different communication media, such as circulars, WhatsApp groups, e-mails, and other social media platforms. Morning briefings and staff meetings were mentioned as other means that schools use to communicate with staff. One participant said that proper channels were not used to disseminate information and this was a cause for concern.

Various stakeholders make it possible for schools to improve the performance of learners. The study focused on the DOE, teachers and learners, who are the stakeholders of the schools. The DOE ensures that the school infrastructure is in a good state and can accommodate the enrolled learners. To ensure effective teaching and learning, the DOE must provide schools with teaching and learning resources and monitor that these resources are utilised in the right way. The district subject facilitators are expected to give guidance and support to teachers in schools. The district director is requested by participants that they avail themselves to schools to give support to the principals on a regular basis.

Teachers were discussed as stakeholders who have direct contact with the learners. Their role is to teach and they must be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of learners so that they can employ different teaching methods that cater for different learners. Another role for the teachers is to implement the curriculum by ensuring that the ATP is completed during the stipulated period. This will allow them to assess the learners so that marks can be captured for reporting purposes.

Learners are expected to maintain classroom discipline, attend all their classes and do all the work assigned to them. Furthermore, it is their responsibility to study what they have been taught by teachers. When extra classes are organised, learners are expected to attend them. From the information obtained recommendations are stated below:

5.4 RECOMMENDATION REGARD TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE

Research objective one was to determine the SMT roles that can lead to improved learner performance in township schools.

Recommendation: During the interview, it was noted that the SMT members were aware of their roles and responsibilities in schools. These roles included being the accounting officers, monitoring teaching and learning, ensuring that there is curriculum delivery, provision of teaching resources, training of teachers, checking the quality of SBAs, managing absenteeism, communication, motivation and communication with learners.

The study found that the SMTs are aware of their roles and responsibilities and the DOE assists them in executing those roles. The GDE provides several training to schools, curriculum delivery being one of the workshops provided for schools. Schools also seek

assistance from certain individuals who provide training to staff members, e.g. ICT training.

Some participants complained about SMTs not executing their roles properly. The researcher recommends that SMTs be properly trained on their roles and responsibilities. SMTs must be able to provide curriculum support to the teachers, especially when a new curriculum is introduced. Ongoing training must be adopted.

Some participants raised concerns about poor communication whereby they receive information in the corridors instead of receiving it through formal communication channels. It is recommended that SMT members adopt formal ways of communicating information to teachers on time to avoid unnecessary tension that may arise between the SMT and teachers.

Research objective two was to establish ways in which SMTs can support learners for improved learner performance.

Recommendation: Firstly, most teachers who participated in the study raised a concern that they did not receive enough support from the SMT. The focus of motivation is said to have been directed at learners only. It is recommended that schools come up with different ways of motivating teachers so that teachers can perform their duties effectively.

It is recommended that schools start recognising the effort that teachers put in to ensure that there is improved learner performance. The teachers whose subjects are not taught well also require support from the SMT so that the results of the school can improve. The principal can invite other stakeholders from the district, especially the subject advisors, to come and offer support to teachers in different subjects.

It was also raised that the performance of learners is also affected by the learners' social background. Some learners are from child-headed families and single-parent households. Schools need to have permanent psychologists or counsellors stationed at schools so that counselling of learners is immediately provided when it is required.

Research objective three was to determine activities organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance.

Recommendation: It was noted during the research that at some sampled schools, training did not happen, especially to new staff members. It is recommended that a school

must form a committee responsible for training and development. Curriculum training should form part of the induction of new staff members.

Furthermore, the department needs to organise regular training pertaining to curriculum issues for all teachers from Grades 8–12 instead of focusing on Grade 12 only. This is supported by Yakavets *et al.* (2017:350), who state that the capacity for continuous improvement can be fostered by providing training to keep teachers up to date with curriculum issues. It is recommended that at the beginning of each year, SMTs can request teachers to forward areas where they need development so that appropriate developmental training can be given to the right individuals.

Adequate resources are also required so that teachers are able to teach effectively, leading to improved learner performance. If new technologies for teaching are introduced, it is recommended that continuous training be provided to all teachers so that they are able to use such technologies effectively.

Research objective four was to determine the challenges faced by SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.

Recommendation: Participants complained about a high rate of absenteeism in schools. Reasons stated for absenteeism were that most learners come from single-parent households, disadvantaged homes and child-headed families. Learners do not get enough parental support and guidance pertaining to their schoolwork. It is recommended that the schools educate parents about the importance of parental involvement in schools. Awareness must be raised especially in township communities on the importance of being involved in the education of their children. The communities need to be aware that schools were built for them and therefore they need to be there for the schools and make sure that criminals do not destroy the school infrastructure. More community centres need to be made available for learners so that they can utilise them after school for studying and doing homework.

Lack of parental involvement was also an issue at most of the sampled schools. Parents need to be conscious about the importance of being involved in the education of their children. The schools can also seek help from community leaders to motivate parents to be committed to the education of the learners.

Drug and alcohol abuse is a very thorny issue in township communities and has a negative impact on schools, as learners are affected. The police need to play an active role, together with leaders. The police can also do regular random searches at schools. Police visibility is also required at schools and in the community.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng was limited to 3 out of 81 schools in the district. The small sample size used might not give similar results if other schools are to be investigated, because schools in other areas may lead to different findings. The study purposely focused on township schools and findings may differ if research is conducted at schools not from disadvantaged communities.

Even though a small sample was used in conducting the research, there is still room for further study on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved performance. The findings obtained on the research could be similar to other township schools in different districts.

5.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

There is a need for further research on the factors that affect learner performance in township schools and a larger sample can be used. The following could be potential research topics for the future:

- The impact of poor attendance of learners in township schools.
- What teaching methodologies can be used in disadvantaged communities to ensure that there is academic achievement?
- The contributory factors that affect academic performance in township schools.

5.5 FINAL WORD

Academic achievement is a challenge in schools situated in disadvantaged communities. The government needs to direct their main focus in such communities so that there can be effective teaching and learning, leading to high academic achievement. The SMTs as managers and leaders in schools need to ensure that they execute their roles so that

there can be improved academic performance. Teachers and learners require all the necessary support so that schools can improve in their academic performance.

Stakeholders of the schools need to be actively involved in the school activities in order to achieve high academic performance. Parental involvement needs to improve in township schools. Parents are obliged to maintain, protect and care for their children by accepting responsibility for the physical and emotional needs of their children and to raise their children in such a way that they can adapt to society and participate successfully in its activities (Torres, 2021:483). If all the stakeholders play their role, the nation could see a positive change in academic achievement for township schools.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: LETTER FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2020/03/11

Ref: 2020/03/11/45587108/12/AM

Name: Mrs S Rikhotso

Student No.: 45587108

Dear Mrs S Rikhotso

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2020/03/11 to 2023/03/11

Researcher(s): Name: Mrs S Rikhotso
E-mail address: 45587108@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 072 670 0245

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof. Sharon Thabo Mampane
E-mail address: mampast@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 012 429 6542

Title of research:

The role of School Management Teams in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng Province

Qualification: MEd Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2020/03/11 to 2023/03/11.

The low risk application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2020/03/11 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.



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Pretorius Street, Muckleneuk, Johannesburg, City of Johannesburg
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3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2023/03/11**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2020/03/11/45587108/12/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motilhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
 motihat@unisa.ac.za



Prof PM Sebate
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
 Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

ANNEXURE B: CONSENT LETTER FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH THE SELECTED SCHOOLS



GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA


8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	05 November 2019
Validity of Research Approval:	10 February 2020 – 30 September 2020 2019/320
Name of Researcher:	Rikhotso S
Address of Researcher:	19 Bromvoel Road Birch Acres Extension 5 Kempton Park, 1618
Telephone Number:	072 670 0245
Email address:	45587108@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Research Topic:	The role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng.
Type of qualification	Masters in Educational Management
Number and type of schools:	Four Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg East

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

 06/11/2019

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0485

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

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

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

Kind regards



Mr Gumani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 06/11/2019

Consent letter for permission to conduct interviews with the selected schools



PERMISSION LETTER: JHB EAST DISTRICT

19 Bromvoel Road

Birch Acres East 5

Kempton Park

1618

Mobile: 072 670 0245

E-mail address: gcinwes@yahoo.com

02 October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Sigcinweyinkosi Rikhotso, I am doing a research under the supervision of Professor ST Mampane, a Lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Leadership, towards a Masters of Education degree at the University of South Africa. I would like to request that three schools participate in a study entitled, "The role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng".

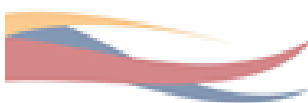
The aims of the research project are:

- To establish ways in which SMTs can support learners for improved performance.
- To determine activities organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance.
- To determine the challenges faced by SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.
- To offer recommendations that might assist Township schools in sustaining improved learner performance.

As previously mentioned, the study will entail research at three selected Township High Schools in the Johannesburg East District. At each of the three selected schools, I would like to interview the Principal, one Deputy Principal, one HoD and one Educator. The study is expected to collect important information that will benefit the schools in ensuring improved learner performance.

The study will entail the following steps in order to ensure a high level of professionalism.

- Interview with each participant will take approximately 20-30minutes.
- Questions will be asked via the distance communication media either telephonic or distant face to face interviews, ensuring that COVID 19 safety procedures like social distancing, wearing of masks and sanitization are observed to avoid the Covid 19 pandemic infection.
- The type of interview method will depend on the consent that will be given by each participant and would like to digitally voice record the interviews to ensure that their responses are captured correctly.



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- Interviews will be conducted during lunch time and after hours to make sure that teaching and learning time is not compromised.
- Participation in the study is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time without any consequences.
- Names of all selected schools and participants will not be disclosed. I will ensure anonymity whereby each school or participant will not be identifiable in the research.

There are no potential risks associated with the study. Furthermore, No injury is anticipated and in the case of emotional harm, the school psychologist at various schools will be informed. Participation is voluntary and therefore, no reimbursement or any incentive for participating in this research will be given.

The feedback will entail the following; after I complete the interview and processing data, I will email a copy of the individual transcripts to each participant in order for them to verify the accuracy of the details. Each participant will be allowed to give their views on the interpretations of their interview and be given an opportunity to vindicate the trustworthiness and credibility of their expressions in the study on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance. The study has received approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the college of Education, UNISA. You may have a copy of approval letter from me if you wish so.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings or should you require any further information or want to contact me about any aspect of the study, please contact Sigcinweyinkosi Rikhotso on mobile number 072 670 0245 or via email gcinlwes@yahoo.com.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor ST Mampane on Telephone number 012 429 6543 or via email mampast@unisa.ac.za

Thank you for your support, I kindly await your response in connection with my request.

Yours Sincerely



S Rikhotso
UNISA Med Student




Professor ST Mampane
Supervisor

University of South Africa
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ANNEXURE C: CONSENT LETTER FOR PERMISSION FROM PRINCIPALS TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS



19 Bromvoel Road
Birch Acres Ext 5
Kempton Park
1618

Mobile: 072 670 0245

E-mail address: gciniwes@yahoo.com

02 November 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Sigcinweyinkosi Rikhotso, I am doing a research under the supervision of Professor ST Mampane, a Lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Leadership, towards a Masters of Education degree at the University of South Africa. I would like to request your school to participate in a study entitled, "The role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng".

The aims of the research project are:

- To establish ways in which SMTs can support learners for improved performance.
- To determine activities organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance.
- To determine the challenges faced by SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.
- To offer recommendations that might assist Township schools in sustaining improved learner performance.

As previously mentioned, the study will entail research at three selected Township High Schools in the Johannesburg East District. At each of the three selected schools, I would like to interview the Principal, one Deputy Principal, one HoD and one teacher. The study will entail the following steps in order to ensure a high level of professionalism.

- Interview with each participant will take approximately 20-30minutes
- Questions will be asked via the distance communication media either telephonic or distant face to face interviews, ensuring that COVID 19 safety procedures like social distancing, wearing of masks and sanitization are observed to avoid the Covid 19 pandemic infection.
- The type of interview method will depend on the consent that will be given by each participant and would like to digitally voice record the interviews to ensure that their responses are captured correctly.



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- Interviews will be conducted during lunch time and after hours to make sure that teaching and learning time is not compromised.
- Participation in the study is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time without any consequences.
- Names of all selected schools and participants will not be disclosed. I will ensure anonymity whereby each school or participant will not be identifiable in the research.

The study is expected to collect important information that will benefit the school in ensuring improved learner performance. Three Township schools have been selected in the Johannesburg East District and you are invited to participate in this study as you have work experience in the school where you are. From each selected school, I would like to interview the Principal, one Deputy Principal, one HoD and one teacher. Interviews with all participants will be conducted during lunchtime and after school hours so that the normal teaching and learning is not interrupted. The duration of each interview will be approximately 20-30 minutes.

There are no potential risks associated with the study. Furthermore, No injury is anticipated and in the case of emotional harm, the school psychologist at various schools will be informed. Participation is voluntary and therefore, no reimbursement or any incentive for participating in this research will be given.

The feedback will entail the following; after I complete the interview and processing data, I will hand deliver a copy of the individual transcripts to each participant in order for them to verify the accuracy of the details. Each participant will be allowed to give their views on the interpretations of their interview and be given an opportunity to vindicate the trustworthiness and credibility of their expressions in the study on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.

Thank you for your support, I kindly await your response in connection with my request.

Yours Sincerely



S Rikhotso
UNISA Med Student



Professor ST Mampane
Supervisor



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

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

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview.

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

Participant Name & Surname (Please print)

Participant Signature

Date

Sigcinweyinkosi Rikhotso

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print)

Researcher's signature

Date



ANNEXURE D: CONSENT LETTER FOR PERMISSION FROM PARTICIPANTS TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS



19 Bromvoel Road
Birch Acres Ext 5
Kempton Park
1618

Mobile: 072 670 0245

E-mail address: gcimlives@yahoo.com

02 November 2020

Dear Participant

I, Sigcinweyinkosi Rikhotso, I am doing a research under the supervision of Professor BT Mampane, a Lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Leadership, towards a Masters of Education degree at the University of South Africa. I would like to request your school to participate in a study entitled, "The role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg East District of Gauteng".

The aims of the research project are:

- To establish ways in which SMTs can support learners for improved performance.
- To determine activities organised by SMTs to ensure improved learner performance.
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- The type of interview method will depend on the consent that will be given by each participant and would like to digitally voice record the interviews to ensure that their responses are captured correctly.
- Interviews will be conducted during lunch time and after hours to make sure that teaching and learning time is not compromised.
- Participation in the study is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time without any consequences.



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- Names of all selected schools and participants will not be disclosed. I will ensure anonymity whereby each school or participant will not be identifiable in the research.

The study is expected to collect important information that will benefit the school in ensuring improved learner performance. Three Township schools have been selected in the Johannesburg East District and you are invited to participate in this study as you have work experience in the school where you are. From each selected school, I would like to interview the Principal, one Deputy Principal, one HoD and one teacher. Interviews with all participants will be conducted during lunchtime and after school hours so that the normal teaching and learning is not interrupted. The duration of each interview will be approximately 20-30 minutes.

There are no potential risks associated with the study. Furthermore, No injury is anticipated and in the case of emotional harm, the school psychologist at various schools will be informed. Participation is voluntary and therefore, no reimbursement or any incentive for participating in this research will be given.

The feedback will entail the following; after I complete the interview and processing data, I will hand deliver a copy of the individual transcripts to each participant in order for them to verify the accuracy of the details. Each participant will be allowed to give their views on the interpretations of their interview and be given an opportunity to vindicate the trustworthiness and credibility of their expressions in the study on the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance.

The study has received approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the college of Education, UNISA. You may have a copy of approval letter from me if you wish so.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings or should you require any further information or want to contact me about any aspect of the study, please contact Sigcinweyinkosi Rikhotso on mobile number 072 670 0245 or via email goziwe@yahoo.com.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor ST Mampone on Telephone number 012 429 6542 or via email mampont@unisa.ac.za

Thank you for your support, I kindly await your response in connection with my request.

Yours Sincerely



S Rikhotso
UNISA Med Student



Professor ST Mampone
Supervisor



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CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

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

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview.

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

_____	_____	_____
Participant Name & Surname (Please print)	Participant Signature	Date

<u>Siqcinweyinkosi Rikhotso</u>	_____	_____
Researcher's Name & Surname (please print)	Researcher's signature	Date



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Pretter Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
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ANNEXURE E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARTICIPANTS (PRINCIPAL, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL, HoD & TEACHER)

Main Research question

What is the role of SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance in the Johannesburg District of Gauteng?

Sub questions	Example questions	Responses by participants
What is the role of SMTs' understanding of improved learner performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What are your roles and responsibilities within the SMT? ➤ How often does SMT engage with teachers to enhance learner performance? ➤ What roles do you think the following stakeholders should take in improving learner performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Department of Education b) School management (SMT) c) Teachers d) Learners 	
How do SMTs support teaching and learning in ensuring improved performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is done to keep staff motivated and also arouse learners' interests in learning? ➤ What are the roles of SMT in supporting teaching and learning? ➤ How does the SMT communicate with teachers? 	
Which activities are organised SMTs to ensure improved learner performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What developmental programmes do you require or prefer? ➤ Did you receive any training and development on the current curriculum (CAPS)? ➤ Have you ever organised workshops for teachers? (Motivate) 	
What are the challenges faced SMTs in ensuring improved learner performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What enables a township school like yours to produce better results than other schools in similar circumstances? 	

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS REVIEW FORM

FOCUS AREA	RECORDS Y/N	COMMENT ON DOCUMENTS
1. SCHOOL POLICIES AND OTHER POLICIES		
1.1 Do you have a school policy and how often do you review it?		
1.2 Do you implement it correctly?		
2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS		
2.1 How often do SMT meet?		
2.2 How often do you hold staff meetings?		
2.3 What is normally the purpose of these meetings?		
3. ATTENDANCE OF TEACHERS AND LEARNERS		
3.1 How do you monitor the attendance of teachers?		
3.2 How do you manage absenteeism?		
3.3 How do you monitor the attendance of learners?		
3.4 How do you control class registers?		
3.5 Do you have an attendance policy for learners?		
4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SMTs		
4.1 How often do teachers get development from SMT?		
4.2 Are the SMTs aware of their roles and responsibilities?		
4.3 What steps has SMT taken to improved learner performance?		

ANNEXURE F: PARTICIPANT DATA SHEET



QUESTION	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B	SCHOOL C	CODES	THEMES & SUB-THEMES
What is the role of the following stakeholders in ensuring improved learner performance? (SMTs, Teachers, Learners & DOE)					THEME 1: Varying roles played by SMT members
1. What are your roles and responsibilities within the SMT?	<p><i>I am the accounting officer. When learners fail, I am the first person to be blamed as if I teach. My role in this school is to see that everyone does what is expected of them. (PRINCIPAL A)</i></p> <p><i>My role is to support SMT members by making sure that there's curriculum delivery. I need to monitor if different departments are doing what they must do in terms of teaching. (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL A)</i></p> <p><i>It is my responsibility to check if all set SBAs are quality assured by the HoD, there's proper marking, SBAs are moderated and then marks are captured correctly in the South African School</i></p>	<p><i>Besides ensuring that learners perform, I'm also responsible for monitoring the nutrition programme by being responsible in appointing and managing food handlers. (PRINCIPAL B).</i></p> <p><i>I make sure that HoDs have the school calendar, management plan for assessments, curriculum for each department, and management of Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs), subject policies and assessment guidelines. It is my responsibility to make sure that all these documents are also forwarded to the teachers. (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL B)</i></p> <p><i>As a Deputy Principal administration, I have to</i></p>	<p><i>My basic role is to coordinate the responsibilities of the SMT members. I ensure that I monitor that they are achieving the goals we set together as a team. I also advise them when they are facing challenges in their departments. (PRINCIPAL C)</i></p> <p><i>The first thing that we do when doing allocation is to ensure that we allocate correctly in terms of subject understanding. In that way, as SMT, we minimise the challenges that teachers might encounter in class. (PRINCIPAL C)</i></p> <p><i>The departmental heads have to ensure that each department has quality results at the end of the year. I don't need results</i></p>	<p>I am the accounting officer</p> <p>I ensure that I monitor that they are achieving the goals we set together as a team.</p> <p>My role is to support SMT members by making sure that there's curriculum delivery</p> <p>Manage the department thus teachers and ensure that allocation of duties is done for the educators</p> <p>Monitor attendance of teachers and learners Liaison officer</p>	<p>SUB-THEME 1.1:</p> <p>Principals, <i>accounting officer</i> <i>coordinator</i> <i>monitor</i></p> <p>Deputy Principals & Supports monitors administrator quality assurer monitor</p> <p>HoDs Educator supervisor Curriculum supporter Academic supporter Mentor</p>

	<p><i>Administration Management System (SASAMS). (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL A)</i></p> <p><i>My responsibility is to manage the department thus teachers and ensure that allocation of duties is done for the educators. I also ensure that the learners are being taught. (HoD A)</i></p>	<p><i>make sure that all administration issues are well attended to. I monitor absenteeism of learners by ensuring that registers are marked regularly and captured. I manage leave forms for teachers and make sure that I submit them to the District. (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL B)</i></p> <p><i>I ensure that learners are always in class and there's curriculum delivery. I give curriculum support to the teachers. (HoD B)</i></p>	<p><i>but I look at the quality in the results as one of the top performing schools in Alexandra Township. (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL C)</i></p> <p><i>One of my key responsibilities is communication on behalf of the Principal and the Deputy Principal. I make sure that I convey the messages from my managers. My role is to get engaged with learners even those in classes that I do not teach and ask about the areas they feel they have gaps. I need to be hands on rather than leading from aside. (HoD C)</i></p> <p><i>I encourage team teaching in my department which has led to good results. Teachers assist each other in topics where they feel that they are not able to teach them effectively. One who understands the topic better, offers assistance to teach it. (HoD C)</i></p>	<p>I'm also responsible for monitoring the nutrition programme</p> <p>The departmental heads have to ensure that each department has quality results at the end of the year.</p> <p>It is my responsibility to check if all set SBAs are quality assured by the HoD, there's proper marking, SBAs are moderated and then marks are captured</p> <p>I monitor absenteeism of learners by ensuring that registers are marked regularly and captured. I manage leave forms for teachers</p> <p>One of my key responsibilities is communication on behalf of the Principal and the Deputy Principal</p>	
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<p>2. What supportive role do you play towards teaching and learning?</p>	<p>We organise different workshops for example subject workshops for teachers. We once called officials for a safety and security workshop which was run by the Head Office for two Saturdays. We also called labour to guide Teachers on their do's and don'ts. (Principal A)</p> <p>Normally the Principal does have some workshops whereby he organises people from outside to come and assist. (HoD A)</p> <p>No, there's nothing like that except if an individual wants help, it would be given to them. As for saying it's a collective planning, it's a no. (Teacher A)</p> <p>The Department of Education gives support to schools by ensuring that they hold extra classes for learners. The Department</p>	<p>We have a developmental team especially to these new teachers. We train them on how to manage the class and on how to approach these learners. We train them on how to deal with problems in class. Even those that have been in the field for so long, we keep on revising the policies. (Principal B)</p> <p>Each department is assigned to an HoD, they manage a small department. If you are successful it means the HoD is giving enough support to them. (Teacher B)</p> <p>We try to get Teachers grievance so that we can address them and challenges are dealt at an earlier stage. (HoD B)</p> <p>The Department of Education organises SSIP which focusses on Grade 12s. The Government is now investing more on these programmes. The</p>	<p>The type of support that we get internally is that they give us information that they get from the facilitators. (Teacher C)</p> <p>Internally, we encourage different departments to have their own departmental meetings whereby the departmental heads can share information. We share the frustrations that we have and we resolve them in brief meetings and staff meetings. If we have personal issues, we address them in the Principal and Deputy Principal's offices to resolve some of the challenges. (Deputy Principal C)</p> <p>We give them all what they need in terms of resources. If its material that the school needs to buy, we buy it. (Principal C)</p> <p>We do not normally open when others are opening but we open few days before other schools can</p>	<p>We train them on how to manage the class and on how to approach these learners</p> <p>We organise different workshops for example subject workshops for teachers.</p> <p>The type of support that we get internally is that they give us information that they get from the facilitators.</p> <p>Normally the Principal does have some workshops whereby he organises people from outside to come and assist</p> <p>Internally, we encourage different departments to have their own departmental meetings whereby the departmental heads can share information. We share the frustrations</p>	<p>Theme 2 SMT support towards teaching and learning</p> <p>SUB-THEME 2.1:</p> <p>Principals, -Organise workshops -We train the teachers -give resources</p> <p>Deputy Principals & -encourage departmental meetings -facilitation of extra classes by department</p> <p>HoDs -Organise external people to facilitate workshops -Listen and solve grievances -compensation of teachers</p> <p>Teachers -No workshops -HoD manages their department -we get information</p>
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	<p>of Education does SSIP for those critical subjects like Maths, Science and Accounting. (HoD A)</p> <p>If you stay until 5pm, you will still find some learners studying. Some of the learners that are studying are the ones that I talk to in class and tell them that if they leave at 2pm what are they going to do at home because I know they stay in one rooms with no space to study and you cannot control what your neighbours do, they have their music blasting and so on. (Principal A)</p>	<p>Department also funds these programmes which also includes camps and holiday classes. These programmes have improved the results of the learners. The Government supplies the school with the exam relate material. Parents are also supporting the programme as they are a big yardstick to the results of the country. Learners focus on these co-exam related areas during these programmes. Learners attend their extra classes in the afternoons and during weekends. (Deputy Principal B)</p>	<p>open so that learners can adjust from being in Grade 11 to being in Grade 12. When other learners come in, they have already adjusted and know themselves as matriculates and are able to push harder. (Principal C)</p> <p>When educators come for extra lessons, they are being compensated as little as R100 per lesson besides the money they get for transport. (HoD C)</p>	<p>we resolve them in brief meetings and staff meetings</p> <p>Each department is assigned to an HoD, they manage a small department</p> <p>No, there's nothing like that except if an individual wants help, it would be given to them</p> <p>We try to get Teachers grievance so that we can address them</p> <p>We give them all what they need in terms of resources</p> <p>The Department of Education gives support to schools by ensuring that they hold extra classes for learners</p> <p>The Department of Education organises SSIP which focusses on Grade 12s.</p>	
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3. SMT engagement with teachers to enhance learner performance	<p><i>I meet the HoDs on Mondays, then the rest of the staff on Tuesdays. In between, the HoDs must make sure that they meet their teachers so that they can give genuine feedback to teachers as well as the Principal. (Principal A)</i></p> <p><i>Usually there's a management plan whereby the SMT members must submit their reports for their departments. Those reports will enable us to see the gaps and make follow ups with the SMT member to see how we can close the gaps together. For example, when monitoring the ATP and we see that they are behind with it, strategies to catch up are derived. (Deputy Principal A)</i></p>	<p><i>We conduct meetings with HoDs to give us problems that they are encountering. We then see how we can assist teachers. (Principal B)</i></p> <p><i>They engage with teachers more often because they will first have their own meetings and thereafter we have morning briefings at least once a week. We also have departmental meetings where we discuss issues. (Teacher B)</i></p>	<p><i>We meet the staff every Monday and Thursday for morning briefings so that the issues can be dealt with on time. I also encourage the HoDs to hold their departmental meetings. (Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>I would say that the SMT does not engage with us as teachers more often to check what teachers need. We don't usually have staff meetings, we have maybe one, once a year but there is a suggestion box where we put our concerns and suggestions. (Teacher C).</i></p> <p><i>Okay, actually, we have got a year planner, I have got a year planner in which on the specific date which I'm meeting with the</i></p>	<p>We conduct meetings. We meet the staff every Monday and Thursday for morning briefings</p> <p>They will first have their own meetings and thereafter we have morning briefings at least once a week. We also have departmental meetings</p> <p>the engagement by SMTs happens during meetings</p> <p>I would say that the SMT does not engage with us</p> <p>Usually there's a management plan whereby the SMT members must submit</p>	<p>Theme 3: Identification and resolution of problems</p> <p>Sub-theme 3.1 Engagement of SMTs with teachers to enhance improved Learner performance</p> <p>Principals Staff meetings Problem identification</p> <p>Deputy principals Morning briefing meetings Monitoring plans Identification of gaps Strategising on addressing gaps</p> <p>HoDs Meetings Briefings</p>

	<p><i>In most cases, the engagement by SMTs happens during meetings whereby it's just one on one not necessarily meetings. (Teacher A)</i></p> <p><i>Uh, Normally it, we take it to our uh respective departments, but as a SMT, we meet every week on Tuesdays. And from there, we need to go back to our educators and respective departments, but normally we have our briefings twice in a week just to make educators aware of what they need to do, just to remind them of their duties. (HOD A)</i></p>		<p><i>educators. I will give an example, like each and every time we have got a monthly meeting. Besides the monthly meeting that we are meeting the whole department, I make sure that I collect the books and manage the books on a weekly basis to see the gaps where they are struggling on each and everything. (HOD C)</i></p> <p><i>We recover challenges everyday, the first one is absenteeism. Most learners, you will find that they don't come to school everyday. Second one is a challenge of bullying, especially senior phase. (Deputy Principal)</i></p>	<p>their reports for their departments.</p>	<p>Checking learner's books</p> <p>Teachers Discussion of problems</p>
<p>4. What enables a township school like yours to produce better results than other schools in similar circumstances?</p> <p>4.1 What can you say about learner attendance in this</p>	<p><i>It's also a challenge, there are too many absenteeism. Dodging of classes even if they are within the school premises, they hide in the toilets. (Teacher A)</i></p> <p><i>In terms of attendance, I would say 90% do attend. Learner attendance is not much of a problem. (HoD A)</i></p>	<p><i>Attendance is poor as most learners come from single parents households where they end up having responsibilities of taking care of their siblings. We have a high rate of dropouts as early as Grade 8. Another challenge contributing to non-attendance is poor support from the community. No</i></p>	<p><i>We discover challenges every day. The first one is absenteeism of learners and this affects our results. We have tried to engage with parents who try and assist us as a school by making sure that learners attend school. (Deputy Principal C)</i></p>	<p>The first one is absenteeism of learners</p> <p>Alexandra learners they don't attend. It seems some of these learners' families are headed by these learners.</p> <p>Learner attendance is bad. There are learners who are absent for no</p>	<p>Theme : 4. Challenges faced by SMTs in Township schools</p> <p>Sub-theme 4.1 Learner attendance</p> <p>Principal -high absenteeism - don't attend</p>

<p>school and how does it affect learner performance?</p>	<p><i>It fluctuates, some moments you have good attendance, some moments the attendance is very low. We don't have the reason why learners are not in school. The main problem that we have is late coming. (Deputy Principal A)</i></p>	<p><i>one asks a learner why they are not in school. Everyone is minding their own business in the community. (Deputy Principal B)</i></p> <p><i>Yah! Most learners come from disadvantaged homes. Parents leave for work early in the morning and come back very late. Parents will assume that the child has gone to school. There is no parent that pushes the learners to come early to school and there is no one who is pushing them to do their work. (Teacher B)</i></p> <p><i>For attendance, I don't want to lie to you, Alexandra learners they don't attend. It seems some of these learners' families are headed by these learners. Let me say 90% of the learners are just coming to school to use the toilets, to use the small space to play football. (Principal B)</i></p>	<p><i>Yah! We are affected by learner attendance due to pregnancies, due to challenges the learners experience at home. Some will tell you that the parents were fighting or they did not have water or electricity. (Teacher C)</i></p> <p><i>With us we don't have a huge problem in terms of learner attendance. On a monthly basis when we analyse, we have 3% absenteeism which is not bad. On a bad term a maximum of 5%. (Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>It's not a challenge especially at the beginning of the year. We only have a challenge towards the exam where attendance is 80-90%. (Deputy Principal C)</i></p>	<p>apparent reason. We do have a policy in place that states that if you are absent for 10 consecutive days, you will be deregistered. So they become absent for nine days and then will be present on the 10th day.</p> <p>With us we don't have a huge problem in terms of learner attendance.</p> <p>It fluctuates, some moments you have good attendance, some moments the attendance is very low. We don't have the reason why learners are not in school. The main problem that we have is late coming</p>	<p>-come from child headed families -no huge problem -attendance is good</p> <p>Deputy Principal -it fluctuates - poor attendance -poor support from community - high absenteeism -not a challenge at the beginning of the year</p> <p>HoD -not much of a problem -it is bad -kids self-motivated to attend</p> <p>Teacher -too many absenteeism Dodging of classes -poor attendance Challenges faced by learners at home -no commitment from parents</p>
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<p>4.2 What can you say about Parental involvement in this school?</p>	<p><i>Parental involvement is not there, as a result parents will wake up and go to work and a child is left alone. The child decides if I should go to school or not and nobody will make a follow up in terms of the child going to school. Parents do not monitor the books, there is no parental involvement at all and that is our downfall. You call them to a meeting, they do not come. (Deputy Principal A)</i></p> <p><i>They are active when Grade 8 are new and when we call meetings, the hall is full, Eeeh! As soon as they go to Grade 9, the numbers</i></p>	<p><i>Parents take their work more serious than the child's educational activities. We do not get random visits from parents coming to check learner progress. We only see them when they come to collect reports. When you invite parents, only 10% come or they just send somebody to stand in for them. (Teacher B)</i></p> <p><i>Our community is too hard. Some they don't even know our school. Parents just ask other people to enrol their kids. They make affidavits that they are guardians of the kids so that they can be in the SGB. To them being</i></p>	<p><i>Fortunate enough we have the support from the parents. SGB is more involved than any other stakeholders. They are the ones who initiate the parents meeting. Every time when we issue out reports they are always there. Like right now when you go to the gate, we have the chairperson of the SGB who always help us with the screening and checking of uniform. They usually search these learners, they come early in the morning and during lunch as we have challenges with learners smoking in the toilets. (Deputy Principal C)</i></p>	<p>Fortunate enough we have the support from the parents.</p> <p>Parental involvement is not there, as a result parents will wake up and go to work and a child is left alone</p> <p>Parental involvement is bad because if you give a learner a call letter, the parents do not come. We don't know if the learner gave the parent the call letter or not. When we phone the parents, they tell you that they are going to work, their bosses don't want to give them</p>	<p>Sub-theme 4.2 Parental involvement</p> <p>Principal -active in grade 8 -don't care about education</p> <p>Deputy Principal -it is not there -child headed homes Above 50%</p> <p>HoD -at the beginning of the year -it is poor</p> <p>Teacher -it is bad -value work than education</p>

	<p>are little and they re-emerge when they get to Grade 12 because now they are interested because their children are completing. (Principal A)</p> <p>Yah! Our parents we only see them at the end of the year. We call a meeting, they don't attend. We don't know whether because they don't stay with their kids but come end of the year, they are all here. (HoD A)</p>	<p>in the SGB is like coming for money. Since I came here, our school is the biggest in the province but parents who come are less than 200. Parents don't care about the education of their children. We can have a meeting for SGB election only to find that 7 parents are here. That is why our SGB members are not elected but are just elected because they are the ones who came for the meeting. (Principal B)</p> <p>Parental involvement is poor. We only see them at the end of the year when you are giving out reports. They only come to ask how their child failed, but it will be the first time seeing them. (HoD B)</p> <p>Most learners come from child headed families, single parents who do not have fatherly figures and most parents fear their children. When they are invited to school, they don't come for example you</p>	<p>We have a little percentage of parents who are not adhering to our code of conduct. You will still find their kids being late, then you call them, they are not coming. We encourage parents that when they see the learners at home, they must report to us so that the learners can be aware that it's the school and the parents who can assist the learner and this changes the learners' behaviour to become better. (Principal C)</p> <p>Parental involvement is bad because if you give a learner a call letter, the parents do not come. We don't know if the learner gave the parent the call letter or not. When we phone the parents, they tell you that they are going to work, their bosses don't want to give them leave. Parents only come to school during December when they have to fetch the report. (Teacher C)</p>	<p>leave. Parents only come to school during December when they have to fetch the report</p> <p>Parents take their work more serious than the child's educational activities. We do not get random visits from parents coming to check learner progress. We only see them when they come to collect reports.</p> <p>Parents don't care about the education of their children. We can have a meeting for SGB election only to find that 7 parents are here. Most learners come from child headed families, single parents who do not have fatherly figures and most parents fear their children</p>	
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		<p>invite a parent and end up having three parents coming before the real parent comes. Learners rent parents to stand in place of their parents. (Deputy Principal B)</p>	<p>Attendance is always above 50% when we call parents' meetings and executive members from the SGB always take part. (Deputy Principal C)</p>		
4.3 How is the school affected by crime?	<p>Yah! There's a lot of burglaries. Whenever we buy, they break in and steal. We are even afraid to invest on resources. Like our computer lab was emptied, they took everything. They took computers with all the information, yes, we are affected. (Principal A)</p> <p>Yah! We have a lot of burglaries in the school like for example we don't have enough smartboards which were installed. All Grade 12 classrooms they don't have smart boards as we speak because they were stolen. Admin block, they broke in and stole the monitors. (Teacher A)</p> <p>There is a lot of gangsterism in the community. Our learners</p>	<p>In this community and this school, crime is very high. There's a lot of gangsterism. One of the learner was beaten because she was saying that she just want to leave this gangsterism style. She was beaten for that to say how she can leave when we have already protected you. Sometimes these learners are not attending. As we are speaking you might find that they are outside the gate now, and there may be three groups waiting for our learners. (Principal B)</p> <p>There's a high rate of gangsterism from girls and boys. Some start fighting from outside the school and they get stabbed or end up being arrested by</p>	<p>This is serious. Most of the times we buy our resources, they come and take. The break-ins which have been happening has cost us a lot. Your laptops and computers will just be stolen. We try to involve the Community Policing Forum (CPF) but it's like they are not able to deal with crime, they are trying but they are not winning. They steal the computers and it says you must buy the new ones. The information is lost and the money you were supposed to use it for something else, you direct it to buy what has been stolen. It has a negative impact on what we are doing. (Principal C)</p> <p>Oh yes, we have been affected by burglaries, they used to steal the computers</p>	<p>There's a lot of burglaries. Whenever we buy, they break in and steal.</p> <p>There is a lot of gangsterism in the community. Our learners are part of the gangsters.</p> <p>There's a lot of drugs around here. There's drug and substance abuse.</p> <p>The system is not giving any support</p> <p>Learners are gambling inside the school. Bullying is very high in the school and some learners end up resorting to dropping out of school.</p>	<p>Sub-theme 4.3 Crime</p> <p>Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -lot of burglaries -break-ins -no support from SAPS -gambling -bullying <p>Deputy Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -gangsterism -drugs and substance abuse -stealing -Selling and using drugs -burglaries -computers stolen <p>HoD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -theft in class -Smart board components <p>Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -lot of burglaries

	<p>are part of the gangsters. You find learners in the same school belonging to different gangsters and fight within the school premises. (Deputy Principal A)</p> <p>There's a lot of drugs around here. There's drug and substance abuse. Learners are used by others to sell drugs to other learners. (Deputy Principal A)</p> <p>There is a lot of stealing among learners. If you have a nice bag, they steal it and sell it to learners in other schools. Learners' cellphones are taken by people who sell them. (Deputy Principal A)</p>	<p>the police. Learners are not safe amongst each other. (Deputy Principal B)</p> <p>Our learners are used as drug mules by some members of the community. There's too much drug and alcohol abuse. These learners are selling and also using drugs. A lot of female students are now taking drugs more than male students. Behavioural problems are now emanating from girls than boys. Overall performance of the school is affected by these challenges. (Deputy Principal B)</p> <p>Another thing since the Government legalised marijuana, the learners are using and even selling drugs. (Principal B)</p> <p>The system is not giving any support for example the learners abusing dagga, if they are caught with it, they cannot be executed because of the</p>	<p>and the Laptops. We also have a workshop where we put tools for Civil Technology, they steal those tools, and break the alarm and we had to repair and buy again the instruments. (Deputy Principal C)</p>	<p>-have not experienced any crime</p>
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		<p><i>probably in the Township. (HoD B)</i></p> <p><i>Learners are gambling inside the school. Bullying is very high in the school and some learners end up resorting to dropping out of school. Because of the behaviour of learners, teachers fear them. (Deputy Principal B)</i></p>			
4.4 How do you deal with these challenges to ensure improved learner performance?		<p><i>Every Friday we make sure that we distribute some food parcels to boost the learners. Those who can't get food just come to get food and attend for the sake of lunch. That is why even after school from 3 o'clock to 5 o'clock, we will be busy dishing out food to these learners, only to find those who were absent from class are now coming for late nutrition. (Principal B)</i></p>	<p><i>In terms of attendance, when we call parents meetings, we emphasize on the issue of attendance and the importance. That has assisted us in ensuring that it is not that bad. We remind parents during parents meeting about our code of conduct, issues of discipline and issues of attendance. If Teachers come to school and learners not at school, it ends up being a fruitless exercise, so we need all of them to be part of this occasion, coming on time and teaching. (Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>We are trying, we have even hired the community</i></p>	<p>We distribute some food parcels to boost the learners.</p> <p>In terms of attendance, when we call parents meetings, we emphasize on the issue of attendance and the importance.</p> <p>We are trying, we have even hired the community members to guide the school as a way of trying to combat crime</p>	<p>Sub-theme 4.4 Dealing with challenges</p> <p>Principal -</p> <p>Deputy Principal -</p> <p>HoD -</p> <p>Teacher -</p>

			<p><i>members to guide the school as a way of trying to combat crime. (Principal C)</i></p>		
5. What is done to keep staff motivated and also arouse learners' interests in learning?	<p><i>Eish, I'm going to be honest on that one. We don't look at the side of the Teachers, we only focus on motivating learners. (Deputy Principal A)</i></p> <p><i>They only try to motivate learners by giving them awards for recognition. They have tried but it's not sustainable. Learners were once awarded and given certificated of achievement. (Teacher A)</i></p> <p><i>We need acknowledge as leadership if the staff is doing something that is good, you need to acknowledge, sometime there must be incentives as an extrinsive motivation. (Principal A)</i></p> <p><i>Some of the SMT would offer extrinsic motivation to learners and to educators by buying them gift for their hard work. We have had some awards for</i></p>	<p><i>Each term when we close we have a small party to appreciate them, then a bigger party at the end of the year. We take them to buffet. We once gave the USBs of up to 16GB. Also, we normally keep on appreciating them in assembly for the great work they have done. (Principal B)</i></p> <p><i>Nothing much is done for the teachers. We only have the National Teachers awards whereby only 12 Teachers are recognised nationwide. I think the district should start recognising great teachers in their districts. Nothing is being done to appraise Teachers for their work. It's just a matter of fear when you have a deadline and then you have to meet it. (HoD B)</i></p> <p><i>We promote competition in the school. We have</i></p>	<p><i>We encourage our educators to do more. (Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>We take out teachers to enjoy themselves that we have made it. Every year the SMT and the SGB takes the school out to have lunch and the school is sponsoring that. Since we are always number 1, we have most NGOs and supporters like Vincent Tshabalala. They supply the school with ingredients for tea and we share amongst ourselves as a school. (Deputy Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>There are appraisals which are happening, for example certificates are being issued to teachers who perform well. Each and every year, when we become number 1 in Alexandra schools, the SGB organises a function for celebration. (HoD C)</i></p>	<p>We take out teachers to enjoy themselves that we have made it</p> <p>We take the educators for mind reflection courses. We invite motivational speakers for both teachers and learners</p> <p>There are appraisals which are happening, for example certificates are being issued to teachers who perform well</p> <p>We don't look at the side of the Teachers, we only focus on motivating learners.</p> <p>They only try to motivate learners by giving them awards for recognition</p> <p>There is a Vincent Tshabalala bursary scheme that start</p>	<p>Theme 5. Motivation of staff and learners</p> <p>Sub-theme</p> <p>Principals, -closing party for staff -encourage teachers -- -must be incentives -acknowledge hardwork</p> <p>Deputy Principals & -No motivation of teachers -Support from NGOs -take out teachers -extra mural activities Mind reflection courses for educators</p> <p>HoDs -Nothing done for teacher -gifts for teachers -teacher appraisals and certificates for teachers -incentives for learners</p>

	<p>learners which was a form of motivation to them. (HoD A)</p>	<p>awards each term that are encouraging the learners to compete so that they can be amongst the Top Ten who are going to be recognised. (Teacher B)</p> <p>There is a Vincent Tshabalala bursary scheme that start recognising the learners from grade 10-12. They identify them and give them gifts from grade 10. In grade 12, they take them to any University that they want and pay for everything. They even give them laptops. (Teacher B)</p> <p>We take the educators for mind reflection courses. We invite motivational speakers for both teachers and learners. (Deputy Principal B)</p>	<p>The Top ten from each grade, each term are given awards in order to motivate them and the most improved learners are also given a token of appreciation to motivate them. (HoD C)</p> <p>We do not only concentrate on teaching and learning, we give them leisure time where they can have extra mural activities. (Deputy Principal C)</p> <p>Because we are in a disadvantaged community, the school looks out for our learners. Early in the morning, they have breakfast to make sure that they kept motivated. (HoD C)</p> <p>We are part of the Vincent Tshabalala trust fund. They normally award our learners based on their results. The bursary only focuses on grade 9-12 learners. (Principal C)</p>	<p>recognising the learners from grade 10-12.</p> <p>Early in the morning, they have breakfast to make sure that they kept motivated</p>	<p>-breakfast for learners</p> <p>Teachers -learner motivation -top ten learners</p>
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<p>6. Did you receive any training and development on the current curriculum (CAPS)?</p>	<p>Yes, I was trained for CAPS and we received certificate of attendance and follow ups were made as we went on. (HoD A)</p> <p>The Department did give us training. It was not specifically for the School but for the entire District. Each facilitator from the District was providing the training for their particular subjects for example, Maths facilitators were training Maths Teachers on CAPS. (Teacher A)</p> <p>All teachers went for training and then from time to time the District calls teachers for meetings so that the new developments can be given</p>	<p>You are talking to a national examiner. I have been trained and we developed the CAPS Document at DBE. After that I came and trained the whole GDE educators. After that I trained my teachers at school level where they don't understand. (Principal B)</p> <p>I was trained at University and there were no follow up trainings. (Teacher B)</p> <p>Training was provided. We do have a secondary improvement plan for Educators where they go for a weekend away. They are mostly assisted in particular topics of the Term. Support is given to teachers when it comes to</p>	<p>I was trained at University. The Department train Teachers on content, they organise workshops twice per quarter where Teachers are booked out for a weekend. Training is on content delivery, developing assessments and assessing learners. (HoD C)</p> <p>No, I did not get ant CAPS training. There were some trainings for subject workshops. (Teacher C)</p> <p>Yes, we did go and there are a number of follow up trainings which are provided by the Department. This year the Department had to suspend a number of trainings due to COVID 19.</p>	<p>All teachers went for training and then from time to time the District calls teachers for meetings so that the new developments can be given to Teachers.</p> <p>I was trained at University and there were no follow up trainings</p> <p>No, I did not get ant CAPS training. There were some trainings for subject workshops</p> <p>No follow up trainings were made and certification to those who were trained</p> <p>Follow ups are there whereby, the training is</p>	<p>Theme 6 Training on current curriculum (CAPS) SUB-THEME :</p> <p>Principals, -Organise workshops -We train the teachers -give resources</p> <p>Deputy Principals & -encourage departmental meetings -facilitation of extra classes by department</p> <p>HoDs -Organise external people to facilitate workshops -Listen and solve grievances -compensation of teachers</p>

	<p>to Teachers. (Deputy Principal A)</p> <p>Mmmh! I don't remember if there was follow up because from that training we were supplied with the book, manual to assist if you forgot on what is supposed to be done in terms of assessments. (Teacher A)</p>	<p>how CAPS and content gives. (HoD B)</p> <p>Training was provided to teachers but not to the new intake. No follow up trainings were made and certification to those who were trained. (Deputy Principal B)</p>	<p>The department was still doing that by integrating what we have in terms of CAPS and in terms of ITC so that the Educators can know what they can be able to offer to Learners. (Principal C)</p> <p>Yes, there was training through workshops. Follow ups are there whereby, the training is a weekend away on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. They book a Hotel for them and they have phases. We also make sure that new Teachers coming from Universities fill a form that they were not trained and all the new members do the workshop. (Deputy Principal C)</p>	<p>a weekend away on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. They book a Hotel for them and they have phases. We also make sure that new Teachers coming from Universities fill a form that they were not trained and all the new members do the workshop.</p>	<p>Teachers -No workshops -HoD manages their</p>
<p>7. What developmental programmes do you require or prefer?</p>	<p>Some SMTs do not hold meetings as they should, and maybe a leadership course will do. (Principal A) SMT need support and guidance. From time to time, they need to be reminded of their responsibilities. (Deputy Principal A)</p>	<p>As we are moving to the Forth Industrial Revolution, we are very fortunate that we have smart boards and we get training regularly every week. Each and every Teacher has a laptop, which they are also given support on how to use those laptops. Those who can't use technology, can</p>	<p>Yes, I think there are developmental programmes needed especially on content delivery. In E.M.S development is needed on the financial part and the Economics part in Grade 9. Also, on discipline, classroom management</p>	<p>Some SMTs do not hold meetings as they should, and maybe a leadership course will do they need to be reminded of their responsibilities Development is needed on the financial part and</p>	<p>Theme 7 SMT support towards teaching and learning SUB-THEME: Principals, -Organise workshops -We train the teachers -give resources</p>

	<p>One of the trainings that we require is the SASAMS training. Some of my colleagues need that training for the school timetable. (HoD A)</p>	<p>go to the ICT committee and they can assist with that. (HoD B)</p> <p>Our Teachers require training on Power point presentation. (Teacher B)</p> <p>Teachers and managers require an ICT training. (Deputy Principal B)</p> <p>One of the biggest training we need is ICT training as technology changes. For example, during Covid time, in other schools they were able to complete the syllabus but us we were only able to rely on WhatsApp. So we really need training on the use of virtual classes. (Teacher B)</p>	<p>and how to discipline learners. (Teacher C) The Covid 19 virus opened our eyes and made us realise that we cannot rely on old things. At the current moment, we are working on making sure that we develop communication between Learners, educators and the SMT. Some staff have been trained but some still require training. (Principal C) We need development, like Panyaza Lesufi has introduced the use of smart boards and tablets. We need Wi-Fi so as to use those gadgets. As a school, we also appreciate all Teachers to have laptops so that we move away from old methods and use technologies. Fortunately, we have people from Mathew Goniwe being sent to school through the District. They come every Term 2 to train Teachers. People from Rain Logistics are also sent by the Department to train</p>	<p>the Economics part in Grade 9. Also, on discipline, classroom management and how to discipline learners. Our Teachers require training on Power point presentation. Teachers and managers require an ICT training. we require is the SASAMS training Fortunately, we have people from Mathew Goniwe being sent to school through the District. They come every Term 2 to train Teachers. People from Rain Logistics are also sent by the Department to train Teachers about the Technology</p>	<p>Deputy Principals & -encourage departmental meetings -facilitation of extra classes by department HoDs -Organise external people to facilitate workshops -Listen and solve grievances -compensation of teachers Teachers -No workshops -HoD manages their</p>
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			Teachers about the Technology. (Deputy Principal C)		
8. Have you ever organised workshops for teachers? (Motivate)	<p>Most workshops are facilitated by the District. (Deputy Principal A)</p> <p>There are no workshops, the only workshops that have been organised are relying on the District which are 3-4 times in a year. (Teacher A)</p> <p>We have been having workshops fortnightly on Thursdays. Specifically it was dealing with ICT to be able to be at the level where other companies and communities are moving in. We organised and were given a personnel by Mathew Goniwe who comes in every Thursday and is able to assist our staff members. (Principal C)</p> <p>I will be training them on how to invigilate the internal classes, I'm talking about Grade 8-11 who will be starting tests that should be formal so that</p>	<p>Most workshops are organised by the Department of Education and they vary with different subjects and they are held 1st, 2nd and 3rd Term, quarterly for Grade 12's. We organise the whole school evaluation workshop. (Deputy Principal B)</p> <p>Internally, if a second workshop is needed, we offer the second workshop, depending on the needs within the school. (HoD B)</p> <p>There are workshops organised for Teachers like the ICT workshop. They are not that enforced like CAPS workshops where we have to implement in classes. They are attended by choice and the attendance is poor. (Teacher B)</p>	<p>Mmmh, I think there was a workshop on invigilation, I only remember this one for now. (Teacher C)</p> <p>We do have workshops for the Teachers through the IQMS done by the senior for example, if it's the Teacher, it will be done by the Departmental head. (Deputy Principal C)</p> <p>Internally, workshops are done departmentally for example workshops on IQMS and LTSM. (HoD C)</p> <p>We have been having workshops fortnightly, on Thursdays specifically it was dealing with ITC to be able to be at the level where other companies and communities are moving in. we organised and were given a person by Mathew Goniwe who comes every Thursdays and is able to assist our staff</p>	<p>There are no workshops, the only workshops that have been organised are relying on the District</p> <p>There are workshops organised for Teachers like the ICT workshop.</p> <p>I will be training them on how to invigilate the internal classes</p> <p>We do have workshops for the Teachers through the IQMS done by the senior</p> <p>Internally, workshops are done departmentally for example workshops on IQMS and LTSM</p>	<p>Theme 8 Organised workshops for teachers SUB-THEME 8.1:</p> <p>Principals, -Organise workshops -We train the teachers -give resources</p> <p>Deputy Principals & -encourage departmental meetings -facilitation of extra classes by department -outsourcing ICT person</p> <p>HoDs -Organise external people to facilitate workshops -Listen and solve grievances -compensation of teachers</p> <p>Teachers -No workshops -HoD manages their</p>

	education should not lose its value. I was also training Teachers to be invigilators of Grade 12 classes. (Principal A)		members. (Deputy Principal)		
9. How does the SMT communicate with teachers?	<p>We have morning briefings every Monday and Thursdays where we share and we have staff meetings once a month. We use circulars, we have a communication book where everyone signs as proof that they have received the information. (Principal A)</p> <p>We have created a WhatsApp group for the school but their communication mainly should be through their departmental meetings. (Deputy Principal A)</p> <p>We have created a WhatsApp group for the school but their communication mainly should be through their departmental meetings. (Deputy Principal A)</p>	<p>We normally send a memorandum through WhatsApp for educators and for the whole staff and a WhatsApp for the SMT. We also make use of the Facebook page of the school. (Principal B)</p> <p>We also have emergency briefings, if there's a matter at hand that needs to be discussed. (HOD B)</p> <p>We have moved to the times. We have got a WhatsApp group for the entire school, formed by the Principal. All the SMT and the Teachers are supposed to be there. When the Principal receives information, circulars are sent immediately to the group. (HoD B)</p> <p>We use circulars, social media, emails, WhatsApp group of the school,</p>	<p>In 2020 we have a challenge of Covid 19 where we have to respect social distancing. Previously, we usually have staff meetings once a term and briefings on Monday and Friday. We have an informal one where we have a school group chat, especially for when we have emergencies we use a WhatsApp group chat. We also have a suggestion box that we put up in front of the admin block. (Deputy Principal C)</p> <p>Previously, we used to rely on the book where we write the message and the message is circulated by a book. Now due to Covid 19, we have resorted to technology and we have a WhatsApp group for staff and another one for the SMT. We have a notice</p>	<p>We have morning briefings every Monday and Thursdays where we share and we have staff meetings once a month</p> <p>We use circulars, social media, emails, WhatsApp group of the school. We also make use of the Facebook page of the school</p> <p>Communication mainly should be through their departmental meetings</p> <p>In terms of effective communication, I think there is no effective communication here at school. Some of the things we hear them in the corridors</p>	<p>Theme 9 Effective communication SUB-THEME:</p> <p>Principals, -Organise workshops -We train the teachers -give resources</p> <p>Deputy Principals & -encourage departmental meetings -facilitation of extra classes by department</p> <p>HoDs -Organise external people to facilitate workshops -Listen and solve grievances -compensation of teachers</p> <p>Teachers -No workshops -HoD manages their</p>

		<p>Teachers and departments. The school is abreast with each information. (Deputy Principal B)</p>	<p>board at the entrance of the admin. (HoD C)</p> <p>The SMT communicates with us by using morning briefings at least once a week. They also encourage departmental meetings. The school also make use of a WhatsApp group to communicate with us. (Teacher C).</p> <p>In terms of effective communication, I think there is no effective communication here at school. Some of the things we hear them in the corridors. Like now, the setting of exams to be submitted, there was no formal communication pertaining to it. Information was heard in corridors. The school needs to improve on effective communication. (Teacher C).</p>		
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<p>10. What roles do you think the following stakeholders should take in improving learner performance:</p> <p>a) Department of Education b) Teachers c) Learners</p>	<p>The role of the DoE is to provide learner material and also monitor those materials in terms of being used correctly by the schools. (Teacher A)</p> <p>The DoE have people called the subject experts, they always come to school and when we need help they are always available to provide it. The DoE guides and mentors some of the teachers who may be struggling in certain topics. They also make resources and materials available for example study guides and materials. The DoE also conducts workshops to make sure that all teachers in the District are on the same page. (Principal A)</p> <p>Teachers must make sure that they implement the curriculum and make sure that they cover the Annual Teaching Plan. (Teacher A)</p> <p>Teachers must just honour their periods to ensure that</p>	<p>The role of the DoE is to make sure that they are giving enough resources to the schools. They must make sure that the teachers' are teaching the relevant syllabus. (Principal B)</p> <p>They are the main stakeholder of the schools. They give us the whole support in terms of resources, to Section 21 schools. They must provide funds to be utilised by the LTSM. (Deputy Principal B)</p> <p>I think the Department of Education needs to be hands on in Township schools. Most schools must be built as classes are overcrowded. It becomes difficult for the teacher to assess and give feedback to a class of 60 Learners within the three days mentioned. Teachers are not only faced with overcrowded classes but they are also overloaded with work. The DOE needs to employ more teachers to</p>	<p>The DoE should ensure that resources are available, either they fund or supply the resources. The resources that I'm looking at are the material ones and the human resources. The moment we have all that that, it becomes easy for the school to achieve better results. (Principal C)</p> <p>We have a challenge of infrastructure. Our enrolment is too big and we don't have enough classes. Automatically, we are going to have a challenge of classrooms, furniture and textbooks. These challenges will be around the first term of the year where you will find that learners are sharing desks. This problem is because our school is the only school that is offering Xitsonga hence we are forced to admit those learners at the beginning of the year. (Deputy Principal C)</p>	<p>The DoE should ensure that resources are available, either they fund or supply the resources. Provide learner material and also monitor those materials in terms of being used correctly by the schools.</p> <p>The DOE needs to employ more teachers to solve this problem of overcrowding.</p> <p>The DoE guides and mentors some of the teachers who may be struggling in certain topics</p> <p>The Department of Education must provide training in different subjects and that assists our educators' in terms of in-service training.</p> <p>This training will make sure that all schools have the Personal Protective Equipment</p>	<p>Enhancing Teacher support for improved performance</p> <p>Sub-theme 1.3: Role of DoE, Teachers and Learners to improve Learner performance</p> <p>Principals DOE -avail resources -fund or supply resources - give enough resources to schools -train teachers Teachers -teach Give support Engage learners Learners -come to school regularly -study</p> <p>Deputy principals DOE - must give support -solve infrastructure challenges</p>
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	<p>they are on time, they try to cover the syllabus and even go an extra mile assisting learners that can be classified as slow learners. (HoD A)</p> <p>Teachers need to prepare their lessons and teach the learners. Teachers need to be available to learners all the time to give them assistance. (Deputy Principal A)</p> <p>We have great challenges in Township schools. I will be blunt with you. The problem we have is unionism and some people misunderstands the functions of the union. You find that some Teachers do not care much about the learners. They feel it's their right to be protected by unions even if they bunk classes. If teachers could just teach and recognise learners that are weak and bring them on board, eeeh, I think we will have better results in the Townships.</p>	<p>solve this problem of overcrowding. It is difficult for teachers to teach effectively when classes are overcrowded. Remember we deal with different kids from different backgrounds, so it becomes difficult for the teacher to give the learners individual support to have effective teaching. (HoD B)</p> <p>They must assist in developing teachers thus training them. The Department of Education must also give curriculum support. (Principal B)</p> <p>During the Covid 19 time, their role is to make sure that all schools have the Personal Protective Equipment to ensure that schools are in line with the regulations of the Covid 19. (Deputy Principal B)</p> <p>Teachers have a direct contact with learners, they deliver the curriculum, assess the learners in order to identify the strengths</p>	<p>The DoE must reduce the number of learners in classes because we have so many learners in a class. If they can bring assistant teachers who can help the teachers with marking and doing one on one sessions with learners, I think that can improve learner performance. (Teacher C)</p> <p>It's only now during Covid 19 when teachers are able to see learners on one on one where the ratio is now 1:20. Before Covid it was 1:45 which was highly impossible to improve learner performance. When you go to such classes you are only thinking about covering topics in such a short space of time and we don't get enough time interact with each and every learner. Now during Covid 19, we can see them in their spare time and also have smaller groups to assist. (HoD C)</p> <p>The subject facilitators, assist the teachers with</p>	<p>shortage of furniture due to high enrolment which require assistance for the Department of Education</p> <p>Teachers need to know their role and know that they are here to teach the learners.</p> <p>Teachers have a direct contact with learners, they deliver the curriculum, assess the learners in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of learners. Teachers also give support to learners,</p> <p>Teachers should teach, assess and do corrections thoroughly with learners.</p> <p>Teachers must just honour their periods Teachers should teach, assess</p> <p>Learners should be disciplined in class for</p>	<p>-provide Personal Protective Equipment to schools -Give support to principals and SMTs Teachers -implement the curriculum -honour periods -identify learners strengths and weaknesses -give support to learners Learners -discipline and determination -show commitment -do their work -be in school on time HoDs DOE -employ more teachers -give support to teachers -employ more teachers -Give support Teachers -honour their periods -cover syllabus -assist learners</p>
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	<p>We still have good Teachers who will voluntarily come on Saturdays and Sunday to teach learners without expecting any extra payment. (Principal A)</p> <p>Learners need to go an extra mile in terms of their studies. They need to adapt a culture of learning and studying on their own. I always encourage learners to remain behind after school in groups of 4 or 5 to study. These learners who remain after school excel better. Some get up to 5 distinctions on their matric. Most of these learners stay in one rooms and there's no enough space for studying. That's why we preach to them that they must also go an extra mile in their studies. (Principal A)</p> <p>The learners must be at school on time. <u>uh</u>. The learners must school on, must be at school on time. (HoD A)</p>	<p>and weaknesses of learners. Teachers also give support to learners, identifying interests of the learners. They make sure that learners excel in extramural activities. Some of these learners end up having a career in sports. (Deputy Principal B)</p> <p>Their responsibility is to teach these learners and go an extra mile by identifying different types of learners. This will enable them to cater for all the learners in class. (Principal B)</p> <p>Teachers should start by engaging the learner, then engage the parent, then engage the HoD before escalating the problem to the Department. (Teacher B)</p> <p>Learners need to come to school early and attend all classes. (Principal B)</p> <p>They must come and do their work. In my</p>	<p>teaching, monitoring and giving guidance on how to implement the Annual Teaching Plan for example how many tasks must be given. (HoD C)</p> <p>The Department of Education must provide training in different subjects and that assists our educators' in terms of in-service training. This training will make educators to understand the content of what is expected of them. This will assist in terms of learner achievement. (Principal C)</p> <p>The District Director must always come and support the Principal and the SMT with challenges that we are facing. For instance, shortage of furniture due to high enrolment which require assistance for the Department of Education to provide us with mobile classes, furniture and also employ more educators. (Deputy Principal C)</p>	<p>effective teaching and learning Learners are supposed to learn, be supported and be assessed.</p> <p>Learners, it's mostly understanding the reason why they are in school and be accountable of anything that they do.</p> <p>honour their periods and ensure that they are there on time, they try and cover the syllabus even go an extra mile assisting learners</p> <p>The teachers is to ensure that they implement the curriculum, make sure that they cover the ATP.</p> <p>Learners must do their homeworks, they must ask questions from teachers.</p> <p>I think teachers can improve themselves</p>	<p>-Attend afternoon and extra classes Learners -be accountable -Attend regularly -study concepts taught Teachers DOE -provide learner material -reduce numbers in classes Teachers -engage the learners -implement the curriculum -cover ATP Learners -do your homework -school attendance -do their work -ask questions</p>
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	<p><i>They must do their homeworks. They must ask questions from teachers. (Teacher A)</i></p> <p><i>The learners must do their work. The learners must be on time. (Deputy Principal)</i></p> <p><i>Eeeh, these ones must just honour their periods and ensure that they are there on time, they try and cover the syllabus even go an extra mile assisting learners that can be classified as learners who are slow in capturing information. (HoD)</i></p> <p><i>The teachers is to ensure that they implement the curriculum, make sure that they cover the ATP. (Teacher A)</i></p> <p><i>Learners must do their homeworks, they must ask questions from teachers. (Teacher A)</i></p>	<p><i>experience, I have learnt that there is no learner that is incapable. They can pass if they are dedicated to their work and come to school. (Teacher B)</i></p> <p><i>Learners are supposed to learn, be supported and be assessed. Where they don't understand, they must inquire. We expect good results from learners. (Deputy Principal B)</i></p> <p><i>Learners, it's mostly understanding the reason why they are in school and be accountable of anything that they do. Some learners are just here because their parents said they should be here. Our learners do not have accountability which is why independent schools are different from the Government schools. In Independent schools, if the child is at home, they know the reason but in our Township schools it's a different story. (HoD B)</i></p> <p><i>I think the teachers shame, it's a pity. A teacher can</i></p>	<p><i>Teachers need to know their role and know that they are here to teach the learners. If teachers can go to class everyday and don't miss their periods in class, that will help these learners to have good performance. (Deputy Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>Teachers should teach, assess and do corrections thoroughly with learners. They must make extra classes with learners who are struggling. Teachers give learners formal and informal tasks. From these tasks, educators start to see the learners' weak points and start working on improving in their performance. (Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>Teachers should teach, assess and also do corrections thoroughly with learners. They must make extra classes with learners who are struggling. (Teacher C)</i></p> <p><i>Learners should be disciplined in class for effective teaching and learning. Learners have to</i></p>	<p><i>with just whatever that they are doing, attending the afternoon and extra classes.</i></p> <p><i>They need to make sure that whatever concept that have been taught, they need to study them and continue studying all work done in all terms</i></p>	
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	<p><i>The learners must do their work and the learners must be in school on time. (Deputy Principal A)</i></p>	<p><i>plan, you know, can plan on how to improve everything. But if there's no support from his team, or support of the parent. It also becomes a challenge. I think teachers can improve themselves with just whatever that they are doing, attending the afternoon and extra classes. (HoD B)</i></p>	<p><i>show discipline, determination and know what it is that they are here for is. Discipline starts with uniform wearing and learners know what is expected of them. They need to cooperate with educators. If they are given tasks either informal or formal, they need to do them. (Principal C)</i></p> <p><i>Learners must come to school regularly, do their work and submit assessments on time. (Teacher C)</i></p> <p><i>They need to make sure that whatever concept they have been taught, they need to study them and continue studying all work done in all terms. (HoD C)</i></p> <p><i>Learners have to show discipline, determination and know what it that they are here for is. There must be commitment for example if a teacher has given the something to do, they must do it. (Deputy Principal C)</i></p>		
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ANNEXURE G: CERTIFICATE FROM THE EDITOR

CORNELIA GELDENHUYS

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20 February 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Herewith I, **Cornelia Geldenhuys** (ID 521114 0083 088) declare that I am a qualified, accredited language practitioner and that I have edited the following master's dissertation:

**THE ROLE OF SMTS IN ENSURING IMPROVED LEARNER
PERFORMANCE IN THE
JOHANNESBURG EAST DISTRICT OF GAUTENG**

by

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