

**THE IMPACT OF MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES ON ORGANISATIONAL
PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
MOPANI WEST EDUCATION DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH
AFRICA**

by

LEKOLOANE NGOAKO WILSON

MINI-DISSERTATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

in the

**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND LAW
(Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership)**

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

Supervisor: Dr E Zwane

2023

DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my entire family and all my friends, in particular, Motsepe Levy, Mahlo Sekolo and Masekela Joseph. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, my father, the late Matlou William and my mother, Manoko Molly Lekoloane, whose words of encouragement kept me going.

My colleagues at Seagotle Secondary School and in particular, the late Letebele Moletele Frank, who supported me unconditionally, my managers in Makhutšwe Circuit, Mrs Malatji PS, Mrs Monakhisi MJ, Dr Mhlongo AS and Dr Ramalepe ML who remained my pillars of strength and inspiration throughout the years and shall forever hold a special place in my heart.

DECLARATION

I, solemnly pledge that this dissertation **“THE IMPACT OF MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MOPANI WEST EDUCATION DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA”** is my own original work and that all the utilised resources that I have utilised or quoted have been referenced and acknowledged by means of detailed references and I confirm that this work has not been submitted before for any other qualification at any other institution.

LEKOLOANE NGOAKO WILSON

23/08/2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following people played a very important part in my completion of this dissertation:

- My loving wife, Mampe Gloria, for her unconditional love, understanding, encouragement and support.
- My four children, Quinton, Vanessa, Marx and Samantha, for their unwavering support and understanding.
- A special appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Engeline Zwane, for her wisdom, motivation and direction.
- My colleagues in Makhutšwe Circuit for being available and really participating in this study.
- Officials in the Mopani West Education district for according me the opportunity to present my proposal to them and granting me the permission for the study.
- My home Province of Limpopo: Department of Education, for the thumps-up to conduct the study.

ABSTRACT

The motivation for this study was to assess managerial threats that hinder the attainment of organisational goals in schools from the point of view of the school management teams. A qualitative study was conducted to assess the impact of managerial challenges on school performance. Data was collected through a standardised open-ended questionnaire using an in-depth interview technique and a focus group discussion. Two groups of respondents participated in the project. In-depth interviews were held with the first group of principals and a focus group discussion with the second group of deputy principals and departmental heads. The findings revealed that SMT members struggle with goal-setting and sometimes lack the innovation, capacity and understanding to set realistic and smart goals. There is a need for the empowerment of SMT's to develop the requisite capacity to achieve at a higher level.

KEY CONCEPTS

Organisational performance, goal setting, educational management, strategic planning, school management team

LIST OF TABLES

1. Table 4.2. Themes

LIST OF FIGURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND / ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY	11
1.1. INTRODUCTION	11
1.1.1. Recent research	11
1.1.2. Key concepts	12
1.1.2.1 Organisational performance	12
1.1.2.2 Goal setting	12
1.1.2.3 Educational management	12
1.1.2.4 Strategic planning	12
1.1.2.5 School Management Team	12
1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM	12
1.2.1. Source and background of the problem	12
1.2.2. Statement of the research problem	13
1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	14
1.3.1. Research aim, objectives and/or hypothesis	14
1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS	15
1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	15
1.5.1. Research Design	15
1.5.2. Sampling	16
1.5.3. Data collection	17
1.5.4. Data analysis	18
1.5.5. Reliability, Validity and Objectivity	19
1.5.6. Bias	20
1.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	20
1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPOSED RESEARCH	21
1.8. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	21
2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	22
2.1. INTRODUCTION	24
2.2. CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	24

2.2.1. Managerial challenges	24
2.2.2. Organisational performance	24
2.3. LITERATURE REVIEW	25
2.3.1. Managerial challenges in secondary schools	25
2.3.1.1. Exemplary leadership	26
2.3.1.2. Time management	27
2.3.1.3. Internal accountability systems	28
2.3.1.4. Poor learner performance	29
2.3.1.5. Capacity to develop/implement School Improvement Plans	30
2.3.1.6. Participative management	31
2.3.2. Organisational performance	32
2.3.3. The effect of managerial challenges on school Performance	32
2.4. CONCLUSION	33
3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	35
3.1. INTRODUCTION	35
3.2. RESEARCH METHOD	35
3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN	35
3.3.1. Sampling	35
3.3.1.1. Population	35
3.3.1.2. Sampling	35
3.3.1.3. Ethical issues related to sampling	36
3.3.1.4. Sample	36
3.3.2. Data collection	36
3.3.2.1. Data collection approach and method	37
3.3.2.2. Developing and testing of the data collection instrument	38
3.3.2.3. Characteristics of the data collection instrument	39
3.3.2.4. Data collection process	39
3.3.2.5. Ethical considerations related to data collection	39
3.3.3. Data analysis	40

3.4.	INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY OF THE STUDY	40
3.5.	CONCLUSION	40
4.	CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION / PRESENTATION / INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS	41
4.1.	INTRODUCTION	41
4.2.	DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS	41
4.3.	RESEARCH RESULTS	42
4.3.1.	Why do school management teams struggle to achieve set goals?	44
4.3.2.	How do managerial challenges impact organizational performance?	44
4.3.3.	What role should management play to ensure organizational performance?	45
4.4.	OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS	46
4.5.	UNEXPECTED FINDINGS	46
4.6.	CONCLUSION	46
5.	CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION	48
5.1.	INTRODUCTION	48
5.2.	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD	48
5.3.	SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS	50
5.3.1.	Key findings from literature review	50
5.3.2.	Key findings from participants	51
5.4.	CONCLUSIONS	51
5.5.	RECOMMENDATIONS	52
5.6.	CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY	52
5.7.	CONCLUDING REMARKS	53

REFERENCES	54
-------------------	-----------

APPENDICES/ ANNEXURES

Annexure A Approval from the university	62
Annexure B Letter seeking consent from the Department of Education: Limpopo	63
Annexure C Letter of approval: Department of Education: Limpopo Province	65
Annexure D Questionnaire	66

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1. Recent research

The mandate given to National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) was to expose identical practices in typical schools, in other words, why schools perform as they do and how they could improve. The 2016 NEEDU report, together with the findings by 2016 Auditor-General and the results from Department of Basic Education (DBE) School Effectiveness Monitoring Reports, identified poor school management and leadership as crucial aspects that need to be addressed for a functional school environment as cited in the DBE Strategy to better school management and governance in schools.

Effective school management was identified as a salient issue that could accelerate performance of schools. The school managers must lead and manage so that teachers can offer lessons and learners can assimilate knowledge. The Department of Basic Education formulated a “Strategy to improve school management and governance in schools”. (Bush and Glover, 2016) after realizing that many South African schools are struggling to achieve their own set goals, community expectations and departmental minimum criteria for success.

There is a need for South African schools to embrace new organisational dynamics that are proven to yield positive results. Some of the challenges facing school management teams were identified as goal-setting, feedback sources and frequency, language use and labelling, technology, globalisation, work ethics, affirmative action, recruitment, never-ending curriculum amendments and incoherent coordination by the officials of the Department of Education, just to mention a few.

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2009), the primary function of the school management team is planning. Tools for planning are provided by the Department of Basic Education. One such instrument provides for conducting school self-evaluation which would then inform the school improvement plan. Is it the lack of capacity or understanding of the significance of the use of these tools that is

affecting schools in their deliberate mandate to shape the strategic direction of our secondary schools?

1.1.2. Key concepts

- 1.1.2.1. Organizational performance points to the real results of an organization measured against set objectives/targets (Moura et al 2019). The targets could be set by the school, the community or, the department of education.
- 1.1.2.2. Goal setting is the development of an action plan designed to motivate and direct people towards a goal and can be implemented using the “principles of clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task complexity” (Locke and Latham,1994). Target setting provides a benchmark for determining whether a school is in actual fact succeeding or not.
- 1.1.2.3. Educational management refers to a process undertaken by the leadership in an institution by applying management principles to effectively utilise available human and any other resource to accomplish the institution’s objectives. Using Fayol principles, it is a distinct process to accomplish predetermined goals.
- 1.1.2.4. Strategic planning is the way an organization showcases its planned intentions, and deciding on meaningful resource allocation to achieve this strategy (Milton and Lambe, 2019).
- 1.1.2.5. School Management Team is a structure in a school with the responsibility of giving assistance, guidance, and leadership in the teaching learning situation (Ahiaku, 2019).

1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.2.1. Source and background of the problem

Every organisation should be able to fulfil its set goals and objectives. It is vital that the managerial shortcomings that hamper organisational performance should be uncovered very early and be addressed. The extent of the impact of managerial

challenges shall be studied and dealt with to enable a functional school environment that improves on its performance.

The study shall evaluate the school management team's knowledge gaps and recommend efficient administrative competencies and approved professional education management competencies imperative to lead and manage schools successfully. The study shall explore additional knowledge on school management, leadership and performance management.

1.2.2. Statement of the research problem

The Southern and East African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) III (2007) conducted a survey of learners in Grade 6 in mathematics and in reading. South Africa performed poorly as compared to other African countries in the study. The study revealed that a huge proportion of Grade 6 learners have not mastered even the most basic reading and numeracy skills. In the 15 education systems that participated in the study, South Africa recorded the third highest proportion of functionally illiterate learners at 27%, and recorded the fifth highest proportion of functionally innumerate learners at 40%.

In the Report for the National Planning Commission, (2011) on Improving Education Quality in South Africa, Servaas van der Berg, Stephen Taylor, Martin Gustafsson, Nicholas Spaul, Paula Armstrong (2011) maintain that effective management of schools shall happen if principals and School Management Team members understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities as curriculum leaders by creating and maintaining a conducive learning environment.

The results of the study commissioned by the Presidency in 2009 by Taylor, Mabogoane, and Akoobhai (2010) on the importance of inspirational leadership confirmed that prioritising efficiency with regards to time management, curriculum coverage, learner teacher support material procurement and use, and assessment yields positive results. An efficient and effective School Management Team is needed to achieve set targets and priorities. Hoadley, Christie and Ward (2009)

also argue that a successful instructional leadership must ensure curriculum coverage, good management of resources and structuring the school day effectively.

It is expected that the School Management Team (SMT) should serve as a problem solving mechanism and adopt innovative approaches for a functional school that is able to deliver on its core mandate. According to the Revised Department of Basic Education five-year strategic plan 2015/16-2019/20 issued in March 2016, it is argued that management capacity at school level lacks the required competencies to deliver, monitor and manage curriculum.

It is the responsibility of the school management teams to generate positive results, optimize employee performance and conduct meaningful evaluations in a systematic manner. The SMT led by the principal needs to be equipped with requisite administrative knowledge and sound professional education administration skills to be effective. There is evidently a lack of capacity in some SMT's to deal with the current managerial challenges in schools.

1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to explore challenges that school management teams encounter in their specified roles, in the use of available tools and in their quest to provide strategic direction in their schools.

1.3.1. Research aim and objectives

The proposed research study set it sight to investigate how the managerial challenges impact on school performance. The following objectives were set for the study:

- 1.3.1.1.** To investigate the managerial challenges prevailing in the selected secondary schools which hamper success.
- 1.3.1.2.** To examine the extent to which managerial challenges hinder organizational performance against set goals and objectives.

- 1.3.1.3. To establish possible solutions on the adverse impact of the managerial challenges on school performance.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research used these questions for direction:

- 1.4.1. To what extent do school management teams struggle to achieve success?
- 1.4.2. How do managerial challenges impact organizational performance?
- 1.4.3. What solutions should management bring to ensure organizational performance?

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1. Research Design

The researcher intended to get an in-depth understanding of the managerial threats that hinder the attainment of organisational goals in schools from the point of view of the school management teams. The researcher used a qualitative research design because it is systematic and largely narrative and seeks in a descriptive or explanatory way to present the researcher's comprehension of observable events (Maree, 2007).

Qualitative research study refers to the approach of research that describes observable events based on the lens of the participants, discovers multiple realities and develops holistic in-depth understanding of observable events within a particular context (Glickman et al, 2007).

Qualitative research uses words rather than numbers, and arrives at meaning-based rather than statistical data analysis (Polkinghorne, 1989). It is concerned with understanding the details and the contextual factors. It studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural setting and focusing on their meanings and interpretations (Holloway and Wheeler, 1996).

It uses the “why” questions in research to get an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in its natural context.

It is also sensitive to the social context. The researcher planned to use a case study as it allows for direct observation and interaction with the subjects. The researcher was able to generate an in-depth experience with the subjects (Maree, 2007).

The research was grounded on interpretivism which assumes that “human life can only be understood through direct involvement” and it draws its strength from “the richness and depth of explorations and descriptions it yields” (Maree, 2007).

1.5.2. Sampling

The purposive sampling method was used. In purposive sampling, people are chosen with a “purpose” to represent a phenomenon, group, incident, location or type in relation to a key criterion (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). A key aspect of purposive sampling is that participants are selected according to predetermined criteria relevant to research objectives. This method is used in special situation where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind.

Purposive sampling method was ideal as the researcher’s focus was on the school management team members. The aim of purposive sampling was to focus on characteristics of a population that was of interest, which would best answer the research questions. The available time also influenced the sample size. The homogenous purpose sampling method was used as a sample that was fit for purpose as they shared the same set of characteristics.

The sample size was to comprise of 10 SMT members in total, comprising of 3 principals, 2 deputy principals and 5 departmental heads. Purposive sampling allows for multiple techniques, for example, the **critical case sampling** may be used to investigate whether a phenomenon has reached saturation or not. This allowed for a determination whether saturation was reached or not. It also allowed for logical generalisations.

1.5.3. Data collection

Data collection tools are measuring devices used to collect information to answer the research questions and are important as they help the researcher to access data, collect data in an orderly way, engage respondents, support the process of research and confirm and verify information.

An interview is a data collection method through oral conversations, and it is ideal for what and why questions. It is used mainly when we want to fully understand someone's impression or experiences or learn more about their answers to a question. It has the following advantages, makes a provision to get full range and depth of information and help to develop a relationship with respondents and allows for flexibility with respondents. The researcher used in-depth interviews for principals.

The researcher used a standardized, open-ended interview method, meaning, the same open-ended questions were asked to all the respondents. Interviews with audio tapes, participation observation and documents were used. Interviews helped to fully understand the participant's impression or experiences.

The principals were interviewed using an in-depth interview technique to explore their perspectives without any bias. The deputy principals and departmental heads formed the focus group. The focus group was crucial as the source of information was the group on a broader range of issues in an interactive manner (Manzano, 2016).

Focus group was used as it allowed participants to thoughtfully answer carefully predetermined questions in their own words and added their own meaning. Participants selection was linked to their job titles. A focus group was able to reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight.

Documents provided supplementary research data. Documents such as the findings from the Auditor-General and the results of the DBE School Effectiveness

Monitoring Report, NSC results extract from the DBE Annual Reports and internal analysis by staff were used.

Document analysis is an efficient and effective way to collate data because documents can be easily managed and are a practical resource. Documents are considered reliable and unchanging, “non-reactive” data sources, because they can be read and reviewed multiple times and remain unchanged by the researcher’s influence or research process as cited in Bowen 2009 by O’Leary (2014).

1.5.4. Data analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of reorganising information, giving it shape, coherence and meaning. Thematic analysis approach was used as it involves the description, themes, and assertions.

The audio recordings were transcribed word for word. The transcribed data was read and reread and key impressions were identified. The impressions were coded. The standout words were noted and linked with the research questions. The coded impressions were categorised into themes. The emerging themes are outlined. The Auditor-General’s report, results of the DBE School Effectiveness Monitoring Report, NSC results, extract from the DBE Annual Reports were read and the information provided background and context and was used for additional probing questions during the focus group interviews.

Thematic analysis is a form of pattern recognition within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006). It involves a careful, more focused re-reading and review of the data. It allows the researcher to analyse the selected information and allocate specific codes and particular categories, based on the information’s features, to expose themes pertinent to a phenomenon.

The researcher is expected to demonstrate impartiality and objectivity (seeking to represent the research material fairly) and sensitivity (responding to even subtle cues to meaning) in the selection and analysis of data (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane

2006). Thematic analysis on qualitative data takes place in the following six steps according to Clarke, Braun and Hayfield 2015:

1. **Familiarisation** is a process of reading more than once the transcripts and listening to the tapes more than once and making notes of initial analytic observations.
2. **Coding** refers to the identification and labelling patterns in data sets and grouping them together.
3. **“Searching” for themes** is a process of clustering codes together to create a plausible mapping of patterns in the data.
4. **Reviewing themes** refers to the checking of whether the candidate themes exhibit synergy with the coded data and the whole data set.
5. **Defining and naming themes** is the summary of each theme and assigning a theme name to ensure conceptual clarity of each theme.
6. **Writing the report** refers to the bringing together in an analytic narrative and vivid and convincing manner the data extracts. The themes provide the organising framework but the researcher draw analytic conclusions throughout the themes.

1.5.5. Reliability, Validity and Objectivity

The process of qualitative research takes time. The researcher may not be able to verify the results conclusively without doubt against the scenarios stated by the respondents. As qualitative research is mostly open-ended, the participants remain in charge of the collected content. All the qualitative studies are unique, so they may be difficult to replicate (Chetty, 2016).

The envisaged population and the choice of sample could be a limitation. The permission from the Department of Education which shall help in the engagement and participation of SMT members remains key for the research. The limitations above shall be addressed by ensuring that the findings are tested by applying the following trustworthiness criteria, credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). The research findings shall be subjected to the above criteria. The findings of all qualitative research may not be applied to a wider population with some degree of certainty (Ochieng, 2009).

1.5.6. Bias

The researcher shall attempt to remain objective throughout the study and avoid bias. Bias, according to Polit and Beck (2014) refers to any influence that provides a misrepresentation in the results of a study. The bias could come from the participants who do not express their actual beliefs but rather what is socially acceptable. Participants may be biased as a result of their opinion about the sponsor of an interview and provide answers that would agree or disagree with all questions asked. The researcher shall pose open-ended questions to allow participants to express themselves honestly and truthfully.

Bias could also come from the researcher who distort data to suit his/her opinion due to pre-existing assumptions. The researcher shall avoid leading questions and the ordering of questions shall move from the general to specific to avoid question-order bias. The structuring of the interview shall be skilfully conducted and an attempt at all material times shall be made to minimise bias from the purposeful participant selection, questioning, data analysis and the report writing.

1.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics refers to acceptable behavioural conduct by a particular group of people considered moral, that have to do with the difference between right and wrong, appropriate or inappropriate, acceptable or unacceptable, moral or immoral. The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the Turfloop Research and Ethics Committee (TREC) as the research involved human beings.

The researcher was permitted by the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo Province formally and in writing. The researcher obtained informed consent from all the participants. The researcher outlined all the expectations including the purpose, methods as well as anticipated outcomes to all participants. All participants were given the right and opportunity to withdraw as their participation was voluntary.

The researcher ensured anonymity and confidentiality of the data and participants. (Naidu 2018). Pseudo names are used instead to ensure anonymity (Surmiak, 2018).

The participants were guaranteed right to withdraw from the process should it become necessary. This right was explained in advance since purposive sampling method was used. The researcher always strived to prevent all harm to the participants (Surmiak, 2018).

1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

The study evaluated the school management team's knowledge gaps and recommended imperative administrative expertise and efficient professional education management competencies imperative to lead and manage schools successfully. The explored necessary and imperative additional knowledge to enhance effective school management, leadership and performance management.

1.8. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The outline shall be structured as per the UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO MANUAL / GUIDELINES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS 2020 (pages 126-136) and shall have the following format:

1. Title page
2. Dedication
3. Declaration
4. Acknowledgements
5. Abstract
6. Chapter outline

1. Chapter one (Introduction and background)

The chapter shall give both an overview and an introduction to the study. It shall include definition of key concepts, source and background of the problem

statement, research aim, objectives and/or hypothesis and research methodology (research design, sampling, data collection, data analysis).

2. Chapter two (Literature review)

An initial literature review enables the researcher to develop a workable research problem and research methodology and write the research proposal. The chapter helps to conduct an in-depth literature study on the research topic. The chapter shall be updated and expanded once the researcher has analysed the collected information to test the research outcomes against existing knowledge.

3. Chapter three (Research methodology)

The chapter shall report precisely about the research methodology and design followed, any problems encountered, and possible inconsistent variables which intervened during the study. The research methodology and design applied shall be warranted based on the literature review. The construction of the research instruments i.e. questionnaire and interview schedule shall be justified. The individuals with similar qualities and sample, and the selection procedure adopted shall be defined and reasons advanced.

4. Chapter four (Interpretation of findings)

All the precise thematic protocols for analysing the data, shall be outlined. The research outcomes shall be compared to similar and/or different findings reported in the literature review. The discussion of the research shall indicate similarities and divergent views in findings obtained in response to different questions.

5. Chapter five (Summary, recommendations, conclusion)

The chapter shall report on the findings of the research in relation to the research questions asked, and more distinctively on the problem statement. It

shall also indicate the constraints of the research with recommendations for future studies and recommending solutions to research problems that might have been encountered.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The role of management in every organization is to ensure that set goals are accomplished optimally using the planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling functions. Management has a direct impact on the success or failure of any organization. Klein (2007) cited Taylor (2003) in the definition of management as deliberate and “the art of knowing what to do, when to do and see that it is done in the best and cheapest way”. The role of management in every organization is thus, immeasurable and crucial. Management has to create an enabling work environment of feel good and satisfied employees. Bacotic, (2016) maintains that organizational performance is influenced by job satisfaction and vice versa. The literature below explores the impact of managerial challenges on organizational performance. Van der Berg et al (2011) maintain that for a school to be effective, carefully selected individuals who manage and lead the school should fulfil their roles in managing curriculum and develop and craft an environment conducive for learning.

2.2. CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1. Managerial challenges

Every organisation is driven by a desire to succeed. When an organisation fails to achieve its own targets, then it has challenges. Challenges in organisations range from lacking innovations to meeting modern challenges up to failing to be effective and efficient. Whatever hampers the attainment of set organisational goal is a challenge. Organisations have to adapt to new policies, develop new ways or innovations to break the monotony and embrace new ideas. The recruitment process should target effective leaders who will add value to the organisation.

2.2.2. Organisational performance

Organisational performance refers to the measure of accomplishment that an organisation achieves against its set or stated objectives and goals. The focus is

mainly on outputs and results; thus how effective and efficient an organisation achieves. It refers to the measurement of actual outputs against the intended outputs.

Organisational performance also means being able to successfully execute tasks in a cost-effective manner and to carry out strategies to achieve institutional objectives (Randeree and Al Youha, 2009). In the context of South African secondary schools, performance is measured mainly through the National Senior Certificate results. Organizational performance also refers to how the sum of individual performance together influence the working unit's systems and programs.

2.3. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.3.1. Managerial challenges in secondary schools

Bernstein argues that the principal and the school management team have a responsibility to create order in the school. The order created by the School Management Team allows the teachers to focus on effective classroom management and successful curriculum delivery. I agree with Bernstein that successful curriculum delivery happens where the school ethos and order are created by the SMT. (Bernstein, 1990, p.159).

The study on the England's National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NLS and NNS) by Leithwood, Jantzi, Earl, Watson, Levin, and Fullan, 2004, concluded that the key to successful educational reform and strategy implementation rest in the nature and quality of leadership. The authors hold the view that transformational leadership is key to successful schools. They however, maintain that principals set the direction of the school, redesign and develop people in a way that foster high expectations. When SMT members understand their roles and work together, and become agents of social change, schools achieve their set goals.

Nick Taylor in the paper on the "The state of South African schools" argues that leadership is responsible for creating the conditions that enables effective teaching, they create a conducive environment which is a prerequisite for good school

performance. The paper identifies two issues which are key to successful teaching and learning in schools as time management and curriculum leadership.

Secondary school principal's managerial challenges in South African Schools include, but are not limited to the following:

- Exemplary leadership
- Time management
- Internal accountability systems
- Poor learner performance
- Capacity to develop/ implement School Improvement Plans
- Participative management
- Lack of innovation

2.3.1.1. Exemplary leadership

Moral leadership refers to the exemplary way in which a leader who becomes a moral agent uses his or her authority to promote shared moral values and demonstrate these in his or her actions for the benefit of all the stakeholders and to achieve the common vision of the organization (Challens, Van Jaarsveld and Wolhuter, 2018:5). The actions of a school principal act as unifier, relational practice, which is flexible in relation to the moral purpose of education (Ehrich, Harris, Klenowski, Smeed and Spina, 2015). A school principal must be dedicated to clarifying and being an embodiment of the school's vision, aim and values. The values of the principal are central to influencing all other role players in a school. The leader's personal and professional values influence the impact on the culture in the school. The values should be consistent with true servant leadership, motivated by the love for the people you serve and based on the best work results achievement.

Moral leadership in underperforming schools, which are predominantly located in the rural communities, is poor, according to Van Jaarsveld et al. Disrespect, mistrust and sabotage exist in most underperforming schools. The performance in most rural schools is a reflection of the historical past of our country, where the

population groups in the deep rural areas perform the worst academically. The research findings make a call for moral leadership an essential requirement for principal leadership in underperforming South African schools. (Van Jaarsveld et al. 2020:73).

2.3.1.2. Time management

Research from the SACMEQ study revealed that there are high levels of absenteeism and late coming by teachers. An extract from the “The Pupil Progress Project (PPP)”, a school effectiveness cross sectional study undertaken in 2003 argues that “seemingly South African teachers, managers and officials have not transcended the dependency culture fostered by successive authoritarian regimes over the last three centuries” (Taylor, 2007). It is the responsibility of the school management team to ensure the effective use of time. Most school leadership do not prioritise the effective use of time. I agree with the study by Chisholm and her colleagues as cited by Taylor, 2007 that, sometimes whilst at school, a lot time is spent by teachers during contact time completing forms for bureaucratic compliance. School leaders and management must endeavour to protect teaching and learning time from malicious compliance policies. There should be policy review and shift by the department to reduce the administrative workload for teachers so that they focus on their core business.

People who become victims of poor time management are overconfident and think all is well as long as they are able to achieve their goals. Such people do not develop personal time management techniques and skills and they usually hope to fulfil their commitments just on time and consequently miss deadlines, and their meetings are either poorly planned or unsuccessful (Akomolafe, 2005). Time management refers to a set of principles, practices, skills, tools and systems that work together to help get more value out of time with the aim of improving organizational goals. Effective time management helps to achieve objectives within a time limit. Akomolafe (2005) in her studies, conclude that, “The skill of time management in leadership is a manifestation of leaders’ preparedness to ensure that the objectives and the goals of the school organization are accomplished.” She argues that principals must strive for effective and efficient time allocation to

school activities. Principals in schools that work adhere to a tight and adequate time schedule.

Time is a very important asset that we all get and we should use wisely. Successful people develop effective time management skills. Effective time management is a conscious decision and according to Blair (2008:12) “involves a deliberate undertaking about what is essential and then arranging one’s time and lives around these things”. It involves a range of competencies, tools and methods to achieve specific tasks and goals. It involves the four pillars on planning, organizing, leading and control, which usually culminate in scheduling, rescheduling, prioritizing, and analysing time needed versus time spent. Blair (2008:26) argues that effective time management allows managers to eliminate wastage and refuse excessive workloads through proper resource allocation.

The 2018 NEEDU report on time-on-task emphasized the importance of using allocated time efficiently and effectively. The allocated time means the “opportunity to learn”. The scheduled teaching time according to the report in poor performing schools is lost through non-adherence to planned activities, ineffective attendance of classes and poor internal controls and accountability; such as period registers. High performing schools use time effectively. Extra time is used for intervention programs to narrow the achievement gaps amongst learners and to assist learners-at risk to achieve better (NEEDU: 2018).

2.3.1.3. Internal accountability systems

The SMT has a responsibility to provide effective curriculum leadership. Successful schools have effective internal accountability systems. Internal accountability refers to the extent to which the school is coherently focused on teaching and learning, ensuring maximum time on curriculum delivery, and sound internal systems around improving instruction. The SMT must design school improvement strategies, implement incentive structures for teachers and support personnel, recruit and evaluate teachers, broker professional development consistent with the school’s improvement strategy, allocate school resources towards instruction, and buffer non-instructional issues from teachers according to Elmore (2003). Christie, Butler

and Potterton, (2007) note that schools in pursuing internal accountability mechanisms differ in approaches. They agree that successful schools set very clear roles for everyone to achieve good results which are monitored.

Hopkins, Harris and Jackson (1997) argue that internal accountability systems is not an easy process for schools and there is need for external intervention to get SMT succeeding. They argue that the first intervention mechanism is often to replace the principal and stabilise internal school organisation, which I do not support. It is the responsibility of the district and provincial structures of the Department of Education to intervene decisively in schools. The challenge remains when it becomes clear that the officials who are expected to provide solutions themselves lack the capacity to do so. Hopkins et al (1997) maintain that the department should prioritise training officials responsible for school governance and management in organisational development. I agree with the argument that they should be held accountable for the efficient management of schools they are allocated to support.

2.3.1.4. Poor learner performance

Every school has its set target of performance to achieve. The department sets school targets. The challenge most schools experience is the inability of learners to achieve the set targets. Poor learner performance is the hallmark of most South African schools. Harber and Davis (2006) maintain that we copy Western secondary school's organization tools, which do not necessarily fit and match the context in our South African schools. We seem not to critically contextualize the feasibility of these methods and tools to our schools and learners.

Research in developing countries attribute the causes of unacceptable learner performance to poverty, malnourishment, truancy, inappropriate curriculum and examinations, poorly trained teachers, lack of textbooks and overcrowded classrooms (Lockhead and Verspoor, 1991:86-87; Pscharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985:209). Learners are promoted from grade to grade using criteria that mostly is not meritorious but somehow automatic with the majority of learners not having mastered the basic competencies, knowledge and skills.

Learners who reach matric without mastering key competencies face National Senior Certificate examinations unprepared and therefore, find understanding and carrying out instructions very difficult. Legotlo, Maaga and Sebego (2002) maintain that the recurrent curriculum changes and revised examination formats coupled with inadequate in-service training of educators affect learner performance. Some educators argue that some learners are ill disciplined and not cooperative. Some learners intimidate teachers and fellow learners and deliberately disrupt learning. Legotlo, Maaga and Sebego (2002) also found that there is still a serious shortage of properly trained, qualified, experienced and effective teachers in some gateway subjects. Some teachers struggle to prepare adequately due to their limited general academic knowledge.

Poor resources rate as a major cause of poor performance in schools ranging from physical facilities, such as inadequate classrooms, libraries, laboratories, water and toilets.

2.3.1.5. Capacity to develop/implement School Improvement Plans

The DBE National policy on Whole School Evaluation (WSE) prescribe that all schools must generate and initiate a School Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP must be specific and detailed, results-oriented, and evaluated and monitored. The Minister of Basic Education in 2017 commissioned NEEDU to conduct the Schools that Work II study (NEEDU: 2018). The report cites literature that suggest that around two thirds of the SIP's fail because they lack the specific details as envisaged in the WSE policy. Van Der Voort and Wood (2014) reveal that there is still a lack of understanding by School Management Teams (SMT's) of the importance and value of SIP's and that there is still a lack of capacity to develop and implement SIP's. Naidu and Ngcobo (2008) argue that SMT's do not value the SIP's, which offer an opportunity for self-evaluation and reflection. Principals and School Management Teams fail to guide teachers in the discussion and elaboration of school development plans.

Clarke (2011) also argue that there is no consultation of stakeholders by schools in the development of Improvement Plans and as such most plans are developed for compliance and seriously lack details and do not provide solutions to existing problems in schools. Schools do not conduct self-evaluation that guide the development of improvement planning. Such an evaluation is supposed to reflect on learner and educator performance as well as attendance and recommend remedial action with clear timelines and monitoring mechanisms. Van Der Voort (2014) argues that SMT's should use SIP's as a tool to improve the school viability and help as an accountability tool. There is a serious need to empower School Management Teams with the skills to be innovative.

Incapacity to develop and implement school improvement plans is not only prevalent in South Africa as international research by Duke, Carr and Sterrett, (2013) report that unless lowest-performing schools do adopt sustainable development, the future of many young people is in serious trouble.

2.3.1.6. Participative management

Robbins, et al. (2016, 304) define participative management “as a process of joint decision making with immediate superiors.” This means participative management is a deliberate and planned initiative directed to involve staff to participate in decision making. School principals involve staff members on decision-making processes as a sign of confidence and trust. Buthelezi and Gamede (2009) believe that the non-involvement of staff in goal setting, problem solving, decision-making, and organisational change could have a negative impact on staff morale, job satisfaction and performance in school.

Somech (2002, 341) is of the view that participative management is a management style with a strong focus on decentralisation of decision making and power sharing to successfully achieve agreed upon and adopted goals. The delegation of authority to subordinates in a school helps in the collective achievement of organizational goals. Every team member feels valued and appreciated and thus put his/her best efforts in the delegated responsibility. Participative management has become the cornerstone of democratic management of schools in South Africa

and help to achieve success, efficiency, effectiveness and excellent results. Most principals work in silos and do not value teamwork and participative management and thus struggle to lead and manage teams.

2.3.2. Organisational performance

National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) adopted a process to evaluative school assessment (what are the reasons a school performs as it does and how performance could be accelerated), rather than to undertake monitoring of schools (how good the school is). Organizational performance, in the school context, refers to how well a school performs against set goals and established standards and how well the school is held responsible or accountable for its operations and performance.

Performance is also measured on how well learners pass and the school's adherence to set circuit, district, provincial and national norms and standards. Measurement of a school performance can also be linked to the level of expertise of the principal in implementing strategies according to Boyatzis and Ratti (2009). Cho and Dansereau (2010) maintain that organizational performance and leadership qualities are intimately linked to a company's performance. Ryan, Emmerling and Spencer, 2009 argues that there is a very strong correlation between organizational performance and leadership competencies with cognitive, social and emotional intelligence.

2.3.3. The effect of managerial challenges on school performance

Every organisation or government department is expected to improve and provide the best services in the most cost effective way and as timeously as possible. Every school is expected to improve both qualitatively and quantitatively. Management must drive the organisation to keep changing and adopting innovative plans to improve performance and remain competitive in pursuit of greater efficiency and effectiveness. Mastrangelo, Eddy and Lorenzet, (2014), believe that competent leaders are able to influence their followers and are key in achieving

organizational goals as they “create an enabling environment that breeds good attitudes and behavior, as well as motivation”.

A management that lacks innovation stifles the possibilities of new ideas. Management must develop a culture that is conducive for innovations and motivate employees to be competitive and are success driven. Kuratko and Welsch, (2004) argue that organisations need a culture to shape their values, beliefs and commitment. When management ensures that an appropriate culture exists, great ideas develop and organisations thrive and improve. Management is expected to develop and build an organisational culture that lays a foundation for “a shared philosophy, ideology, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, behaviour and norms that bind an organization” argues Kavanagh and Ashkanasy, (2006).

According to Ibrahim and Daniel, (2019) a leader must provide direct and coordinate the activities of the individual members within the group and make sure there is focus and unity of purpose. The impact of the leadership within an organization is demonstrated by the direction of the organization and the attainment or not of set goals.

Cobb and Couch, (2022) maintain that school management team members need initial proper training and continuous professional development to succeed. It is argued that without continuous professional development, innovations in leadership techniques, pedagogical and instructional guidance and the overall goals and vision of the school become blurred.

2.4. CONCLUSION

It is my conviction that schools with competent and visionary leaders, who are dynamic and accommodative can manage and overcome challenges better. Research in the articles and books consulted acknowledge that the world and governments are changing at an alarming rate. Organisations need leaders who are able to confront challenges such as poor time management, poor learner performance and incapacity head-on with innovative ideas to succeed. Leaders need

to involve team members from the planning phase to be able to achieve organisational goals.

3. CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The chapter aims to present in a systematic way, all the steps followed from formulating a hypothesis, data collection, data analysis and arriving at conclusions and generalisations including the ethical considerations encountered throughout the research process according to Kothari, (2004). The chapter shall endeavour to present all the variables encountered during the research process.

3.2. RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative research approach was used to assess the school management team member's attitudes, opinions and behaviour in relation to the managerial challenges in schools. The perspective of the participants was key to developing generalisations and arriving at certain conclusions based on facts emerging from the data analysis. Focus groups and in-depth interviews were used as techniques.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.3.1. Sampling

3.3.1.1. Population

The population is derived from the school management team members of Makhutšwe Circuit in Mopani West Education District in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The circuit has 28 schools. 16 are primary schools and 10 of the 12 secondary schools offer grade 8 up to matric while the last 2 offer grade 8 - 9. The population is further made up of big enrolled schools with enrolment of between 600 - 1 000 learners, medium enrolled schools of between 300 – 599 learners and small enrolment schools of between 100 – 299 learners.

3.3.1.2. Sampling

Secondary school SMT members were purposefully sampled who matched the predetermined criteria according to Kothari, (2004) that would offer “information-rich” data. Participants were selected on the assumption of their possible deepest insights and involvement in management and were expected to offer honest opinions and answers to the research questions. The participants were purposefully selected from big enrolled, medium enrolled and small enrolment schools respectively. The sample was intended to reflect a balanced view prevalent in all the schools. It must be mentioned that “small” schools do not have the post of deputy principal and the insights were generated from participating principal and departmental head.

3.3.1.3. Ethical issues related to sampling

Purposive sampling is considered a subjective and bias selection of participants. The researcher has to target participants who suit the purpose with the anticipation that they will offer unique and information rich data to the study. The purposive sampling method has limitations in that it lacks randomness and therefore offers limited inference to the entire population according to Patton, (2002).

The sample was limited to only suitable people only and there was a deliberate choice of participants. The sampling method was influenced by the limited time and resources available.

3.3.1.4. Sample

The sample was initially set to comprise of ten school management team (SMT) members, representing three purposefully selected secondary schools according to size. The sample come from small-enrolment schools, medium-enrolment schools and big-enrolment schools and comprised of 4 principals, 4 deputy principals and 4 departmental heads.

The current sample was extended by a further two members to achieve saturation. The participants are all appointed SMT members in their

respective schools and are considered appropriate and directly involved to share their insights on the managerial challenges that are prevalent in Makhutšwe Circuit.

3.3.2. Data collection

3.3.2.1. Data collection approach and method

In-depth interviews were held with individual principals of schools representing the three categories of secondary schools mentioned in the sample. The interviews were goal orientated and intended to extract specific answers as per the interview schedule. The interviews were conducted in the respective school principal's offices at a time and date mutually agreed upon to create a comfortable setting. A rough guide of the interview schedule was shared in advance of the interview as a guide. The Interviews were used to investigate the views, encounters, convictions and reasons of individual participants. It was expected that each participant shall provide unique attitude, opinion and behaviour in relation to the managerial challenges in schools.

The in-depth interviews were followed by the focus group discussion of purposefully selected deputy principals and departmental heads. Deputy principals are considered curriculum managers and are at the coalface of strategy development and implementation. Departmental heads are appointed specialists who lead their colleagues in the implementation of carefully developed programs and plans.

These group of people were brought together to discuss and shed light on the interview questions which were open-ended, flexible and unambiguous. The questions were structured with the aim to search for answers to the research questions. The focus group was used to exploit group dynamics to generate qualitative data. Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, (2008) maintain that a focus group may also be used to clarify, extend and test the data collected through other ways including in-depth interviews.

3.3.2.2. Developing and testing of the data collection instrument

A questionnaire was used to generate a profile of the characteristics of participants, their age, qualifications level and experience in management. Some of the questions were designed to generate data that would help in answering the research questions. The questionnaire had both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was tested amongst colleagues and with the limited available time, the scope could not be expanded beyond the researcher's workstation.

3.3.2.3. Characteristics of the data collection instrument

The interview schedule was designed to extract as much data as was possible. The first two closed-ended questions were used to collect biographical information and open-ended questions 3-14 were structured in a way to generate as much information as possible for sound analysis and clear interpretation. The open-ended questions allowed for follow-up questions. The interview schedule was used as a guide for both in-depth interviews and the focus group discussion

3.3.2.4. Data collection process

An informed consent from all participants was obtained and is in written form. All the participants were duly informed in advance of the date and time for the interviews. An interview schedule was issued beforehand in time and all the process were explained in advance, the ethical issues were clarified and participants consented to the interviews being recorded and were given an undertaking of anonymity and confidentiality.

It was an oral face-to-face interviews spread over 5 days for the principals. The biographical information part of the interview schedule was collected on the day of the interview with the individual participants. The interviews were

recorded using a digital tape. Participants were given the assurance of the privacy of the data collected upon the conclusion of the interview.

The focus group interview was conducted to provide a real-time unfiltered response to the research questions within a group dynamic that always provide responses that are not rehearsed. All participants handed in their completed written consent and responses to biographic information before the start of the focus group discussion. The robust engagements with participants shared their beliefs and thoughts on the managerial challenges in schools and what they think could be a solution.

3.3.2.5. Ethical considerations related to data collection

All the participants were informed well in advance of the time and place and were assured of compliance with all ethical principles such as anonymity and confidentiality. All the participants gave their written consent. The venue for the in-depth interviews were recommended by the participants themselves as privacy and less distraction was key. The timing was also free from distractions as they were held when all other staff members and learners had left.

Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, (2016) consider purposive sampling as “judgment sampling” as the researcher develops a mental map of expectations and sets out to find people who can and are willing to volunteer the information by virtue of their knowledge or experience. The participants are preselected for their proficiency and being well informed. Due to the limited time available, Spradley, (1979) record that participants are also sampled because they are willing and available to participate.

The approval from the Limpopo Department of Education to conduct research was obtained and was shared with participants. It also assures the participants of the directive to the researcher to comply and adhere to all the principles of conducting research.

There is also an approval from TREC obtained that guides the entire process and parameters within which the research must be conducted.

3.3.3. Data analysis

The data collected was analysed and themes that emerged were used as categories for analysis. Patterns from within the data was coded and the thematic analysis six steps according to Clarke, Braun and Hayfield, (2005) were followed. A detailed report from the analysis is presented in the next chapter with extracts.

All the exact thematic procedures for analysing the data, shall be detailed and specified in chapter four. The research findings are compared to identical and/or different findings as detailed in the literature study.

3.4. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

The testing of validity of the study is a continuous process. It cannot be determined at the tail-end of the study. According to Golafshani (2003), with the developments affecting the traditional concepts of validity and reliability, argues that validity and reliability are “conceptualized to mean trustworthiness, rigor and quality in qualitative paradigm”. A conclusion is thus drawn that triangulation must be used. In the context of this study, triangulation thus means a validity procedure where a researcher searches for commonalities among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study” (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 126).

3.5. CONCLUSION

The chapter endeavoured to present details of steps followed in the study to arrive at the findings as presented in the next chapter.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION / PRESENTATION / INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The chapter endeavours to present all the thematic procedures followed in the data analysis. A comparison with other findings contained in the literature review shall be presented. All the actual thematic steps for analysing the data, are specified. All the correlations and contracts gathered from the findings shall be outlined. The intention is to help with “the understanding of a social phenomenon with the expressed views and experiences of all the participants” according to Pope and Mays, (1995). The unexpected findings with explanations are recorded and detailed.

4.2. DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

The data was managed through the use of a thematic analysis approach involving description, themes and assertions. Patterns that emerged from the data were used as categories for analysis as specified by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, (2006). The thematic analysis on qualitative data was conducted using the six steps according to Clarke, Braun and Hayfield, (2006) which can be summarised briefly as follows:

- a) Familiarisation – the data was read and listened to more than once; there was scribbling of notes and observations which were also converted into words.
- b) Coding - according to Tracy, (2018) it is “the process of labelling certain excerpts or chunks of the data as representing or fitting into some type of phenomenon”
- c) Searching for themes - the clustered codes presented the following patterns

- Foul language and labelling
- Use of IT
- Goal setting
- Absenteeism and ill-discipline
- Poor planning
- Lack of staff development programs
- Poor motivation
- Poor communication/ open communication lines/sharing

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No exemplary/servant leadership • Non-implementation of agreed programs • Compulsory In-service training and capacity building • Teamwork /team building/ frequent capacity building • The balance between admin and teaching • Shared goals • Realistic profiles of staff and learners • Creativity to overcome challenges • International best practice |
|---|

Table 4.2. Themes

- d) Reviewing themes – refers to the process of checking the collected and clustered codes against the research questions.
- e) Defining and naming the themes – each theme is summarised and clarified using the data collected.
- f) Writing the report – the views of the participants are explicitly narrated culminating in the bringing together of the implications and recommendations.

4.3. RESEARCH RESULTS

In the examination of managerial challenges prevailing in the selected secondary schools which hamper success, the majority of participants strongly agree that the use of foul language and labelling by the departmental officials is discouraging and makes them feel inadequate and threatens meaningful engagement. Words such as “underperformer”, “chronic underperformer”, “dysfunctional” are attached to school managers whose schools fail to reach the set targets. They are thus poorly motivated and lack the confidence to show innovation.

School Management Teams generally struggle with the use of technology and other 4IR innovations in curriculum management and delivery. The innovations such as the filling of google forms to generate and collate data remains a challenge and without the requisite skills, SMT’s become overwhelmed with manual gathering and dissemination of data. Blended learning which was an absolute necessity at the

height of the Covid-19 pandemic in our schools remains a dream in most schools and exposed how vulnerable schools are.

Most SMT members struggle with goal-setting and sometimes lack the innovation, capacity and understanding to set realistic and smart goals that should encourage and keep them motivated. Goals that are pursued are actually not realistic and mainly come from a higher office and managers struggle to set systems in place to achieve them as the context prevailing in most of the schools do not allow a platform for their seamless implementation. The development of school improvement plans is not informed by a well thought school self-evaluation process.

The transition from excellence as subject teachers do not always translate into good managers. There is a lack of capacity-building to transition teachers to management as the responsibility to plan, monitor and control approved programs remain a challenge. The lack of capacity affects the self-confidence and decision making of SMT's in schools. There is a general feeling of inadequate capacity building programs and a general lack or no continuous professional development programs offered.

SMT members are given plans that they do not understand and lack the skills and competence to implement them effectively. Some members are not ready to embrace changes that bring innovations in their prescribed jobs. Most of the appointed SMT's acknowledge their lack of capacity and would appreciate and benefit from structured programs to induct them sufficiently into their new roles. For some, there is an attitude change challenge and they would benefit from well-structured change management programs.

One Departmental Head maintained that they were taken to a two-day induction workshop and they feel it was inadequate for their new responsibilities. He claims there is inadequate support from the department and the targets that are pre-set are insurmountable to achieve without adequate orientation. He feels there should be continuous professional development programs that would enhance their capacity with the requisite skills for the job.

Some SMT members attribute challenges to the poor discipline of learners. They claim some learners lack a good support system from home and in dealing with their attitude towards school work, there is no co-operation from the families.

The research was conducted in an attempt to analyse the extent to which managerial challenges hinder organizational performance against set goals and objectives. It was also aiming to identify possible solutions on the adverse impact of the managerial challenges on school performance. The data collected provided answers to the following questions:

4.3.1. Why do school management teams struggle to achieve set goals?

Most of the SMT members are newly appointed with less than five years' experience. There is poor or inadequate induction into their new roles. Despite their appropriate qualifications, there is still a struggle to align their own acquired academic knowledge with their actual roles in management. Their job descriptions remain unclear and they work *in silos* as each one plan and endeavor to achieve individual goals.

There is poor synergy between roles and result in poor teamwork spirit among members. The members do not complement each other but compete as individuals to outshine each other. An unhealthy competition develops resulting in poor performance. There is poor sharing of team goals and a general lack of ambition to achieve at a higher level. Some of these challenges could be attributed to inadequate in-service training and lack of continuing professional development as envisaged by the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

4.3.2. How do managerial challenges impact organizational performance?

The general lack of capacity results in poor planning and understated, unrealistic and poor target setting. The SMT who pursues individual goals more than team goals lack direction and leads to infighting, poor time management and

overambitious plans. An unhealthy competition develops which may result in poor resource utilization in pursuit of unrealistic individual goals. All these challenges affect the motivation of the team and result to organizational lack of direction and failure to achieve its set and prescribed goals and subsequently underperforms.

According to NEEDU (2018), schools should fuse target-setting with the school improvement plans. Successful schools plan annual goals and subdivide them into short term, for the quarter, month and then a week. The 2018 NEEDU report maintains that this kind of planning propels schools to follow steps necessary to achieve the set end-of-year targets. There is a need for the empowerment of SMT's to develop the capacity to achieve at a higher level.

4.3.3. What role should management play to ensure organizational performance?

According to Bell, (2002) each school is expected to have a workforce with the requisite skills and ability to organise and develop the professional capacity of colleagues. Management has the responsibility to conduct school self-evaluation and develop developmental programs that would ensure that each member of staff is accountable for his/her job roles. He further maintains that there is a need to develop procedures tailor-made to meaningfully engage all staff in curriculum management and staff development to enhance their capacity. School management teams have a shared responsibility to deliver on these core mandate.

According to Randeree and Youha, (2009) there is a need to capacitate public employees to develop operational plans, over and above the key performance indicators and SMART targets. There is a need for capacity building programs to prepare for the development of good plans. They acknowledge that there is a continuing need for self-development to remain relevant and aligned to the ever changing needs of society. According to Bucăța, (2018) managers are expected to provide leadership and guidance in the organisations they lead. All stakeholders and interested parties look up to the managers for decisions and should thus have capacity.

4.4. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The report aims to present the research results honestly and explicitly reflect on the views of the participants and detail the implications (Drisko, 2005). Most schools had co-opted educators into the managerial roles and there were no capacity building programs for such caretakers over a period of time. Almost all the departmental heads were recently appointed and fall within the category of 0-5yrs in terms of experience. There is general lack of capacity in the use of ICT and blended learning methods.

Most SMT members need training in basic management skills such as conducting School Self Evaluation (SSE), the development of School Improvement Plans (SIP), target setting, etc.

4.5. UNEXPECTED FINDINGS

The whole circuit had a vacancy rate of 100% deputy principals as at the end of the 2021 academic year. Most schools were led by co-opted SMT members without any incentives and without any formal recognition by the employer. The deputy principals in all the secondary schools within the circuit were appointed from the 01st of January 2022.

All the newly appointed SMT's have a minimum postgraduate qualification which could serve a good foundation for professional development. There was a very long period in the Limpopo Department of Education without appointed SMT's in most schools and the gaps/lack of capacity seems to have accumulated over the years. There is a serious need for the department to strengthen and prioritise the capacity of managers of schools. There is no knowledge of international practice from the participants that increases the capacity of managers to perform.

4.6. CONCLUSION

The expressed views of the participants imply that there is a need for mandatory structured induction and continuing professional development programs. With the ever-changing education practices, SMT's should constantly undergo in-service training. There must be deliberate programs to enhance innovative thinking and teamwork. Department officials need to encourage and motivate management teams that are struggling instead of calling them names. There is a need to conduct further research on other challenges affecting performance in schools.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research design and methods employed by the researcher in the research process. A summary and meaning of the findings in the context of the study is presented. Limitations were acknowledged and the study finally presents recommendations for the department to consider.

5.2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The process of conducting research follows a particular plan to collate and scrutinise data in the quest to answer the research questions. In this research, a qualitative research method with purposive sampling as a design was followed. The choice was influenced by the topic as well as the deliberate intention to get a deep understanding of the phenomenon studied.

The intention was to produce findings of a non-statistical nature, and therefore a nonmathematical process of interpretation was followed to discover new concepts and relationships. In a quest to understand the impact of managerial challenges on organisational performance, the nature of the research problem according to Corbin and Strauss, (2014) influenced the choice of this method.

Data was collected using in-depth interviews and a focus group discussion. A grounded theory as outlined by Strauss and Corbin, (1994) was followed. The theory was derived from the data, in other words, there was no preconceived idea before the research, instead the data collection, analysis, and ultimately the theory resulted in the relationship. There was a deliberate attempt to highlight and explore the participant's perceptions on managerial challenges and organisational performance according to Khan, (2014).

The study on the influence of managerial challenges on organisational performance was conducted in the Limpopo Department of Education, Mopani West Education District, in Makhutšwe Circuit. The participants were purposively sampled from 8

secondary schools and comprised of 4 principals, 4 deputy principals and 5 departmental heads. The participants represented three categories of schools in terms of size, namely, high, medium and low enrolment schools.

5.3. SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.3.1. Key findings from literature review

5.3.1.1. Exemplary leadership

A school principal must be dedicated to clarifying and being an embodiment of the school's vision, aim and values. The values of the principal are central to influencing all other role players in a school. The research findings sanction a call for moral leadership as an imperative for principal leadership in underperforming South African schools (Van Jaarsveld et al. 2020:73).

5.3.1.2. Time management

Akomolafe (2005) in her studies, conclude that, "The skill of time management in leadership is a manifestation of leaders' preparedness to ensure the objectives and the goals of the school organization are accomplished." She argues that principals must strive for effective and efficient time allocation to school activities. Principals in schools that work adhere to a tight and adequate time schedule. Blair (2008:26) argues that effective time management allows managers to eliminate wastage and refuse excessive workloads through proper resource allocation.

5.3.1.3. Poor learner performance

Research in developing countries attribute the causes of poor learner performance to poverty, malnutrition, absenteeism, inappropriate curriculum and examinations, badly trained teachers, lack of textbooks and overcrowded classrooms (Lockhead and Verspoor, 1991:86-87; Pscharopoulos and

Woodhall, 1985:209). Legotlo, Maaga and Sebegu, (2002) maintain that the recurrent curriculum changes and revised examination formats coupled with inadequate in-service training of educators affect learner performance

5.3.1.4. Capacity to develop/ implement School Improvement Plans

Van Der Voort and Wood, (2014) reveal that there is still a lack of understanding by School Management Teams (SMT's) of the importance and value of SIP's and that there is still a lack of capacity to develop and implement SIP's. Naidu and Ngcobo, (2008) argue that SMT's do not value the SIP's, which offer an opportunity for self-evaluation and reflection. Principals and School Management Teams fail to guide teachers in the discussion and elaboration of school development plans.

5.3.1.5. Participative management

Gamede (2009) believe that the non-involvement of staff in goal setting, problem solving, decision-making, and organisational change could have a negative impact on staff morale, job satisfaction and performance in school. Somech (2002, 341) is of the view that participative management is a management style with a strong focus on decentralisation of decision making and power sharing to successfully achieve organisational goals. Most principals work in silos and do not value teamwork and participative management and thus struggle to lead and manage teams.

5.3.1.6. Lack of innovation

A management that lacks innovation stifles the possibilities of new ideas. Management must develop a culture that is conducive for innovations and motivate employees to be competitive and are success driven. Kuratko and Welsch, (2004) argue that organisations need a culture to shape their values, beliefs and commitment. Cobb and Couch, (2022) maintain that school management team members need initial proper training and continuous professional development to succeed. It is argued that without continuous

professional development, innovations in leadership techniques, pedagogical and instructional guidance and the overall goals and vision of the school become blurred.

5.3.2. Key findings from participants

The majority of participants strongly agree that the use of foul language and labelling by the departmental officials is discouraging and makes them feel inadequate and threatens meaningful engagement. School Management Teams generally struggle with the use of technology and other 4IR innovations in curriculum management and delivery.

Most schools do not have sufficient internal accountability systems that work. Those that exist are not closely monitored. SMT members struggle with goal-setting and sometimes lack the innovation, capacity and understanding to set realistic and smart goals. The development of school improvement plans is not informed by a thorough school self-evaluation process. There is a lack of capacity-building to transition teachers to management and a general lack or no continuous professional development programs.

5.4. CONCLUSIONS

School management teams lack capacity to manage schools. The induction workshops are inadequate and lack the depth to prepare SMT's into their new roles. Despite their appropriate qualifications, there is still a struggle to align their own acquired academic knowledge with their actual roles in management.

The majority of the SMT members do not complement each but instead compete as individuals to outshine each other. An unhealthy competition develops resulting in poor performance. Some of these challenges could be attributed to inadequate in-service training and lack of continuing professional development.

The general lack of capacity result in poor planning and understated, unrealistic and poor target setting. All these challenges affect the motivation of the team and result

in an organization lacking direction and failing to achieve its set and prescribed goals and subsequently underperforms.

There is a need for the empowerment of SMT's to develop the requisite capacity to achieve at a higher level.

5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a general lack of capacity in SMT to implement the vision of the Limpopo Department of Education which is "Excellence in the provision of Innovative Quality Education". There must be regular in-service training programs to address the gaps identified and enhance capacity in ICT and blended learning theories and techniques.

Continuing professional development should be encouraged and well-coordinated to enhance the identified developmental needs. Basic training is needed to SMT's in schools to conduct School Self Evaluation(SSE), and develop School Improvement Plans (SIP). The use of foul language and derogatory remarks should be discouraged.

This study was conducted in one circuit, namely Makhutšwe Circuit and thus, cannot be generalised for the entire Limpopo Department of Education. It is, therefore, recommended that future studies should be conducted in other Districts of the Limpopo Department of Education.

5.6. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is imperative in that it offers an insight into impact of managerial challenges on organisational performance. Challenges faced by managers in schools and recommended ideals in the literature provide a basis for further development.

The initial objective of the study was to examine the managerial challenges prevailing in the selected secondary schools which hamper success. I believe the participants expressed views highlight the challenges that are prevalent in the sampled schools.

The second objective was to analyse the extent to which managerial challenges hinder organisational performance against set goals and objectives. The literature review set a basis for analysis and participants expressed views reflected on the impact of the managerial challenges.

The third objective was to identify possible solutions on the adverse impact of the managerial challenges on school performance. The recommendations shall go a long way in providing possible solutions to managerial challenges in schools.

5.7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The overwhelming majority of participants acknowledge that they lack knowledge and skills and therefore the capacity to perform as expected. They are willing to be developed to be able to overcome the managerial challenges they are confronted with every day.

REFERENCES

- Ahiaku, P.K.A., 2019. Measuring the effectiveness of appointment of school management team: a qualitative analysis of the stakeholders' views. *AFFRIKA Journal of Politics, Economics and Society*, 9(2), pp.33-45.
- Akomolafe, C.O., 2005. Principals' time management abilities in secondary schools in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning*, 5(1), pp.58-67.
- Bacotic, D., 2016. Relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance. *Econ Res-Ekon Istraz*, 29, pp.118-30.
- Bell, L., 1992. *Managing teams in secondary schools*. Psychology Press.
- Bernstein B. 1990. *Class. Codes and control: Vol 4: The structure of pedagogic discourse*. London: Routledge.
- Blair, G.M., 1992. Personal time management for busy managers. *Engineering Management Journal*, 2(1), pp.33-38.
- Boyatzis, R.E. and Ratti, F., 2009. Emotional, social and cognitive intelligence competencies distinguishing effective Italian managers and leaders in a private company and cooperatives. *Journal of Management Development*.
- Bucăța, G., 2018. The challenges of organizational management. *Land Forces Academy Review*, 23(4), pp.275-281.
- Bush, T. and Glover, D., 2016. School leadership and management in South Africa: Findings from a systematic literature review. *International journal of educational management*, 30(2), pp.211-231.
- Buthelezi, A.B. and Gamede, B.T., 2019. Challenges facing secondary school principals regarding effective implementation of participative management in patriarchal South Africa. *Gender and Behaviour*, 17(4), pp.14547-14561.

Challens, B., Van Jaarsveld, L. and Wolhuter, C., 2018. Morele leierskap: Die skoolhoof as agent vir die vestiging van morele waardes ter bevordering van skoolklimaat. *Litnet Akademies*, 15(3), pp.1090-1118.

Chetty, P., 2016. Limitations and weakness of qualitative research methods. *Project Guru*.

Clarke, A., 2011. What I have learnt from working with underperforming schools. *School Management and Leadership*, 5(2), pp.23-24.

Clarke, V., Braun, V. and Hayfield, N., 2015. Thematic analysis. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*, 3, pp.222-248.

Cho, J. and Dansereau, F., 2010. Are transformational leaders fair? A multi-level study of transformational leadership, justice perceptions, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *The leadership quarterly*, 21(3), pp.409-421.

Cobb, D. and Couch, D., 2022. Locating inclusion within the OECD's assessment of global competence: An inclusive future through PISA 2018?. *Policy Futures in Education*, 20(1), pp.56-72

Creswell, J.W. and Miller, D.L., 2000. Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, 39(3), pp.124-130.

Denton, M. and Vloeberghs, D., 2003. Leadership challenges for organisations in the new South Africa. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 24(2), pp.84-95.

Department of Basic Education (2016). Annual Report 2016/2017. Retrieved from [https://nationalgovernment.co.za/departments/annual/173/2017-department:-basic-education-\(dbe\)-annual-report.pdf](https://nationalgovernment.co.za/departments/annual/173/2017-department:-basic-education-(dbe)-annual-report.pdf). Accessed 31 October 2022

Drisko, J.W., 2005. Writing up qualitative research. *Families in Society*, 86(4), pp.589-593.

Duke, D.L., Carr, M. and Sterrett, W., 2012. *The school improvement planning handbook: Getting focused for turnaround and transition*. R&L Education.

Dyer, J., 2019. *Strategic management: Concepts and cases*. Wiley.

Ehrich, L.C., Harris, J., Klenowski, V., Smeed, J. and Spina, N., 2015. The centrality of ethical leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*.

Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S., 2016. Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American journal of theoretical and applied statistics*, 5(1), pp.1-4.

Fereday, J. and Muir-Cochrane, E., 2006. Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 5(1), pp.80-92.

Fusarelli, B.C., Fusarelli, L.D. and Riddick, F., 2018. Planning for the future: Leadership development and succession planning in education. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 13(3), pp.286-313.

Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. and Chadwick, B., 2008. Methods of data collection in qualitative research: interviews and focus groups. *British dental journal*, 204(6), pp.291-295.

Golafshani, N., 2003. Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The qualitative report*, 8(4), pp.597-607.

Harber, C. and Davies, L., 2005. *School management and effectiveness in developing countries: The post-bureaucratic school*. A&C Black.

Heystek, J. and Emekako, R., 2020. Leadership and motivation for improved academic performance in schools in low socio-economic contexts. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 34(9), pp.1403-1415.

Hopkins, D., Harris, A. and Jackson, D., 1997. Understanding the school's capacity for development: growth states and strategies. *School Leadership & Management*, 17(3), pp.401-412.

Holloway, I. and Wheeler, S., 1996. *Qualitative Research for Nurses*, City of publication: Blackwell Science Ltd.

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b&lei=jzhPZOxNicmBBoGqLA&q=needu%20report%202018&ved=2ahUKEwis0ZC>

GndPAhWJZMAKHQEVcWAQsKwBKAB6BAhWEAE%20Accessed%2031%20October%202022.

Ibrahim, A.U. and Daniel, C.O., 2019. Impact of leadership on organisational performance. *International Journal of Business, Management and Social Research*, 6(2), pp.367-374.

Kavanagh, M.H. and Ashkanasy, N.M., 2006. The impact of leadership and change management strategy on organizational culture and individual acceptance of change during a merger. *British journal of management*, 17(S1), pp.S81-S103.

Khan, S.N., 2014. Qualitative research method-phenomenology. *Asian Social Science*, 10(21), pp.298.

Kenny S, V., 2019. Employee productivity and organizational performance: A theoretical perspective.

Klein, K.J. and Harrison, D.A., 2007. On the diversity of diversity: Tidy logic, messier realities. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 21(4), pp.26-33.

Korstjens, I. and Moser, A., 2018. Series: practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), pp.120-124.

Kothari, C.R., 2004. *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Age International.

Krosnick, J.A., 2018. Questionnaire design. *The Palgrave handbook of survey research*, pp.439-455.

Kruger, A.G., 2003. Instructional leadership: the impact on the culture of teaching and learning in two effective secondary schools. *South African journal of education*, 23(3), pp.206-211.

Kuratko, D.F. and Welsch, H.P., 2004. *Strategic entrepreneurial growth*. South-Western Pub.

Legotlo, M.W., Maaga, M.P. and Sebego, M.G., 2002. Perceptions of stakeholders on causes of poor performance in Grade 12 in a province in South Africa. *South African journal of education*, 22(2), pp.113-118.

Leithwood*, K., Jantzi, D., Earl, L., Watson, N., Levin, B. and Fullan, M., 2004. Strategic leadership for large-scale reform: the case of England's national literacy and numeracy strategy. *School Leadership & Management*, 24(1), pp.57-79.

Locke, E.A. and Latham, G.P., 1994. Goal setting theory. *Motivation: Theory and research*. Theory and research (pp. 13–29).

Lockheed, M.E. and Verspoor, A.M., 1991. *Improving primary education in developing countries*. Oxford University Press for World Bank.

May, K.A., 1991. Interview techniques in qualitative research: Concerns and challenges. *Qualitative nursing research: A contemporary dialogue*, pp.188-201.

Manzano, A., 2016. The craft of interviewing in realist evaluation. *Evaluation*, 22(3), pp.342-360.

Maree, K., 2007. *First steps in research*. City of publication: Van Schaik Publishers.

Mastrangelo, A., R. Eddy, E. and J. Lorenzet, S., 2014. The relationship between enduring leadership and organizational performance. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 35(7), pp.590-604.

Maxwell, J., 1992. Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard educational review*, 62(3), pp.279-301.

Mestry, R., 2019. School Management Teams' instructional leadership role in closing the achievement gap in impoverished schools. *Africa Education Review*, 16(6), pp.94-110.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M., 1994. *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. sage.

Milton, N. and Lambe, P., 2019. *The knowledge manager's handbook: a step-by-step guide to embedding effective knowledge management in your organization*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Moura, L.F., Pinheiro de Lima, E., Deschamps, F., Van Aken, E., Gouvea da Costa, S.E., Treinta, F.T. and Cestari, J.M.A.P., 2019. Designing performance measurement systems in nonprofit and public administration organizations. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 68(8), pp.1373-1410.

Naidoo, P., 2019. Perceptions of teachers and school management teams of the leadership roles of public school principals. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(2).

Naidu, A. and Ngcobo, T., 2008. *Education management and leadership: A South African perspective*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Naidu, T., 2018. To be or not to be... Revealing questions of anonymity and confidentiality. *The Palgrave handbook of ethics in critical research*, pp.241-256.

Ncube, A.C., 2013. Managing and organising secondary schools for ineffectiveness? The views of principals in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 4(4), pp.637-643.

Ochieng, P.A., 2009. An analysis of the strengths and limitation of qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*, 13, pp.13.

O'leary, Z., 2014. Primary data: Surveys, interviews and observation. *The essential guide to doing your research project*, pp.201-216.

Patton, M.Q., 2002. *Learning in the Field: An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, edited by Gretchen B. Rossman and Sharon F. Rallis. Sage, Beverley Hills, 1998.

Polit, D. and Beck, C., 2020. *Essentials of nursing research: Appraising evidence for nursing practice*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Polkinghorne, D.E., 1989. Phenomenological research methods. *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology: Exploring the breadth of human experience*, pp.41-60.

Pope, C. and Mays, N., 1995. Qualitative research: reaching the parts other methods cannot reach: an introduction to qualitative methods in health and health services research. *bmj*, 311(6996), pp.42-45.

Prew, M., 2016. Challenges facing education in South Africa. *Interview November*, 9.

Psacharopoulos, G. and Woodhall, M., 1993. *Education for development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Randeree, K. and Youha, H.A., 2009. Strategic management of performance: an examination of public sector organizations in the United Arab Emirates. *International Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Change Management*, 9(4), pp.123-134.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J. and Elam, G., 2003. Designing and selecting samples. *Qualitative research methods*, pp.77-108.

Robbins, S.P. and Judge, T.A., 2013. *Organizational behavior* (Vol. 4).

Ryan, G., Emmerling, R.J. and Spencer, L.M., 2009. Distinguishing high-performing European executives: The role of emotional, social and cognitive competencies. *Journal of Management Development*, 28(9), pp.859-875.

Somech, A., 2002. Explicating the complexity of participative management: An investigation of multiple dimensions. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(3), pp.341-371.

Spradley, J.P., 1979. *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston. *LeCompte, MD (2000). Analyzing Qualitative Data. Theory into Practice*, 39(3), pp.146-156.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J., 1994. *Grounded theory methodology: An overview*.

Surmiak, A.D., 2018. Confidentiality in qualitative research involving vulnerable participants: Researchers' perspectives. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 19, No. 3). DEU.

Tracy, S.J., 2018. A phronetic iterative approach to data analysis in qualitative research. *질적연구*, 19(2), pp.61-76.

Van der Berg, S., Taylor, S., Gustafsson, M., Spaul, N. and Armstrong, P., 2011. Improving education quality in South Africa, Report for the National Planning Commission, September 2011. *Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch. LEARNING ABOUT SUSTAINABLE CHANGE IN EDUCATION.*

Van Jaarsveld, L., Mentz, K., Wolhuter, C.C., Challens, B.H., Khumalo, J., Malan, A., Tapala, T., van der Vyver, C.P., Van Wyk, A. and Vos, D., 2020. *Leadership Approaches to Negotiate Challenges in a Changing Education Landscape* (p. 400). AOSIS.

Van Der Voort, G. and Wood, L., 2014. Assisting school management teams to construct their school improvement plans: an action learning approach. *South African Journal of Education*, 34(3), pp.1-7.

APPENDICES/ ANNEXURES

Annexure A Approval from the university



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 14 October 2021
PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/225/2021: PG
PROJECT:

Title: The Impact of Managerial Challenges on Organisational Performance: A Case Study of Selected Secondary Schools in Mopani West Education District, Limpopo Province, South Africa
Researcher: NW Lekoloane
Supervisor: Dr E Zwane
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership
Degree: Master of Public Administration and Management

PROF P MASOKO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Annexure B Letter seeking consent from the Department of Education: Limpopo

Enquiries Lekoloane NW
Persal 80634605
Cell 083 588 2237

Seagotle Secondary School
P O Box 95
Trichardtsdal
0890
02 August 2021

The District Director
Mopani West Education District
Private Bag X4032
Tzaneen
0850

Madam PP Modika

APPLICATION FOR CONSENT AND PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.
2. I, **Lekoloane Ngoako Wilson**, a Masters of Public Administration and Management (**MPAM**) student at Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership, University of Limpopo. hereby wish to apply for permission to conduct research in the Department of Education as per the approved research topic. **“The impact of managerial challenges on organisational performance: a case study of selected secondary schools in Mopani West Education District, Limpopo Province, South Africa”**.
3. The full details of my research project are outlined in the attached mini dissertation which was approved by the Graduate School of Leadership of the University of Limpopo.
4. Furthermore, I request permission to conduct interviews with staff members and distribute questionnaires amongst SMT members as per my research proposal.

The purpose of the proposed study is to obtain information from secondary school management team members about the managerial challenges prevailing in schools which hamper success and hinder organisational performance against goals and objectives set by the Department of Basic Education and explore possible solutions on the adverse impact of these managerial challenges on school performance.

5. Attached please find the Faculty Approval of my proposal as well as a copy of my mini-dissertation.
6. I am hoping for positive response.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'M', 'L', and 'W' in a cursive style, enclosed within a large, sweeping loop that extends to the right.

LEKOLOANE NW
PRINCIPAL

Annexure C Letter of approval: Department of Education: Limpopo Province



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

REF: 2/2/2 ENQ: Mpenyana M. B CEL: 082 954 0919 DATE: 19//11.2021. Email: Mpenyanam@gmail.com

TO: Lekoloane NW

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON: "THE IMPACT OF MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMARMANCE: "A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MOPANI WEST EDUCATION DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA".

1. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research on the above mentioned topic has been approved.
2. The focus of your research should on the principals of the sampled schools in Mopani West Education District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.
3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 Arrangements should be made with the affected schools.
 - 3.2 The research should not be conducted during examinations.
 - 3.3 During research, applicable research ethics should be adhered to, in particular the principle of voluntary participation in the study.
 - 3.4 Upon completion of the research study, the researcher shall share the findings and recommendations with the Department of Education.
 - 3.5 Please ensure that All COVID -19 protocols are adhered to.
4. The research should not have any financial implications to the Department of Education, Limpopo Province.
5. You are expected to produce this letter to the sampled schools and offices you intend to conduct research.

The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success to your research.



DISTRICT DIRECTOR

22 Nov 2021

DATE

27 peace street, Private Bag X4032 Tzaneen, 0850 Tel 015 306 6800 Fax No. 086 517 7632

The heartland of South Africa- development is about people!

QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Mark with a (X) below your selected answer.

1. Biographical Information

1.1. Please indicate your age

23-30	31-38	39-47	48-55	56-60

1.2. Please indicate your gender

Male	Female

1.3. Please indicate your home language

Sepedi	Tsonga	Venda	English	Afrikaans	Other

1.4. Please indicate your SMT appointment status

Departmental Head	Deputy Principal	Principal

1.5. Please indicate the number of years' experience in your current position

0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+

1.6. Please indicate your highest educational level

Diploma	Undergraduate Degree	Postgraduate Degree	Other

If, other, please specify:

2. This section lists managerial challenges identified by the researcher in a literature study. Please read the statements below, and next to each identified challenge, put a rating by a (X) in the box which indicates how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement. The rating system is as below:

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Managerial challenge		Rating				
2.1.	SMT members struggle with goal-setting	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
		1	2	3	4	5
2.2.	The use of foul language and labelling by the departmental officials is discouraging	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
		1	2	3	4	5
2.3.	SMT's generally struggle in the use of Technology in management.	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
		1	2	3	4	5
2.4.	Affirmative action compromise quality appointments in management.	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
		1	2	3	4	5
2.5.	It is the responsibility of the school management teams to generate positive results in schools.	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
		1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		

2.6.	SMT lack appropriate administrative skills and professional education management competencies to be effective.	1	2	3	4	5
2.7.	Recurrent curriculum changes in management frustrate managers in schools.	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
2.8.	There is poor coordination in management by the Department of Education officials.	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5

3. There is a perception that some school management teams struggle to deal with managerial challenges in schools. What is your opinion?

4. How does this lack of capacity impact on school performance?

5. Why, do you think, school management teams struggle to achieve set goals?

6. What role should management teams play to ensure good organisational performance?

7. Do you know of any international best practice that is proven to yield positive results?

8. How do you wish to be supported in your management role?

9. What changes would you like to see effected in the management of secondary schools?

10. Is there any practice in school management that you wish to change and why?

11. Exemplary leadership, a general lack of respect, trust and support affect performance in schools, do you agree? Substantiate

12. What role does the SMT play to improve poor learner performance?

13. What is your opinion about the capacity of SMT's to develop/implement School Improvement Plans?

14. What do you understand about Participative Management and what is your opinion on it?

Thank you very much for your participation. Your inputs are greatly valued.