



**A framework for the promotion
of healthy school environments
to enhance the well-being of
educators in public schools**

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DECLARATION

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I declare that: **A framework for the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators in public schools**, is my own work and that all the sources that were used and/or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete list of references. I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part thereof, for examination to any other university for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



08. 12.2021

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my late father Khazamula Samuel Mabunda and my late mother, Kayela Mamayila Mabunda. Not forgetting my late aunts Mphephu Chavalala, Ngobeni Nkotasi and Ngoveni Mjaji.

Nzama

Wa

Khazamula

Wa

Ndhambhi

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Mgevisa

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Pheni

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Mbhalati

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Xake

Wa

Cucululu

Wena wa rhaku ro ala ku tshama hansi ri rhandza ku tlitlana

Mabunda

Mhlave!

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ABSTRACT

This study which focused on developing a framework for promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators in public schools was conducted in the Shamavunga Circuit in Mopani East District, Limpopo, South Africa. This study noted the serious challenges facing rural public schools with regards to employment and retention of qualified educators with good teaching records in South Africa. The wellbeing of educators can be affected by unfavourable working conditions in such environments. As a result, this study developed a theory-based framework for principals to create school environments that will enhance the wellbeing of educators.

The paradigm that guided this study is emancipatory, it adopted a qualitative research design. A participatory action research approach was used to identify aspects of the school environment that have an impact on the wellbeing of educators. Photovoice, focus group interviews, individual interviews and observations were used to gather data. The study was conducted in one rural high school which was purposefully sampled. The sample comprised ten participants, namely, two members of the SMT, two members of the school health committee, three educators whose subjects have high learner enrolment, two members of the School Governing Body and one department official who worked at the wellness section at the Mopani East Education District.

The research findings revealed several factors that constrain or promote the wellbeing of educators in the school environment. Educator wellbeing was found to be a multidimensional construct that includes emotional, physical and cognitive wellbeing. A positive wellbeing was associated with physical comfort, safety, thermal comfort, availability of water and resources and attractive school surroundings, while a negative wellbeing pertained to unclean surroundings, physical facilities that were poorly maintained and shortage of toilets. A conclusion drawn from this exposition of lessons is that school principals can play a salient role in promoting healthy school environments in order to address the issue of educator wellbeing in schools.

This study recommends a theory-based framework for principals to promote healthy environments for a better educator wellbeing. This framework is empirically derived as the constructs employed in developing it were from the findings of the research conducted. Four principles of Senge's theory of learning organisations, namely, vision building and sharing,

systems thinking, team learning and mental models were used as driving force for principals to promote healthy environments.

KEY TERMS: educator wellbeing, work-related wellbeing, school environments, healthy school environments, promotion of healthy school environments.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|---|
| CARE | Cultivating Awareness and Resilience for Educators |
| CDE | Centre for Development and Enterprise |
| CSE | Comprehensive Sexuality Education |
| DBE | Department of Basic Education |
| DHPE | Directors of Health Promotion and Education |
| DOH | Department of Health |
| DSD | Department of Social Development |
| HPS | Health Promotion School |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| IOL | Independent Online |
| ISHP | Integrated School Health Promotion |
| LBP | Low Back Pains |
| LO | Life Orientation |
| MIET | Media in Education Trust |
| NEIMS | National Education Infrastructure Management Systems |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NSNP | National School Nutrition Programme |
| OECD | Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PAR | Participatory Action Research |
| PLCs | Professional Learning Communities |
| SBT | School-based Support Team |
| SGB | School Governing Body |
| SMT | School Management Team |
| SHP | School Health Promotion |
| SRN | School Register of Needs |
| SWB | Subjective wellbeing |

| | |
|-------|--|
| TRIS | Teacher Rural Initiative Scheme |
| WASCE | West Africa School Certificate Examination |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

EDITING CERTIFICATE

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LETTER OF CONFIRMATION OF ENGLISH EDITING

This is to confirm that the thesis with the provisional title, “A framework for promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators in public schools”, to be submitted by Kenneth Nzama Mabunda of North-West University, has been edited for language by Olivier Language Practitioner, Willemien Olivier. The document needed only a few amendments. Neither the research content nor the author’s intentions were altered in any way during the editing process.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The issue of educator wellbeing has become a contentious one in the field of school development. It is very significant because of its impact on school effectiveness, teaching, learning and academic performance. Many researchers concur that educator wellbeing is important to ensure the quality of teaching and learning (Theron, 2009; Salter, 2010; Roffey, 2012). For educators to execute their professional tasks effectively, they should have enhanced wellbeing. Literature supports that enhanced educator wellbeing is essential for delivery of quality education, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction, and willingness to perform their routine duties at their maximum level (Briner & Dewberry, 2007; Spilt, Koomen & Thijs, 2011; Mampane, 2012). It is believed that for a school to improve learner performance there is a need to pay special attention to the wellbeing of educators (Holmes, 2005). This is due to the fact that productivity and the quality of education that is rendered by any education system depend on educators (Dakduki, 2015).

Educator wellbeing is often defined as the expression of a positive emotional state, which results from the harmony between the sum of specific environmental factors and the personal needs and expectations of educators (Aelterman, Angels, Van Petegem, & Verhaeghe, 2007; Seligman, 2011; Wissing, 2014). It is not only critically relevant for whole school wellbeing, and a stable environment for learners, but also for financial considerations. This study focused on educator wellbeing as work-related and domain-specific. Work-related educator wellbeing refers to an individual's positive evaluations of and healthy functioning in a work environment (Van Horn, Taris, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2004). Thus, the understanding of educator wellbeing in this study is multidimensional as it includes mostly the components of subjective wellbeing (thinking and feeling about factors that promote or harm wellbeing in a school environment) and only environmental mastery in psychological wellbeing. The latter is based on the notion that educators are capable of managing their environment.

Several studies have identified various factors that impact the wellbeing of educators over the years, depending on the geographical locations. Internationally, the wellbeing of educators has been found to be affected by poor school climate, high job demand, lack of social support, poor leadership of the principal, the dynamic nature of the job, socio-economic factors, work overload, complex social interaction, difficulty in balancing work and school life, poor working conditions, etc. (Salter, 2010; Salter-Jones, 2012; Moore, 2012). In addition to these factors, in African countries like Kenya, Nigeria, Malawi,

Ghana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Tanzania issues of physical facilities such as sub-standard classrooms, toilets, over-crowded classes, limited desks and chairs, lack of laboratories and libraries, poor salaries, low and infrequent compensation, increased workload, and lack of voice (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Mege, 2014; Kamau & Ruth, 2016; Nyamubi, 2017) also impact negatively on educator wellbeing. South Africa seems to be battling with similar issues as in international countries and in particular, Africa. This is evident in the studies of Theron (2009), Bergman (2013), Pelsler and Van Wyk (2016), Bowen (2016), Van der Vyver, Kok and Conley (2020) and Kwatubana and Molaodi (2021) who mention constraining factors such as, high learner drop-out rate, poor parental involvement, poor physical facilities particularly in rural schools, lack of promotional opportunities, work overload, limited job resources, understaffing, poor learner discipline, unfavourable working conditions, leadership and leadership styles of school principals, as well as various changes taking place within the education context. In all these studies school buildings and other physical facilities were found to be key factors that constrain educator wellbeing. This information reveals two important aspects: that educator wellbeing can be affected by work-related factors; and that no matter in which geographical areas educators are, their wellbeing matters.

The research is divided on how to deal with the factors highlighted above in order to enhance educator wellbeing. Some interventions focus on social capital which is about expectations and interactions that promote trust, respect, value and collaboration (Roffey, 2012) while others emphasize equipping educators with skills such as problem-solving, self-care, maintaining a work-life balance (Mansfield, Beltman, Weatherby-Fell & Broadley, 2016). This study aligns itself with interventions used by Wessels and Wood (2019) that involve engaging educators in collaborative processes that enable them to learn how to improve and sustain their wellbeing.

There is now a strong body of evidence that supports the notion that the wellbeing of educators is influenced by the school environment. Thus, the perception of their school environment is important. Educators who perceive the environment of the school to be conducive for teaching and learning are more likely to detach themselves from their responsibilities and roles than those with positive perceptions (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Healthy school environments play an important role in effective teaching and learning and the wellbeing of educators (Collett, 2013). Section 24 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996) stipulates that everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to health and wellbeing. Indicators of healthy school environments include the availability of certain physical features such as well-maintained school buildings, ablution and sanitation facilities; school surroundings where everyone feels physically and psychologically safe; and running water for drinking and washing of hands (Kwatubana & Nel, 2018). The right to a healthy school environment is violated when there are an inadequate number of toilets, filthy classrooms and school grounds that are littered. It can be argued that

the core business of schools is focused on educational outcomes, however, researchers agree that health and education are intertwined, as poor health inhibits learning. It is for this reason that a focus on promotion of healthy school environments becomes imperative in this study.

School principals are assigned the responsibility of providing healthy school environments for educators and learners. To this end, the Department of Basic Education's Policy: South African Standard for Principalship (South Africa, 2016) indicates the role of principals as, amongst others, creating a safe, secure and healthy learning environment. In executing this task, principals are expected to build and sustain high motivation and support their staff in developing the skills required to successfully change and coordinate processes and activities and encouraging them to sustain new practices and activities (Dadaczynski & Paulus, 2015), promote the interests of all learners and staff members, ensure that the school and human resources, assets and all other resources are organized and managed to provide an effective, efficient, safe and nurturing environment (South Africa, 2016). It is the principals that act as 'gatekeepers' to school innovations that have a significant influence on whether or not a school will become and remain a healthy organisation (Dadaczynski & Paulus, 2015:254). To that end, this study developed a framework to guide principals on how to promote healthy school environments to the benefit of educator wellbeing in their schools.

Most of the studies consulted investigated factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators focusing on personal aspects including lack of skills to deal with pressures (Maas, Schoch, Scholz, Rackow, Schuler, Wegner & Keller, 2021), relationships (Tran, Nguyen, Dang & Ton, 2018) and workload (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). As much as these aspects are important, this study adds another dimension, that of school environments. Moreover, the literature consulted on the wellbeing of educators mainly derives from well-developed countries and this leads to a lack of insight on how issues of educator wellbeing can be addressed in the context of developing countries like South Africa. It is for this reason that there is a need to investigate factors in the school environment that impact the wellbeing of educators in order to develop a framework for principals to assist in the promotion of better wellbeing for educators.

1.2 Background and statement of the problem

Several studies show that the jobs of employees in the public service are characterized by considerable high demands, low levels of job control as well as limited resources (Collett, 2013, Pelsler & Van Wyk, 2016, Bowen, 2016). This resonates with numerous studies that espouse that teaching is one of the most stressful professions (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015; Newberry & Allsop, 2017; Harmsen, Helms-Lorenz, Maulana & van Veen, 2018). As a result of these challenges, some educators quit the teaching profession, resulting in high attrition rates. This resounds with a study by Ingersoll (2017) who found that about 20 percent of educators in the USA leave the teaching profession on an annual basis. Similarly, in

a study conducted in the UK by the Education Policy Institute (2021), participants were asked how likely they are to leave the teaching profession in the short term (by summer 2021 to summer 2022) and longer-term (by summer 2025). The results of this study showed that educators' intention to leave the teaching profession increased by 9% points (12% to 21%) in the short term and by 16% (27% to 43%) in summer 2025 (Education Policy Institute, 2021). The outcome of the increase in anxiety and stress levels of educators is surge in their intentions to leave the teaching profession (Jones & Youngs, 2012), their decision to leave teaching (Newberry & Allsop, 2017), and a decrease in their quality of teaching (Harris, Davies, Christensen, Hanks & Bowles, 2019). All these factors are associated with low levels of wellbeing. The arguments in this paragraph indicate that educator attrition is a global problem.

The findings of a study conducted by Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) in White River in the Mpumalanga Province, reveal that one of the most serious challenges facing rural schools is the employment and retention of qualified educators with good teaching records. Educators are reluctant to work or stay in rural areas due to the lack of access to professional opportunities and taking on multiple duties without proper financial compensation. This situation can be attributed to the fact that rural schools face severe challenges that are unique to their environment. When a school is labelled "rural" in South Africa, the defining characteristic is undoubtedly poverty (Brown, 2010). Rural contexts are described in terms of multiple deprivations or as disadvantaged (Naidoo & Perumal, 2014). Moreover, Handal, Watson, Petocz and Maher (2013) explained the factors that impact educator retention in rural schools by grouping them into three major categories: professional, organisational and personal. They argue that these factors, develop a working environment that promoted educator attrition fuelled by professional burnout (Handal et al., 2013:23). In such situations, the need for strategies to attract and retain educators becomes urgent and imperative in rural communities.

There is a wealth of research available and attesting to the fact that the wellbeing of educators is affected by unfavourable working conditions, insufficient resources, overcrowded classrooms (Pelsler & Van Wyk, 2016; Bowen, 2016), poor school infrastructure (Khumalo & Mji, 2014; du Plessis & Mestry, 2019), inadequate ablution facilities (Jiyane, Fombad, & Mugwisi, 2016), and poor safety and security (Calitz, Cullen & Jooste, 2020). However, to date, little research has been conducted in order to develop a framework for principals to promote healthy school environments that will enhance the wellbeing of educators.

1.3 Personal rationale

My interest in the wellbeing of educators started through my personal experience as an educator. As an educator employed by the Limpopo Department of Education for the past 32 years (i.e 17 years as an ordinary educator, 3 years as a deputy principal and 12 years as a principal of a high school starting from

2009 to date), I noticed with great anguish how educators tendered resignation letters to the Limpopo Provincial Education Department every year. In one instance, our school with a staff of 33 educators lost 5 (2 departmental heads and 3 post-level 1) educators in 2016 due to resignation. This translates to an attrition rate of 15,2%. It was difficult to fill up the two departmental head posts due to their promotional status. It took the school 2 years to fill up the posts. Excessive workload and ill health were cited as reasons for leaving the teaching profession. Informal interaction with educators in our school shows that their wellbeing levels have declined for several reasons. This made me think that the current state of affairs in South African education is more stressful as the teaching profession is characterized by the exodus of educators. Consequently, I was prompted to conduct a study to explore various factors that impact the wellbeing of educators in public schools. This study culminated in the development of a framework that will assist school principals to promote healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators.

1.4 Research aim and objectives

The aim of this study was to develop a theory-based framework for school principals to create school environments that enhance the wellbeing of educators.

1.4.1 Research objectives

To achieve the aim, the following objectives have been formulated:

- report on what educator wellbeing entails;
- discover the essence of promotion of healthy school environments
- reflect on factors that promote the wellbeing of educators in the school environment;
- identify factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators in the school environment;
- explore the role of school principals in promoting the wellbeing of educators;
- understand the role of school principals in promoting healthy school environments;
- develop a theory-based framework for school principals to create healthy school environments that will enhance the wellbeing of educators.

1.5 Research questions

The proposed study will be guided by the following primary question:

How can a theory-based framework that enable school principals to create school environments that will enhance the wellbeing of educators be developed?

1.5.1 Sub-Questions

To answer the main question, the following sub-questions arose:

- What does educator wellbeing entail?
- What is the essence of the promotion of healthy school environments?
- What factors in the school environment promote the wellbeing of educators?
- What factors in the school environment constrain the wellbeing of educators?
- What is the role of school principals in promoting the wellbeing of educators?
- What is the role of school principals in promoting healthy school environments?
- How can a theory-based framework that will enable school principals to create healthy school environments be developed?

1.6 Conceptual framework

In this section, I define and clarify key concepts applicable to this study. It is imperative to present a graphic presentation of the important concepts indicating how they relate. Figure 1.1 presents the conceptual framework of this research.

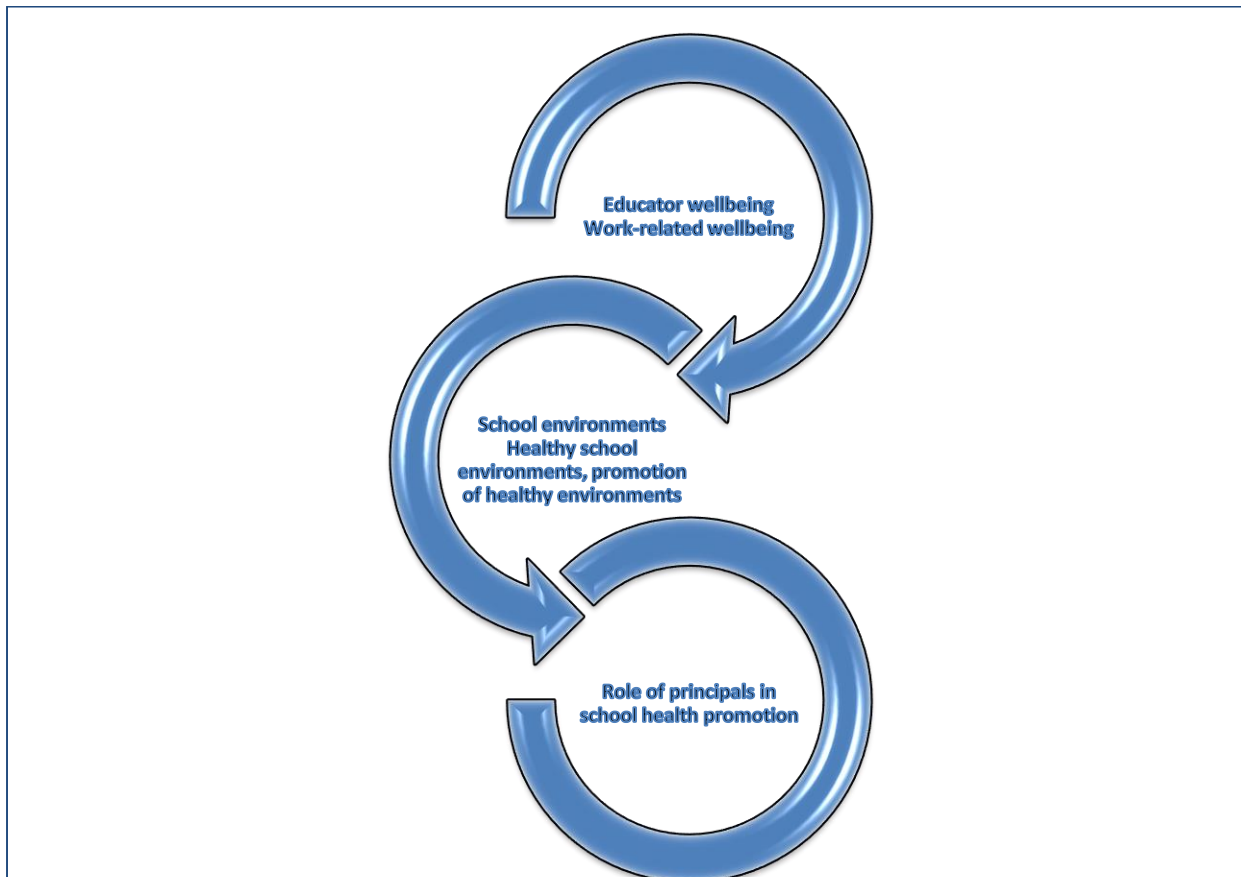


Figure 1-1: Conceptual Framework

The key concepts in the figure above are clarified in the following paragraphs:

1.6.1 Educator wellbeing

The term wellbeing is defined by Bird and Saltmann (2014:145) as a “holistic concept which embraces the emotional, physical, spiritual, social and cognitive dimensions of development and emerges when a range of feelings are combined and balanced”. Huppert (2005) cited in Ruggeri, Garcia-Garzon, Maguire, Matz and Huppert (2020:1) defines wellbeing as “the mixture of feeling good and functioning well; the experience of positive emotions such as happiness and contentment as well as the development of one’s potential, having some control over one’s life, having a sense of purpose, and experiencing positive relationships”. In this study, educator well-being entails a situation where the educator is physically, psychologically and emotionally happy at work.

1.6.2 Work-related wellbeing

Work-related wellbeing relates to “all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organisation” (ILO, 2021:1). Davis, Nowland and Qualter (2019) refer to work-related wellbeing as the ability of an individual to pursue personal interests, values, and life purpose in order to gain meaning, happiness, and enrichment professionally. Positive work-related wellbeing may have a positive impact on work engagement. Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma and Bakker (2002) cited by Sun and Bunchapattanasakda (2019:65) define work engagement as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption”. Work engagement is believed to have a moderate relationship to work-related wellbeing.

A negative work-related environment can lead to occupational stress. Occupational stress is defined as “a gradual process in which individual cognitive assessments of occupational stressors generate adverse health with severe behavioural consequences” (Moreno, Tian & Huebner, 2020:3629). Occupational stress emanates from a toxic work environment such as poor control, high work demands, lack of information, extreme pressure and low decision-making latitude (Mustafa, Illzam, Muniandy, Hashmi, Sharifa & Nang, 2015). According to a study by Soh, Zarola, Palaiou and Furnham (2016) occupational stress has a strong negative relationship to work-related stress.

1.6.3 School environments

The school environment is “an embracive concept that includes physical facilities, the attractive landscape of the school premises as well as the culture and psychosocial climate of the school” (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015:3). Although the school environment is mainly concerned with the school buildings, school surroundings, resources as well as other physical facilities are also included (Collett, 2013). In this study, the term school environment refers to the physical infrastructure such as buildings, school grounds including the landscape, water and sanitation and psychosocial environment.

1.6.4 Healthy school environments

Healthy school environments are the main determinant of health and they greatly influence the individual’s level of intellectual growth and development. The concept healthy school environment denotes “all the consciously organized, planned and executed efforts to ensure safety and healthy living conditions for all members of the school community” (Amaran, Kupoloyi & Salako, 2017:62). The American Academy of Paediatrics (1993) defines a healthy school environment as one that protects learners and staff against immediate injury or disease and promotes prevention activities and attitudes against known risk factors that might lead to future disease or disability. Healthy school environments

aim at creating a healthy and safe learning environment in the school, providing adequate safe water supply and sanitation facilities for use in the schools (Amoran et. al. 2017).

1.6.5 Promotion of healthy school environments

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2000) refers to school health promotion as “any activity that occurs from within a school that is undertaken to improve and/or protect the health of the whole school community”. It has to do with providing a better foundation to build a rich health knowledge base and healthy living skills (St Leger & Young, 2009) through health education, as well as developing learning spaces that are a part of the everyday life of the school (Carlsson, 2016). Health promotion in schools is not only significant for the elevation of health of individuals but also pertinent for the achievement of organisational goals (Kwatubana, Nhlapo & Moteetee, 2021). Focusing on school health promotion enhances the knowledge, competencies and health status of the school in general. Neglecting school health promotion could have a ripple effect on the performance and effectiveness of the entire school leading to a higher risk of academic failure (Kwatubana, 2014).

1.6.6 Role of principals in school health promotion

Bosak (2018) defines a role as a socially defined pattern of behaviour expected of a person occupying a social position or belonging to a particular category. In this study a role refers to certain functions that the school principal is expected to perform in promoting healthy school environments. School principals need to have a better understanding of their role to guide the school community towards turning their schools into health-promoting ones (Kwatubana, Nhlapo & Moteetee, 2021).

1.7 Theoretical framework

Grant and Osanloo (2014) define a theoretical framework as “a blueprint that is often ‘borrowed’ by the researcher to build his/her research inquiry”. It serves as the foundation upon which research is constructed. This study adopted Senge’s theory of learning organisation. It is a participatory approach based on the principles that:

- members of the organisation engage in continuous learning to expand knowledge on issues affecting the organisation;
- organisations are never static but changing;
- members of the organisation should serve as change agents and should solve their organisation’s problems (Senge, 1990) without relying entirely on external change agents; and

- members of the school community should engage in team learning to attain the desired changes.

These principles are explained in detail in Chapter 4.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

This study focuses on a framework for school principals to create healthy school environments that will enhance the wellbeing of educators. The schools that were targeted were those in the Limpopo province in the Greater Giyani Municipality. Limpopo Province has 5 district municipalities that are divided into 22 local municipalities. This is one of the poorest provinces in South Africa that is mostly rural and depends heavily on mining and agriculture economies. The province has an unemployment rate of 49.9 % (BusinessTech, 2021). The figure below shows the map of the Limpopo Province.



Figure 1-2: Map of the Limpopo Province

In the Greater Giyani Local Municipality there is only one town called Giyani. The local municipality has a total of 151 schools, 94 primary schools and 57 secondary schools. This study focused on secondary schools only.

1.9 Research method

In this section, the research paradigm, research design and the research approach adopted are discussed in detail. The aims and benefits of these research methods have been discussed as well.

1.9.1 Research paradigm

Research paradigms play a significant role in social research and definitions of the term paradigm abound. Neuman (2011:94) defines a research paradigm as “a whole system of thinking”. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:26) refer to a research paradigm as “a system that influences the action for research thus providing a philosophical framework to establish research traditions in a particular discipline”. In simplistic terms, a research paradigm refers to a set of beliefs that guides action. Taking into account the research design used in this study, an emancipatory paradigm was used. The concept of emancipatory research is an umbrella term that embraces a variety of research streams such as critical theory, race-specific, feminist, transformative, and participatory research (Groat, 2002). The emancipatory research paradigm is mainly concerned with the process of producing knowledge that is beneficial to the disadvantaged group of the community (Noel, 2016). In this research, educators are regarded as being in a disadvantaged position if their wellbeing is not enhanced. Emancipatory research also focuses on changing the system in which the researchers find themselves (Denscombe, 2003).

This research paradigm aims to increase “awareness of contradictions hidden or distorted by everyday understandings”, to direct “attention to the possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes” (Lather, 1986:259) as well as to empower the subjects of the research (Noel, 2016). The participants in this research were made aware of the conditions of their school environments that affect their wellbeing. They were involved in the processes of transforming these environments as indicated in Chapter 6. According to Danieli and Woodham (2009), the emancipatory research paradigm is characterized by such principles as participation, openness, empowerment, accountability, and reciprocity.

1.9.2 Research design

According to Punch (2011:62), the term research design refers to “all the issues involved in planning and executing a research project from identifying the problem through the reporting and publishing of results”. It is a plan of action that enables one to communicate the framework of the study (Okeke & van Wyk, 2015). From these definitions, one can argue that a research design is a detailed plan of how the researcher will conduct a research. This study followed a qualitative research design. Ahmad, Wasim, Irfan and Gogoi (2019:1) refer to qualitative research as “a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting”. An in-depth understanding of

the factors that promote and harm educator wellbeing was sought in the natural setting of the participating school. I decided to use this research design to gain in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives as indicated by McMillan and Schumacher (2010). This research design was also preferred because of its flexibility in the use of data collection methods and its reliance on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives.

1.9.3 Research approach

The proposed study used participatory action research (PAR), which is a component of qualitative research. Participatory action research is based on the understanding that people should understand their oppression and thereby decide which action to take that will lead to their emancipation (Okeke & van Wyk, 2015). Reason and Bradbury (2001:1) refer to PAR as “a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowledge in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes”. Minkler and Wallerstein (2003) cited in Asaba and Suarez-Balcazar, (2018) denote it as a research tradition of researchers, practitioners, and community members collaborating to address health and social challenges that matter to communities. From the definitions above, it can be concluded that PAR is participatory, collaborative and emancipatory when it is effectively implemented.

Using PAR in this study enabled the participants to share their perspectives on how school environments affect the wellbeing of educators in general and provided them with the opportunity to decide the actions to be taken to emancipate themselves. It also enabled them to share their personal experiences (Asumeng & Osae-Larbi, 2015) on how the school environments affect their wellbeing. Figure 1.3 below illustrates how the research was conducted using PAR.

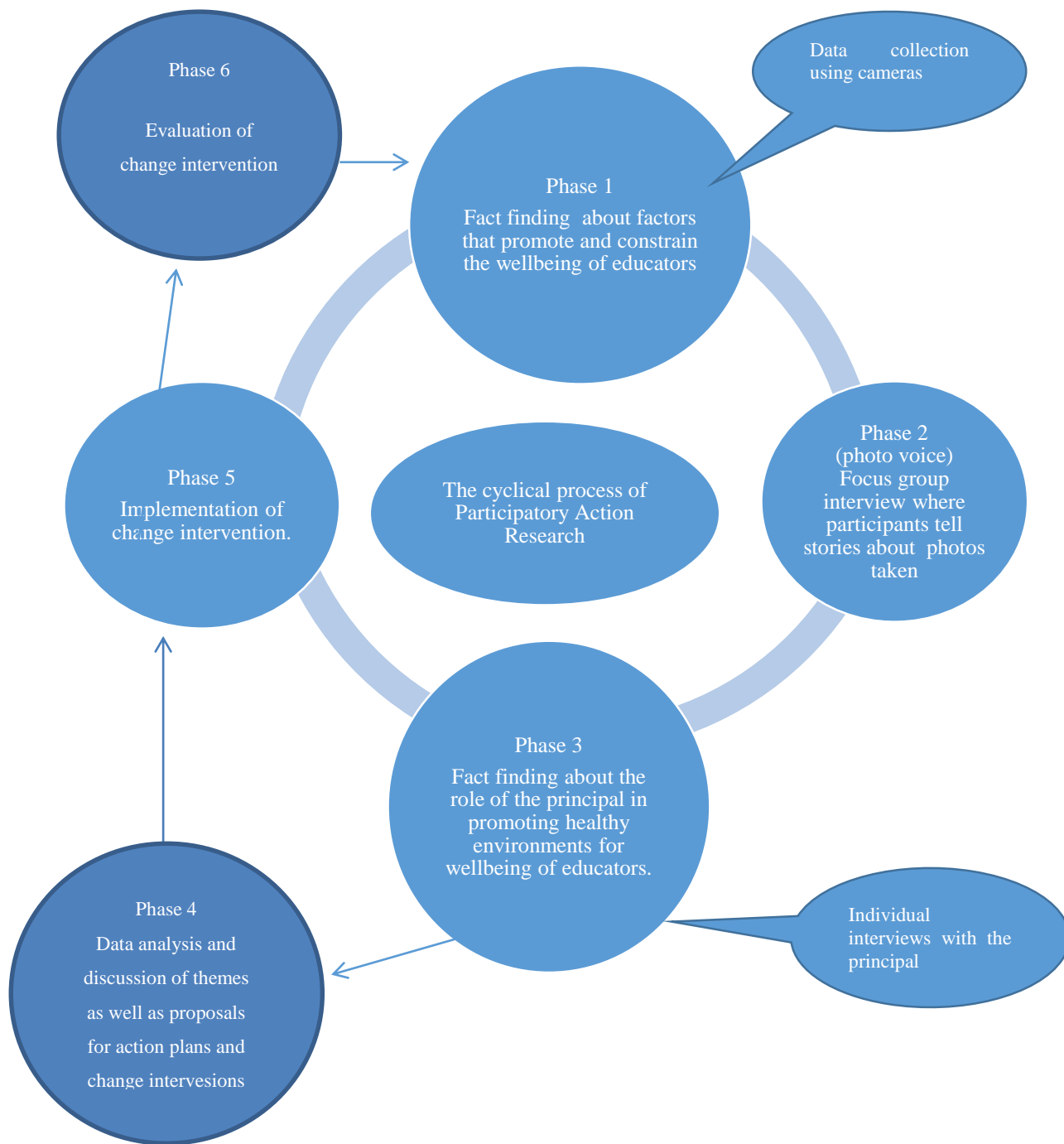


Figure 1-3: The process of PAR in this research

Figure 1.3 Adapted from Lewin (1948)

Figure 1.3 above shows the actions that were taken in each phase of the PAR process. This PAR cycle focused on the collection of data based on the research questions. In phase 1, the data collection was conducted using cameras. Phase 2 included a focus group interview in which participants were afforded an opportunity to share their views about the photos they had taken in the school environment. In phase

3 an individual interview was conducted with the principal of the case study school to obtain data about his role in promoting healthy school environments that enhance the wellbeing of educators. Phase 4 dealt with data analysis as well as the discussion of themes that emerged from the data collected. These themes informed the actions, action plans and change interventions to be taken to bring about change. In phase 5, the research team engaged in the implementation of the change intervention. Phase 6 was concerned with the evaluation of change interventions to determine the success and failure of the implementation of the intervention. All participants took part in data collection, discussions, implementation, and evaluation of strategies as this is a norm in PAR.

The next section elaborates on how the site for the research was selected, the composition of the research team and how the participants were sampled.

1.10 Site selection, sample and sampling method

This section focuses on site selection for the study, sample and sampling method.

1.10.1 Site selection

The study was conducted in Mopani East District. Mopani District is one of the ten (10) districts that fall under the jurisdiction of the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education, South Africa. Mopani East District comprises 13 (thirteen) circuits. The research study was conducted at Shamavunga Circuit. Shamavunga Circuit comprises thirty-four (34) schools: twenty (20) primary schools and fourteen (14) secondary schools. Of the 14 secondary schools, six were considered as big schools as they had bigger enrolment. The research was conducted in one P4 secondary school which was purposefully sampled. The choice of this school was guided by the fact that P4 schools are big schools with high learner and educator enrolment. The P4 school enabled the researcher to draw the sample from the pool of information-rich participants, unlike P1 schools that comprise of one (1) to six (6) educators.

The selection of this school was based on the following criteria:

- A big school with an enrolment of not less than 600 learners. In some contexts, this school would not be regarded as big, however, in rural areas, because of shortage of learners, such schools are regarded as big.
- A quintile level two (02) school which is non-fee paying. Quintile level two schools are situated in a locality where the socio-economic status of the community is very poor.
- A school in a rural community where resources are believed to be scarce.

1.10.2 Sample and Sampling

When conducting research, a researcher cannot study the entire population. It is therefore imperative to use a sample of the entire population to gather data. In any research study, participant selection is of utmost importance as it plays a role in outlining the criteria by which the participants will be selected. It is also salient because it enables the researcher to confine the study to a particular group of participants. A sample is defined by Okeke and Van Wyk (2015:226) as a “set of respondents or participants selected from a larger population for the purpose of conducting a research”.

A school comprises the principal and the members of the school management team (SMT) who are at the helm of the school hierarchy, educators, learners, members of the school governing body (SGB), and members of the support staff. For this study, the SMT, educators, and the SGB members were sampled. The research sample comprised of the following participants, namely, the two (02) members of the SMT (principal and the departmental head), two (02) educators who were members of the school health committee, three (03) educators whose subjects registered high learner enrolments, two (02) members of the SGB who represented the parent component as well as one (01) district official who was working in the wellness section. In summary, the study comprised ten (n=10) participants. The determination of the sample was based on Johnson and Christensen’s (2004) suggestion that focus groups usually contain 6-12 persons. Focus group interviews are one of the data collection methods in this study as indicated in 1.10 below. This study did not intend to generalize beyond the sample of this research.

In this study, purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling was adopted because it provides an opportunity for the researcher to obtain information-rich data from the study (Yin, 2016:93). Purposive sampling is “subjective and judgemental in nature as it is following the researcher’s purpose” (Okeke & van Wyk, 2015:230). This implies that purposive sampling is determined by the researcher’s own opinion and intentions. As mentioned above, the school was sampled with a purpose as the criteria 1.9.1 indicates. The different groups of participants also present a stratified purposeful type of sampling. After the principal of the school was approached about the research, he decided to schedule a meeting with all stakeholders, SMT members, educators and SGB members. In this meeting, I explained to the attendees about the study, how it was going to be conducted and what participants were expected to do. I then indicated to them that I needed volunteers from the three groups, who were to inform the secretary of the SGB of their decision to partake in the study. This arrangement did not put pressure on anyone to partake in the study. Thus, the sampling frame was first divided into strata (SMT, educators, SGB members) before the district official also agreed to participate after being approached. A purposeful sample was selected from each stratum in order to get rich data from a heterogenous group.

1.11 Data collection tools and processes

A variety of data collection tools were used to collect qualitative data including in-depth individual interviews, photovoice, focus groups interviews and observation as suggested by Creswell (2013:15). In photovoice disposable cameras were used by the participants to capture various aspects of the school environment that participants perceived as promoting or constraining the wellbeing of educators. Photovoice is a PAR method in which participants are provided with cameras and allowed to use photography to express, reflect, and communicate their everyday lives (Wang, 1999). It enables those most marginalized in communities with a means to share their experiences and perspectives on issues that affect them and allows researchers to see the world through the lenses of research participants (Okeke & Van Wyk, 2015).

This process was followed by a focus group discussion with participants on the factors that they observed within the school environment that they perceived as having a bearing on the wellbeing of educators. During the first focus-group interview, participants were given envelopes according to their codes with the photos that they captured about various aspects of the school environments that they perceived as supporting, constraining the wellbeing of educators, as well as those that needed improvement. This focus group interview afforded participants an opportunity to share their views about the photos they had taken.

An individual face-to-face interview was conducted with the principal of the case study school. The intention was to collect data on the role of school principals in the promotion of healthy school environments and the wellbeing of educators. During the individual interview, data was collected using a semi-structured interview, guided by an interview schedule as discussed in Chapter 5. The interview schedule allowed for probing questions. A voice recorder was used to capture the responses.

Observation was also used as a data gathering tool. Observation is an activity that was undertaken by the participants during the evaluation of the research project to verify whether the results were realized or not. In this study, a semi-structured observation was used where participants were evaluating the implementation of action plans decided upon in the focus group discussions.

1.12 Data analysis and interpretation

There are several methods used in qualitative research to analyse data of which no one is better than the other and they depend on the type of research. Data were analyzed according to procedures suggested by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000). Data collected through photovoice, focus group interviews, observations and individual interviews were transcribed after each data set was collected. Thematic data analysis was used to analyse data in this study. Thematic data analysis involves the generation of

themes whereby broken bits of collected data ought to be understood in the context of themes (Roberts & Pettigrew, 2007). Thematic analysis is a suitable method for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences as well as generating unanticipated insights (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Thematic analysis was useful for summarising key features of large data sets, as it forces the researcher to take a structured approach to the handling of data (Nowell et al., 2017).

To increase the accuracy of the collected data, the transcribed information underwent member checking. After data were analyzed, the results were returned to participants to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences. Where discrepancies were detected, the necessary corrections were done to ensure that the information provided by the participants was not distorted in any way. Member checking was done two times in this research as specified in Chapter 5.

1.13 Measures to ensure trustworthiness

According to Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) trustworthiness has to do with the question: “How can an enquirer persuade his or her audience (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of”. However, Connelly (2016) refers to trustworthiness as “the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study”. Trustworthiness in qualitative research encompasses four main aspects, namely, credibility, dependability, transferability, conformability and reflexivity (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Each of these aspects is discussed in the section that follows.

1.13.1 Credibility

The term credibility refers to “the confidence in how well the data address the intended purpose” (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Polkki, Utrianen & Kyngäs, 2014:13). Credibility is important in every research as it enables the researcher to link the research findings with reality and thereby demonstrate the truth of the research findings. As the PAR method was followed in this study, the credibility technique employed was member checking. Member checking is whereby “data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom they were originally collected” (Moser & Korstjens, 2018:121). The participants were allowed to check the research findings to make sure that they were true to their experiences as indicated by Holloway and Wheeler (2010), Saldana, (2011) and Thomas and Magilvy (2011). To achieve this, participants were provided with: the transcribed data to check if the responses provided were in no way altered or distorted; the findings from photovoice and those of the individual interviews.

1.13.2 Conformability

In qualitative research, conformability of findings means that the data accurately represent the information that the participants provided and the interpretations of those data are not invented by the inquirer (Elo et al., 2014:1). In that case, I had to ensure that the findings of the study reflect the voice of the participants rather than the perspectives, biases, and motivations of the researcher, as suggested by Polit and Beck (2012). To increase the conformability of the current study, I made it a point that data collected speak for themselves instead of speaking for them as a researcher. In other words, I distanced myself from manipulating the research data so that the research findings reflect the voice of the participants rather than my perspectives, biases, and motivations as the researcher.

1.13.3 Transferability

According to Polit and Beck (2012), the term transferability refers to the extent to which the research findings can be transferred to other settings and groups. To increase the transferability, the researcher ensured that data gathering methods used and procedures followed in data collection and data analysis are provided so that other researchers who want to conduct similar research could have all the information. I also gave an accurate description of the lived experiences of the participants and the contexts in which the data was collected.

1.13.4 Dependability

Dependability refers to “the stability of data over time and under different conditions” (Elo et al., 2014:4). It answers the question of whether the same research findings can be attained if repeated with similar participants within the same context (Polit & Beck, 2012). To safeguard dependability in this study, the researcher ensured that data collection, interpretation of the findings, and reporting of results are clearly articulated. The logic used in selecting the participants, the events observed, and the interviewing processes were presented. The processes within the study were reported in detail, thus presenting a series of activities.

1.13.5 Reflexivity

Polit and Beck (2012) define reflexivity as the process of critical self-reflection about oneself as a researcher (own biases, preferences, preconceptions) and the research relationships (researcher’s relationship to the participants and how the relationships affect participants’ answers to the question). Haynes (2012:7) refers to reflexivity as “an awareness of the researcher’s role in the practice of research and the way this is influenced by the object of the research, enabling the researcher to acknowledge the way in which he or she affects both the research processes and outcomes. The primary aim of reflexivity

is to reduce the researcher's prejudice. Transparency about the researcher's position and potential biases and assumptions is vital in judging accounts of qualitative research and the authenticity of the findings (Reid, Brown, Smith, Cope & Jamieson; 2018:70). In this study, reflexivity was enhanced by ensuring that I detach myself from all forms of bias and be true to the research finding.

1.14 Ethical consideration

Ethics entails a set of moral principles that is suggested by an individual or a group which sets out rules and behavioural expectations about the subjects, participants, and other researchers (Ringani, 2018). It is a matter associated with morality and ethical guidelines which serve as the standard and basis to evaluate one's conduct (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Anyone involved in research "needs to be aware of generally agreed research ethics about what is proper and improper in scientific research" (Creswell, 2013). Since the study involves human beings, I ensured that I follow ethical principles to guarantee that I conduct research morally and ethically. The principles that were followed are discussed below.

1.14.1 Permission

The researcher requested permission from the North-West University Ethics Committee, the application was approved on the 05th of April 2019. The ethics number for conducting the research is NWU-00656-18-A2. I had to apply to the Mopani East District Education Department to get permission to research schools in this district. The approval letter is attached as Appendix 1. I further requested permission from the school manager and the chairperson of the SGB of the sampled school. Upon receiving permission from the school I started with the process of informed consent for participants.

1.14.2 Informed consent

An "informed consent" is a process where the research participant must receive and comprehend information appropriately to make an autonomous decision. Informed consent is used as an information highway in research to explain study procedures, risks, benefits and participant rights (Kadam, 2017). Similarly, Mandal and Parija (2014:1) refers to informed consent as "the bond of trust which is the foundation and the central stone to any research involving human subjects". It is the central doctrine and is probably the most important part of any research. The aim of the informed consent process is to provide sufficient information to a potential participant, in a language which is easily understood by him/her, so that he/she can make the voluntary decision regarding "to" or "not to" participate in the research study (Nijhawan, Jonodia, Muddukrishna, Bhat, Bairy & Musmade 2013: 134). The process of informed consent thus extended beyond the signing of the consent forms and included a dynamic and continuing exchange of information between the researcher and the research team (all participants). To comply with the process of informed consent, I personally explained the details of the study to all

participants and allowed them to ask questions to gain more clarity before they engaged in the actual research process. In addition, I ascertained that all the sampled participants gave their own expressed voluntary willingness to participate in the study. In this study the participants had to give consent to: participate in the study, adhere to ethical principles regarding the use of cameras, and observe ethics in focus group interviews.

1.14.3 Voluntary participation

Lavrakas (2008) refers to voluntary participation as a human research subject's exercise of free will in deciding whether to participate in a research activity or not. To ensure voluntary participation, special care was taken to remove undue pressure on research participants in order to allow them to refuse to participate in any stage of the research process without consequences. The participants were not coerced to participate in the research study but were constantly reminded that they may withdraw at any time during the process if they wish to do so.

1.14.4 Protection from harm

In conducting research, every researcher has a responsibility of ensuring that the “participants are not exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm” (Creswell, 2013). This means that researchers must first assess the risk that participants may face (Bos, 2020). During the research, I strived to be honest and respectful to all participants. I also put measures in place to ensure that if by chance the participant gets hurt, they are referred to the professionals who can be of assistance to them.

1.14.5 Privacy

Nissim and Wood (2018) refer to privacy as the ‘right to be let alone’ and as an essential component of the right to one's personality. To ensure privacy, the focus group and individual interviews were conducted in a room at the school where non-participants were not allowed in. The gates were locked when the sessions were held with the participants, this was easy to do as they were scheduled on Saturdays or late in the afternoon when learners had already left.

1.14.6 Confidentiality

Ethicist (2015) refers to confidentiality as the agreement to limit access to a participant's information. Research that involves human subjects, a pledge is made to limit the dissemination of information about the subject to those with a need to know and not divulge information to those without a need to know. To ensure confidentiality, both researcher and participants must have a clear understanding of the confidentiality of the results of the study.

1.14.7 Anonymity

According to Saunders, Kitzinger and Kitzinger (2015) anonymity refers to collecting data without obtaining any personal, identifying information. This means that there is no way in which anyone can personally identify participants in the study. This means that no personally identifying information can be collected in an anonymous study. Anonymity is one form of confidentiality – that of keeping participants' identities secret. Moreover, anonymity also includes keeping private what is said by the participants. To ensure anonymity in this study, the researcher concealed the identity of the participants by allocating code P001 to P010 instead of revealing their real names.

1.15 Chapter layout

CHAPTER 1: Orientation and overview of the study - Chapter 1 focused on the background of the study under investigation, formulation of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, ethical considerations, and the significance of the study.

CHAPTER 2: Factors that promote or constrain the wellbeing of educators - Chapter 2 gave a detailed description of the factors that promote and constrain the wellbeing of educators in the school context. This chapter also elaborates on the role of principals in promoting educator wellbeing,

CHAPTER 3: The role of school principals in promoting healthy school environments - In Chapter 3, the study highlighted the role of the school principal in promoting healthy school environments. It also showed how the school principal can influence the creation of healthy school environments that will promote the wellbeing of educators.

Chapter 4: Theoretical framework - In Chapter 4 the theoretical framework on which the study is grounded was dealt with in more detail.

Chapter 5: Research methodology - Chapter 5 is devoted to the research design and methodology. In this chapter, the research methods, procedures, population and sample, research tools, and data collection were discussed. Research design and research methodology will be covered in this chapter.

CHAPTER 6: Data presentation and analysis - In Chapter 6, the responses of participants were presented and this was followed by a detailed analysis and interpretation. The chapter will cover data presentation, analysis, and interpretation. Here the results will be presented, discussed, and interpreted.

CHAPTER 7: Discussion of research findings - This chapter gave a detailed account of the data analysis based on the responses of the participants. It also presented the data gathered using photovoice, individual, observation and focus group interviews.

CHAPTER 8: Development of a theory-based derived framework - Chapter 8 devoted to the development of a theory-based framework that will assist school principals to create healthy school environments that will enhance the wellbeing of educators.

Chapter 9: Conclusion and recommendations - Chapter 9 gives a summary of the results of the empirical research as well as a conclusion of the study. The limitations and recommendations for additional research were also discussed.

1.16 Chapter summary

This chapter commenced with the conceptualization of the term educator wellbeing and identifying the various factors that impact it from the international, African and South African perspectives. This is followed by the background and statement of the research problem, the research question as well as the definition of concepts. The research methods, data collection tools and processes, data analysis and interpretation, the significance of the study, measures of trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations were discussed in detail. The chapter concludes with the chapter layout of the study. The following chapter deals with educator wellbeing as well as the role of school principals in enhancing it.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATOR WELLBEING AND THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, educator-wellbeing was introduced. Information on the importance of focus on its promotion, what it entails and why it is the principals' responsibility to enhance it, was briefly mentioned. Chapter two elaborates further on the key concept of educator-wellbeing. It commences with a general overview of the concept of educator wellbeing with special reference to its definition, importance, and approaches. It also expounds on the various factors that impact the wellbeing of educators. These factors either support or constrain the wellbeing of educators. To gain a deeper understanding of the topic under investigation, a literature review on the wellbeing of educators was conducted.

2.2 Background on educator wellbeing

The wellbeing of educators is increasingly gaining awareness as attested by literature in the field of school improvement and effectiveness (Acton & Glasgow, 2015). The ever-increasing number of research studies on the wellbeing of educators internationally (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Carter, 2016; Hobson & Maxwell, 2016; Hwang, Bartlett, Greben & Hand, 2017, Benevene, Statio, Fiorilli, Buonomo, Ragni, Briegas & Barni, 2019, Hascher, Beltman & Mansfield, 2021, McCallum, 2021), in Africa (Wolf, Torrente, McCoy, Rasheed, & Aber, 2015; Mabhoji, 2020; Ngwenya, 2021) as well as in South Africa in recent years (Fouché, 2015; Muthivhi, Pendlebury & Broom, 2016; Kruger, 2019; Wessels & Wood, 2019; Kwatubana & Molaodi, 2021) indicate that the wellbeing of educators is in the spotlight. Nowadays, the teaching profession is characterized by a universal challenge of high educator attrition which according to Pitso (2018) has far-reaching implications for teaching and learning.

A study by Nissinen and Välijärvi (2011) in Finland estimates that the educator turnover rate ranges from 13 to 15% annually. This means that even in Finland, where the teaching profession is highly esteemed and where educators have been very committed to their profession, there is a rising concern about their wellbeing, job satisfaction, the attractiveness of the teaching career, and an increase in turnover (VAKAVA Statistics, 2017).

Studies in the USA suggest that the teaching profession exerts more stress on educators causing low levels of wellbeing among them (Redding & Smith, 2016; Redding & Henry, 2018; Sorensen, & Ladd, 2020). It is estimated that about 20 percent of educators leave the teaching profession on annual basis (Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2012). Statistics collated by Health and Safety Executive (2014) in Great Britain consistently revealed that educators have a higher prevalence of stress and anxiety that is work-related compared to other professions. It is postulated that the prevalence of stress in teaching in Britain averaged over 2009 to 2012 was 2.3 percent relative to 1.2 percent in other professions (Health and Safety Executive, 2014). A study by Morrison (2021) in the UK found that around one in 12 teachers left the profession in 2020. The vast majority of educators leaving (87%) were joining other careers, with the number of retirements falling due to changes in the retirement age and educator demographics.

According to Moore (2019) in Australia, teaching is regarded as a short-term career where educators quit in droves given the high workload and stress attached to it. Furthermore, the status of educators and the teaching profession is in a very serious decline in Australia as a result of increased pressure and anxiety exerted on the teaching profession (Moore, 2019).

According to Oke, Ajagbe, Ogbari and Adeyeye (2016), educator turnover is a matter of concern in African countries like Nigeria, it is estimated that the turnover rate is above percent. In Ghana, the turnover rate is so high that it adversely affects school improvement efforts leading to disruption of stability and continuity in teaching. A study conducted by Zeitlin (2021) in Rwanda shows that 20 percent of educators leave the teaching profession annually. Of the 20 percent who leave the teaching profession, 11percent exit the public sector teaching force permanently whereas the remaining 9 percent seek employment in other sectors. It was found that educator turnover was concentrated among male educators who are still new in the teaching career. The study also found that of all educators who exit the system, 23 percent of them are not replaced the following year. Due to the above realities, class sizes increase leading to some educators (23 percent) teaching subjects that are outside their areas of expertise. High learner educator ratios as a result of high turnover rate put more stress on educators leading to low levels of wellbeing among educators (Zeitlin, 2021).

The trend of quitting the teaching profession before reaching the retirement age is also prevalent in the South African context. A report by IOL News (Macupe & Hawker, 2012.) of the survey by the (OECD) Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development in South Africa with a sample of 4000 educators and principals from 200 schools across the country, found that 25 percent of educators reported that they were experiencing stress in their work. This is higher than the OECD average of (18 percent). Most educators experiencing higher stress levels are employed in city schools (28 percent) than in schools in rural settings (15 percent).

In South Africa, the recruitment and deployment of educators in rural schools face many challenges as educators are not willing to work in those areas (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). As a result of the high attrition rate in rural schools, the Department of Education introduced the Teacher Rural Initiative scheme (TRIS) to attract Mathematics and Science educators in those areas. Poti, Mutsvangwa, and Hove (2014) evaluated this programme with a sample of educators and school principals in 325 schools in North West Province. These were educators that were receiving rural allowances from 2008 to 2012. The study found that 16 percent of educators who participated in the survey who transferred to rural areas did so because they wanted to benefit from the initiative scheme, 45 percent were intending to relocate to urban areas whereas 73 percent were willing to continue working in rural areas if more incentives were to be put in place.

This study advocates for other means of retaining educators in rural schools. As much as a financial incentive would motivate some educators to relocate to rural schools, some would be attracted to such environments because of health gain.

2.3 Conceptualizing educator wellbeing

The term wellbeing originates from the field of human resources. However, it has entered the educational discourse about the wellbeing of learners and more recently about the wellbeing of educators (McCallum, Price, Graham & Morrison, 2017). For that reason, only a limited number of studies address the definition of wellbeing from the perspective of educators. For instance, Aelterman et al. (2007:286) refer to educator wellbeing as “a positive emotional state, which is the result of harmony between the sum of specific environmental factors on the one hand, and the personal needs and expectations of teachers on the other hand”. Another definition of wellbeing that makes specific reference to educators is that of Acton and Glasgow (2015:101) that defines educator wellbeing as “an individual sense of personal professional fulfillment, satisfaction, purposefulness, and happiness, constructed in a collaborative process with colleagues and learners”. Furthermore, Viac and Fraser (2020:18) focus on educator wellbeing as a work-related concept, and define educator’ occupational wellbeing as “educators’ responses to the cognitive, emotional, health and social conditions pertaining to their work and their profession”. Wessels and Wood (2019) refer to wellbeing as the improvement of quality of life by focusing on strengths and already existing resources. In this study, positive wellbeing is about positive feelings and satisfaction about the factors in the school environment that are perceived to contribute to its enhancement.

The concept of wellbeing is a multi-dimensional construct that revolves around two distinct traditions, namely, the hedonic and the eudaimonic traditions (Stiglitz, Sen & Fitoussi, 2009; Diener, 2009; Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders, 2012). The hedonic tradition emphasizes that wellbeing comprises constructs such as happiness, low negative effects, positive effects as well as satisfaction with life (Diaz, Stavradi, Blanco & Gandarillas, 2015). Limeade and Quantum Workplace (2016) espouses that the hedonic perspective of wellbeing puts more emphasis on happiness by maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain. People who support the hedonic tradition believe that pleasure is the most important thing in life. They opine that life fulfillment is associated with the hedonic perspective of wellbeing. According to Di Fabio and Palazzeschi (2015), the eudaimonic tradition avers that an individual should live by their true self (daimon). The eudaimonic view of wellbeing conceptualizes wellbeing in terms of “the cultivation of personal strength and contribution to a greater good, acting by one’s inner nature and deeply held values, the realization of one’s true potential and the experience of purpose or meaning in life” (McMahan & Estes, 2011:3-4).

Cenkseven and Akbas cited in Ilgan, Ozu-Cengiz, Ata and Akram (2015) purport that the concept of wellbeing comprises of two main approaches, namely, subjective and psychological wellbeing. Subjective wellbeing is indicated by hedonic measures whereas psychological wellbeing is indicated by eudaimonic measures (Kállay & Rus, 2014).

2.3.1 Subjective wellbeing

Diener (2009) cited in Das, Jones-Harrell, Fan, Ramaswami, Orlove and Botchwey (2020:2) defines subjective wellbeing (SWB) as “people’s feeling and thinking that their life is desirable regardless of how others see it.” This definition highlights the thinking and feeling dimensions of SWB. Feeling refers to “the emotional/affective dimension of SWB, whereas a prevalence of positive emotion over negative emotion leads to higher SWB” (Das et al., 2020:2). Thinking refers to the evaluative/cognitive dimension of SWB, where the evaluation of individuals’ lives in predominantly positive terms leads to higher SWB (Das et al., 2020:2). Subjective wellbeing as articulated by the definition is expressed from the cognitive and affective domains. The cognitive aspect thereof refers to the extent to which people think about their life satisfaction in general whereas the affective element refers to emotions, moods, and feelings that an individual experience (Albuquerque, 2010). To this end, Albuquerque (2010) avers that SWB comprises of three main aspects, namely, the positive affects, life satisfaction as well as negative affects. The affect is regarded as positive when an individual experiences the emotions, moods, and feelings that are pleasant such as joy, affection, elation, etc. Albuquerque (2010) further asserts that affect is negative when one’s feelings, moods, and emotions are experienced in an unpleasant manner such as guilt, anger, shame, etc.

Ilgan et al, (2015) state that SWB can be understood from the hedonic perspective. Concerning the hedonic perspective, an individual's satisfaction with life, positive affects, low negative affect, as well as happiness, are very crucial in the wellbeing of one's life (Dodge et al., 2012). Schotanus-Dijkstra, Pieterse, Drossaert, Westerhof, de Graaf, Ten Have, Walburg and Bohlmeijer (2016) contend that there is a link between positive affect and flourishing whereas negative affect is associated with languishing or survival. Frederickson and Losada (2005) refer to flourishing as the ability of a person to live an optimal range of human functioning, the one that suggests a feeling of goodness, growth, and resilience. Educators experience subjective wellbeing if they experience a general feeling of life satisfaction as well as other domains such as work and positive emotions and moods as opposed to negative ones (Vazi, Ruiters, Van den Borne, Martin, Dumont & Reddy, 2013). According to Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., (2016), positive affect leads to improved problem solving and creativity in dealing with situations. This implies that educators with positive affect have better problem-solving skills and can cope well with everyday life challenges. Conversely, educators with negative affect may find it difficult to solve and cope with their life challenges.

2.3.2 Psychological wellbeing

According to Robertson, Woodall, Henry, Hanna, Rowlands, Horrocks, Livesley, and Long (2018:1), psychological wellbeing refers to "positive mental states such as happiness or satisfaction". Ryff (2014) explains that psychological wellbeing comprises six main aspects, namely, self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, personal growth, purpose in life, and autonomy. For this study, a brief elaboration on environmental mastery is made as it directly links with this study. Ryff (2014) cited in Safford, Deeg and Kuh (2016) defines environmental mastery as the sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment, the ability to control external activities to achieve benefits of surrounding opportunities. This implies that people should take control of their environment. Ryff (2014) opines that individuals with environmental mastery are competent in managing their environment, make effective use of the opportunities in their environment and create contexts that are conducive for their personal needs and values. Educators with low environmental mastery lack control over the environment they find themselves in. They find it difficult to improve surrounding contexts and they do not see opportunities in the surrounding environment.

In this study, educator wellbeing entails a state in which an educator is in harmony, happy, satisfied and content with the various aspects of the work environment. In this study, the utterances of Devi (2014) who posits that educator wellbeing is concerned with why and how people experience their life, be it negative or positive and includes both cognitive judgements as well as affective reactions are

considered. The concept of wellbeing was related to judgements about factors in the school environment that affect educators and their wellbeing, how it motivates them to engage with their work and perform their duties.

The work-related wellbeing is more appropriate in this study than the general wellbeing defined above. Work-related wellbeing relates to all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organisation (ILO, 2021:1).

2.4 The significance of educator wellbeing

Many researchers concur that the wellbeing of educators is of utmost importance to ensure quality teaching and learning (Salter, 2010; Roffey, 2012; Acton & Glasgow, 2015). Its significance also plays a role in improving the quality of teaching and learning (Theron, 2009; Salter, 2010; Roffey, 2012). McCallum (2021) attests that educators who are well do not only contribute to the social, spiritual, emotional, cognitive and physical wellbeing of learners, but also to their academic achievement. Roffey (2012) accentuates that educators who are well contribute to the school as a whole. Such educators enable learners to complete their school years in a well and happy state, making them ready to contribute as productive and responsible citizens. In addition, Kern, Waters, Adler and White (2014) show that educators with high levels of wellbeing are more committed to their work which correlates with better academic achievement of learners. Devi (2014) expostulates that educator wellbeing is of significant importance in the long-term growth of any education system around the world as it requires harmony between the mind, body and the environment. This could imply that there should be a balance and ease about the pressures in the individuals' life.

McCallum et al. (2017) argue that educator wellbeing plays an important role in learner achievement. Learners taught by educators with high levels of wellbeing are more likely to perform better than the ones taught by educators with low levels of educator wellbeing. When learner performance increases, the wellbeing of educators increases as well (McCallum, 2021). Clarke (2020) avers that there is a relationship between the performance of learners and how educators feel about their work. Clarke (2020) postulates that for the school to improve the performance of learners there is a need to pay special attention to the wellbeing of educators first. Christie, Butler and Potterton (2007) argue that one of the factors that affect positive learner performance is good educators with a positive sense of wellbeing. Therefore, to ensure effective educator engagement and productivity, the issue of educator wellbeing has to be taken into serious consideration.

The wellbeing of educators also plays a significant role in the execution of their duties in the school. As it affects the behaviour of an individual educator in the entire three domains, namely, the cognitive, affective and psychomotor, it does not only facilitate their adjustment to different lifestyles but also promotes productivity (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). As a result, Dakduki (2015) attests that productivity and the quality of education that is rendered by any education system depends on educators. This implies that the quality of education for every nation depends on its educators. Bajorek, Gulliford and Taskila (2014) further emphasize the fact that the wellbeing of educators plays an important role in their productivity and performance. Pagán-Castaño, Sánchez-García, Garrigos-Simon and Guijarro-García (2021) show that educators who are well display innovative behaviours such as cooperative and problem-based learning. As a result of these innovations, the classroom practices of these educators improve leading to higher organisational performance. For that reason, Bryson, Forth and Stroke (2017) indicate that it is imperative for the school to improve the wellbeing of educators in order to impact positively on the quality of teaching and improvement in the general performance of the school.

Verhaeghe, Vlerick, Gemmel, Van Maele and Backer (2006) cited in Dakduki (2015:8) maintain that there is a significant relationship between wellbeing and work. They contend that educators with positive self-concept and enhanced wellbeing are more likely to attend to their work compared to educators whose wellbeing is compromised. For this reason, Clarke (2020) asserts that organisations that promote staff wellbeing are more likely to have a workforce that has high job commitment. McInerney, Ganotice, King, Morin and Marsh (2014:2) refer to “commitment as the psychological bond a person feels towards the organisation”. According to Abd Razak, Darmawan and Keeves (2010), educators who are well are committed to their work. Such educators put more of their effort into enhancing learner performance and the achievement of organisational goals. Therefore, the achievement of organisational goals and improved learner performance contribute to enhanced educator wellbeing.

Many nations around the world base their education policies on the premise that quality education can be attained when educators are motivated, professionally satisfied, committed, and are willing to execute their duties at their maximum level that will enable learners, the community and society to benefit.

Educators with enhanced wellbeing have a strong sense of life and work commitment, they also display a greater control of their life and are more receptive to change, and life challenges (Wangari & Orondho, 2014). According to Pagán-Castaño et al., (2021), educators who are well are more receptive to change as this enable them to adapt to their life changes. As agents of change, educators who are well are able to apply educational innovations that can produce planned change. For example, they are receptive to the use of information technology in classroom teaching that increases learner and organisational performance.

2.5 Factors that affect the wellbeing of educators

In this section, factors that promote or harm the wellbeing of educators in the school environments will be elaborated on.

2.5.1 Factors that support educator wellbeing

There are 5 factors that are discussed in the following sub-sections. Only factors that support the wellbeing of educators which are in the school environment are presented.

2.5.1.1 Beautiful and clean school premises

The school premises with their landscapes play a crucial role in the wellbeing of educators (Kopeva, Khrapko & Ivanova, 2017). The school landscape is “the design of outdoor spaces with vegetation, water features, or any other landscape elements, as well as landmarks and structures that help in achieving a better and healthy sustainable environment to surround the human and provide the best quality of life” (Medhat & Kenawy, 2016:1). Educators spend most of their time at school performing their duties. While performing these duties, they experience stress that affects their work performance. Recurrent stress leads to mental fatigue which culminates in poor performance, negative emotions, tension, and violent behaviour (Venkatesha, 2014). The presence of a green landscape in schools can be a solution for educators who are to overcome and recover from stress and mental fatigue (Medhat & Kenawy, 2016). A school with an attractive landscape is an inspiration to educators, learners, and parents (Ali, Rostam & Awang, 2015). A school with a beautifully designed schoolyard brings about a feeling of beauty and raises a positive spirit to school users. A schoolyard with properly planned landscaping creates a stimulating environment that enhances the wellbeing of both learners and educators (Kopeva et al., 2017).

Verlade, Fry and Tveit (2007) assert that there is a relationship between health and an attractive landscape. This is supported by Venkatesha (2014) who espouses that the school landscape can support the wellbeing of educators by satisfying their human biological and psychological needs. As workers, educators are confronted with many challenges in their work. As a result, they have to interact with nature through the school landscape to restore their brain attention capabilities. When the brain is fully occupied, mental fatigue takes place leading to a high level of stress. This negatively affects the wellbeing of educators and thereby reduces their work performance, social behaviour, and their ability to concentrate (Elmaghraby & Kenawy, 2017). The mental fatigue can be healed by ensuring that educators spend time in an environment with natural elements such as plants, water, or an outdoor environment that has a peaceful, calming, and relaxing effect on the brain (Ali et al., 2015).

According to Kopeva et al. (2017) school environment with flourishing trees protects school users from the detrimental effect of exhaust gases, atmospheric dust as well as excessive noise caused by moving vehicles. Tall trees grown on the southern or southwestern sides of the school buildings protect them from direct sunlight at noon and during afternoon hours. This creates a conducive environment for the building's occupants. Conifers marked with phytoncide properties (Junipers, Pines, Spruces, etc.) that are grown in the schoolyard helps to improve sanitation, hygienic and microclimatic parameters by eliminating harmful micro-organisms in the atmosphere thereby making the school environment healthier for learners and educators (Khrapko & Kopeva, 2012).

2.5.1.2 Thermal comfort

ASRAE 55 (2010) cited by Al Horr, Arif, Katefygiotou, Mazroei, Kaushik, and Elsarrag (2016:11) defines thermal comfort as “the state of mind that expresses satisfaction with the thermal environment in which it is located”. In this study, thermal comfort refers to the conducive workplace temperature that promotes work performance. An optimum thermal environment promotes job satisfaction, work engagement, and job performance as well as the wellbeing of staff members (Bluyssen, 2015). Therefore, for educators to perform their duties to their maximum level, the workplace environment should have a favourable temperature. Within the school context, it is important to make sure that the working environments (classrooms, libraries, staffrooms, and administrative offices) have adequate thermal comfort. Educators who teach in classrooms with extremely high temperatures are more likely to experience a low level of wellbeing than those with good thermal comfort (Bluyssen, 2015). In addition, the design of the building should meet the thermal needs of its occupants and should be considered pre-construction as it will be cost-effective compared to post-construction (Indraganti, Ooka, Rijal & Brager, 2014). When the thermal environments of school buildings are conducive to work in, the wellbeing of educators improves as well (Csobod, Rudnai & Vaskovi, 2010).

2.5.1.3 Ergonomic comfort

Furniture plays a salient role in the wellbeing and productivity of educators (Lopéz-Garcia, Garcia-Herrero, Gutiérrez & Mariscal, 2019; Sisay & Yamaura, 2015). Good quality furniture enhances individual health, safety, comfort, and productivity. It also reduces risk factors that may lead to work-related injuries and illnesses such as strain and sprains as well as cumulative trauma disorder. The working environment with good quality furniture enables educators to perform their tasks in a more relaxed manner (The Occupational Safety and Health Academy, 2017).

The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998) asserts that educators are allocated between 60 percent and 90 percent of the school day to teach depending on the nature of the

post. However, educators spend the remaining time in the staffroom performing administrative duties such as setting assessment tasks, compiling learners' marks, marking and balancing daily attendance registers, etc. Educators have to perform these duties in a friendly environment with good-quality furniture. A poor working environment with poor quality furniture harms the wellbeing, mental, and physical health of individuals (Habibi & Soury, 2015). A similar sentiment is shared by Grainger, Forest and Hamilton (2013) that poor workplace comfort caused by poor furniture results in excessive effort, fatigue, and discomfort of staff members.

According to Sisay and Yamaura (2015), the work environments of educators should have good furniture that will provide comfort for them when executing their work. However, the Department of Basic Education and Media in Education Trust (MIET) (2010) indicate that many rural schools in South Africa have a dire shortage of desks and chairs for both learners and educators. Their workstations do not have good-quality furniture that provides a workplace environment that supports their wellbeing as educators. Habibi and Soury (2015) espouse that a poor workplace environment with poor quality furniture has a deleterious effect on the wellbeing of educators as it contributes to low back pains (LBP) resulting from sitting on a poor quality chair for a long time in an awkward uncomfortable position. It is also associated with high levels of work-related stress (Sisay & Yamaura, 2015). According to Olabode, Adesennya, and Bakare (2017), there is a relationship between educator performance and ergonomic comfort. It is difficult for members of staff to be productive in their work if the workplace comfort is not conducive. If their workplace comfort (ergonomic and thermal comfort) is not comfortable over a long period, their productivity will be affected in an adverse manner.

The Occupational Safety and Health Academy (2017) argues that schools should ensure that the ergonomic comfort of the workstations of educators is improved as they:

- increase productivity, job satisfaction, and wellbeing of educators;
- increase staff morale as employees feels valued through improved ergonomic comfort;
- reduce absenteeism as improved ergonomic comfort leads to healthy and productive employees; and
- help staff members to perceive their work in a favourable manner (Occupational Safety and Health Academy, 2017).

This implies that schools should create workplace environments that promote a job-friendly environment that enhances educator performance and work comfort. Comfort is the state of subjective feeling

corresponding with a positive state, relaxation, free from pain, a pleasant experience and it includes physiological and physical satisfaction with the environment (Sisay & Yamaura, 2015).

2.5.1.4 Safety and security

The safety and security of the school environment have been stipulated by the policy on the South African Standard for Principalship (Department of Basic Education, 2016:12) which directs the principals to “work with the school’s community to ensure a school environment that is safe, secure, and disciplined”. According to Mubita (2021), educational environments must be safe and secure spaces for learners, educators, non-teaching staff and the local community. Therefore, it is imperative to manage school safety and security properly to avert accidents and incidents, creating an environment in which emotional, social and physical wellbeing is promoted. The safety of educators is regarded as imperative within the school environment. When staff members work in a safe and secure environment, they execute their duties adequately, establish and maintain good relationships and work freely without fear of danger (Kapur, 2018). The National School Safety Framework asserts that educators working in an unsafe violent school are more likely to experience stress reactions such as anxiety and headaches; symptoms of depression; negative social behaviour; diminished social functioning; less supportive interpersonal relationships (Department of Basic Education, 2015).

Mubita (2021:78) defines safety as “the control of recognized sources of danger (hazards) in order to achieve an acceptable level of risk”. The term security is related to the presence of peace, safety and the protection of people and their resources. It also relates to the absence of threats to human life and dignity. According to Safeopedia (2021), safety is a concept that comprises all measures and practices taken to conserve the life, health, and bodily integrity of individuals. In this study, school safety refers to the conditions in the school setting that are characterized by a safe environment that supports the physical and emotional wellbeing of educators. Security refers to the protection of individuals, organisations, and properties against external threats that are likely to cause harm (Mubita, 2021).

Schools with safe and secure environments as called safe schools (Kapur, 2018). Squelch (2001) cited by Mubita (2021:78) defines a safe school as “one that is free from danger and possible harm, where non-educators, educators and learners can work, teach and learn without fear of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, or violence”. Similarly, Hernandez, Floden, and Bosworth (2010) refer to safe schools as places where educators, learners, visitors and all staff members interact freely without fear or threats to support teaching and learning.

Therefore, safety is an umbrella term that refers to a variety of issues that the school community has to address to enhance the general wellbeing of its members. Examples of such safety features among others the health, mental wellness, fire safety, building safety, weather safety, bullying, violent persons, bus and traffic safety and environmental disasters. This means that the creation of a safe environment for learners and educators should start from their home to school and back home without experiencing any kind of abuse, disaster (whether manmade or natural, transportation and fire). For that reason, schools must focus on both internal and external threats (Mubiti, 2021). McGuire (2017) indicates that schools are considered unsafe if the school community members perceive danger from educators, administrators, other learners, outsiders, or even infrastructure.

Certain measures are to be put in place to ensure school safety, namely, burglar proofing, access control and well-maintained fencing.

2.5.1.4.1 Burglar-proofing

To provide a safe school environment that supports the wellbeing of educators, a proper burglar-proofing system has to be put in place. Burglar-proofing is one of the most important features of school safety as it has a high potential of preventing burglars from accessing school buildings (Pease & Gill, 2011). A study by Tseloni, Thompson, Grove, Tilley and Farrell (2017) found that burglar-proofing is the most fundamental safety feature that successfully deters thieves as the result of their visibility. Burglary has a significant impact on schools as it involves the financial cost of replacements and repairs. According to Pease and Gill (2011) schools without burglar-proofing have 75 percent more burglaries than those installed with burglar-proofs. Furthermore, burglar-proofed buildings result in higher failed burglaries. According to Tseloni et al. (2017), in schools without proper fencing and burglar-proofing, thieves could simply enter, steal and vandalize school properties. The availability of burglar-proofs and security fencing makes it difficult for them to get in. However, these authors recommend that burglar-proofing can be augmented by other security devices such as CCTV cameras, burglar alarms, and window locks as additional safety features that increase the security of school buildings.

2.5.1.4.2 Access control

Another safety feature that can provide a safe environment for both educators and learners is ensuring that there is well-managed access control at the gate. Thomas and Galla (2013) cited by Xaba (2014) refers to access control as a system that enables or prevents people from entering or exiting the location. Schneider (2010) defines access control as the ability to decide who gets in and out of an institution. For this study, the definition of access control by Schneider (2010) suffices. According to Xaba (2014), the purpose of access control is to ensure that only authorized personnel, learners, and visitors are allowed

to enter, move within and leave the institution. This enables the protection of the personnel, learners, and properties as well as the institution itself. The presence of the security officer at relevant school locations assists in detecting, discouraging, and detaining potential offenders. Fisher, Mowen and Boman (2018) recommend that numerous safety measures such as metal detectors as well as requiring students and staff members to have identification cards may boost the effectiveness of access control at the gate.

One way of keeping potential criminals from accessing the school premises is recording the names of visitors in the access control book. This strategy is effective because it helps to curb criminal activities by outsiders inside the schoolyard. Furthermore, recording the names of visitors in the access control book assists in tracking visitors who might have committed criminal activities at a particular time at school. As a result, the Department of Basic Education emphasizes the importance of access control at the gate and the signing of visitors' registers (Department of Basic Education and Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2015).

2.5.1.4.3 Well-maintained fencing

The safety and wellbeing of educators are also affected by poor fencing structures. A study conducted by Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014) in KwaZulu-Natal reveals that safety in schools is threatened by the lack of inadequate fencing. They accentuate that broken fencing structures give criminals, late-comers and learners access into and out of the school. Through these openings, gangs can enter the school to sell drugs and commit other criminal activities. Once inside, they intimidate both learners and educators forcefully taking their cell phones, money, school bags, and other belongings. As a result, both learners and educators feel threatened and unsafe in schools (Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014). Consequently, this creates an atmosphere dominated by fear and anxiety which interferes with the educators' ability to teach and the ability of learners to learn. As educators continue to work in an unsafe and insecure environment, they experience teaching fatigue which tends to reduce wellbeing levels. A study by Burton and Leoschut (2012) on school safety found that 30 percent of the educators sampled felt unsafe when teaching as they considered their school environment to be unsafe.

A qualitative study by Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014) in six provinces of South Africa (North West, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal) reveals that safety in South African schools is threatened by a high prevalence of violence. The study found that gangsterism particularly in Limpopo and Western Cape was one of the factors that threatened the safety of both learners and educators. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, safety is a basic need that must be met before ascending to higher levels of performance (Robert, Taormina & Gao, 2013). This is also applicable to schools. Learners and staff must feel safe before they can focus their energy on teaching and learning. As schools seek to improve academic performance, there is a need to create a physically and

emotionally safe environment for everyone in school. Failure to create a safe and secure school environment could lead to educators experiencing low levels of wellbeing that are associated with poor learner achievement.

De Cordova, Berlanda, Pedrazza and Fraizzoli (2019) conducted a study on school safety focusing on violence perpetrated by learners and parents against educators with a sample of 475 participants working in primary and secondary schools in north-east Italy. The study found that educator wellbeing can be enhanced by decreasing violence against educators.

2.5.1.5 Availability of resources

The provisioning of resources that support teaching and learning is one of the roles of school principals stipulated by the Policy on the South African Standard for Principalship (Department of Basic Education, 2016). Owoko (2009) cited in Okongo, Ngao, Rop, and Nyongesa, (2015) refers to the term resources not only to teaching methods and materials but also the time available for instruction, the knowledge and skills of educators acquired through training and experience. According to Schieb and Karabenick (2011), learning resources are things that educators can use to help them do some aspects of their job better. This is important because the quality of educators has been highlighted as the most significant factor in determining the effectiveness of a school system (Schieb & Karabenick, 2011).

According to Okongo et al., (2015) availability of teaching and learning resources refers to satisfactory or acceptable quality and quantities of material resources, physical facilities and human resources. Availability of basic instructional materials such as textbooks which are the main instruction material is the most cost-effective input affecting learner performance. It also determines the efficiency of the education system. For effective teaching and learning to take place, basic resources such as textbooks and other resource materials that are basic should be made available. The absence of these resources makes educators handle subjects in an abstract manner, portraying them as dry and boring. Okongo et al., (2015) citing Momoh's (2010) study on the effects of instructional resources on students' performance in West Africa School Certificate Examinations (WASCE) found that material resources have a crucial role on learners' achievement as they facilitate the learning of abstract concepts and ideas and discourage rote-learning. Similarly, Lyon, Bunch and Shaw (2012) aver that learning is a complex exercise that involves the interplay of learners' motivation, physical facilities, teaching resources, as well as teaching skills.

It is therefore imperative that educators be provided with the necessary teaching and learning resources as the adequacy of these resources enhances the effectiveness of schools and brings about good

academic performance for learners. High learner performance resulting from the availability of teaching and learning resources leads to educators experiencing higher levels of wellbeing (Okongo et al., 2015).

2.5.2 Factors that constrain educator wellbeing

Several factors are indicated as constraining the wellbeing of educators in the literature which include over-crowding in classrooms and school infrastructure. These factors are discussed in the sections below.

2.5.2.1 Overcrowding of classrooms

Overcrowding is a situation in which the number of learners exceeds the optimum level in such a way that it causes hindrance in the teaching-learning process (Khan & Iqbal, 2012). Over-crowded classes are an ongoing concern for many educators both nationally and internationally. Nesane (2008) espouses that educators have a negative perception of overcrowded classes and this reduces their sense of enjoyment, satisfaction, and wellbeing. A study by Molina, Fialho, Amaral, Bach, Rocha and Souza (2017) with 575 educators from both rural and urban areas of Brazil found that the number of learners in the classroom influences the wellbeing of educators. The study indicates that educators teaching more than 25 learners in a single class had low levels of wellbeing. This is supported by Meier and West (2020) who espouse that teaching over-crowded classes is associated with burnout which has a deleterious effect on the wellbeing of educators. According to Saleh, Shabila, Dabbagh, Al-Tawil, and Al-Haditi (2015) reducing the number of learners per classroom leads to educators reporting positive experiences and higher job performance.

In western countries, classes that have more than 30 learners are considered overcrowded. According to the World Bank (2020), a low learner educator ratio has been observed in developed countries such as France (18:1), Ireland (16:1), the USA (14:1), Germany (12:1), Sweden (12:1) and Switzerland (10:1). For that reason, Meier and Marais (2012) opine that the learner educator ratio of 9-15:1 is acceptable for 5-year-olds (grade R learners). Meier and Marais (2012) further opined that a learner educator ratio exceeding 18:1 is unacceptable internationally. According to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2011), the average learner educator ratio in South Africa is much higher than the average of 16:1 in the school of OECD countries such as Finland, Australia, and the Netherlands that promotes a lower learner educator ratio.

A study conducted by Adedeji and Olaniyan (2011) reveals that in Africa, the number of educators is relatively low compared to the number of learners. It indicates that over sixty percent of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have a learner-educator ratio of more than 40:1. The same study states that in countries such as Mozambique, Rwanda, and Chad the learner-educator ratio is above 60: 1 as a result

of the inception of free education in these countries. The problem of overcrowding is prevalent in Africa in general and in South Africa in particular.

In South Africa, a similar trend is observed where there is a high learner educator ratio, a situation that will remain in the immediate future and perhaps even in the long-term future. Thus far, the recommended national learner educator ratio in South African primary schools is 40:1 whereas in secondary schools the ratio is 35:1 (Department of Basic Education, 2012). Despite these recommendations, there are schools in South Africa that still experience higher enrolment in class. A study by Marais (2016) confirms that overcrowding in classrooms has not been addressed in South African schools particularly in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal with the Eastern Cape as the most hit province. Consistent with the above, the findings of the study by John (2013) in some schools in the Eastern Cape reveals that the conditions of the classroom are so appalling, to such an extent that learners are sitting three or four at a desk meant for two, thus hindering educators' free movement. One school in the Eastern Cape was reported to have an enrolment of one thousand three hundred learners with only twenty-four educators. Similarly, Venktes (2011: 3) reports that one school in the Eastern Cape had one hundred and sixty-five (165) grade 3 learners accommodated in one class and one hundred and forty (140) grade 2 learners in a single class. The above realities create undesirable conditions that lead to low levels of educator wellbeing. As a result of overcrowded classes in some schools, a memorandum was handed over to parliament in 2013 in Cape Town and at the Department of Education in Pretoria (Davis, 2013).

The report of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education (Department of Basic Education, 2020) oversight visit to Limpopo Province to assess the state of readiness of schools for the 2020 academic year, the general state of schooling, as well as the latest National Senior Certificate results, which were poorer than expected, found that overcrowding was very rife. The committee found that at Bachabang and Diphala primary schools and Phafane Secondary School learner enrolment in some classes varied from 45 to 68 per class. This is far much higher than the national norm of 40:1 in primary schools and 35:1 in secondary schools. A similar trend was found in Eureka Full Service School where the number of grade 6 and grade R learners were 83 and 58 respectively (Department of Basic Education, 2020).

According to Meier and West (2020), several factors contribute to overcrowding in South African Schools. For example, insufficient infrastructure such as an inadequate number of classrooms. Another cause of overcrowding pertains to the graduation rate of educators. Bernstein (2015) reporting on the survey conducted by the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) projects that the South African teaching force has to expand to around 456 000 in 2025 to meet the learner enrolment rate. Although Gauteng has a low learner educator rate of 31.4:1, there are still provinces such as Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal where the learner educator ratio is above 50:1 (Department of Basic Education, 2014). The report of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education's oversight visit to Limpopo found that

the causes of overcrowding in schools include among others the lack of educators as well as the inadequate number of classrooms (Department of Basic Education, 2020).

Prolonged exposure to these constraints leads to recurring stress that hurts the wellbeing of educators (Emmer & Stough, 2001). Studies show that over-crowding impacts negatively on the wellbeing of educators (Alli, Naz, Maqbool & Rana, 2011; Herzalla, 2011). Marais (2016) accentuates that overcrowding is one of the factors that lead to didactical neglect. When classrooms are overcrowded, educators are unable to pay individual attention to the educational needs of learners leading to poor academic performance and consequently to low levels of wellbeing.

Muthusamy (2015:14) contends that overcrowded classrooms pose the following constraints on educators:

- Lack of physical space for movement
- Cause excessive workload for educators
- Impersonalizing of teaching
- Reduces opportunity for learners to participate actively in the learning process
- Limit opportunities to meet individual learner needs for self-activity, inquiry, motivation, discipline, safety, and socialization.

Imtiaz (2014) and Khumalo and Mji (2014) concur that overcrowded classes pose an unsupportive environment for both the learners and educators and may end up affecting their health and wellbeing. For instance, they opine that larger classes are unhygienic because if a learner or an educator has a contagious infection, others can be easily affected. Overcrowding exacerbates the transmission of tuberculosis (Harling & Castro, 2011), hospitalization due to influenza (Tam, Yousey-Hindes & Hadler, 2014) and rheumatic fever (Jaine, Baker & Venugopal, 2011). It also leads to poor ventilation which provides an ideal condition for viruses, bacteria, and other pathogenic organisms (Haverinen-Shaughnessy, Moschandreas & Shaughnessy, 2011).

2.5.2.2 School physical infrastructure that is in a bad state

The Department of Education (2007) refers to school physical infrastructure as aspects such as the provisioning of sanitation, water, suitable classrooms, and well-designed specialized rooms such as laboratories and libraries. In this study, physical environment refers to the physical facilities in the school setting such as classrooms, staffrooms, laboratories, libraries and ablution facilities. School infrastructure

plays a salient role in the provisioning of quality education (UNICEF, 2009). The ASHRAE (2010) postulates that people spend about 80 to 90 percent of their time indoors and the characteristics of buildings contribute to the health and comfort of their occupants. How educators perceive their work environment has a bearing on their wellbeing. When the work environment is perceived by educators in a favourable way, they experience increased levels of wellbeing (Wong, 2015).

According to Adedeji and Olaniyan (2011), many schools in sub-Saharan Africa are characterized by infrastructural facilities that are in a state of deterioration. Some are still built with mud bricks and they are not only posing a health hazard but also a potential death trap. Some classes are conducted under trees and during rainy seasons learners have to be cramped into a few buildings resulting in overcrowding which increases educator stress and reduces their wellbeing levels (Adedeji & Olaniyan, 2011).

According to the IOL News (Macupe & Hawker, 2012), the problem of poor infrastructure is still prevalent in some schools in South Africa. These schools have classrooms with broken window panes. This damages the authentic appearance of the school. It also causes distraction to both educators and learners during teaching time as they can see things happening outside (Macupe & Hawker, 2012). A report by North Coast Courier (2017) on the conditions of school buildings reveals that at Aldinville Primary School in Groutville the classroom floors are characterized by big potholes which are covered by old chalkboards to protect both educators and learners from falling through and thereby causing injuries to them.

Simons, Hwang, Fitzgerald, Kielb, and Lin (2010) argue that the conditions of the school buildings particularly leaking roofs have been associated with school absenteeism of both educators and learners. They further indicate that leaking roofs affect the roof insulators leading to the aggravation of respiratory infections such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, pneumonia, and lung cancer. A study by Draga (2017) reveals that classrooms in most rural schools in South Africa are in a poor physical state with floors full of holes, ceilings broken down, and leaking roofs.

Veriava, Thom, and Hodgson (2017) aver that infrastructure inadequacy such as water, electricity, libraries and laboratories impact negatively on the wellbeing of educators. In support of the above, a report by the Department of Basic Education and Media In Education Trust (2010) indicates that infrastructure is of grave concern in South Africa. It indicates that most rural schools are characterized by crumbling classrooms, toilet facilities that are in a horrendous state, cracked fences as well as the absence of libraries and laboratories. This is consistent with Veriava et al. (2017) who attest that indeed the worst infrastructure conditions are prevalent in former Bantustan areas particularly the Eastern Cape,

KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo province. For that reason, it is opined that the majority of rural educators are exposed to unfavourable infrastructural realities that lead to reduced levels of wellbeing.

Therefore, only a few privileged educators find themselves in comfortable, well-resourced, and safe schools that have a positive impact on their wellbeing (Draga, 2017). Dryden and Vos (2005) maintain that the wellbeing of educators is enhanced when the majority of basic infrastructural challenges have been addressed in the school. A similar study by Lee and Zuze (2007) in fourteen (14) sub-Saharan countries postulates that educators enjoy working in schools that have access to facilities such as libraries, running water, electricity, equipment, and playgrounds. This is consistent with Marishane (2013) who expostulates that educators show more interest in working in schools that are having well-managed infrastructure than in schools that need structural repairs and are characterized by temporary school structures that are unattractive.

The Department of Education and Media In Education Trust (2010:22) reveal that there are significant backlogs concerning school infrastructure in South Africa. It is estimated that 22 percent of schools in South Africa are in poor conditions with a 4-year backlog in planned maintenance. The Department of Basic Education (2012) reported that of the 24 000 public mainstream schools, only 7 847 have municipal flush toilets, 11 231 use pit latrine toilets while 970 of them do not have ablution facilities at all.

As a result of the infrastructural realities depicted above, in August 2009 the Minister of Basic Education developed a national policy called “The minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure”. National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) is a database of public schools derived from the first survey (School Register of Needs -SRN) conducted in 1996 and updated in 2000. It was developed from 2005 and completed in 2007. However, Business Day (Phakathi, 2012) reports that NEIMS is failing to provide adequate school infrastructure because national and provincial governments are not willing to put enough money towards building and fixing the schools.

Furthermore, NEIMS indicates that South African schools do not only lack basic infrastructure, but also resources. It was reported in the National Education Structure Management System (NEIMS, 2011) that out of 24 793 ordinary public schools found in South Africa:

- 544 of them do not have electricity whereas 804 of them have an unreliable source of electricity.
- 2 402 schools do not have a supply of water while 2 611 have an unreliable supply of water (i.e. depend on harvesting rainwater).
- 11 450 are still using pit toilets and 913 of them do not have ablution facilities at all.

- 22 938 schools are not having stocked libraries while 19 541 of them do not have libraries at all.
- 19 037 schools have no computer centres while 3 267 do have a room designed like a computer centre but there are no computers inside.
- 21 021 schools do not have laboratories whereas 1 231 of them have stocked laboratories.
- 2 703 schools are not fenced at all.

The issue of infrastructure in South African schools is well-documented. The consequences of poor infrastructure include that it perpetuates inequality in education (Pillay, 2021) with urban schools having better infrastructure than those in rural communities. Poor infrastructure is also indicated as having a negative impact on teaching and learning (Amsterdam, 2010; Lam, Ardington & Leibbrandt, 2011). However, there were few studies in other countries that linked poor infrastructure to wellbeing. A study by Cuyvers, De Weerd, Dupont, Mols and Nuytten (2011) that investigated the impact of infrastructure on the wellbeing of learners found that school infrastructure contributes to their wellbeing. The authors conclude that the quality of school infrastructure has a strong impact on an individual's perception of his wellbeing. Not only are the dusty and unhygienic environments unsafe, along with the lack of clean running water and toilets, but prolonged exposure to these environments has severe health consequences for learners and educators (Barrett, Treves, Shmis & Ambasz, 2019).

2.5.2.3 Water and sanitation

Sanitation refers to the availability of the necessary facilities to urinate or defecate (private, safe toilet, latrines, and availability of tissue paper) or facilities that enable girls and women to manage their menstrual hygiene (private location and management of disposal of menstrual materials (Jasper, Le & Bartram, 2012). In this study, sanitation is defined as the availability of ablution facilities that are conducive for a urinal, defecation, menstrual hygiene and washing of hands. WHO (2000) cited by Vandegrift, Bateman, Siemens, Nguyen, Wilson, Green, Van Den Wymelenberg and Hickey (2017:2) define hygiene as "infrastructural changes that alter the environment in a way perceived as beneficial to human health (such as the installation of water and sewage treatment facilities". In this study, hygiene refers to the practice of cleansing hands and cleaning surfaces within the person's environment. The definitions above show that the concept of hygiene is rooted in the relationship between cleanliness and the maintenance of good health. Therefore, adequate hygienic conditions at school are very crucial as they reduce the rate of absenteeism and promote better performance for educators (Joshi & Amadi, 2013). According to Xaba (2014), the issue of water and sanitation in South African schools is a contentious one. Good hygiene practices cannot be practiced in a school situation where there is a lack

of washing areas and waste disposal facilities (Chittleborough, Nicholson, Basker, Bell & Campbell, 2012; Joshi & Amadi, 2013).

Water and sanitation contribute to the health and wellbeing of the school staff (WHO, 2017). For that reason, staff members should have the right to safe drinking water at all times. They should also have the right to proper and hygienic sanitation (van Maanen, Shinee, Grossi, Vargha, Gabriadze & Schmoll, 2016). At the same time, the use of unsafe water has a detrimental effect on their health, wellbeing, physical and cognitive aspects (WHO, 2017). This is confirmed by the findings of a study by Komarulzaman, de Jong, and Smits (2019) on the effect of water on absenteeism in Indonesia. The study found that both learners and educators find themselves absent from school as a result of the effects of diarrhoea caused by unsafe water.

The wellbeing of educators is negatively affected by the unhygienic conditions of school toilets. Educators prefer not to use school toilets regularly for various reasons which include among others: untidy floors, unpleasant smell, lack of privacy, lack of soap and toilet paper as well as towels for drying off hands (van Maanen et al., 2016). Joshi and Amadi (2013) espouse that the health and wellbeing of educators can be improved by ensuring that the ablution facilities have proper washing basins and soap as this prevents the spread of germs that are associated with respiratory illness and diarrhoeal diseases. Various authors suggest that the wellbeing of staff members can be enhanced by ensuring that:

- there are a sufficient number of toilets that can cater to all learners and staff during breaks (McMichael, 2019);
- the toilets are easily accessible to all with entrances positioned in a way that will provide privacy when entering or leaving the toilet facility (WHO, 2017);
- toilets are hygienic and conducive for use so that they don't turn into a haven of disease transmission (Joshi & Amadi, 2013);
- toilets have handwashing facilities with soap, water, and proper drainage (Jasper, Le & Bartram, 2012); and
- ablution facilities are properly maintained and cleaned with strong disinfectants to protect them from disease-transmitting vectors (Baskovich & Uijtewaal, 2019).

WHO (2019) maintains that the wellbeing of female educators is compromised when there are toilet facilities that lack privacy, doors, or cubicles as well as by sharing toilets with male colleagues. The wellbeing of female staff members can be improved by ensuring that the toilet facilities have adequate

resources to cater and manage their menstrual hygiene (Campbell, Benova, Gon, Afsona & Cumming, 2015). In support of the above, poor menstrual hygiene can lead to adverse health consequences such as urinary and reproductive tract infections. It may also lead to psychosomatic effects such as pain, stress, and embarrassment (Sumpter & Torondel, 2013). Using one toilet facility for both male and female staff members contributes to the low levels of educator wellbeing. Numerous studies assert that female staff members prefer not to use ablution facilities that are shared with their male counterparts.

In some instances, female staff members avoid drinking water while at school to suppress the need of using the toilet (Freeman, Trinies, Boisson, Mak & Clasen, 2012; Garn, 2013; Morgan, Bowling, Bartram & Kayser, 2017; Chard, Trinies, Moss, Chang, Doumbia, Lammie & Freeman, 2018). A study by Sorenson, Morssink and Campos (2011) found that the practice of reducing water consumption harms human beings as it can cause dehydration and poor work performance which are associated with a low level of wellbeing.

In Limpopo, schools are still experiencing a dire shortage of toilet facilities. The Report by the National Education Infrastructure Management Systems (NEIMS, 2020) elucidates that approximately 3 164 schools nationwide still rely on pit toilets. Of this number, 472 schools are found in Limpopo province. This resonates with the report by Health-E-News (Mukwevho, 2020) that in Waterval High School in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province the challenge of school toilets was very rife. It was reported that all toilets at the school were not functional making it difficult for both educators and learners to relieve themselves when nature calls. Similar findings were reported at Mabila Primary School in Thohoyandou in Limpopo where there was not a single toilet working at the school (Mukwevho, 2020).

Poor sanitation threatens human wellbeing. The contribution of sanitation to wellbeing includes “intensely personal and subjective experiences and feelings as dignity, safety, convenience, comfort and status” (Mane Abhay, 2014:1). Thakadu, Ngwenya, Phaladze and Bolaane (2018) argue that basic hygiene is essential in promoting the health and wellbeing of human beings. These studies indicate that poor sanitation and lack of water may disable wellbeing if not addressed.

2.5.2.4 Staffroom that is disorderly

The state of staffrooms is one of the factors of the school environment that constrains the wellbeing of educators if they are neglected. The staffrooms are in a disorderly manner if they are not regularly cleaned and if educators do not have adequate staffroom resources such as lockable steel cabinets to keep their teaching and personal belongings safe. In support of the above, the study by Barrett and Zhang (2012) that focussed on understanding educators’ opinions regarding the comfortability of their

working environment, with a sample of educators from five schools, found that a lack of private storage and a lack of ability to personalize their workplaces harm educators' wellbeing.

This resonates with a study by Geiger and Pivovarova (2018) with Arizona public school educators that found that educators in schools with good working environments that are well resourced are more likely to experience a high sense of wellbeing than the ones working in difficult working environments. Furthermore, schools with good working environments as well as adequate resources register a lower attrition rate than those with poor working environments. Haegerstrand and Knutsson (2019) share the same sentiment that an attractive workplace environment with sufficient resources increases the wellbeing of employees, and gives them higher levels of work commitment as well as reduces their urge to look for employment elsewhere. It is therefore imperative that educators are provided with adequate work resources that would lead to the improvement of their wellbeing.

2.6 Interventions to promote educator wellbeing

In this section, I discuss interventions that promote educator wellbeing, which is divided into those that focus on building social capital and that intend to equip educators with skills.

2.6.1 Interventions that focus on building social capital

In the subsection below, the interactions that promote trust are discussed as they are regarded as key in building social capital.

2.6.1.1 Interactions that promote trust

According to Wilkins (2018), trust is of significant importance in building and maintaining mutually respectful relationships. Several factors influence affect individuals' level of trust such as educational attainment as well as cultural and personal beliefs. Breuer, Hüffmeier, Hibben and Hertel (2020:5) define trust as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectations that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party". Wilkins (2018) refers to trust as a firm belief in the reliability, truth, and ability or strength of someone or something.

Interactions between educators and principals are important. These interactions should be built on trust in order for them to be effective and benefit both parties. According to Berkovich and Eyal (2018:749), "educators' trust in the school leader simplifies social interactions, enabling both principals and educators to devote less time to detailing plans, clarifying intentions, and monitoring each other's behaviour". Handford and Leithwood (2013) describes trust in schools, and particularly trust in the leader, as an

'enabler of change'. Involvement of educators in school activities may be promoted where there is trust between them and the principal.

It is important to focus on interactions that promote trust among educators. According to Windschitl, Thompson, Braaten and Stroupe (2019), one of the intervention strategies of educators that promotes trust is professional learning communities (PLCs). Professional learning is a process whereby educators come together to ascertain their professional requirements and also sort means of working together to attain their objectives. Educators need to work as groups and teams in communities of practice and this is important to enable them to develop professionally. This is done through collaboration by all the group members to assist each other in areas they need help in terms of their professional development. This requires educators to assist in building trust among themselves, making them content in addressing challenges that they are facing together and collaborating with the truth (Wilkins, 2018). When there is no trust among educators in professional communities of practice, there is very little likelihood to have a positive working relationship among them. This will result in inhibiting learning activities, thus affecting educators' professional development. It is therefore imperative for educators to develop a relationship of trust with other educators in order to acquire the necessary skills needed in their profession (Patton & Parker, 2017).

Studies such as those of Tokuda, Fuji and Inoguchi (2010), Yamamura, Tsutsui, Yamane, Yamane and Powdthavee (2015), and Alawiyah and Held (2015) revealed a positive association between trust and wellbeing. Moreover, individuals' experiences of wellbeing are understood to be relational and socially constructed within the school environment (Brady & Wilson, 2021).

2.6.2 Interventions that equip educators with skills

According to Harmsen, Helms-Lorenz, Maulana, and van Veen (2018) teaching is a stressful profession. It requires educators who have the necessary skills to cope with the demands of their job. These skills include among others, problem-solving skills, self-care as a strategy as well as maintaining a work-life balance.

2.6.2.1 Problem-solving skills in wellbeing

According to Kim, Choi, Sung and Park (2018), educators encounter very complex problems that are not well defined and lack a clear solution. As a result, they need to be able to identify and apply different strategies to solve these problems. However, problem-solving skills are not readily available. They need to be taught and instilled in the lives of educators so that they use them in different settings and contexts. To help educators develop their problem-solving skills so that they are so competent in their teaching career, Chan, Clarke and Cao (2018) suggests that educators should be engaged in solving problems

that concern the school. Involving educators in participatory decision-making would help create skillful problem-solving educators.

2.6.2.2 Self-care as a strategy for enhancing wellbeing

Self-care is very important in the working life of educators as the teaching profession is characterized by high-stress levels and requires additional work outside of school hours (Larrivee, 2012). Baker (2020:1) defines self-care as the “actions that an individual might take in order to reach optimal physical and mental health”. Sherman (2005) cited by Mills, Wand, and Fraser (2018) refers to self-care as “the self-initiated behaviour that people choose to incorporate in promoting good health and general wellbeing”. Practicing self-care and doing activities that bring joy to an educator a few times a week may assist to increase positive attitudes, attendance rates, and benefit wellbeing both inside and outside the school.

According to Larivee (2012), educators who fail to practice self-care are prone to (a) physical exhaustion, a feeling of being depersonalized at work, as well as a feeling of lack of personal accomplishment. Jennings (2018) suggests several approaches that educators may use to deal with the stress associated with their work such as mindfulness practices and “Cultivating Awareness and Resilience for Educators” (CARE) which was developed to benefit educators who are struggling with mindfulness techniques. According to Cardinal and Thomas (2016), self-care strategies to help educators to fulfill their potential include:

- taking care of one’s physiological needs;
- ensuring your safety and that of other people next to you,
- focusing on important relationships especially those that create memories and promote bonding;
- seeking opportunities to learn new skills;
- taking in the natural beauty of the world around you;
- acknowledging that your human potentials are self-fulfilling; and
- helping others recognize their own potential.

Realization of the above strategies will enable educators to enjoy the teaching profession and assist others (particularly their learners) to be at their best (Jennings, 2018).

2.6.2.3 Maintaining a work-life balance

According to Mensah, and Adjei (2020), maintaining a healthy work-life balance has become an issue of great concern in the life of working individuals. This requires employees to develop the necessary skills to strike a balance between work and home life. Bulger (2014:1) refers to work-life balance as “the ability to accomplish the goals set in both work and personal life and achieve satisfaction in all life domains. Kirchmeyer (2000) cited by Mensah and Adjei (2020) refers to work-life balance as the level of prioritization between personal and professional activities in an individual’s life and the level to which activities are related to their job are present in the home setting. In this study, work-life balance refers to the ability of an individual educator to maintain a balance between work and family life.

Leineweber, Baltzer, Magnusson Hanson and Westerlund (2013) in their study among working adults in Sweden show that work-life balance affects males and females differently. This has been caused by an increase in the involvement of women in the labour force as well as the rising involvement of men in performing housework, including child care and family chores (Kelly, Moen, Oakes, Fan, Okechukwu, Davis & Hanson, 2014). Despite the increase in the involvement of men in household activities, Greenhaus, Allen and Spector (2006) show that women continue to spend more time on household activities as compared to men.

Kinnunen, Geurts and Mauno (2004) found no evidence of gender difference in the association between poor work-life balance and health outcomes such as life satisfaction and wellbeing. In a study among working adults in Sweden, Leineweber, et al. (2013) found an association between work-life conflict and suboptimal self-reported health among working women than men. Similarly, a work-life imbalance has a negative effect on the life of working individuals. For example, Eek and Axmon (2015) found that women in relationships with unequal distribution of work and family activity reported a higher level of fatigue, stress, and physical symptoms than those in relationships with equal distribution of responsibility. Furthermore, work-life conflict among employees is known to be related to many health problems, including poor physical health, psychological distress, and life dissatisfaction (Griep, Toivanen, Van Diepen, Guimarães, Camelo, Juvanhol & Chor, 2016).

2.7 The role of school principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators

The role of school principals has been stipulated in the policy of the Department of Basic Education on the South African Standards for principalship (Department of Basic Education, 2016). School principals are charged with the responsibility of providing leadership to the most important institutions in a society, the schools. As such, the type of leadership that they display to educators influences their wellbeing. For instance, school principals who display a positive leadership role that is free from any form of bias impact

positively on the wellbeing of educators and vice versa (Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). This opinion is consistent with Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington and Gu (2007) who espouse that the quality of leadership displayed by the principal at a school plays a salient role in promoting the wellbeing of educators and it also enables them to cope with their day-to-day challenges.

Salter-Jones (2012) indicates that the wellbeing of educators prevails in schools where principals create healthy school environments for learners, educators and the school community in general. Some of the roles of the school principals are discussed in the section that follows.

2.7.1 Facilitation of professional development of educators on educator wellness

One of the roles of school principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators involves the facilitation of the professional development of educators (Fatih, 2021). Educator professional development is defined as “activities that improve educators’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes of teaching practices” (OECD, 2014:262). Darling-Hammond, Hylar and Gardner (2017:1) define professional development “as structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes”. In this study, educator professional development refers to the activities undertaken by the school to improve the professional skills of educators. School principals have the responsibility of supporting the educators by creating opportunities that enable them to adapt to the change taking place in the education system and to increase their effectiveness (Buchanan, 2012).

Various authors identified certain benefits attached to educator professional development. For example,

- it promotes educator knowledge, skills, performance, positive climate, and wellbeing (Butler, Schnellert & MacNeil, 2015);
- it improves teaching and learner achievement (Rodriguez, Condom-Bosch, Ruiz, & Oliver, 2020);
- it enables educators to identify better ways of teaching in the use of innovative methods that have been supported by scientific research (Desimone & Garet, 2015);
- it enables educators to change their attitudes and beliefs about their teaching efficacies (Rodriguez, Condom-Bosch, Ruiz & Oliver, 2020);
- it enables educators to be involved in dialogic-based training which positively impacts their ability to address current school problems (Roca, Gomez & Burgues, 2015).

Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) indicate that educator professional development is conducted in different ways, for example, (a). It can be conducted through external expertise (b) It can take the form of

workshops where educators meet and discuss matters related to their jobs, or (c), through collaboration between schools or educators across schools (e.g. observational visits to other schools or educator networks) or within the schools in which educators work.

2.7.2 Involving educators in decision making

According to Moran (2015), educators are one of the major stakeholders in the education system. They are foot soldiers who ensure that teaching and learning take place more effectively. Involving educators in decision-making is one of the roles of school principals in the promotion of the wellbeing of educators. Decision-making refers to the participation of educators in making important decisions that directly affect their work-life (Veisi, Azizifar, Gowhary & Jamalinesari, 2015).

Klecker and Loadman (1998) cited in Balyer (2017) add that decision-making has to do with the involvement of educators in educational decisions such as financial matters, choosing educators, as well as determining school programmes. Involving educators in decision-making enables educators to be actively involved in school management processes. Russo (2014:1) defines decision-making as the process whereby an individual, group, or organisation reaches conclusions about what future actions to pursue given a set of objectives and limits on available resources.

When educators are involved in decision making, they make decisions in matters related to their work and this impacts the quality of their work positively. According to Wadesango and Bayaga (2013) involving educators in decision-making enables them to develop a high sense of commitment as well as greater ownership of the school vision. It also motivates educators to execute their duties in a more meaningful way. Furthermore, educators develop a sense of stronger commitment to the school in general as well as enhanced wellbeing (Devos, Tuytens, & Hulpia, 2014, Moran, 2015). Another study by Srafidou and Chatziioannidis (2013) with a sample of 143 primary schools in Greece found that educators involved in decision-making have high levels of job commitment and job satisfaction.

Involving educators in decision-making provides them with an opportunity to develop problem-solving and decision-making skills (Wadesango & Bayaga, 2013). When educators are afforded the opportunity of participating in decision-making, their problem-solving skills improve, making the entire school benefit from it. According to Endeed Editorial Team (2021) problem-solving and decision-making skills are both important in the workplace because it helps to navigate a variety of situations arising at work. Problem-solving is a process of creating a solution to address a challenge and often involves making decisions. Decision-making, similarly, is the action of choosing the best option in a situation, including choosing the best solution to a problem.

Additionally, involving educators in decision-making increases their level of wellbeing making them experience a sense of job satisfaction as they have a feeling that their voices are heard in many areas related to their job (Veisi et al., 2015). A study by Collett (2013) with principals of primary schools in challenging conditions in South Africa found that involving educators in decision-making leads to enhanced educator wellbeing and increases a sense of collegiality in school.

2.7.3 Promoting close relationships with educators

The principal-educator relationship plays a pivotal role in the teaching profession as it enables effectiveness and functionality in the school (Collett, 2013). Although one may argue that school principals are also educators at the school, the influence that they have in the schools has a major impact on the wellbeing of educators. Blum (2007) asserts that educators who have a strong relationship with the school principal report higher job performance than those with poor principal-educator relationships. Nonetheless, Blum (2007) argues that a positive relationship between the school principal and educators is very fundamental in fostering the wellbeing of educators as this enables educators to enjoy their work and increase their willingness to contribute to the positive learning environment of the school. This implies that the type of leadership displayed by the school principal should enable educators to cope with the day-to-day demands of their job (Collett, 2013).

In addition, Blum (2007) argues that for the wellbeing of educators to flourish, the relationships formed between the principal and educators should be based on trust and respect. Brown, Gray, McHardy and Taylor (2015) assert that educators working in schools where there is an atmosphere of trust and respect are more likely to experience a sense of belonging, job satisfaction, with little intention to leave the school.

They should foster a healthy relationship with educators, give generous and genuine praise as well as provide constructive criticism to them (Day et al., 2007). Amoatema and Kyeremeh (2016:46) refer to praise as “involving the timely, informal and/or formal acknowledgment of a person’s behaviour, effort or business result that supports the organisation’s goals and values, and which has been beyond normal expectations”. According to Imran, Ahmad, Nisar and Ahmad (2014), educator recognition has been identified to be a powerful motivational tool that enriches educators’ energies towards the accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives. Recognizing educators through praise is very key in boosting their morale, commitment and performance. For that reason, school principals should constantly recognize good work in order to expand and enrich educators’ capabilities which will consequently lead to enhanced educator wellbeing (Imran et al., 2014).

Littleford (2007) also indicates that it is of utmost significance that the school principal treats every member of the teaching staff fairly and equitably. Such treatment will result in boosting their morale and building cordial relationships among them and thereby lead to job satisfaction and enhanced wellbeing (Tsvara, 2013). A study by Collett (2013) shows that school principals who treat every member of the teaching staff fairly and equitably are more likely to build a cordial relationship among the staff. According to Price (2012), principals' treatment of their educators affects their wellbeing, satisfaction, cohesion, and job commitment. Educators receiving fair treatment from their leaders are more likely to experience high levels of wellbeing and vice versa.

2.7.4 Emotional identification

School principals interact with educators in the school setting. In their interaction, educators display emotional expressions through body language, vocal tone, and facial expressions, these affective reactions tell the mood in which the educator is operating (Mancini, Biolcati, Agnoli, Andrei & Trombini, 2018). This calls for an emotionally intelligent school principal. Angel (1981) cited in Jang and Elfenbein (2015:484) define emotional intelligence as "an individual's ability to be aware of affective responses that occur during varied daily interaction". Petrovici and Dobrescu (2014:1406) refer to emotional intelligence as "a series of non-cognitive abilities, competencies and skills that influence a person's level of adaptability to the demands and pressures of the environment". In this study, emotional intelligence refers to the ability of the principal and educators to understand and manage their emotions and that of other people around them.

According to Jang and Elfenbein (2015), emotionally intelligent school principals can identify the emotions of their educators. They can discern between honest and dishonest feelings. Regular observation of the educators' emotional behaviour enables them to identify whether educators are showing true feelings or not. In most instances, this might involve the understanding of nonverbal signals such as body language and facial expressions. Consequently, this will enable them to perceive, interpret, communicate and respond in a way that will not hurt their feelings.

Furthermore, they should control their feelings and calm down when exposed to negative feelings. Control of feelings and calming down lead to the elimination of depression and negative emotions (Jang & Elfenbein, 2015).

As a way of enhancing the wellbeing of educators, Petrovici and Dobrescu (2014:1406) argue that school principals should train educators under their supervision to:

- Be aware of their personal emotions. Educators should learn to know if a colleague is experiencing negative feelings. Think of a situation where an educator fails to understand when a

fellow colleague is feeling sad or angry. This could lead to conflicts and misunderstandings. Being aware of other colleagues' negative feelings will enable them to monitor their feelings so that they contain the negative feelings that they may encounter.

- Manage their emotions. The ability of educators to manage emotions effectively is a crucial part of emotional intelligence. This implies that educators should be able to regulate their emotions and respond appropriately to the emotions of others. This will enable educators to have self-control of their emotions and adjust themselves in a way that ensures positive interactions. When a person calms down if exposed to negative feelings it leads to the elimination of depression and negative emotions.
- Identify the emotions of other people. The emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. For example, if the educator is expressing angry emotions, the observer must interpret the cause of the person's anger and what it could mean. In that case, the observer educator should be empathetic to understand the emotions of others as the emotions of the observed educator could have been triggered from home and manifest themselves in the workplace. For that reason, they have to be calm and develop the attitude of supporting their colleagues' feelings.
- Handle relationships. Educators who are not emotionally intelligent may easily break workplace relationships. They may carelessly and irresponsibly expose their negative emotions. As a result, educators should develop the art of establishing and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships that would maintain positive workplace relationships.

2.7.5 Creation and management of positive school culture

As heads of the institution, school principals ought to inculcate within their schools a positive school climate that will enable the wellbeing of educators to flourish. One of the roles of school principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators is the creation and maintenance of positive school culture (Confeld, 2016). Carnevale (2016) also maintains that school principals who focus on creating and maintaining positive school culture are more likely to establish norms and conditions that enable people to thrive.

School culture can be defined as “patterns of behaviour that distinguishes us from them” and “a set of behaviours that seem strange to new employees” (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015:6). Confeld (2016:4) refers to school culture as “a deeper level of reflection of shared values, beliefs, and traditions between staff members”. In a similar vein, Maslowski (2002) cited in Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenvoghe and Aelterman (2008) defines school culture as the assumptions, norms and values, as well as cultural artefacts that are shared by the members of the school which influence their functioning at school.

Positive school culture is important because it provides a safe, supportive, encouraging, inviting, and challenging environment for learners and staff, which in turn allows learners' academic achievement to evolve. The individual successes of educators and learners are recognized and celebrated.

According to Nehez and Blossing (2020), schools with positive school cultures are characterized by

- Relationships and interactions that are characterized by openness, trust, respect, and appreciation.
- Staff relationships that are collegial, collaborative, and productive to all staff members are held to high professional standards.
- Learners and staff members feel emotionally and physically safe, and the school's policies and facilities promote their safety.
- School leaders, educators, and staff members model positive, healthy behaviours for learners to copy.
- Important leadership decisions are made collaboratively with input from staff members, learners, and parents.

According to Schein (2010), school principals have a crucial role to play in the creation and maintenance of positive school cultures. School principals who effectively manage the culture of their schools contribute positively toward the wellbeing of their educators (Hallinger, 2003). Carnevale (2016) also maintains that school principals who focus on creating and maintaining of positive school culture are more likely to establish norms and conditions that enable people to thrive.

First, a positive school culture leads to the creation of a warm and welcoming school environment where both the learners and educators feel supported and valued. Educators receive recognition from the principal for the good work they do and inculcate in them the habit of giving recognition for outstanding performance and acceptable behaviour. The same should happen to learners who perform well or display good behaviour. Realization of the above would lead to a school community that feels valued and respected.

Secondly, a positive school culture makes educators experience a strong sense of belonging which consequently leads to the improvement of their wellbeing (Confeld, 2016). Confeld (2016) shows that educators in schools with positive school culture feel a sense of community, as they enjoy being part of the school community. They enjoy working with colleagues in doing their daily tasks and are satisfied with their work.

According to Confeld (2016), school principals should enforce a more positive culture by doing away with school cultures that are negative in the sense of the lack of mission and vision, doing away with laziness and apathy, appreciates togetherness rather than separateness and inclusivity rather than exclusivity, and work on positive peer relationships. Schools with negative cultures mainly focus on failures and use them as an excuse to remain stagnant. Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) opine that educators in schools with negative cultures encourage themselves to see failure as an inescapable result of conditions beyond their control rather than a chance for improvement. Educators in schools with negative school cultures are gratified with their performance and their unprofessional conduct may be used to bond them together (Schein, 2010). Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) accentuate that educators are more collaborative but their collaborations are not aligned with the goals of promoting and encouraging learners to succeed or focused on educators to improve their performance. For that reason, school principals must curtail all elements of negative school cultures as they can harm the wellbeing of educators.

Carnevale (2016) asserts that positive school culture plays a salient role in improving the wellbeing of educators as well as the promotion of school effectiveness. It also influences the way people feel and act. According to Sergiovanni (2006), schools with healthy school cultures are characterized by educators who are highly committed, with high job performance and enhanced wellbeing. It is therefore the role of school principals to ensure that their schools have positive school cultures that encourage individuals to improve their performance and commitment, stimulate motivation and increase a sense of competency (Peterson & Deal, 2009). Fullan (2001) posits that school principals, irrespective of the endless demands made on them, should focus on transforming the school culture so that the process of teaching and learning can effectively take place. Consequently, school principals have to work towards creating a non-violent, caring, responsive and positive school culture that affords individuals ample opportunities to be efficacious throughout their working career (Confeld, 2016). School principals should focus their time on creating the school culture that will enable the school to attain the desired outcomes (Habegger, 2008). Moreover, a positive school culture flourishes when the school principal and the school management team (SMT) develop and encourage educators to perform to their maximum potential (Collett, 2013).

Positive school culture also creates an atmosphere that enables educators and office staff to work as a team. As a result, the role of the principal in managing school culture also has to do with influencing behaviours, relationships, beliefs and other complex dynamics in the school that are often unpredictable (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015). School principals should ensure that there is a positive school climate and good educator commitment that will culminate ineffective communication and collaboration among educators (Bruggencate, Luyten, Scheerens, & Slegers, 2012). School principals should promote the wellbeing of educators by encouraging them to work as a team (Shah, 2012).

2.7.6 Facilitation and implementation of educator wellness programmes

One of the major roles of school principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators is to facilitate and implement educator wellness programmes. Levy and Thorndike (2019:175) refer to wellness programs as “initiatives undertaken by employers with the aim of reducing health care costs”. The National Wellness Institute cited by Lever, Mathis, and Mayworm (2017:4) defines a wellness programme as “an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward a more successful existence”. In this study, employee wellness programmes are defined as wellness plans initiated by the employer to support healthy lifestyles among educators. Lever et al. (2017) espouse that wellness programmes fall under three categories, namely (1) screening activities, (2) preventive interventions, and (3) health promotion activities. Although it is the responsibility of the educators to see to it that they engage in the above wellness programmes, the school principal has a responsibility of motivating and encouraging them to partake in these programmes.

2.7.6.1 Screening activities

This category focuses on identifying health risks in educators and they include measuring weight, completing a health risk questionnaire, and taking other biometrics (Lever et al., 2017). This is the responsibility of the individual educator. However, when wellbeing sessions are held in schools, educators may be encouraged to screen for health.

2.7.6.2 Preventive interventions

These are programs that are implemented to assist educators to make positive changes in their health behaviours, such as health education classes, individual health counseling, or step-counting programs (Lever et al., 2017). The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2021) identifies two types of preventative interventions, namely, primary and secondary interventions. Primary prevention can be done by carrying out health educational interventions that are meant to equip educators with skills and knowledge on specific aspects of wellbeing. Secondary prevention has to do with early detection and implementation of strategies that will help to alleviate the suffering that may arise.

2.7.6.3 Health promotion activities

These activities promote healthy lifestyles for all employees. Certain days can be dedicated to engaging educators in playing physical games or other sporting activities that promote health promotion. For example, the Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE, 2005) reported on a 10-week health promotion programme for employees in the Dallas Independent School District, with a focus on exercise and physical fitness. This study revealed that: 44 percent of educators changed their overall lifestyle, 68

percent changed their diet, 26 percent who were not engaged in physical exercises began vigorous programs, and 18 percent quit smoking. The programme led to 1.25 days less absenteeism for those educators who took part in the exercise.

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2021) espouses that involving educators in a wellness programme yield the following benefits:

- It plays a significant role in improving educator retention and productivity.
- It reduces the rate of absenteeism among educators.
- It lessens health care costs among educators.
- It improves the quality of life for educators.

According to Mattke, Liu, Caloyeras, Huang, Van Busum, Khodyakov, and Shier (2013), participation in organizational wellness programs is associated with higher job satisfaction and lower absenteeism, greater gains in weight loss, smoking cessation, and increase physical exercises.

It is a fact that the implementation of wellness programmes requires a measurable amount of supervision from school principals, however, they can delegate people to conduct the wellness programmes but the responsibility of supporting and monitoring the programmes lies with them. This implies that the success or failure of school wellness programmes lie in the hands of the school principal (Russell-Mayhew, Ireland, Murray, Angela, Nutter, Gabriele, Peat & Gereluk, 2017). Although there are out-of-school educator wellness programmes to enhance the wellbeing of educators, Desimone and Pak (2017) argue that successful educator professional development takes place in the school setting as it is easy for school leaders to monitor and evaluate their effectiveness.

2.8 Chapter summary

This study chapter explored the role of school principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. It commenced with conceptualizing the concept of educator wellbeing. The chapter also discussed the various factors that affect the wellbeing of educators. These factors were classified into two categories, namely, those that support the wellbeing of educators and those that promote the wellbeing of educators. Each of these factors was identified and thoroughly discussed. This was followed by various intervention strategies that promote the wellbeing of educators. This chapter culminates with a detailed discussion of the role of the school principal in enhancing the wellbeing of educators.

CHAPTER 3

PROMOTION OF HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present literature relating to the promotion of healthy school environments and the role of principals in it. As the promotion of healthy school environments is a concept embedded in school health promotion, the chapter will start by discussing what school health promotion entails and elaborate on its purpose. This will be followed by the essential components of school health promotion and then the role of school principals in health promotion.

3.2 What school health promotion entails

In general terms, health promotion is defined as a process about enabling people, meaning that people can actively acquire competencies to create more control over their own health and their environment (WHO,1986). Specifically, school health promotion is defined as any activity that occurs from within a school that is undertaken to improve and/or protect the health of the whole school community (WHO, 2000). School health promotion has to do with providing a better foundation for building a rich health knowledge base and healthy living skills through health education and the development of learning spaces that are part of the everyday life of the school (Darlington, Violon & Jourdan, 2018). The three definitions indicate that school health promotion has to do with actions, skills, processes for own health and that of one's environment. It is thus, a broader concept than health education. In this study, school health promotion is defined as an undertaking by the school to improve the health of learners and all staff members at the school. The definitions also indicate that school health promotion is important in that education and health are inextricably linked. In the case of educators, schools are worksites for the staff and are settings that can practice and model effective worksite health promotion for the benefit of all staff and ultimately the learners.

As SHP is increasingly receiving attention as aspired by the Ottawa Charter presented at the first international conference on health promotion in 1986 (Fry & Zask, 2017), there are many initiatives that have been adopted over the years aimed to go beyond the limitations associated with just providing health education in schools. The concepts that are important in this study are: health promoting schools and the promotion of healthy school environments. A health-promoting school (HPS), according to WHO (2017:1) is a school where “all members of the school community work together to provide students with positive experiences and structures that promote and protect their health. A health-promoting school is a

school that can create a healthy setting for living, learning and working (WHO, 1998). Its aim is to promote health and learning with all possible means at its disposal for the whole school community.

The concept of SHP and promotion of healthy school environments rely on a school-based approach, which means that it is in the school environment that all the selected activities that promote health come together as an integrated whole. The World Health Organisation (1984) identified schools as important settings for health promotion. Schools are more than physical settings where healthy activities are carried out; they can be the agents of change (Turunen, Sormunen, Jourdan, von Seelen & Buijs, 2017). This means that school health promotion can be used as a mechanism to create change in school communities.

A health-promoting school aims at achieving healthy lifestyles for the total school population by developing supporting environments conducive to the promotion of health. It offers opportunities for and requires commitments to the provision of a safe and health-enhancing social and physical environment (WHO 1995). This approach moves “beyond individual behaviour by also aiming at the whole system changes through strengthening the physical and social environment including interpersonal relationships, school management, policy structures and teaching and learning conditions” (Dadaczynski, Rathman, Hering & Okan, 2020:2). A health-promoting school is a school that implements a structured and systematic plan for the health, wellbeing and the development of social capital of all pupils and teaching and non-teaching staff (Jourdan et al., 2011). These definitions indicate that a health-promoting school cares about the health and wellbeing of its community.

The concept healthy school environment encompasses a focus on the school buildings and all their contents including physical structures, infrastructure, furniture; the site on which a school is located; and the surrounding environment including the water (WHO, 2000). The definition that is suitable for this study for a school’s physical environment is the one that includes buildings (offices, staffrooms and classrooms), grounds and equipment, water and sanitation.

WHO (2021) states that a health-promoting school approach that was adopted by many countries globally was introduced twenty-five years ago. However, the school health promotion initiative is new in South Africa. A draft on guidelines for schools was only published in 2000. For that reason, few researchers focus on SHP in general, instead, many studies are dedicated to a single issue such as, for instance, teenage pregnancy, school nutrition programme, sexuality and sex education, mental health among learners etc. SHP is a whole school approach that intends to deal with a range of issues simultaneously by providing interventions that target multiple problems rather than just dealing with a single issue. Thus, a school health-promoting strategy was adopted to ensure the development of

healthy school policies, supportive learning environments, strong community links, personal skills development and the provision of appropriate education support services (Struthers, 2006).

With regards to the purpose of SHP, Kumar and Preetha (2012) show that health promotion aims to achieve equity in health by reducing differences in current health status while ensuring equal opportunities so that people achieve their fullest health potential. The Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2014) highlights the aim of health promotion in schools as the creation of a healthy environment through the promotion of the general health and wellbeing of both educators and learners. This, according to the Department of Basic Education (2014), can be achieved through addressing key health and social barriers to learning in order to promote effective teaching and learning. Kumar and Preetha (2012) espouse that school health promotion is very important in the school community because it enables people to increase their control and improve their health. For an individual or group to reach a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, such individuals must be able to identify, realize, satisfy needs and adapt to the environment. Therefore, health is a positive concept accentuating the physical capabilities as well as social and positive resources. Good health is an important dimension of quality life and it is a resource for economic, social and personal development. One of the most important rights of every person is to enjoy the highest attainable standards of health. It is for that reason that the focus of this study is on educators and their perception of the impact of school environments on their wellbeing.

Most studies that have been conducted on school health promotion internationally, focus on educator commitment to health promotion (Jourdan, Stirling, McNamara & Pommier, 2011), while in South Africa the emphasis is on the characteristics of a Life Orientation educator (Magano, 2011), resources for teaching Life Orientation (Van Zyl, Webb & Wolvaardt, 2021), professional development of Life Orientation educators (Diale, Pillay & Fritz, 2014). The studies from South Africa are about what educators can provide in terms of the curriculum. There is a dearth of studies on the benefits of school health promotion for educators.

3.3 Essential components of school health promotion

According to the Integrated School Health Policy (2012:12–16) activities that should make up the package that should be provided in all schools include educator and learner participation, community participation, coordination and partnership, and health education and promotion. These essential components of SHP will be discussed in the subsequent sub-sections. Ensuring the school health promotion necessitates that there be policies in place that guide school health promotion; school health programmes; involvement of educators and learners in the implementation of these programmes as well as collaborations and partnerships as discussed below.

3.3.1 Policy framework for school health promotion in South Africa

School health policies are important in safeguarding the allocation of resources and the implementation of school activities and practices, and in highlighting school priorities. In this section only the Integrated School Health Policy will be discussed, this information will suffice for this study. Policies in South Africa are designed at national, provincial, local, and school levels and should be in proportion to each other. In this section, I will also elaborate on policies that are developed at the school level.

The policy that dealt with school health in South Africa was developed in 2003 and called the National School Health Policy Implementation Guidelines. This policy was later replaced by the Integrated School Health Policy (ISHP) which was piloted in schools in 2010 and came into effect in 2012 (Shung-King, Orgili & Slemming, 2013). The ISHP was endorsed by the ministers of health and basic education (Shung-King et al., 2013), this means that it is implemented collaboratively by both government departments, the former providing health services to schools and the latter monitoring the implementation in schools. According to the ISHP (2012:8), the acts that have relevance to the implementation of the ISHP include: the Constitution of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996); the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 as amended (Republic of South Africa, 2005); the National Health Act No. 63 of 2003 (Republic of South Africa, 2003); and the Mental Health Care Act No. 17 of 2002 (Republic of South Africa, 2002).

The ISHP (Integrated School Health Policy, 2012:6) outlines the basic components of a school health programme to be provided in all schools which are: health-related school policies; ensuring a healthy physical, learning environment, emphasizing safe water and sanitation; skills-based health education; and school-based health and nutrition services. The components of school health promotion are just introduced here, but explained in detail in the sections below. These components are four-legged as depicted in the figure below:

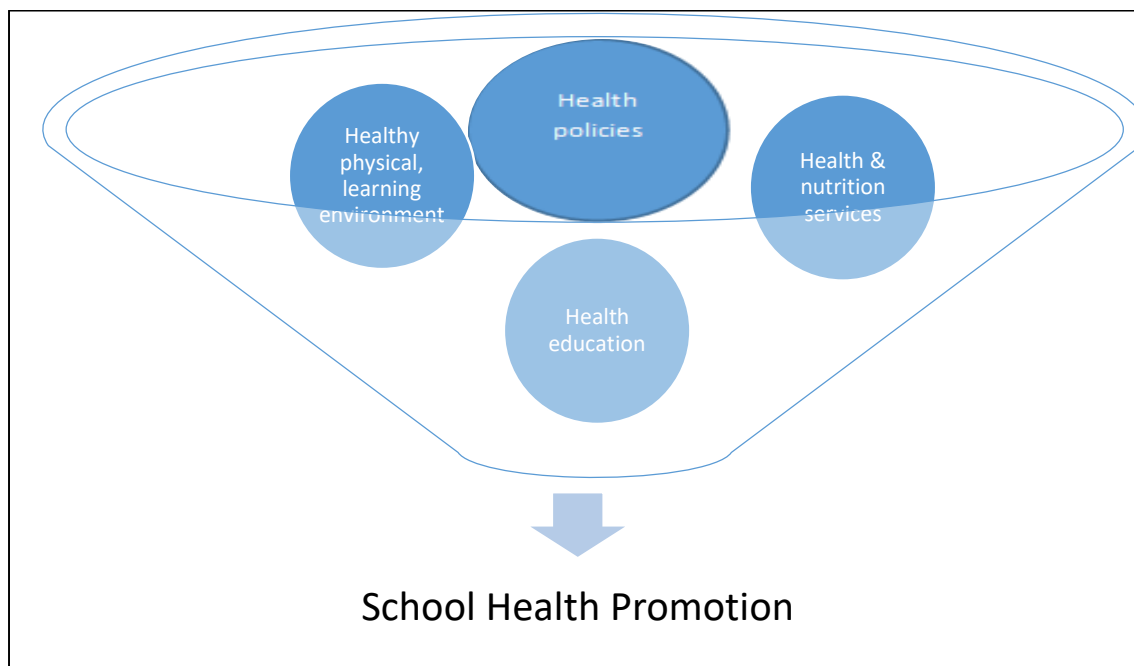


Figure 3-1: Multipronged approach to school health promotion in South Africa.

The figure above shows a holistic approach to school health promotion, which is guided by policies that are developed at different levels. The vision and goal of school health promotion are captured in policies. Policy development has been deemed critical for the implementation of school health promotion initiatives (Samdal & Rowling, 2011) and is important in helping principals provide justification to change practices (McIsaac et al., 2013). However, the role of the principal in enforcing these policies and practices is less clear. A study conducted in Alberta by Roberts, McLeod, Montemurro, Veugelers, Gleddie and Storey (2016), revealed that principals felt uncomfortable acting as enforcers, but understood that this role was necessary in order for the project to be instilled and sustained within the school. It is for that reason that one of the objectives is to investigate the role of principals in promoting healthy school environments. It was necessary to get information from a principal on how he understands his role to be.

The second component entails ensuring a healthy physical, learning environment, emphasising safe water and sanitation. The importance of healthy physical environments is evidenced by a number of studies in South Africa that look at different factors relating to this concept. Some studies focus on safety and security status of schools' physical environments (Xaba, 2006; Van Jaarsveld & Minnaar, 2012; Themane & Oshar, 2014; Bipath, 2017). The main argument in these studies is that school safety refers to a healthy learning environment. Other researchers see a healthy physical environment as a major role player in teaching and learning (Bantwini, 2017; Naude & Meier, 2019; Molaudzi, 2021). These studies

highlight an important factor that first, healthy physical, learning environments are crucial in school settings and second, when they are ensured they may have a positive impact and a ripple effect in all the activities of the school. It is for this reason that this research argues that healthy physical, learning environments can support the wellbeing of educators if safeguarded.

The third component involves the collaboration of schools with governmental departments such as the Education and Health departments to access services. The ISHP (2012) advocates for strong intersectoral collaborations not only with these two departments but also with the Department of Social Development in order for these departments to take joint responsibility for the implementation of the policy. The same policy also campaigns for collaborations and partnerships between schools and their communities. Perhaps, the lesson that can be learnt here is that schools need all the support they can get from their communities in order for them to be effective in their initiatives. Moreover, the core business of schools is focused on educational outcomes, rather than the reduction of health problems. The intersectoral collaborations, community engagement and partnership allow schools to be involved in school health promotion while they also focus on their core activities.

The fourth component pertains to health education which equips learners with skills for healthy living. This is a curriculum-based programme that has been offered in schools even before 1996. A more traditional approach to health education in schools focuses on individual health topics, such as healthy eating, smoking, physical activity, mental health, sexuality etc. In a topic-based approach, health may be viewed at the level of the individual and their relationship to the topic being explored (Young, St Leger & Buijs, 2013:7). While a topic approach in school health education can play an important role in the promotion of health in schools, there are a growing number of health topic programmes and initiatives that are taking account of a whole-school approach. This means that the knowledge and skills learned in one context can be transferred to another context. A systematic review of physical activity and academic performance (Peters, 2012) concluded that participation in physical activity is positively related to performance in other subjects studied by children. In that case, the focus of health education in the new curriculum is not only on knowledge about health issues but also on equipping learners with skills that will enable them to live healthy lifestyles.

Though the ISHP that is discussed here is developed at a national level, the Department of Education allows schools to come up with their own policies based on the national policies. This is a bottom-up approach that has also been used in many instances to introduce the concept of HPS using a single health issue of local relevance (Macnab & Kasangaki, 2012). Such an approach in South African schools has allowed for the implementation of adopt-a-learner programmes, gardening projects, sanitary pads programmes etc. Macnab and Kasangaki (2012) also maintain that with the successful implementation of a programme to address an identified issue, schools are intended to take ownership of their programme,

identify additional health topics of relevance to them and expand their HPS activities. A study by Kwatubana and Ebrahim (2019) that investigated psychosocial support provision for learners from child-headed households found that the programme of informal adoption of orphans by educators seemed to be working well. The authors offer four reasons for their success: adoption of a learner or learners was voluntary; it was the brainchild of the educators themselves, they owned it; they were involved in decisions on how it operates; and that they knew what they had to do. This was an issue that the schools in the study were battling with, of which they came up with a strategy to deal with it. What can be learnt from such findings is that school-based policies and programmes have a role to play in school health promotion. This also means that school-based policies have the potential to succeed if the implementers are motivated. Consequently, all members of the school community benefit from the implementation of school-based policies.

3.3.2 Involvement of educators and learners in SHP

The involvement of educators and learners in the implementation of school health programmes is endorsed by the ISHP (2012) and the World Health Organisation (1986). Educators are fundamental to the success of developing a health-promoting school. The pivotal role of educators in shaping and improving the health-promoting school concept in their school communities is one of the drivers for health-promoting schools in many countries (St Leger, 2000).

In schools, committees that are responsible for the implementation of programmes are formed. Examples of such committees are school safety and school health committees. Role players in these committees comprise internal stakeholders and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders in the case of a safety committee include learners, educators and members of the school governing body. External members are usually made of the South African Police Service (SAPS), the community policing forum, the social worker and the ward councillor. The involvement of the external stakeholders is to strengthen the school committees as they bring a wealth of expertise and skills enabling effectiveness in the implementation of programmes. However, the extent of the involvement of external stakeholders in school committees depends on their relationship with the principal of the school or with the chairpersons of such committees. Their level of contribution is subject to the level of involvement.

In many schools in South Africa, the school health committee is constituted to deal with all issues related to school health. Its chairperson is an educator or a member of the SMT. It comprises of a school nurse and educators who teach Life Skills and Life Orientation, a social worker and any educators who have an interest in the committee. Thus, most members of health committees are educators. Educators have to accept and understand their roles in the implementation of health programmes in order for them to be effective. Educators' acceptance of a programme according to Gugglberger and Dür (2011) and

Ingemarson, Rubenson, Bodin and Guldbrandsson (2014) is crucial to its integration into the everyday core business of a school, which in turn makes positive health-related change more likely. Moreover, educators can be effective in executing their duties if they have the required knowledge and understanding of school health policies and the aims of such policies. Their understanding of policies can enable them to play a strategic role in the implementation of SHP (Obembe, Osungbade, and Ademokun, 2016). Obembe et. al. (2016) opine that when educators are aware of and involved in the implementation of school health programmes in schools, the success and effectiveness of the school health programme may be guaranteed.

Ofili, Usiholo, and Oronsaye (2009) cited by Obembe et al. (2016) argue that the role of educators especially in sub-Saharan Africa is characterised by some limitations regarding the implementation of school programmes which is a serious concern. The involvement and provision of leadership by educators in health promotion has always been classroom-based (Kwatubana, 2018). The multipronged approach to school health promotion means that educators will become more proactive outside the classroom. The role of principals in this regard according to Kwatubana (2018), can be signalling support for educators leading health committees and revealing caring leadership, in order to influence the programme implementation positively.

The involvement of learners in school health promotion is as crucial as that of educators. A specific case study by Paulus (2012) on learners' participation concluded that, if given sufficient guidance, children can act as agents of health-promoting changes. The main goal of participation was construed as the development of learners' capacities to actualize their ideas in order for them to be positive about their involvement (Paulus, 2012). Another systematic review by Griebler, Rojatz, Simovska and Forster (2017) that focused on the effects of learner participation in school health promotion measures showed personal effects on learners referring to increased satisfaction, motivation and ownership, an increase in skills, competencies and knowledge, personal development, health-related effects and influence on their perspective.

Nevertheless, the benefits of involvement in school health promotion activities depend on the level of involvement. Learners that are only involved through cleaning campaigns, tree planting, garden projects etc. as they merely do what they are told to may not benefit much. The monitoring of these activities is delegated to educators. Accordingly, learners are not involved in the planning and monitoring of the initiatives, but only in their execution. It is a concern that in schools in South Africa peer-led health programmes are scarce and only focus on peer education. It can be argued that in such cases there is no real involvement of learners in SHP, they are merely, just recipients of health programmes (Macnab & Kasangaki, 2012). Although peer education interventions in schools are an acceptable model of health

education (Al-Iryan, Basaleem, Al-Sakkaf, Kok & Van den Borne, 2013) there is a need to extend such interventions to accommodate activities outside the classroom.

3.3.3 Collaborations and partnerships

According to the World Health Organization (2017) and ISHP (2012), schools should collaborate with external organisations through building alliances and networking with their communities to strengthen capabilities for undertaking relevant health activities thus increasing HPS programmes. The perspective taken here reflects that the school, while it is clearly environment conducive to promoting the health of its community, is not the only one responsible for carrying out this mission. Mattesich and Monsey (1992) cited by Green and Johnson (2015:1) refer to collaboration as “a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organisations to achieve common goals”. Collaboration occurs when two or more entities work together to produce the intended and shared results. Collaborations are indicated as inevitably linked to SHP (Leurs, Mur-Veeman, Van der Sar, Schaalma & de Vries, 2008). Numans, Van Regenmortel and Schalk (2019) refer to a partnership as an agreement to do something together that will benefit all involved, bringing results that could not be achieved by a single partner operating alone, and reducing duplication of efforts. A successful partnership uses resources at its disposal to promote innovation and it is characterized by a strong commitment from each partner.

Bagarette (2014:405) argues that community members bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to school which can be used to the advancement of the school. In a study by Kwatubana (2014) some school community members that were involved in community health projects in their communities, were conversant with health policies. It would therefore be unwise to ignore the vast experiences of community members central to successful health promotion initiatives at schools.

Working in collaboration is not an easy task and requires the commitment of all role-players involved. Even the most dedicated people find it difficult to lead collaborations that support school health programmes. The groups in collaborations are usually diverse and leading such a group might be problematic. One of the challenges in leading these groups is not having enough know-how to implement and develop partnerships with community members (Turunen et al., 2010). Cikaliuk (2011) opines that obstacles hindering effective inter-organisational alliances include mindsets, operations and inability to provide leadership. In African countries and South Africa in particular, lack of participation and involvement in school activities is attributed to lack of empowerment of the community members (Overy, 2010: 54; Xaba, 2015: 204; Kwatubana & Makhalemele, 2015). A study by Munje and Ncube (2018) supports that educators working in schools that serve disadvantaged communities are more likely to have a negative perception of parental involvement. They regard parental involvement as less

encouraging and less rewarding in terms of advancing children's learning thereby, ignoring the potentials of parents to supervise learners and partake in school activities (McDowall & Schaughency, 2017).

A study by Kwatubana and Makhalemele (2015:321) reveals that the involvement of parents in the National School Nutrition Programme becomes a trigger that motivates some to become more involved in school activities in general. The exposure to the school system as a whole while serving in the National School Nutrition Programme can motivate parents to explore and be involved in other school activities and/or in the children's well-fare. This could mean that community members can be involved in school programmes that they have an interest in, this could be a gateway to other programmes in the school. This involvement is capable of reinforcing home-school relationships if, according to Okeke (2014:7), it is promoted and popularised within the school community. In addition, a study conducted by Dias, Vieira, da Silva, Vaconcelos and Machado (2016) highlighted the importance of organisational skills and the ability to improve structures as necessary competencies for the development of inter-professional collaborations in school health promotion. Another strategy includes building a healthy relationship with local community structures, for example, health-promoting schools can work in collaboration with drop-in centres to provide meals to vulnerable and orphaned learners after school. As a result, drop-in centres are better positioned, through multi-sectoral collaboration, to support the physiological needs (in the form of food, clothing, medical care, and school supplies), and give age-appropriate guidance and assistance to this category of children (Valk & Kratoviš, 2021).

According to Kwatubana et. al. (2021), collaborations in South African schools occur in three tiers. The next three sub-sections are elaborating on the levels of collaborations.

3.3.3.1 Collaborations with government departments

This type of collaboration occurs at a national level and is cascaded to school levels. The inter-departmental collaborations that will be discussed here are those that are formed between the Department of Education and the police services; and the Department of Health and the Social Development. This notion is supported by the Department of Health and Department of Basic Education (2012:17) that indicates that implementing the ISHP requires a commitment to close collaboration between all role players, with the Department of Health, Department of Basic Education and the Department of Social Development as well taking joint responsibility for ensuring that the ISHP is comprehensive and sustainable. The principal's role is that of affirming that collaborations with the professionals providing services are as strong as those at national levels in order for them to benefit the poorest learner (Kwatubana et al. 2021).

School principals should work in partnership with the South African Police Service to deal with safety issues. Schools are linked to local police stations who give them support on safety matters. Some safety issues addressed by the South African Police include providing awareness to learners about the negative impact of using illegal drugs, crime and substance abuse. Through this awareness, learners are afforded relevant information about the dangers of engaging in criminal activities (Collett, 2013).

Kwatubana et. al. (2021) cited collaborations with different government departments as one of the roles of principals at the school level. One example is the involvement of school nurses from the Department of Health who frequently visit the school to inform learners about healthy behaviours and provide other health services including vaccination. The involvement of health professionals in schools is documented in school health policies, of which the latest is the Integrated School Health Policy (2012).

In addition, Kwatubana et. al. (2021) espoused that partnership with the Department of Social Development is enhanced by providing opportunities for social workers to visit the school to counsel learners who are experiencing hardships, such as child abuse, the sudden death of parents, etc.

3.3.3.2 Collaborations with Non-Governmental Organisations

School principals can strengthen school health promotion by developing a healthy collaborative relationship with local business entities. As a result of this relationship, school principals can access resources for the school. For example, asking for donations from business partners to build sports fields that would enable learners and educators to live active lives, may promote wellbeing. Through collaboration, schools can address some of the challenges they are faced with that lead to unhealthy school environments. Kwatubana (2019:71) argues that “as in many developing countries, the implementation of school health programmes in South Africa is challenged by the lack of finances and resources”. For that reason, collaborations between schools and their communities are imperative for strengthening and sustaining school health programmes.

There are also collaborations at the national and school level with Non-Governmental Organisations. There is a consensus that implementation of the education vision and priorities set out in the National Development Plan requires a strong and active NGO sector (Volmink & van der Elst, 2017). According to Kwatubana (2019:72), the NGO becomes the vehicle for community participation in school policy implementation, advocating for social change. Schools can draw on the expertise of the NGOs that are already working with the Department of Education in school improvement, as well as those that are in the vicinity of the schools that have the potential to make contributions. Examples of such NGOs include Soul Buddies, Love Life, Red Cross etc.

The leadership that has to be provided in such collaborations is operational: providing support, organizing resources and acting as liaising officers between the health professionals and parents of learners who are beneficiaries of the interventions (Kwatubana, 2019:72).

3.3.3.3 Collaborations with Community members in the vicinity of schools

The last tier pertains to collaborations with parents, community members, local business members and local companies. School–community partnerships play a salient role in successful schools, by providing support and resources to meet staff, family, and learners needs that go beyond what is typically available through the school. Willems and Gonzalez-DeHass (2012) define school-community partnerships as meaningful relationships with community members, organisations, and businesses that are committed to working in cooperating with a shared responsibility to advance the development of learners’ intellectual, social, and emotional wellbeing. This collaboration enhances respectful alliances among educators, families, and community groups that value relationship building, dialogue, and power-sharing as part of a socially just and democratic school (Auerbach, 2010:729).

3.3.4 School health programmes

The school that is regarded as health-promoting, implement programmes that are characterised by the reinforcement of policies and practices in the school environment as well as the parent community. World Health Organisation cited by Integrated School Health Policy (2012:6) defines a school health programme as “a combination of services ensuring the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners to maximise their learning capabilities.” Moronkola (2003) cited in Obembe et. al. (2016) explain a school health programme as the whole project and activities that a school engages in, with the intent to protect and promote health and development for the school community. Sinnott (2006) accentuates that school health promotion programmes are very significant as they ameliorate knowledge, proficiencies and health positions which consequently lead to improved learner outcomes.

There are a number of health-related programmes that are implemented in schools in South Africa. These programmes can be divided into two categories: (a) interventions (b) those that intend to equip recipients with skills and knowledge. In the section below an intervention programme and two curriculum-based programmes will be discussed. These are not the only programmes that are executed in schools for learners, however, this information will suffice for this study. Some of these programmes that are intended for learners benefit educators indirectly in the form of equipping them with knowledge and skills that they can use to enhance their wellbeing.

3.3.4.1 Intervention programme for learners

- **National School Nutrition Programme**

The National School Nutrition Programme is the government programme that provides one nutritious meal to all learners in poorer primary and secondary schools (Department of Basic Education, 2020). According to Kwatubana (2017), the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) was put to inception to provide nutritious meals to learners from impoverished backgrounds. The beneficiaries of this programme are learners in quintiles 1, 2 and 3 primary and secondary schools (Govender & Subban, 2020). According to White and Van Dyk (2019), all South African public ordinary schools are categorized into five groups, called quintiles, mainly for purposes of the allocation of financial resources. Quintile one school is the poorest, residing in poor communities, while quintile five is the least poor residing in affluent communities. Therefore, schools classified in quintiles 1, 2 and 3 are regarded as poor and are not expected to charge school fees (White & Van Dyk 2019). Thus, learners benefiting from the NSNP are those from impoverished backgrounds who are regarded as poor.

Child Poverty is prevalent in South Africa. This is consistent with the study by Govender and Subban (2020) who shows that child poverty is at its highest level in the Eastern Cape Province (78%). KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo Provinces closely follow at 75 percent and 74 percent, respectively. According to Statistics South Africa (South Africa, 2020), 62,1 percent of children in South Africa are multidimensional poor. The term multidimensional poverty refers to an income-based poverty index that measures multiple deprivations alongside other relevant factors to determine and classify poverty (South Africa, 2020). The multidimensional approach to child poverty measures goods and services that are fundamental for their full development and essential for the fulfilment of their rights.

A report by UNICEF (2020) shows that Black African children (68,3%) present the highest percentage of multidimensional poverty index as compared to their peers from other population groups. Multidimensional poverty is highly prevalent amongst double orphans (77,3%) and paternal orphans (75,0%) as opposed to non-orphans and maternal orphans. More than twice as many children living in rural areas (88,4%) face multidimensional poverty compared to children in urban areas (41,3%). The highest multidimensional poverty rates are found amongst children residing in Limpopo (82,8%) and Eastern Cape (78,7%). Gauteng and Western Cape, on the other hand, are better off with respectively 33,6 percent and 37,1 percent of children being multidimensional poor. Children living in non-metropolitan municipalities (73,7%) show much higher multidimensional poverty rates than children in metropolitan municipalities (39,6%) (UNICEF, 2020). Most of these children are beneficiaries of the NSNP and child support grants offered by the Department of Social Development. These statistics paint a bleak picture when compared to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

countries. The most recent figures of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for 2014 attest that child poverty averaged 13.1 percent across OECD countries and was below 5 percent in only two of them, namely Denmark and Finland (OECD, 2019).

As a result of the above realities, the Department of Education is implementing the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). The beneficiaries of this programme are learners in poverty-stricken primary and secondary schools. Nationally, the NSNP is feeding over 9 million learners nutritious meals every day. The NSNP is funded by a conditional grant which moved from the budget of R5,5 billion in 2014/2015 to R7 billion in the 2020/2021 financial year (Limpopo Department of Education, 2021). In Limpopo alone, more than 1,6 million learners in more than 3 800 Limpopo public schools benefit from the feeding programme with Sekhukhune District registering 353 328 learners who take advantage of the provision of the NSNP (Limpopo Department of Education, 2021).

Schools play an important role in the implementation of the NSNP programme (Qila & Tyilo, 2014) as well as developing and implementing a school nutrition policy that governs the execution of the NSNP programme. In addition, educators are involved in the election of the NSNP committee that oversees all issues pertaining to the smooth running of the programme of which they are part. The educator who is the chairperson of the NSNP is appointed by the school principal to monitor the voluntary food handlers in performing their duties as expected. The role of the NSNP educator is to provide support to the food handlers such as training them to use correct measurements when preparing food. The rest of the educators assist with monitoring the distribution of cooked food to learners.

3.3.4.2 Educational programmes for learners

- **Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention and Management Programme**

The Department of Basic Education presently implements an alcohol and drug prevention and management programme through the integration into the Life Orientation and Life Skills subjects. This is supported by co-curricular activities implemented through the peer education programme. Peer education is an intervention strategy that involves training and support of members of a given group to bring about change among members of the same group (Department of Basic Education, 2014). The main role player in the implementation of a peer education programme is the peer mentor (usually an LO educator) who liaise with the School-Based Support Team. The peer mentor coordinates the selection of peer educators, supervise and support their work as well as communicate with the school management team with matters pertaining to the programme. In addition, the peer mentor makes referrals to external agencies and supervise the collection of data on programme implementation (Department of Basic Education, 2014).

- **HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme**

The Department of Basic Education, through the National Policy on HIV and AIDS for Learners and Educators in Schools (South Africa, 1999), integrates HIV and AIDS as well as important life skills into the schools' curricula as a strategy to prevent and mitigate the spreading of the infection and the provision of the necessary support and care for those infected and affected with this virus.

According to the Joint UN Programme on HIV/Aids UNAIDS (2019), South Africa has the biggest and most high-profile HIV epidemic in the world, with an estimated 7.7 million people living with HIV in 2018. As a result, South Africa accounts for a third of all new HIV infections in Southern Africa. In 2018, there were 240,000 new HIV infections and 71,000 South Africans died from AIDS-related illnesses. UNAIDS (2019) further indicates that in 2018 it was estimated that about 260,000 children (aged 0 to 14) were living with HIV in South Africa, 63 percent of whom were on treatment. However, new infections have declined among South African children, from 28,000 in 2010 to 14,000 in 2018. The decline is largely due to the success of the prevention of mother-to-child transmission programmes. Children are also affected by HIV through the loss of family members. In South Africa, more than 1.2 million children and adolescents (ages 0-17) have been orphaned by HIV and AIDS. Orphans are particularly vulnerable to HIV because of economic and social insecurities (a) they are often at risk of being forced into sex, (b) have sex in exchange for support, and (c) typically become sexually active earlier than other children (UNICEF, 2017). Considering these statistics and the impact of HIV on families in South Africa the continued inclusion of the topics on HIV and AIDS and sexuality are justified.

HIV and AIDS Education is mainly included in the Life Orientation in Grades eight to twelve (secondary schools) and Life Skills in grades R to 6 (primary schools) (Department of Basic Education, 2013). Among other topics, learners are taught sexual and reproductive health. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) was instituted as part of the Life Orientation Curriculum in 2000. No new CSE content has been added to the curriculum but its implementation necessitated (a) a review of the LO curriculum (b) the review of Learner Teacher Support Material for LO curriculum and (c) the review of educator training for LO. The above reviews led to the advancement of scripted lesson plans, and the development of state-owned LO textbooks (Department of Basic Education, 2012). The lessons are presented through Learner Teacher Support Materials which are National Curriculum Statement and Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements compliant (Department of Basic Education, 2012). Since 2013 several CSE programmes have been implemented by the Department of Basic Education through co-curricular programmes such as (a) Keeping Girls in Schools (b) Breaking the Silence; Determined, Resilient, Empowered, Aids-Free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) and She Conquers.

A strong focus of the above-mentioned educational programmes is on the needs of learners than those of educators. However, as mentioned above, there is an indirect benefit to educators in the programmes. There is a need for schools to operate as caring and supportive environments that foster the wellbeing of the whole school community (Kwatubana, 2017).

The next subsection provides information on the Employment Assistance Programme which is the only programme that could be found that focuses directly on the wellbeing of educators.

3.3.4.3 Employee Assistance Programme

There are very few programmes in schools that educators can benefit directly from. The one that is worth mentioning here is the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Pollack, Austin and Grisso (2010) refer to an EAP as a work-based intervention programme designed to help employees in resolving personal problems that may have been affecting their performance. Attridge (2009) defines EAPs as employer-sponsored programs designed to alleviate and assist in eliminating a variety of workplace problems. The EAP provides screening, assessments, brief interventions and outpatient counselling for workers with mental health and addiction problems (Attridge, 2009). Traditionally, EAPs assisted workers with issues such as alcohol or substance misuse. However, of late, it covers a variety of issues such as children or elderly care, relationship challenges, financial or legal problems, wellness matters and traumatic events including workplace violence (Attridge, 2009).

According to Pollack et al. (2010), EAPs were originally established in the 1940s with an intention of addressing alcohol abuse and its impact on the workplace. These early EAPs, helped companies to identify troubled employees and support them through the process of recovery and returning to work (Trice & Schonbrunn, 2003). However, as a result of challenges in education, with staff experiencing alcohol and addiction problems and the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in South Africa, the concept of EAP entered the education discourse. Staff members who were experiencing such problems were referred to personnel responsible for the implementation of the EAP in the district office to receive counselling or referred to other health professionals.

Despite the fact that there are no clear policies on the implementation of the EAPs for educators, the modus operandi followed involved the identification of troubled educators by the principals. The first step was for the principal to meet with the troubled educator to discuss issues affecting their work lives. If the educators agree, the second step is to refer them to the wellness section of the Department of Education in the district office. The third step is for the district to organize a rehabilitation facility to assist them to receive counselling so that they be rehabilitated back to work. This process indicates challenges in the way in which EAPs are implemented which include that (a) it takes more time for educators to be referred

to the district as some principals are sceptical to discuss challenges facing educators, (b) referred educators are not replaced leading to the remaining educators sharing their workload, (c) if a number of educators are referred at a time, there might be several classes that are left unattended. In that case, as much as the programme assists the troubled educator, it does not provide support to schools during the times when the affected educator is attending sessions. Additionally, there is a lack of privacy and confidentiality. When the educator is referred to the district other educators in the school would know, this makes educators to be reluctant to access such resources, for the fear of being labelled as out of control of their situations. To that end, there is a need for the reinforcement of the EAP programme. There are several challenges that educators are faced with since its inception.

As this is the only programme that is meant to assist and provide support to employees in education seems not to be working well, educators are left with few options at their disposal in terms of enhancing their wellbeing.

3.4 The role of school principals in health promotion

The general roles and responsibilities of school principals have been outlined in the policy on the South African Standards for Principalship (South Africa, 2016). One of the roles of school principals that focus on school health promotion is the creation of a safe and secure school environment. For that reason, school principals have a responsibility of ensuring that the school, human, and other resources are organized and managed in a way that would provide a safe, effective and invigorating environment (South Africa, 2016). The Integrated School Health Policy (Department of Health and Department of Basic Education, 2012) indicates that the implementation of this policy is the prerogative of the School-Based Support Team (SBST) under the supervision of the school principal. Principals are assigned the responsibility of providing guidance in the performance of the tasks and mobilizing the community to ensure that all components of the integrated school health package are provided. To that end, the two policies mentioned here place school principals in South Africa at the forefront with regards to SHP.

In addition, among a wide range of components of SHP, school leaders are increasingly identified as gatekeepers for the initiation and sustainability of standardized and complex interventions on SHP (Dadaczynski et al., 2020:2). For instance, in a study conducted in Australia, Adamowitsch et al. (2017) reported that school principals were mostly the driving force in initiating school health promotion and in deciding on concrete health-promoting activities. Evidence from Norwegian Network on health-promoting schools suggests that a positive attitude of a school leader towards SHP was perceived as key for running the programme at schools and for sustaining it over time (Tjomsland, Larsen, Viig & Wold, 2009). However, Turunen et al. (2017) purport that school managers, persons who have the main administrative responsibility for the schools, are a relatively rare studied group related to school health promotion;

though they have a great influence on priority areas performed in schools. This research intends to narrow this gap by adding information on the role of principals in promoting healthy school environments for enhanced educator wellbeing.

The roles that a principal has to play in promoting healthy school environments that enhance the wellbeing of educators are discussed in the sub-sections below. The six roles discussed below are not exhaustive, but sufficient for this study. The first role pertains to vision building and sharing.

3.4.1 Vision building and vision sharing

According to the Glossary of Education Reform (2015), the term vision refers to a public declaration used by the school to describe what the school wants to achieve in future. It is the ideals, core values and long-term objectives that the school desires its community to be capable of doing or of achieving either in the short, medium or long term. The school vision has to do with the end-goals of what the school want to achieve in the future. Having a vision of the school is very important as it provides a sense of purpose and direction because (a) it helps the school to define its short and long term goals and (b) guide the decisions that the school has to take along the way (Mombourquette, 2017). Moreover, it would be difficult for a principal to provide guidance on matters pertaining to the SHP without a clear vision.

According to the South African Standards for Principalship (South Africa, 2016:14), one of the roles of the school principal is “to work with all members of the school community to ensure that the vision of the school is translated into agreed goals and operational plans designed to promote and sustain on-going school improvement”. Mombourquette (2017) concurs adding that a good school vision is formulated from a collaborative and inclusive development process that includes educators, learners, parents and the entire school community. These definitions imply that the collaborators are involved from the formulation of a vision through to the implementation of operational plans, monitoring and evaluation. The vision should be communicated to all members of the organisation. The shared vision should also be included in all school-based policies on health promotion such as school health policy, safety policy and the HIV/AIDS policy etc.

Griffin and Green (2013) accentuate that building a successful vision requires a principal who is visionary, influential with high conviction so that the intended goals can be achieved. Visionary leadership is a type of leadership that aims to give meaning to work and efforts done together by members of the organisation giving direction and meaning to work and efforts done according to a clear vision (Windschitl et al., 2019). Van der Voet and Steijn (2021:1277) define “visionary leadership as a (verbal) future image of a collective with the intention to persuade others to contribute to the realization of that future”.

Visionary leaders shape their actions and initiate transformation to reach a specific goal (Van Jaarsveld, Mentz & Van Der Walt, 2016).

Visionary leadership is important in the school setting because it:

- provides followers with a sense of identity and purpose (Venus, Stam & van Knippenberg, 2019);
- provides an opportunity for the organisation to grow and to meet the needs of its members (van der Voet & Steijn, 2021);
- helps in building team cohesion which provides interpersonal attraction and group pride (Salas, Grossman, Hughes, & Coultas, 2015); and
- provides a conducive environment for team members to experiment, cooperate and exchange ideas (Morgeson, DeRue & Karam, 2010).

Shared vision refers to a clear and common picture of a desired future state that members of an organisation identify with (Hoe, 2007). Shared vision refers to an image that a group of people hold in common. According to Foster and Chilton (2017), the following are the benefits of a shared vision:

- It ensures that only relevant and pertinent knowledge is acquired and thereby disseminated within the organisation to achieve the business goals.
- It enables employees throughout the organisation to make decisions that are synergistic with the organisation's business outcomes.
- It helps to inspire employees with compelling, consistent, clear pictures of what they want.

The second role is about the provision of management and leadership in the implementation of programmes.

3.4.2 Role in implementation of SHP programmes

School principals have a responsibility of ensuring that school health promotion programmes are implemented (Darlington et.al. 2018). The study conducted by Kwatubana et.al. (2021) revealed that the participants in their research regarded their role as aligned more with management. Jones and George (2018:5) define management as “the planning, organizing, leading, and controlling of human and other resources to achieve organizational goals efficiently and effectively.” Gulati, Mayo and Nohrian (2017:8) refer to management as “the act of working with and through a group of people to accomplish a desired goal or objective in an efficient and effective manner”. Management is not only about managerial tasks

but also about people and achievement of goals. A study conducted by Johnson and Lazarus (2003) on building health-promoting and inclusive schools in South Africa found that good leadership and management are important for successful school-based interventions.

3.4.2.1 Managerial roles in school health promotion

In managing school health promotion, the following managerial tasks are applied, namely, planning, organising, delegation and monitoring. Bateman and Snell (2013) define planning as a process of making decisions about the activities to be pursued to achieve the goals of the organisations. School principals should plan how school health promotion programmes should be implemented. During planning, the involvement of the school health committee is very imperative. They should first analyse the school environment and use the analysis to set goals, activities and objectives (Lloyd & Aho, 2020).

The planning process is followed by organising. Bateman and snell (2013) cited by Lloyd and Aho (2020:12) refer to organizing as “a process of assembling and assigning the human, financial, physical, informational, and other resources needed to achieve goals”. In this study, organizing entails the distribution of resources and delegation of tasks to educators with the intention of meeting the goals of the organization. In organizing, human resources are identified that can assist in pursuing the set goals.

Serrat (2017:740) refers to delegation as “the grant of authority by one party to another for an agreed purpose”. According to Conti (2017), leaders need to delegate certain responsibilities to team members as they cannot execute all the duties on their own. For example, the school principal can delegate responsibilities to educators who are serving as members of the school health committee so that health-related challenges at the school are addressed. There are certain benefits associated with delegation such as building trust, empowering team members, as well as serving as a means of professional development (Conti, 2017).

Another role of the principal in the implementation of school health is monitoring how the assigned educators roll out the health promotion programme. Kariuki (2014) defines monitoring as a continuous assessment of the function of project activities in the context of implementation schedules and the use of project inputs. Similarly, the World Bank (2011) refers to monitoring as a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide for the management and primary stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention, with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. There is a common denominator between the two definitions as they all see monitoring as a continuous function that has to take place on a day-to-day basis. Even though principals assign responsibility to educators to implement health programmes, the responsibility of monitoring the implementation process lies with the principal.

Therefore, for the school health programmes to be successful, school principals should see to it that they are closely monitored (Darlington et.al. 2018).

Cambalikova and Misun (2017:1) define control as “a process through which managers ensure that resources are procured and used efficiently and effectively to meet the goals of the organization”. Sihag and Rijdsdijk (2019:91) refer to control as “any process through which controllers motivate and direct controlees to behave in ways that are aligned with the controllers’ objectives. Cardinal, Kreutzer and Miller (2017) assert that organizational control increases the performance of the organization. In controlling, school principals assign responsibilities to educators serving in the school health committee and then motivate and guide their actions to enable them to achieve the desired results. Successful control of members of the school health committee will result in the successful implementation of school health promotion programmes.

3.4.2.2 Leadership roles in school health promotion

School principals play a leadership role in the implementation of school health promotion programmes. Kesting, Ulhøi, Song, and Niu (2016) define leadership as a process by which a leader motivates or influences others to achieve organizational goals. Malak and Azmat (2019:25) refer to leadership as a “process in which a person or persons inspire(s) and motivate(s) the people to meet the shared goals or objectives which may be changed or added as per the needs and challenges”. In this study, leadership refers to the process by which a leader influences educators to attain the goals of the school. Dadaczynski and Paulus (2015) state that school principals play a decisive role in influencing school health programmes and the executors of such programmes. Lucas and Baxter (2011) define influence as compelling behaviour change without the threat of punishment or promise of reward as a result of the respect and esteem in which one is held by others. Leadership is associated with influencing subordinates towards achieving certain goals. According to Hogg (2010), leaders are agents of influence in that influence and leadership are tightly intertwined. When people are influenced it is often because of effective leadership. For school principals to influence educators to be effective in their health-promotion related tasks, they should show interest in the implementation of school health programmes and inculcate within the educators the zeal to implement them. Through the influence of the school principal, educators will also develop an interest in ensuring that the programmes become a success.

For a school health promotion programme to succeed, there should be a willingness on the part of the school principal to turn their schools into health-promoting ones. Griffin and Green (2013) add that schools should be transformed into health promotion sites. This is also in line with Roberts et.al. (2016) assertion that school principals play a pivotal role in the success of the programme as they are responsible for the creation of a healthy school environment.

In addition, principals have to support and communicate the importance of the programme to others and to take ownership of it. Providing support is one of the key roles of school principals. For a health promotion programme to succeed adequate support must be provided to those who implement it. According to Griffin and Green (2013), one kind of support that should be provided to educators by the school principals is emotional support. In rolling out the school health programmes, educators encounter negative feelings that reduce their motivational levels. It is therefore imperative to give educators support so that they can continue to implement the programme. School principals have to provide the necessary resources that would assist in rolling out the programme (Dadaczynski & Paulus, 2015). Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) argue that the principal is likely to have an impact on a health promotion programme if the educators are actively supported by the development of capacity and through the principal's commitment.

The third role is about modelling the behaviour that principals would like their subordinates to emulate.

3.4.3 Modelling health promotion leadership

According to Jiménez, Winkler and Dunkl (2017), modelling health promotion leadership is one of the roles of the school principal in promoting school health. Modelling refers to doing what the leader expect from followers (Yao & Wildy, 2021). If principals expect staff members to live according to the values of school health promotion, they should model that behaviour by aligning their behaviour per the objectives of the school. This will enable educators under their supervision to emulate their behaviour and actions.

Horsburgh and Ippolito (2018:1) opine that in modelling, “people tend to identify individuals who hold social position to which they themselves aspire”. They, therefore, pay special attention to the role model as they hold a belief that they can learn skills and accepted behaviour (Gibson, 2004). Through observing the behaviour of a role model, members of the school community can learn a variety of skills, behaviours and ways of thinking (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018). It is therefore imperative for school principals to model health promotion leadership so that members of the school community can observe such behaviour leading to the adoption of health promotion behaviour in the school.

Jiménez et al. (2017) espouse that most people in the organisation look at the behaviour of their leaders to determine how to behave as they usually copy the behaviour of a higher status person, the principal. If the principal model the behaviour that is consistent with the vision and mission of the school, the same may happen to the subordinates. Thus, if the principal displays health-promoting leadership, the same will happen to the subordinates (Jiménez et.al., 2017).

The fourth role pertains to the provision of health-promoting leadership.

3.4.4 Principals as health-promoting leaders

Skarholt, Blix, Sandsund, Thale and Andersen, (2016) refer to health-promoting leadership as a democratic and supportive leadership style, where leaders seek to motivate and inspire their employees. Health-promoting leadership is a type of leadership that cares about employees' health and wellbeing (Yao, Li & Wildy, 2021). Jiménez, Winkler, and Bregenzer (2017) see health-promoting leadership as a combination of different leadership behaviours that aim to design a healthy workplace for the employees. Bregenzer, Milfelner, Žižek, and Jiménez (2020) assert that health-promoting leaders can influence the health of employees directly or indirectly. Regarding the former, leaders can influence educators by encouraging them to participate in health promotion activities. Indirectly, leaders can support healthy working environments by creating working conditions that promote healthy workplaces. Pertaining to the latter, the school principal and the SGB have to work in collaboration to access resources that will assist in enhancing the wellbeing of educators.

According to Dunkl, Jiménez, Žežek, Milfelner and Wolfgang (2015), health-promoting leaders combine a variety of leadership styles and behaviours to design healthy workplaces. For example, transforming a school into a health promotion site requires a transformational leader who can change the behaviours of staff members and encourage them to exceed expectations. A transformational leader is defined as a leader who transforms his followers, inspires them, builds trust, encourages them, admires their innovative ideas, and develops them (Khan, Rehmat, Butt, Farooqi & Asim, 2020). This can be achieved by influencing, inspiring and motivating staff members (Chun, Cho & Sosik, 2016).

A healthy workplace enables employees to gain social wellbeing as well as a positive relationship with others (Grawitch, Gottschalk & Munz, 2006). An individuals' wellbeing is dependent on a warm, rewarding and trustworthy relationship with others as well as understanding the giving and receiving components of human relationships (Eriksson, Orvik, Strandmark, Nordstein & Torp, 2017). Žižek, Mulej, and Cancer (2017) opine that health-promoting leaders can develop such relationships through: Involving employees in decision making; preparing the work culture based on partnership; formulating policies and practices that promote employee relations; providing relevant information to employees and preparing a suitable strategy to communicate it and organizing work tasks processes in line with a health-orientated approach.

The fifth role relates to the leadership and management of collaborations and partnerships.

3.4.5 Expedition of collaborations and partnerships

One of the roles of school principals, as stipulated in the Policy for South African Standards for Principalship (South Africa, 2016:21), is “to build and maintain collaborative relationships and partnerships with other agencies and potential resource providers in the community”. Successful health promotion in schools depends on the collaborative effort between different group partners. According to Kitchen, Berry and Russell (2019), collaboration is defined as a joint interaction in the group in all activities that are needed to perform a shared task. It is the process of working together to achieve a common goal. Castañer and Oliveira (2020:966) define “collaboration as a cooperative, inter-organisational relationship that is negotiated in an ongoing communicative process,” Collaborations are characterized by cooperation, trust, respect and achievement of common goals.

Davis (2020) espouses that building collaboration is beneficial in teaching and learning. The same can be expected for SHP. It has been shown that collaboration does not only develop higher-level thinking skills in staff members but also boost their confidence and self-esteem as well. The feelings of isolation are mitigated when educators collaborate with others (Mora-Ruano, Heine & Gebhardt, 2019). One other benefit of building collaboration is that it does not end among educators, it can be used to plan learners’ activities that allow them to work, collaborate and learn from each other (Hattie, 2015) on different aspects other than learning.

According to Reeves, Pun and Chung (2017), the responsibility of ensuring that collaborations among educators are maintained lies with the principal. Maintaining staff collaboration can be achieved by ensuring that school principals create and allocate time for staff members to collaborate. A lack of time and a lack of support from the principal can render educator collaboration ineffective.

Another challenge of leading collaborative teams relates to unwillingness on the part of staff members to collaborate. If some members of staff are not willing to work in collaboration with other employees, the work will be negatively affected and the team performance will produce undesirable results (Assbeihat, 2016).

The sixth role is about the responsibility of principals in ensuring that educators get professional development.

3.4.6 Professional development of educators-school health promotion

The policy on the South African Standards for Principalship (South Africa, 2016:20) stipulates that one of the roles of school principals is “to encourage effective and relevant continuing professional development opportunities through participation in professional learning.” Avelos cited by Hauge (2019:2) refers to educator professional development as “how educators learn and put their newly acquired knowledge into practice”. Pedder and Opfer (2011) define professional development and learning as the growth and development of educators’ expertise that leads to changes in their practice to enhance the learning outcomes of learners. In this study, educator development refers to the development of new skills and knowledge that enables educators to improve their practice and learner results.

As indicated elsewhere in this study, the concept of SHP is still new since it was first introduced to the South African education system in 2000. It, therefore, requires a school principal who understands the role of developing and empowering self and others. Educators, as the essential supporters of school health promotion, are often concerned with seeking practical solutions and gaining new knowledge that meets their situational needs, organisational circumstance and stage of growth (Boot, van Assema, Hesdahl & de Vries, 2010). Based on this, the discussion on professional development in this section will be two-fold: (a) focusing on training pertaining to information and skills needed to implement health programmes in schools and (b) training which focuses on personal wellbeing. I believe that the former training also benefits educators indirectly, as they can use the acquired skills for their own personal benefit.

DuFour and Fullan (2012) suggest that school principals should develop educators on issues related to health promotion. This can be achieved by ensuring collaborative learning where educators can express their views openly on issues that would enhance the health and wellbeing of learners. This resonates with the European commission (TALIS) (2013) that found that educators using collaborative learning as a form of educator development hold strong efficacy belief, are job satisfied and are more innovative in teaching.

Educators also attend workshops that are organized by the district each year. These workshops are usually focused on information that promotes learners’ health. For example, the Integrated Strategy on HIV, STIs and TB 2012-2016 and a Sexual and Reproductive Health peer education programme for girls in grades 7 to 9. These workshops are infrequent and sporadic. For instance, in 2019 educators in our district attended workshops on Keeping Girls in Schools and Rads Peer Support (Department of Basic Education and Media in Education Trust, 2010). The topic of Keeping Girls in School included information on assisting girl learners who are experiencing difficulties at home. Rads Peer Support is about receiving support from fellow teenagers on challenges affecting them as youth. Although there were workshops

planned for 2020, COVID-19 made it impossible for educators to attend because of constant lockdowns, resulting in remote learning. The year 2021 was no better although schools are functioning better with fewer disturbances with regards to school functions; huge gatherings are still not preferred. Information and skills acquired in these workshops are important for schools in general and learners specifically. Educators are encouraged to report back to the entire staff. This is a form of information sharing that was discussed elsewhere in this study. School principals need to develop educators to understand and apply the newly acquired skills to support school health programmes in order to enhance learner achievement (European Commission, 2013) and educator wellbeing.

3.5 Chapter summary

The chapter commences with the discussion of what school health promotion entails. This is followed by the various components of school health promotion such as the policies guiding school health, involvement of educators and learners in school health promotion as well as collaboration and partnership. These collaborations include among others, the collaboration with government departments, non-governmental organizations as well as community members in the vicinity of schools. A discussion on school health programmes that are implemented in schools and the interventions programmes for learners was highlighted. The educational programmes directed at assisting learners to improve healthy lifestyles were discussed as well. The chapter concludes with the role of school principals in enhancing school health promotion. The following chapter focuses on the theoretical framework underpinning the study.

CHAPTER 4

SENGE'S THEORY OF LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with the unveiling of the theoretical framework that has been adopted. This will be followed by the rationale of changing traditional schools into learning organisations. The chapter will also elucidate the prerequisites for transforming schools into learning organisations. Furthermore, various initiatives that aim to transform schools into learning organizations will be discussed. Moreover, the chapter highlights the role of educational leaders in transforming institutions into learning organisations as well as how Senge's theory of learning organisation can be applied in the school context.

4.2 The rationale for the use of senge's theory

The use of Senge theory in this research was informed by the fact that schools as organisations are not static but dynamic. In the same way as in the business sector where market conditions are changing and customer demands are unstable, the education sector is not an exception. In this era of globalization, there are numerous aspects of the school that are evolving such as curriculum and assessment practices, teaching strategies, schooling, management of schools and others. These aspects need to be rejuvenated and reinvented for schools to survive. For that reason, schools are to become more flexible, responsive, and receptive to change to remain competitive and to endure into the future. They have to adjust and adapt to their surrounding environment and develop their capabilities as well as those of their members to manage change (Hamzah, Yakop, Nodin & Rahman, 2011). During such change processes the wellbeing of educators may be affected positively or negatively, forcing schools to learn new ways of enhancing wellbeing. I share the same sentiments with Williams, Brien and LeBlanc (2012) who postulate that schools can develop the ability of learning and thinking, promote innovation and manage the resources available to respond to environmental changes with the best results both for schools and learners.

As suggested by Bohlin and Brenner (2016:5) using the theory of learning organisation in this research enables "identification of gaps between the current and the desired future realities and decisions to be taken on things that need to be improved and thereby enable them to prioritize areas that need urgent attention". The objectives of this study focus on identification of factors that promote or discourage wellbeing. Areas of concern were identified and action plans developed to address the issues. Most importantly, this theory guided the development of the theory-based framework for principals to promote healthy school environments for a better educator wellbeing (cf. Chapter 8).

When schools operate as learning organisations, members of the organisation are receptive to change and they are willing to work in collaboration with other members of the organisation (Chan, 2009). Moreover, when schools operate as learning organisations, members of the school community develop an interest in working as groups and are committed to continuous learning (Chan, 2009). In learning organisations learning is constant. Kruse (2003) opines that educators who are receptive to life-long learning create a school culture that is receptive to change. Through the restructuring of schools as learning organisations, its members develop the willingness to accept change (Geijsel, Slegers, Van Den Gerg & Kelchtermans, 2001). In order for learning organisations to develop, members of the organisation must be willing to work together, learn together and be willing to accept change.

Several studies concur that the use of Senge's theory of learning organisation has proven to be effective when used in a school setting (Moloi, 2010; Williams, Brien & LeBlanc, 2012; Panagiotopoulos, Zogopoulos & Karanikola, 2018). For example, Panagiotopoulos et.al. (2018) found the effectiveness of Senge's theory of learning organisation in the area of educator professional development. Similarly, a study by Moloi (2010) in South Africa, on the impact of learning organisations on learner performance with a sample of 16 educators in one district in Gauteng Province found that educator commitment to continual learning enhanced learner performance. In addition, a study by Williams (2012) on the impact of learning organisations in organisational reform with a sample of 50 Brunswick schools across the 5 districts in Southern Georgia found that Senge's theory of learning organisation is effective in organisational reform. Although Senge's theory of learning organisation has been successfully used in schools, no study was found that links this theory to either the wellbeing of educators or promotion of healthy school environments in particular. Moreover, there were no studies that were found that used the theory of learning organisations to develop a framework for promotion of healthy school environments to enhance educator wellbeing. The following section elaborates on the essence of learning organisations.

4.3 Learning organisations

In his book, entitled: 'the Fifth Discipline', Senge (1990) provided a theoretical framework for learning organisations whereby members of the organisation are to create structures designed to encourage learning and adaptability to changing conditions (Thompson & McCelvey, 2007). Definitions of the concept of learning organisation abound, however, various researchers "define it according to their own experiences and perspectives" (Gerhart, Sartori, Constantini, Ceschi & Tommasi, 2018). Senge (1990:3) defines a learning organisation as an organisation "where people continually expand their capacity to create results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations are set free and where people are continually learning". Gerhart, Marsick, Van Buren and Spiro (1996:36) refer to a learning organisation as an organisation which has "an enhanced capacity to learn, adapt and change. It is an organisation in which learning processes are analysed,

monitored, developed, managed, and aligned with improvement and innovative goals”. Similarly, Kools and Stoll (2016:10) express learning organisation in terms of change and adaptation by referring to them as organisations “that can change and adapt routinely to new environments and circumstances as its members individually and together learn their way to realizing their vision”. The above definitions have something in common as they all suggest that in learning organisations continuous learning helps in adaptation to changes and capacitating and empowering of members. The characteristics of learning organisations that are presented in these definitions converge to the view that learning, as a continuous process, plays a decisive role in an organisation and with the simultaneous involvement of all workers contributes to the transformation of the organisation and its environment (Panagiotopoulos et.al. 2018). The transformation of an organisation and its environment depends on the willingness of its members to expand their capabilities through continual learning and cultivation of new models of thinking in order to achieve their goals. The difference in the three definitions cited above is the fact that Senge further went on to indicate that members of the organisation should have collective aspirations for successful change to take place while others only focus on change and adapting to the environment through learning.

There are certain conditions that learning organisations should satisfy for them to learn effectively, these will be discussed in the sub-section below.

4.3.1 Conditions for learning organisations to learn

According to Senge (1990) and Brandt (1998) schools should satisfy certain conditions for them to learn. Failure to placate these conditions hampers their ability to learn. For learning to take place, the following conditions have to be adhered to:

- **Learning should be personally meaningful**

Wilhelm (2017) espouses that the kind of learning that staff members receive should be meaningful to them. This means that staff members should be engaged in tasks that aim to solve the problems that are affecting them. For example, it is fruitless to engage staff members in acquiring skills to deal with issues that do not affect them. The skills they acquire need to be of relevance to them. Personal usefulness is the “perception that a stimulus can be used to fulfill an important personal goal” (Priniski, Hecht & Harackiewicz, 2018:12). If the knowledge that has been acquired cannot be used to solve a problem or for a certain purpose, it can be regarded as useless and unimportant. First, meaningfulness is personal and about what one has to gain from learning. Meaningfulness is the individual's subjective perception of the degree to which a stimulus (an object, an activity, a topic) is connected (has some relation) to the individual personally (Priniski, et al. 2018:12). Learning can be meaningful if in the end, for example, educators acquire skills that enable them to take care of their own wellbeing. Second, the most

personally meaningful type of relevance is identification, which is about the incorporation of the stimulus in the individual's identity (Priniski, et al., 2018:12). In that case, learning about the promotion of healthy environments can, for example, become meaningful to educators who identify themselves as those who love clean surroundings, problem solvers, change agents etc.

- **Learning should involve social interaction**

Social interaction is an exchange between two or more individuals and is a building block of society. Social interactions among educators play an important role in learning as it influences their social and emotional wellbeing (Ladd, Ettekal & Kochenderfer-ladd, 2017). According to Okita (2012), social interaction plays an important role in learning. Interacting with other staff members has been found to be effective in assisting them to organize their thoughts, reflect on their understanding, and find gaps in their reasoning. Social interaction is associated with better mental health (Shteynberg, 2015). According to Panda (2019), social interaction plays an important role in the lives of educators as they are more likely to have a lightened mood which makes them feel happier during interactions. In addition, social interaction promotes a sense of safety, belonging, and security allowing them to confide in others and vice versa (Wang & Wellman, 2010). Panda (2019) indicates that social interaction can enable educators to understand other people's behaviours. To that end, they can be well-equipped to work with parents and community members.

According to Cantino et. al. (2017), most learning involves social interaction. For real learning to take place, members of the organisation have to interact, thus, during learning, there should be real discussions, inferences, and responses to others' ideas.

- **There should be a positive emotional climate**

According to Nelumbo Team (2018), emotional climate is a concept that measures the climate of a particular community, such as the school community. It is a constant feature of the social and relational environment that has a significant impact on the life of an organisation, learning processes and performance outcomes. Emotional climate influences the emotional relationships of educators as it is interwoven among the members of a school community (Nelumbo Team, 2018). Emotional climate can be positive or negative.

According to Nelumbo Team (2018), positive emotional climate refers to the climate that supports positive behaviour as well as social and emotional behaviours. Emotional climate has an impact on wellbeing. To safeguard a positive emotional climate in the organisation that promotes learning, educators should take care of their personal emotions because they can have an effect on other people (Srivastava, 2013). For example, before educators engage in learning, they should adjust the bad mood

so that the bad emotions do not affect other educators. Therefore, a positive emotional climate can be achieved if educators try to be kind-hearted, mindful, courteous, and sensitive to one another. Furthermore, a healthy positive emotional climate can be maintained by avoiding overreacting, rage and being in control of ones emotions.

A positive emotional climate is important because it stimulates creativity, growth as well as professional development. In addition, it contributes to overall staff morale, performance and productivity (Nelumbo Team, 2018). Research evidence suggests that individuals' ability to think and learn effectively is closely related to their physical and emotional wellbeing. Ricciardi, Cantino and Rossignoli (2020) aver that positive emotions enhance memory whereas stressful environments hamper the learning process. For effective learning to take place, organisations should stimulate positive emotions such as laughter, enjoyment, excitement and appreciation.

Srivastava (2013) argues that negative emotional climates have a negative effect on learning as they may exacerbate depressive symptoms and discourage personal growth. A negative emotional climate facilitates the perception of threat and could thus contribute to a change in personal value towards values that emphasize security and stability of society. Nelumbo Team (2018) maintains that a negative emotional climate creates negative emotions. Negative emotions can be described as any feeling which causes one to be miserable and sad. These emotions make people to dislike themselves and others and reduce confidence and self-esteem and general life satisfaction. Ricciardi et.al. (2020) assert that emotions that can become negative are hate, anger, jealousy and sadness. Negative emotions can dampen peoples' enthusiasm for life, depending on how long they let the negative emotion affect them and the way they choose to express the emotion.

- **Learning should be developmental**

Kools and Stoll (2016) assert that members of the organisation should not engage in learning for the sake of learning, otherwise they will lose interest in the learning process. Learning should be meaningful and developmental. The Free Dictionary defines developmental learning as learning that takes place as a normal part of cognitive development that results in the acquisition of skills and knowledge. It encourages staff members to explore what excites their curiosity. Developmental learning takes place effectively when learning is combined with their experiences (Kools & Stoll, 2016). Such learning should be able to develop their skills so that they can adapt to the changing environment.

Kools and Stoll (2016) accentuate that effective learning occurs when members of the organisation feel challenged to work towards the goals that are set appropriately high. Setting challenging but achievable goals enables members of the organisation to feel confident to take up the challenge. It is therefore

imperative that organisations set high but realistic goals that will inspire staff members towards achieving them.

It is also vital for schools as learning organisations to create conducive school conditions that will enable members of staff to engage in developmental learning in order to acquire necessary skills aiming at improving the school environment.

4.3.2 Importance of transforming schools into learning organisations

According to Gerhart, et.al. (2018), transforming schools into learning organisations is of utmost importance as it promotes continuous learning and systematic thinking. Laal and Salamati (2012) refer to continuous learning as the process of learning new skills and knowledge on an on-going basis. Members of an organisation learn simultaneously while they work. Continuous learning can take different forms, from formal course taking to casual social learning. Members can take a formal course together to learn about a certain topic of interest to them or the school.

Learning organisations can also learn from their own experiences and history, the experiences of others as well as their best practices. This is an example of casual social learning where people come together to learn from past experiences. They can share ideas about the problem at hand based on their personal experiences or experiences of the school. Through the exchange of ideas, organisational problems may be solved and members can gain understanding of the situation.

As indicated in the foregoing paragraphs, learning organisations are capable of adapting to change. Panagiotopoulos et. al. (2018:3) suggest that “change is attainable if people overcome their outdated beliefs and assumptions”. In support of the above, Park and Kim (2018:27) confirms that “learning organisations are ideal structures for achieving continuous change and improvement”. When organisations operate as learning organisations, their members are attuned to each of the elements of the organisation and they can be able to respond to the ever-changing environmental demands (Evans, Thornton & Usinger, 2012).

Renshaw (2003) espouses that changing schools into learning organisations is of utmost importance as it enables members of staff to support and empower one another in adapting to the rapid changes and uncertainties. According to the theory of learning organisations, organisations are dynamic systems that are in the process of adaptation and need improvement. Adaptability is one important aspect that educators need and it plays a salient role in helping them to navigate the demand of their work. The Conversation (2018) asserts that more adaptable educators tend to report greater job satisfaction, improved wellbeing, and higher work engagement. Their adaptability enables them to effectively navigate to change, novelty, and uncertainty that occur in the teaching profession. Moreover, educators adapt

easier if they have the support of the school principal. Through the support of the principal, educators develop a sense of empowerment and belonging in the workplace (The Conversation, 2018).

School principals are tasked with the role of leading schools and supporting staff and learners in the ever-changing environment. In transforming schools into learning organisations school principals are best positioned to create conditions that support staff to adapt and learn new ways of doing things (Schein, 2010). For example, during this time of COVID-19 where educators and learners are experiencing ambiguity and uncertainty, there is a need for school leaders to support them and be oriented toward learning and create structures and systems for creative problem solving and innovation (Smith & Riley, 2012).

Transforming schools into learning organisations is imperative because it enables members of staff to focus on improving their support for continuous learning, promoting innovation and creativity as well as a genuine commitment to the goals of the organisation (Senge, 1990; Marsick & Watkins, 2003). As a result of this transformation, members of the staff assist each other to overcome the uncertainties brought about by the rapid changes through sharing ideas, experiences, and collegial support.

In a similar vein, Hussein, Mohamad, Noordin and Ishak (2014) purport that transforming schools into learning organisations must be a top priority as it enhances organisational performance. The call for transforming schools into learning organisations is based on the assumption that schools operating as learning organisations are capable of promoting learning, innovation, and using the available resources to respond to the environmental changes for the best interest of the school (Williams, Brien & LeBlanc, 2012).

4.3.3 Initiatives to promote learning organisation

Numerous initiatives promote the change of schools into learning organisations. However, for this study, information on decentralization of leadership role, involving educators in transforming the school, developing positive school culture, and practicing professional learning communities will suffice. These initiatives have been included here because they are the main prerequisites for learning organisations to succeed.

4.3.3.1 Decentralization of leadership roles

This theory advocates for the decentralization of leadership roles in an organisation so that the capacity of all the people in the organisation is utilized productively towards the attainment of common goals (Luhn, 2016). According to Joseph (2019) decentralization refers to a type of organisational structure in which day-to-day operations and decision-making responsibilities are delegated by top management to

middle and lower-level managers. Pomuti and Weber (2012) opine that decentralization is the process of transferring responsibilities, decision-making power, and tasks from a higher level to lower organisational levels. The purpose of decentralization is to promote democracy in decision-making (Joseph, 2012). In the context of this research, the school principal can delegate responsibilities to an educator who can be allocated duties of leading a health committee. The committee through the leadership of the chairperson is given the latitude of dealing with health issues affecting the school and its community. Consequently, members of this committee can discuss issues experienced by the school community and make decisions that would ensure the promotion of healthy school environments on behalf of the school principal.

Pomuti and Weber (2012) accentuate that decentralization empowers lower-level staff and middle managers' autonomy to make decisions. Allowing them to decide on the day-to-day operations of the organisation affords top managers ample time to embark on more serious issues that aim at developing action plans on improving the school environment in general. Of vital importance, decentralization allows staff members to act together more quickly and tackle the problem at hand and put the situation under control. Staff members perform to their maximum level when they are allowed to make decisions. This leads to improved efficacy, high self-concept, improved wellbeing, and innovative abilities (Darvishmotevale, 2019). Decentralization makes educators feel that their presence in the organisation is valued and recognized (Joseph, 2019).

To enhance health promotion in a school, the principal can delegate some of the powers to the school health committee. This committee is democratically elected after a three-year cycle (based on the policy of the school) to deal with health-related issues. The purpose of this committee is to provide a healthy environment and advocates health promotion for the school community. The committee comprises a chairperson who is democratically elected, educators and external stakeholders as discussed in Chapter 3.

Although many studies support decentralization, if not properly managed, minimal success can be achieved. For example, if staff members assigned with responsibilities are not given support by the principal, decentralization will fail to achieve its intended purpose. The school manager's support motivates staff members to be innovative in their behaviour and give direction where it is lacking (Anderson, Potocnik & Zhou, 2014). Furthermore, decentralization should be democratic and the membership of school committees should not be imposed by the school management.

4.3.3.2 Involving educators in transforming the school

Another way of tapping the capacity and commitment of members of the organisation is to involve them in the process of transforming the current status of their organisation into the one they aspire for. Panagiotopoulos et.al. (2018) espouse that members of learning organisations are the only people best positioned to solve problems affecting their organisation. As change agents in their institution, educators are to be allowed to participate actively in shaping their organisation towards the desired direction (Panagiotopoulos et. al., 2018).

Alagoz, Chih, Hitchcock, Brown and Quanbeck (2018:1) define change agents as people who “introduce innovations into a client system that they expect will have consequences that will be desirable, direct and anticipated.” Bourn (2015) refers to a change agent as someone who promotes and enables change to take place within any group or organisation. For this study, Bourn’s definition will suffice. Change agents can either be internal or external. External change agents are individuals affiliated with an outside entity who formally influence intervention decisions in a desirable direction. Internal change agents are individuals within the school who initiates and influence intervention decisions in order to achieve the desired state (Powell, Waltz, Chinman, Damschroder, Smith, Matthiew, Proctor & Krichner, 2015).

Educators as change agents have to be involved in aspects of health promotion and the promotion of healthy school environments as they require a team effort. This implies that all members of staff in the organisation will be engaged in such a way that enables them to be equally committed to the shared vision of the organisation. The involvement of educators in issues affecting their schools resonates with Senge’s (1990) assertion that people are agents of change in the structures and systems they find themselves in. For that reason, they should participate actively in shaping and creating their future. Similarly, Weldy and Gillis (2010) concur that members of staff should be involved in changes affecting the school. Non-engagement of staff members in the affairs of the organisation is regarded as disempowering to staff members. Staff members must be informed about the environmental challenges affecting their schools and be allowed to express their views on how the situation can be addressed. The information acquired through the engagement of educators will enable them to make informed decisions. This type of engagement enables educators to feel valued bringing about high levels of educator wellbeing (Algoush, 2010).

In learning organisations, change agents should emanate from inside the organisation. This means that members of the organisation should be the ones responsible for implementing change in the organisation (Rodgers, 1995). For example, it is ideal for the school that is experiencing, for example, health promotion or school safety challenges to transform the status quo by using internal change agents as

they are aware of the challenges facing their school. Govindaran (2020), opines that internal change agents are more effective in transforming schools into learning organisations because they:

- understand the needs of the staff in their scope of responsibility;
- understand why transformation should take place;
- understand how their school operate and contribute to the overall organisation;
- can clearly explain the reason for the transformation and the expected benefits;
- visibly advocate the changes required for the transformation; and
- determine appropriate strategies for influencing change.

In implementing change in learning organisations, Panagiotopoulos et al. (2018) posit that educators as change agents in schools should:

- promote the value of the change undertaken in the organisation;
- formulate ways in which the change should be implemented; and
- ensure that the new processes, procedures, structures, etc. are implemented in a way that will bring about the expected value that organisational change has to produce.

To ensure a successful change in the organisation, Lukacs and Galluzzo (2013) accentuate that as change agents, educators should:

- read the environment of their school and come up with strategies that can motivate colleagues to initiate school reforms;
- work in collaboration with their colleagues in the generation of solutions that will bring about school improvement;
- collectively identify problems and possess problem-solving skills to address them; and
- have a sense of ownership about those problems.

From the list outlined above, it becomes apparent that educators should first identify the problems affecting them and work in collaboration to generate solutions that would bring about the change they truly desire.

Damscroder, Aron, Keith, Kirsh, Elexander and Lowery (2009) espouse that for change to be successful, the change agents should possess the necessary skills. These skills include among others, the ability to build relations, communicate effectively, and prioritize. Educators with good communication skills relate well with other colleagues and they can use their different skills and capabilities to come up with solutions to create healthy school environments. It can be argued that not all educators succeed as change agents. Brown, White and Kelly (2021:3) indicate that effective change agents are those who are best able to signal that a specific change is attractive enough for others to adopt. Such change agents are positive, they believe they possess the ability to successfully pursue change. Attractiveness could mean that changers perceive the specific change to be achievable and of value to them and others. It is important for school leaders to identify those educators who would be effective in bringing about change as they would be best able to encourage the take-up of new ways of working or of doing things.

4.3.3.3 Developing a positive school culture

School culture is defined as “patterns of behaviour that distinguishes us from them” and “a set of behaviours that seem strange to new employees” (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015:6). According to Schein, (2017:2) culture can be understood as “assumptions and values that a group have incorporated and base their actions upon”. In this study, school culture refers to the norms, values, and beliefs that guide the way in which things are done at school.

School culture plays an important role in transforming schools into learning organisations because (a) it defines the internal and external identity of the school (b) it shows how the school runs its business, how it interacts with the outside world particularly the external stakeholders and (c) determines how staff and parent community perceive the school (Mosley, 2019). School culture is about living the core values of the school. It represents the way in which things are done at the school, how the staff interacts, how the workflow is managed and how members of the organisation treat stakeholders. All these facets add up to an experience that represents the school culture (Collins & Porras, 2004).

Confeld (2016) distinguishes between positive and toxic cultures. Barrett (2015) espouses that transforming schools into learning organisations depends on positive school culture. Positive school culture has a positive impact on staff performance and wellbeing. It also provides a safe, supportive, encouraging, inviting, and challenging environment for learners and staff, which in turn allows learners’ academic achievement to evolve (Confeld, 2016).

A positive school climate exists when educators and learners feel comfortable, wanted, valued, accepted, and secure in an environment where they can interact with caring people they trust. Mosley (2019) expostulates that staff wellbeing is not influenced by good salaries and good benefits, but by the school

culture that makes the staff feel valued. When staff feels valued, they become advocates of the school culture. They do not only contribute to positive school culture but also promote it and live it externally and internally. A positive school climate enables educators to experience a strong sense of belonging which consequently leads to the improvement of their wellbeing (Confeld, 2016). Furthermore, Mosley (2019) contends that transforming staff members into advocates of positive school culture can be achieved by:

- recognizing and rewarding good work;
- having a school culture that embraces individual and team success;
- giving credit when it is due; and
- maintaining a school culture that offers a sense of accomplishment.

Positive school culture plays an important role in orientating new educators into the new work environment. Through a positive school environment, newly appointed employees can be aligned so that they fit well into the new work environment (Bradt & Vonnegut, 2009). The positive school culture enables entrants' educators to learn how teams learn together to bring about the changes in the school. This can be achieved by introducing onboarding programmes that aim to assist new staff members to adapt and adjust to the new work environment (Aelterman et al., 2007).

Positive school culture has a positive effect on educators in general as it (a) makes staff members experience a sense of belonging (b) helps to promote staff retention, (c) make them feel connected to the school (d) provides a unique staff experience, and (e) assists in improving work engagement (Carnevale, 2016). Furthermore, Confeld (2016) adds that positive schools can also help in the promotion of staff engagement and commitment. Staff work engagement and commitment occur when the school does not only emphasize job performance but also takes the physical and mental wellbeing of educators into consideration. This can be attained when an open school culture enables members of staff to have a say in shaping their working environment (Barrett, 2015).

Toxic school culture is a major barrier in transforming schools into learning organisations. Schools with a negative culture are characterized by (a) a lack of a clear sense of purpose (b) norms that reinforce inaction (c) discouraging collaboration and having hostile relations among staff members (d) educators who are unhappy with their jobs, where both educators and learners are not academically motivated (Boen, Kozlowski, Karolyn & Tyson, 2020).

Supporting the above assertions, Peterson and Deal (2009) expostulate that in schools with a negative culture:

- staff members are not free to give their suggestions for the fear of being attacked and criticized;
- new staff members who are motivated and committed are quickly squelched and dragged into negative ways of thinking;
- programmes that are planned are poorly implemented due to a lack of commitment to change;
- organisational plans fail due to a lack of will.

From the discussion above, it is apparent that a positive school culture has a significant impact in transforming schools into learning organisations where staff members are continually learning and are innovative in their thinking.

4.3.3.4 Professional learning communities

One important initiative that aims to promote learning organisation is professional learning communities (PLCs) (Lieberman & Mace, 2008). Stoll, Bollam, McMahon, Wallace and Thomas (2006) cited in Prenger, Poortman and Handelzalts (2019:19) refer to a professional learning organisation as “a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inductive, inclusive, learning orientated, growth-promoting way; operating as a collective enterprise”. This definition seems to be very complex and difficult to understand as it defines PLCs from the general point of view. For that reason, there is a need to define PLCs from an educational perspective. The most relevant definition of a PLC which is educationally orientated is given by Desimone, Smit and Phillips (2013) who refer to a PLC as learning resulting from any activity that aims to prepare staff members to improve their performance in present and future practice. In this study, a professional learning community refers to a group of educators who meet on regular basis and work collaboratively to solve problems pertaining to the school environment.

Smith and Andrews (1989), cited in Jones, Stall, and Yarbrough (2013) espouse that PLCs are more effective if they:

- are dedicated to the attainment of the goals of the school and the district;
- can mobilize the resources to accomplish the goals;
- demonstrate commitment to academic goals; and
- create a climate of high expectations in the school that is characterized by trust and mutual respect.

Bennett (2017) contends that implementing PLC is beneficial to the school as educators are allowed to assume leadership roles making them feel a sense of ownership over the activities of the school. Educators in PLCs can develop the willingness to engage in self-reflection that leads to professional growth and improvement if an atmosphere is created for them to talk freely. Educators in PLCs are more professional confident and better equipped to meet the learning needs. PLCs promote positive professional relationships that are based on trust and effective communication.

Weber (2011) accentuates that although a PLC may be seen as a panacea in developing the skills of members of the organisation, it can fail if it lacks the team norms. Team norms are the foundation of PLCs. The Centre for Creative Leadership (2021:1) refers to team norms as “a set of rules or operating principles that shape team members' interactions”. They establish clear, agreed-upon behaviour on how the work will be done, and what team members can expect of each other. When a team operates without norms, conflict occurs. Teams that do not have norms do not know how to communicate effectively and disagree professionally. It is therefore imperative that a PLC develops norms and standards that govern its operational procedures.

Furthermore, a PLC can fail if it lacks team goals. This resonates with Bennett (2017) assertion that a team without goals lacks purpose, urgency, and destination. It is difficult to attain a small win if the team is without established norms and goals. Therefore a PLC has to set team goals to achieve its purpose.

The time scheduled for a PLC session should be taken into cognisance. Jones et al., (2013) assert that a PLC session should not be scheduled at the end of the school day when educators have been frustrated by the complexity of the challenges of the day. The most suitable time for a PLC session to be conducted is during school hours when educators are still energetic and ready to work.

According to Fullan and Hargreaves (2012), educators find themselves working in isolation and thereby miss the positive feedback from other colleagues that can calm their anxiety and work-related stress. Working in isolation is more prominent during COVID-19 times, where there are lockdowns, school closures due to increased number of infections, and remote learning. Research after research highlight the rise in work-related stress among educators.

To curb the undesirable effect brought about by stress and burnout, schools should engage themselves in PLCs programmes. In PLCs educators as colleagues can come together to have a discussion for example, on topics about work-related wellbeing or how they can promote healthy school environments. PLCs are based on the premise that inquiry happens collaboratively, discussions are taken collectively and problems are solved together by the whole team. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the PLCs implementation is difficult to apply given the fact that members have to maintain social distancing

leading to work collaboratively (Salari, Hosseinnian, Jalali, Vaisi-Raygani, Mohammadi, Rasoulpoor & Kaldi-Paheh, 2020), especially in areas where there is no internet access. Schools in rural communities are a good example where it would be difficult to have PLC sessions conducted virtually. This could mean that such schools have to come up with creative ways of maintaining these PLCs even under such difficult situations as they could be the only source of motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professional learning communities are collaboratory and reflective (Timperley, 2011). This means that members of PLCs can meet together, discuss issues related to the school environment and thereafter reflect on whether the team succeeded in achieving its objectives or not. PLCs are characterized by supportive leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practices as well as supportive conditions (Jones, Stall & Yarbrough, 2013). PLCs enable educators to meet with their colleagues to engage them in learning and reflect on practice (Mitchell & Sackney, 2009). In essence, PLCs entail shifting from the traditional method of doing things in isolation to a shared and collaborative way of doing things (Halbert & Kaiser, 2013). Professional learning communities are based on the premise that existing practices need to be transformed to bring about new change (Riveros, Newman & Burgers, 2012).

For PLCs to operate effectively there should be an environment of trust and respect among colleagues (Mitchell & Sackney, 2009). When educators do not trust each other or feel that they are being criticized as not being good enough, engagement and knowledge building is hampered (Timperley, 2011). Lencioni (2007) contends that lack of trust occurs when members of the team are reluctant to be vulnerable with one another and they are not willing to admit their mistakes, weaknesses or that they need help. Without a certain level of comfort among the members of the team, trust is impossible.

In PLCs, teams are built and roles shared amongst members. According to Kelly (2015), PLCs occur among groups that have a similar challenge that they want to resolve. For example, school safety committees in the same locality may be experiencing learner bullying at their schools. The two committees can come together to devise strategies that will curtail bullying practices in their schools. Through the exchange of ideas, the committees would be learning from each other resulting in continual learning which is one of the key principles of learning organisations.

Educators engaging in PLCs can realize their newfound efficacy; tend to develop a sense of commitment to their profession, their organisation, and their learners. The type of support that they receive from a PLC enables them to grow and develop skills and knowledge that will enable them to deal with problems related to their teaching career (Mitchell & Sickney, 2009). The same can be expected in PLCs that are formed to address matters pertaining to SHP. Educators engaged in PLCs are more likely to accept and

embrace feedback from peers which leads to significant improvement in their work. Furthermore, educators attending PLC classes are job satisfied with high morale and improved wellbeing (Kelly,2015).

At present PLCs are developed for teaching and learning including learner academic performance. For schools to succeed in rolling out their PLCs, certain conditions should be met. Educators must first see the importance and the need for being a member of a PLC, they should concede to the fact that engaging in PLCs may result in the improvement of their performance and efficacy; they, therefore, have to be committed to the aims and objectives of the PLC programme. Meeting all these conditions may result in the school succeeding as a learning organisation and thereby enable educators to work in collaboration. Having discussed this, I, therefore, argue that the introduction of the PLCs at schools can serve as a panacea to enhance educator wellbeing as they have the potential of addressing aspects of the school environments that affect the wellbeing of educators. The next section is about the essential components of Senge's theory of learning organisations.

4.4 Essential components of senge's theory

According to Senge (1990:14), for schools to become learning organisations, "they should master certain basic disciplines, namely, systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning". These basic disciplines are represented in the diagram below:

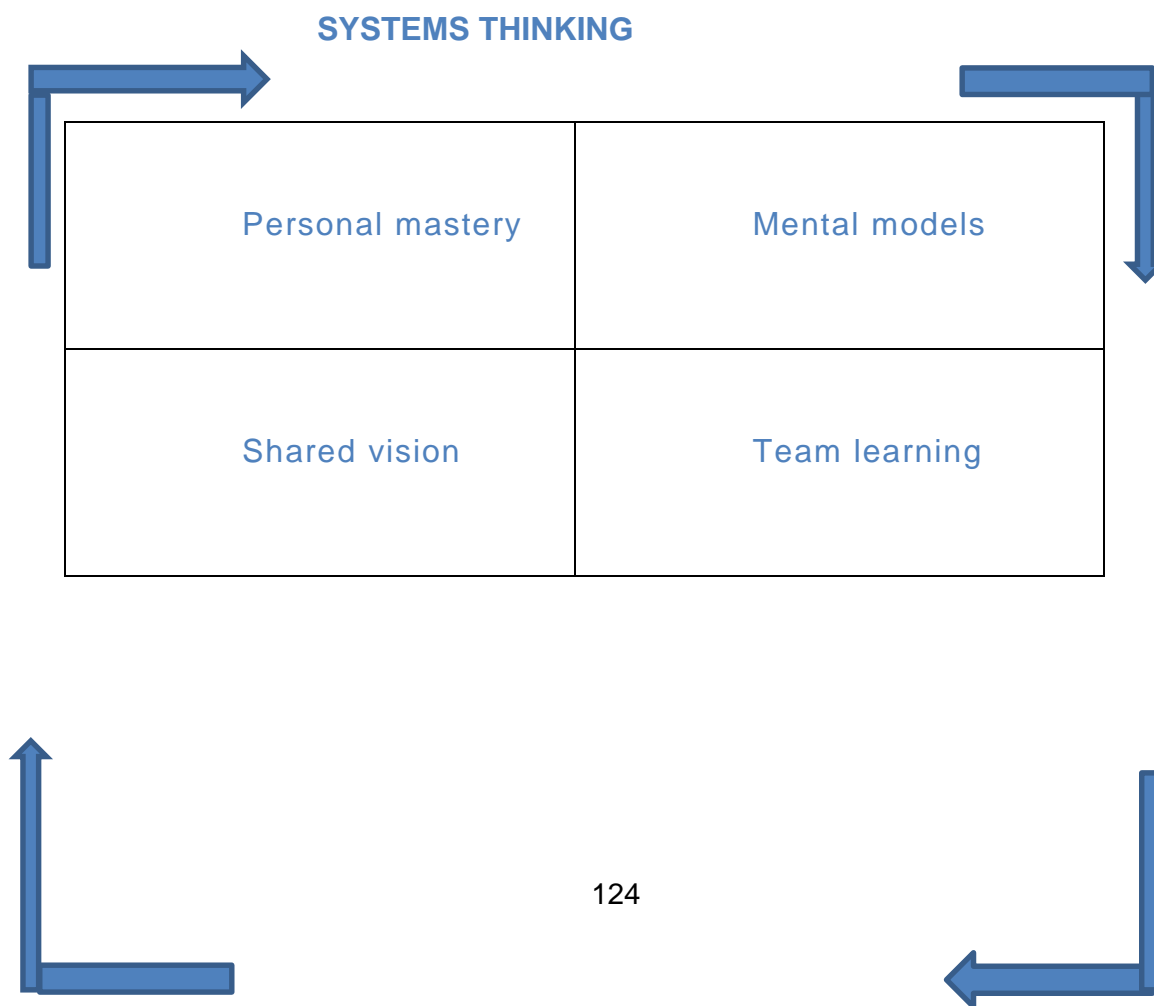


Figure 4-1: Model of essential components of Senge learning organisation

Adapted from Evans, Thornton, and Usinger (2012)

The figure above shows the essential components of Senge's theory of learning organisation. In this study, shared vision, mental models, team learning and systems thinking are discussed. These are the components that were used to develop the theory-based framework for principals to promote healthy environments for enhanced educator wellbeing.

4.4.1 Systems thinking

Evans, Thornton, and Usinger (2012:165) define systems thinking as “the ability to see a situation in a holistic perspective”. Senge (1990) refers to systems thinking as a discipline for seeing wholes and frameworks, for seeing relationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static snapshots. These definitions, although interesting, are somehow not clear as they just describe highly critical elements of systems thinking but fail to give it a sense of purpose. In this study system thinking is referred to as a way of critical thinking where situations are perceived holistically and where relationships between parts of the systems are analysed to understand the situation at hand for better decision-making.

Panagiotopoulos et.al. (2018:3) regard systems thinking as the “cornerstone of Senge's five learning disciplines”. This is consistent with Senge's (1990) assertion that systems thinking is a discipline that incorporates and infuses other disciplines into a coherent body of theory and practice. Systems thinking entails moving from the observation of data or events to the identification of patterns and behaviour over some time as well as surfacing the underlying structures that drive these patterns or events (Goodman, 2018). Exponents of systems thinking espouse that traditional methods of solving problems are inadequate for the rapidly changing environment in which various parts of the system interact and create the reality of the situation (Dominici, 2012). From the systems thinking point of view, examining the interaction of the various parts of the system leads to the emergence of larger patterns. These patterns enable members of the organisation to understand how systems operate. If the patterns are progressive to the organisation, they are reinforced but if not, a decision to change the pattern is taken (Dominici, 2012). According to the Waters Foundation (2018) systems thinking has to do with:

- Seeking to understand a system holistically.
- Focusing on the relationships that exist among the various parts of the system.

- Exploring the system from numerous perspectives.
- Using a variety of instruments to design high-leverage techniques for attaining system transformation.

Senge (2006) expostulates that as the conditions in organisations become more intricate a need for systems thinking becomes greater. Similarly, Stroh (2015) asserts that system thinking is suitable for solving complex environmental problems, unlike conventional thinking which addresses simple problems. Senge (1990) contends that traditional organisations are not succeeding because they fail to see organisations as dynamic institutions and thereby tend to focus on parts (individuals) rather than the whole (system).

Cantino, Devalle, Cortese, Ricciardi and Longo (2017) posit that schools exist in relationships i.e. learner-educator, educator-educator, educator-principal, etc. These relationships can either strain or promote the wellbeing of educators. As a way of promoting the wellbeing of educators systems thinking can be used to understand how the various parts of the school system can be pulled together to assist in the promotion of the wellbeing of educators. A clear understanding of how various parts of the school system operate will enable members of the organisation to deal with issues that are related to the wellbeing of educators and bring the problem at hand under control.

Systems thinking plays a significant role in this study as it has the potential to enable staff members to interact with various systems in their environment. According to Bronfenbrenner (2005), the ecological system comprises five socially organized systems, namely, the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Dukduki, 2015). The microsystem of the school is the immediate environment with which the school community interacts such as the parents, neighbourhood, church groups, community members as depicted in Figure 4.2 below. The mesosystem is the second layer that comprises participative relationships that connect two or more systems, e.g., the school and home, workplace and home, etc. The exosystem is the community in which the school is located including its neighbourhood. It includes the social environment that lies outside the individual's experiential field but still has an effect on micro and macro systems (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Aucamp, Steyn and Van Rensburg (2014) maintain that the exosystem system comprises broader societal structures and networks such as NGOs, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and other community stakeholders who have an interest in education. Macrosystem represents the social blueprint of a particular culture, subculture, or broader social context and consists of the overarching patterns of values, belief systems, lifestyles, opportunities, customs and resources embedded in them (Dakduki, 2015). The chronosystem encompasses the dimensions of time as it relates to an individual's environment. The different systems are presented in the figure below.

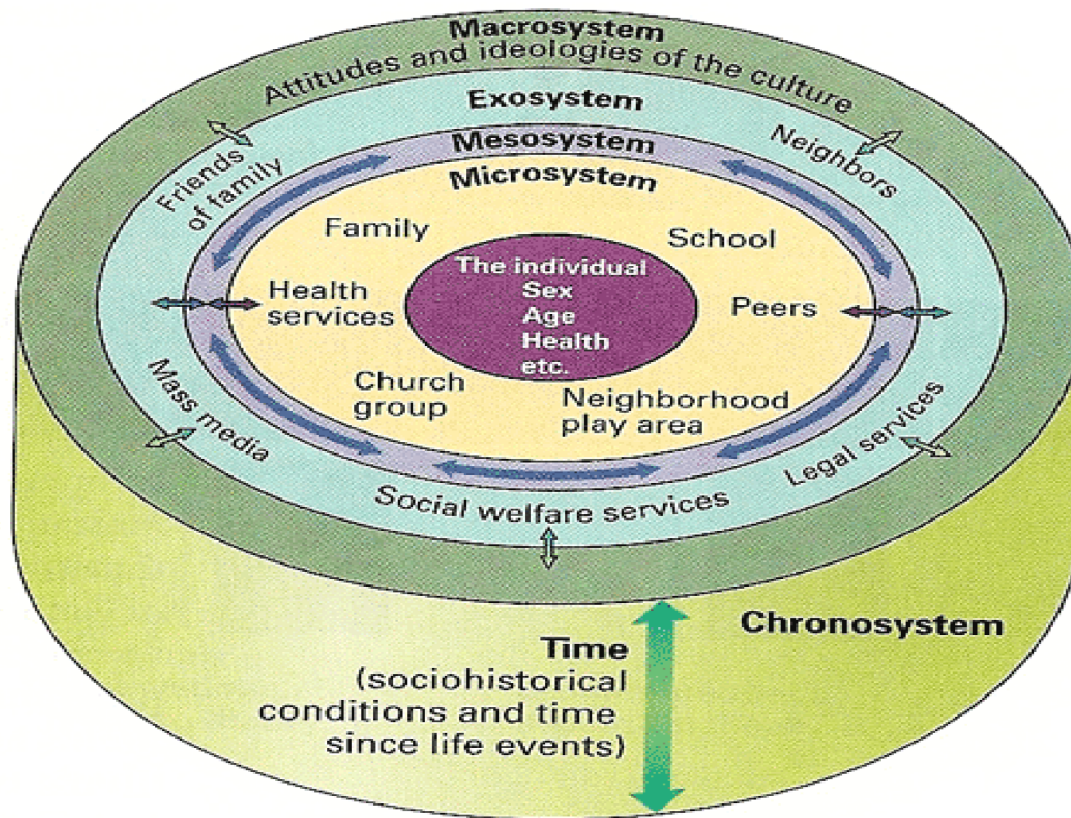


Figure 4-2: Bronfenbrenner's ecological system.

Adapted from: Santrock (2007)

In this study, the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystems are regarded as important in bringing about change in schools with regards to the promotion of healthy school environments and support of educator wellbeing. Kwatubana (2014) maintains that school health promotion requires collaboration with various members of the school community that is composed of parents of learners in the school, members of the business community, the Non-Governmental Organisations, a network of agencies, the church community and government departments in order for it to be sustainable.

4.4.2 Mental models

Magzan (2012: 57) defines mental models as "the frameworks or meaningful structures for describing the interrelationship between activities, objectives, and abstract items of knowledge in a person's mind and can also involve predictions of future events". Al-Diban (2012:2) refers to mental models as "internal representations that have meaningful declarative and procedural knowledge that people use to understand a particular phenomenon". Rook (2013) cited in Kwatubana and Nhlapo (2020:9) refers to a mental model as "an internal representation of the external environment, personally and internally

created by the person himself or herself". It is developed through the subjective interpretation of a person's experiences to make conclusions based on the available information and predictions about future states. For this study, the definition by Rook (2013) will be adopted.

Mental models are representations of reality that members of an organisation use to understand a particular phenomenon. They are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even images and pictures that influence how people understand the world and how they take action (Magzan, 2012). This is consistent with Rook (2013) who maintains that mental models can influence how an individual makes a judgement and thereby affect their actions. These deeply held internal images of how the world operates are developed over time through social interaction with others. Once the mental models are created, they become fixed and reinforced in the mind of members of the organisation. The role of mental models is to mediate reality for people's minds and assist them to categorize and organize an endless stream of information we receive on daily basis (Holtrop, Scherer, Matlock, Glasgow & Green, 2021).

Kwatubana and Nhlapo (2020) accentuate that mental models in a team context have to do with creating and maintaining common ground as well as building team mental models. To achieve this, school principals have to work with various teams at the school level to formulate a shared vision that promotes school health (Kwatubana and Nhlapo, 2020). Rook (2013) postulates that mental models are critical for making sense of team activities, understanding the dynamic changes of team goals and the needs of the team.

According to Magzan (2012), there are several ways to shift organisations to new mental models. First, a shift to new mental models can be done by creating a culture of a learning organisation as well as providing a safe environment for information sharing as discussed above. Savolainen (2017:1) defines information sharing as "a set of activities by which information is provided to others, either proactively or upon request, such that the information has an impact on another person's (or persons') image of the world and creates a shared, or mutually compatible working, understanding of the world". For example, information on how the school intends to promote a healthy school environment, the identified strategies that are to be employed to change the status quo and the processes for implementation, monitoring and evaluation can be shared and discussed with the stakeholders. This can be achieved if the organisation embeds the core values into the vision and mission of the school, promote individual and team learning as well as create an environment in which people can generate and share information (Gerasimova, 2017).

Second, shifting organisations to new models can be attained by driving teamwork and collaboration through reflective conversation. In such conversations, staff members can talk about functional things

and those that are dysfunctional, suspend assumptions as well as use facilitators to drive dialogue and establish dialogue skills (Magzan, 2012).

Third, to shift the organisation to new mental models is to ensure that leaders are ready to unfold their mental models (Gerasimova, 2017). School leaders are also human, their perceptions might be false or incorrect. They must be willing to be corrected. There should be a willingness in the organisation to discuss differences to achieve mutual clarity and understanding. Such willingness can create open communication that is built on trust. The organisation should shift away from the idea that leaders are individuals who stretch their power over others to achieve their goals (Al-Diban, 2012).

Mental models can shape or break the organisation. De Wit and Meyer (2004) expostulate that in transforming the school into a learning organisation, there is a need to break the old paradigm and step out of the preconceived mental models so that the organisation keeps abreast with the ever-changing reality. De Wit and Meyer (2004) further indicate that the preconceived mental models have to be frequently challenged and rebuilt to find new ways of understanding the environment that does not trail the earlier beliefs. Magzan (2012) asserts that if mental models remain unchallenged members of the organisation will see what they have always seen. This implies that members of the organisation will only see what their mental models permit them to see and only do those things that their mental models permit them to do. For example, educators with unchanged mental models may see things that need to be changed (unfavourable school environments) as unachievable. To change schools into learning organisations, staff members must first discover what their internal assumptions are and then unlearn what they think they know (Magzin, 2012).

4.4.3 Building shared vision

Avery (2008) cited by Somboonpakorn and Kantabutra (2014) defines a shared vision as a set of values that are essential for maintaining a group striving for a common goal. Shared vision refers to what members of the organisation want to create or accomplish as part of the organisation (Senge, 1990). A shared vision is not imposed by one or few members of the organisation, instead, it is derived from members of the organisation having a common interest in all organisational activities. According to Jacobs (2015) and Scheetz and Benson (2018), a shared vision only exists when there are personal visions that have been formulated. The process of building a shared vision starts with members of the organisation creating personal visions. As members listen to each other's visions, new perspectives start to surface and shape the shared vision. A vision is shared when staff members in the organisation are truly committed to it. A shared vision serves as a guiding force that enables organisations to navigate difficult times to keep the learning process in progress (Jacobs, 2015).

Fitcher (2015) espouses that an individual vision can be achieved through effective communication and it is a vital precursor for a school's shared vision. It helps to communicate ideas to achieve better understanding. Communication is significant as it assists in the creation and implementation stages of a shared vision. Through communication, educators can discuss, formulate and clarify the shared vision. There is a positive relationship between shared vision and communication (Kantabuntra, 2018). Within the organisation, a shared vision can improve the effectiveness and success of communication.

According to Martin, McCormack, Fitzsimons and Spirig (2014) for an organisation to succeed, the vision must not be imposed from top-down, but it should be a group effort. This enables staff members to commit themselves to the vision. A vision that is formulated by members of the school community tends to use a bottom-up approach. Such approaches are important in schools. The shared vision that is developed locally becomes the brainchild of those who participated in its inception. Such a shared vision becomes easier to implement as all members understand its contents and align with its values.

A shared vision provides the organisation and its staff members with drive and purpose. However, this can only happen if staff members have a clear understanding of the vision (Paroby & White, 2010). This is consistent with Fitcher (2015) who opines that poor organisational commitment prevails where there is a lack of understanding of shared vision and poor communication. A shared vision can provide motivation and propel staff members to achieve the goals set in the shared vision. With a shared vision, they will have a clear direction and determination to put their ideas into action. According to Schippers, Den Hartog, Koopman and Van Knippenberg (2008) shared vision provides organisational teams with a shared view and a goal that enables them to communicate about their current situation as well as future direction.

According to Thompson (2017) creating a shared vision enables the organisation to be clear of what it aims to achieve (i.e. promotion of healthy school environments). A clear vision assists staff members in their respective teams to determine their goals and cooperate with others as they know that they are all working towards the achievement of the same goal. When members of the staff with similar interests unite and share a common vision, they are more likely to achieve the set goals (Volkamer & Renaud, 2013). Senge (1990: 9) asserts that the "building of a shared vision involves the ability of the organisation to possess skills required to unearth shared pictures about the future". These shared pictures should aim to foster the genuine commitment of all staff members at the school rather than mere compliance. The discipline of shared vision entails the integration of individual goals and vision into the shared organisational vision (Park, 2008 cited in Sotarauta, 2018). When members of the organisation have the same shared vision, they are more likely to work positively towards change. Kantabutra and Avery (2010) purport that a good vision can inspire the organisation and its members with an optimistic challenge that

is clear, stable, and concise. Additionally, Kantabutra (2020) espouses that a good vision has the potential of addressing both short-term and long-term objectives.

To master this discipline, Senge (1990) suggests that principals ought to do away with creating the vision from an individualistic point of view, but rather try to translate it into a shared vision through the engagement of other members of the organisation. Principals have to spread and reinforce the shared vision to the rest of the staff in the organisation and the members of the school community. As people talk about the shared vision of the organisation, it gets clearer to everyone and consequently increases enthusiasm for its benefits to grow (Thompson, 2017). When there is a genuine shared vision in the organisation, people excel and learn not because they are coerced, but because they are willing (Senge, 2006).

4.4.4 Team learning

To be competitive in the education sector, schools as organisations depend on the learning capabilities of teams. The pressure for change rests on the shoulders of these teams. Teams are a group of individuals who interdependently work together to achieve a shared goal (Shuffler, 2019). “Team learning refers to the process of aligning and developing the capabilities of a team to produce the results its members truly desire” (Senge, 1990:1). Ellis, Hollenbeck, Ilgen, Porter, West and Moon (2003) cited in Lehmann-Willenbrock (2017:124) define team learning as a process that yields “a relatively permanent change in the teams’ collective level of knowledge and skills produced by the shared experience of team members”. In team learning, team members are encouraged to share, discuss, and reflect on important issues, processes, and outcomes. For organisations to succeed, teams should be ready and willing to learn. When teams do not learn, there is a high likelihood for an organisation to fail (Edmondson & Nembhard, 2009). In such cases adaptation to change becomes impossible. This resonates with Bossart’s (2017) assertion that for an organisation to succeed, it has to practice team learning. Inconsistent with individual learning, in team learning, members learn from their fellow team members’ experiences (including their own), via the socio-cognitive and interpersonal interaction processes that coordinate and integrate individual cognitions (Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017).

In team learning, several behaviours are involved such as exploring ideas and processes, discussing differences, and resolving them with the aim of co-constructing new understanding (Erhardt, Gibbs, Martin-Rios & Sherblom, 2016). These behaviours arise and develop as team members interact over time within the social and temporal context (Santos, Uitdewilligen & Passos, 2015). As they make sense of these differences and integrate them into logical explanations team members co-construct meaning and mutual agreement. Team learning enables members to ask questions, explore different viewpoints,

challenge assumptions, and identify mistakes as well as examine unexpected results within the process of constructive conflict (van der Haar, Segers, Jehn & Van den Bossche, 2015)

Senge (1990) espouses that team learning commences with dialogue and the ability of its members to suspend assumptions and enter into genuine thinking together. Principals should be willing to listen to criticisms that come from various quarters and see them as experiences that encourage growth. This resonates with Wiese and Burke (2019) who expostulate that facilitating a dialogue requires respect and humility.

Stephanie, Meeuwissen, Gijsselaers, Van Oorschot, Wolfhagen and Oude Egbrink (2021) contend that engaging people in organisational dialogue encourages regenerative thinking and generative listening. As they engage in the exchange of ideas during team learning, opportunities are provided for the promotion of creativity. The more they exchange ideas, the more they learn (Stephanie, Beeuwissen, Gijsselaers, van Oorschot, Wolfhagen & oude Egbrink, 2021).

In team learning staff members are motivated and they have the zeal to learn and act together (Senge, 1990). Therefore teams have to work in collaboration and align their effort towards the attainment of a shared vision. Furthermore, learning organisations can utilize the strength of individual members to produce positive change in the organisation. Panagiotopoulos et al., (2018:3) maintain that “team learning enables members of the organisation to learn through their mistakes and failures”. Learning through their mistakes and failures enables them to develop a kind of collective intelligence. When teams learn together, they are not only going to produce good results for the organisation, but they will also grow more rapidly than could have occurred in individual learning (Senge, 1990).

4.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the theoretical framework adopted for this study was discussed, the chapter starts off by presenting a rationale for choosing Senge’s theory. It then elaborates on learning organisations and how they operate. Initiatives used to transform schools into learning organisations, the conditions under which learning organisations can thrive were deliberated on. The chapter culminates with arguments on four of Senge’s essential components of a learning organisation. Only systems thinking, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning were regarded as suitable for this study.

The next chapter deals with the presentation of the research methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the research design as well as the methods that were employed in this research. The choice of the research method adopted in this research is directed by the purpose of the study being conducted and the research paradigm chosen. In the sections of this chapter, the data collection tools and the data analysis methods used are discussed. A detailed description of the study population and the sampling procedures are explained. The quality criteria, as well as the limitations of the study, are elaborated on. The chapter concludes with a discussion of ethical guidelines followed during data collection.

5.2 Research paradigm

Paradigms play an important role in social research. In this study, an emancipatory paradigm was used. The concept of the emancipatory research paradigm is an umbrella term that embraces a variety of research streams such as critical theory, race-specific, feminist, transformative, and participatory research (Noel, 2016). This research paradigm emerged as a result of the growing discomfort with the dominant research paradigms and procedures (Groat & Wang, 2001). The emancipatory research paradigm is mainly concerned with the process of producing knowledge that is beneficial to a particular group of the community that is experiencing an undesirable situation. In this research, it was preferred because new knowledge had to be generated on factors that enhance or constrain their wellbeing and on addressing the latter. This paradigm aims at changing the situation in which the group finds itself and transforms it into the most desirable one (Danieli & Woodham, 2009).

My choice for the emancipatory research paradigm was informed by the fact that it can be applied to the research project to transform the status quo of the researched group to obtain the desired results. In this current research, I wanted to develop a framework for principals for the promotion of healthy school environments that enhance the wellbeing of educators. The undesired situation in this research included the factors that were found to restrain the wellbeing of educators in the school environment. This is the status that was to be changed by the participants in order for them to have more wellbeing enhancing factors that were to be sustained by the implementation of the theory-based framework that was developed.

I also took the advice of Mertens (2012) who maintains that in using the emancipatory paradigm, the researcher had to apply the principle of reciprocity. I took measures not to dominate the research process but allowed participants to interact and exchange ideas among themselves in all the phases of the research. As the emancipatory paradigm advocates for the involvement of participants, I also applied the principle of participation where I encouraged participants to participate actively through the entire research process.

Collett (2013:34) asserts that a research paradigm comprises four key components, namely, ontology-the nature of reality; epistemology-the nature of knowledge; methodology- the theoretical framework and the axiology- ethical consideration. Ontology refers to “the study of being or reality” (Mouton, 1996:46). The ontological perspective adopted for emancipatory paradigm is an anti-positivist one. An anti-positivist ontological perspective is of the view that there is a fundamental difference between the social and natural world that there is a need of using different methods in the study of these worlds. Epistemology is defined by Babbie and Mouton (2009:642) as “the study of the nature and origins of knowledge”. It has to do with the way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know (Crotty, 2003:3). The epistemological stance adopted is constructivism. Constructivism asserts that meaning is constructed through conscious engagement of people with their world. Methodology is referred to as “the scientific approach which is adopted for conducting a research” (Mistra & Alok, 2017:9). It explains the methods by which you may proceed with your research. Methodology aims to describe, evaluate and justify the use of a particular method (Wellington, 2000). The methodology adopted is a case study. A case study is defined as “a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bound systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case themes” (Alpi & Evans, 2019:2). Axiology refers to “the ethical issues that need to be considered when planning a research” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017: 28). It has to do with defining, evaluating and understanding concepts of right and wrong behaviour in a research. It considers what value the researchers shall attribute to the different aspects of their research, the participants, the data and the audience to which they shall report the results of their research. The ethical principles adopted in this research are discussed below. The axiological stance espoused is deontology. Deontology is the understanding that every action that I will undertake during the research will have its own consequence, anticipated to advantage participants, the researcher, the scholastic community or the general public (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The next section discusses the research design that was chosen for this study.

5.3 Research design

The term research design refers to “all the issues involved in planning and executing a research project from identifying the problem through the reporting and publishing of results” (Punch, 2011:62). This study

followed a qualitative research design. Ahmad, Wasim, Irfan and Gogoi (2019:1) refer to qualitative research as “a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting”. An in-depth understanding of the factors that promote and harm educator wellbeing was sought in the natural setting of the participating school. I decided to use this research design to gain in-depth understanding of participants’ perspectives as suggested by McMillan and Schumacher (2010). This research design was also preferred because of its flexibility in the use of data collection methods and its reliance on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives.

Using a qualitative research design enabled me to depend on the views of the participants. This was due to the belief that as participants possessed lived experiences about factors that constrain and promote their wellbeing in the school environment, they will share a rich source of data. Moreover, the choice of this approach was based on the fact that the qualitative method occurs in a natural setting. The environments that were observed by means of visual methods and discussions about wellbeing, plans and framework were in the participants’ natural setting, the school. In that case, I had an opportunity to interact and talk directly to the participants.

Through qualitative research, I was able to discover, describe and discuss how the school environments impact the wellbeing of educators in public schools. Having justified why I chose the qualitative research design, the following section seeks to present and discuss the strategy of inquiry adopted in this study.

5.4 Research approach

As indicated in Chapter 1, this study used participatory action research (PAR), which is a component of qualitative research. PAR is a type of research approach that combines participatory and action research. The participatory part was ensured by guaranteeing a collaborative research approach that equitably involved all stakeholders in the research process (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003:4). The participants were participating fully from the stage of identification of the problem to the implementation and evaluation of plans and development of the theory-based framework. In the action part, the participants were active in gathering data, analysing and interpreting it and development of plans. They implemented and evaluated the execution of action plans, and took lead in developing the framework.

PAR is a unique approach because participants are considered to be experts as a result of their lived experiences that are related to the research topic (Watters, Comeau & Rastall, 2010). PAR aims to transform social realities through participants’ engagement and insight so that the existing situation is transformed to achieve the most desired one (Bergold & Thomas, 2012). In this case, certain factors that were perceived as constraining the wellbeing of educators in the school environment were transformed in

order to increase those that promote their wellbeing. This is based on the understanding that people should be aware of their problems and thereby decide on the action to be taken that would culminate in their emancipation (Okeke & van Wyk, 2015).

In using participatory action research, I took into cognisance the advice by Bergold and Thomas (2012) that for participatory action research to produce credible results it requires a willingness on the part of the participants to give out their personal views, opinions, and experiences about the topic of study. To achieve this, I had to manage dominant members (district official, chairperson of the school governing body, the principal of the school) by giving all participants equal opportunity to share their ideas. I made the participants aware of my willingness to learn with them as I (although I am a principal of another high school in the same area) also did not know of the factors in their school environment that promote or constrain their wellbeing and the strategies that can be taken to better the situation. I allowed the participants to assume co-ownership of the project and I indicated to the participants that in PAR the aim is not to reach a consensus but to gather as much information as possible about the topic under investigation. For that reason, they were encouraged to give dissenting views during focus-group discussions as this was essential for the production of new knowledge.

PAR process empowers participants (Baum, MacDougall & Sith, 2006). Through PAR participants were empowered as they had increased control over the research project and its processes. First, participants were given the authority to take control of a project. Second, the information that they acquired when gathering data on the aspects that promote or constrain the wellbeing of educators, was empowering. Third, participants took photographs and explained through photovoice how these aspects impact the wellbeing of educators. Participants were given a platform to express their views on matters that affect them. Fourth, participants had the power to change the situation in the school, they chose what needed to be improved in the school environment and how to change the existing school environment to the one that will result in a healthy environment that will enhance the wellbeing of educators. Thus, participants were empowered to take part in transforming the status quo in the school to the most desirable one on their own. The process that was followed in this research is depicted in the figure below:

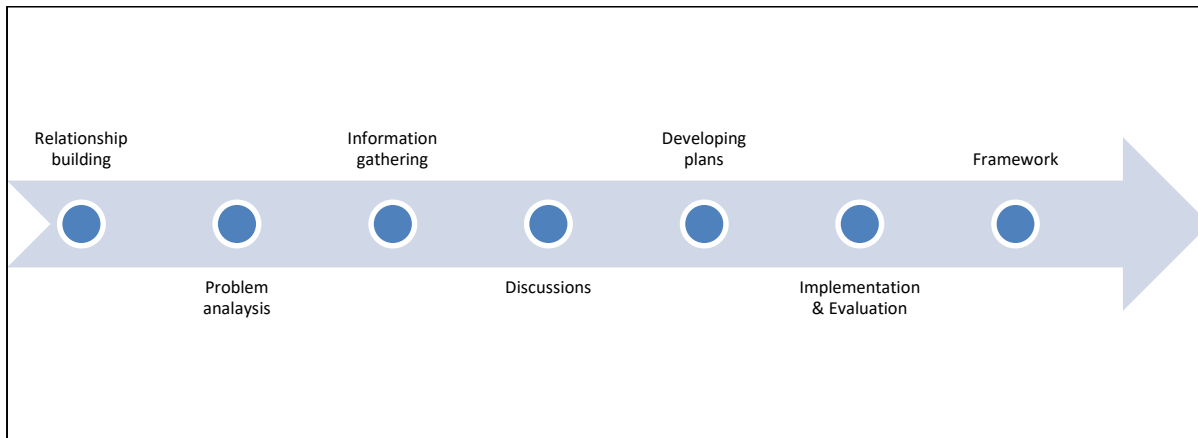


Figure 5-1: Process of PAR

In Figure 5.1 the first step that was taken was to establish a relationship with the participants and the school community. Only participants that agreed to participate were part of the meeting. According to Youell and Youell (2011), building a rapport is one of the essential components of successful research. A rapport is the ability of a researcher to connect with the participants in a way that creates a climate of trust and understanding (Knight, 2009). In building the rapport, I took into consideration the advice by Youell and Youell (2011) of focusing on bringing about a sense of harmony, recognition, and mutual acceptance that the participants and I could feel at ease with one another. In my first visit to the school, I established a rapport with the participants. This included gaining trust and generating interest in the inquiry. I was aware that if close relationships are not built early in the research even before we started with data collection that would have a negative effect on the whole project. I was also aware that relationship building is not a once-off affair but continuous throughout and even beyond the project. Participants spent three hours delineating the scope of the research undertaking in terms of both the research and action elements. It was important for participants to have a clear picture of the whole project in order for them to be emotionally ready for the project.

The second step was that of the problem analysis phase, where participants came up with the problems experienced at the school. We also checked what the problems relate to the focus of my study. It was to be based on the challenges experienced in the school. It was important to formulate a research problem based on the challenges they identified in order for them to regard it as an issue worth investing in. The participants had another session on training how to use disposable cameras. It was also important for participants to understand the conduct that is acceptable and that which is not acceptable when using cameras for research. The third visit was for the collection of cameras for processing.

The third step in the information-gathering phase is comprised of four group discussions. The first focus group session focused on the discussion of photos on the aspects of the school environment that promote the wellbeing of educators. The processes that were followed in this session are explained in 5.6.1.1 below. The second focus group discussion focused on the discussion of photos on the factors of the school environment that were perceived as constraining the wellbeing of educators. This session followed the same procedure as the first with regards to the presentations, the prompts, and the discussions. The third focus group discussion dealt with prioritizing aspects of the school environment in order to formulate action plans as explained in 5.6.1.2. The fourth focus group discussion session took place after the evaluation of the implementation of action plans. In this session, the participants discussed the success and the failures of the research project.

The final stage of PAR in this research was the development of a framework that was informed by the data, implementation and evaluation of plans. This framework is guided by four of Senge's essential components (team learning, systems thinking, shared vision, and mental models) as discussed in Chapter 4 and presented in Chapter 8.

The following section elaborates on the research site and the participants in this research.

5.5 Site selection and sample

The study was conducted in Mopani District. Mopani District is one of the ten (10) districts that fall under the jurisdiction of the Limpopo Provincial Education Department. Mopani District comprises 24 circuits. The research study was conducted at Shamavunga Circuit which has thirty-four (34) schools: twenty (20) primary schools, and fourteen (14) secondary schools. Out of the thirty-four (34) schools, the research was conducted in one P4 secondary school. The choice of this school was guided by the fact that P4 schools are big with a higher number of educators. In rural areas, the enrolment is big if it exceeds 600 learners. This was not the only school with a big enrolment, there were three other schools with similar demographics. This was the first one to be approached and agreed upon. If they had not agreed to participate, another one with similar demographics would have been approached. The status of this school enabled the researcher to draw a sample from a pool of information-rich participants, unlike P1 schools that comprise two (2) to six (6) educators. The enrolment of the school is presented in the table below:

Table 5-1: Enrolment from 2018-2020 and number of educators

| Year | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Enrolment per grade | Grade 8: 121 | Grade 8: 120 | Grade 8: 190 |
| | Grade 9: 92 | Grade 9: 134 | Grade 9: 170 |
| | Grade 10: 184 | Grade 10: 140 | Grade 10: 120 |
| | Grade 11: 116 | Grade 11: 160 | Grade 11: 109 |
| | Grade 12: 151 | Grade 12: 124 | Grade 12: 103 |
| Total | 664 | 678 | 692 |
| No. of educators | 24 | 23 | 24 |
| No. of educators who resigned | 02 | 00 | 01 |

Table 5.1 above shows the enrolment of learners in the school case study per grade, the number of educators as well as the number of educators who resigned. The data in the table is presented to indicate that the school met the criteria in terms of enrolment and the number of educators.

Due to the general belief that “it takes longer to complete PAR and it is more labour-intensive than other forms of research” (Fouché & Roestenburg, 2021:499), I decided to focus on one school, including ten participants in the research project, while employing multiple methods of data gathering. The sampling method and the sample for this research are discussed below.

5.5.1 Study sample

In this study, purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling is a sample procedure in qualitative research which is used to select information-rich participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). As discussed in 5.5 above, the purposive sampling started with the choice of a school, which was based on the enrolment and being quintile level 2. I also purposefully chose the participants that I assumed were having lived experiences of the issue of educator wellbeing and factors that have an impact on it. As PAR is inclusive of all those that are disadvantaged, I decided on a stratified sample that included: SMT members; educators; school governing body members; and a district official. A stratified sampling

method is a sampling method that involves dividing the population members into non-overlapping groups called strata, defined by selected characteristics and each sampled separately (César & Carvalho, 2011:1). The main advantages for the use of stratified sampling method in this research were that (a) different sample fractions by stratum improves the efficiency of sample design and estimators for relatively small but important population subgroups and (b) the formation of strata and allocation of samples to different strata may be done in such a way that the sample can represent the population with respect to the characteristics under study (César & Carvalho, 2011). As mentioned earlier, in this research, there were four strata of data: SMT, SGB, educators and the district official.

The research participants were as follows:

- A member of the SMT and the principal (n=2)
- Two members of the school health committee (n=2)
- Three (n=3) educators whose subjects registered high learner enrolments. These educators were incorporated into the research sample because educators whose subjects have an educator-learner ratio above 1:30 are more likely to experience an overcrowded classroom that is an incubus on the wellbeing of educators. Moreover, it is assumed that educators teaching subjects with high enrolment might be experiencing higher educator-learner ratios that have an impact on the wellbeing of educators.
- Two (n=2) members of the SGB, namely, the chairperson and the secretary. These members of the SGB members were included because they are responsible for releasing funds that would assist in the promotion of healthy environments in the school.
- The last participant was the district official (n=1) who was heading the wellness section of the Department of Education. The district official was included because he has a thorough knowledge of the wellness issues of educators.

In summary, the study comprised ten (n=10) participants. The choice of different strata was purposive so as to ensure that all groups within the school took part in the research.

The next section deals with the multiple data collection methods that were used to gather data that enabled problem identification and analysis.

5.6 Data generation methods and procedures

Data generation includes methods and systematic procedures that the researcher uses to collect information about the topic under investigation (Creswell, 2013). In this study, data were collected using three data collection tools, namely, photovoice, focus group, individual interviews and field notes in the form of journal keeping. This section will first discuss data collection methods and then elaborate on the procedure followed to gather data.

5.6.1 Data collection methods

As indicated in the preceding paragraph, this study used three data collection tools, each suited to unearth a particular type of data.

5.6.1.1 Photovoice

In this study participants used photovoice to collect data using disposable cameras. Each participant was provided with a disposable camera to use for the purpose of collecting data for this research. Before embarking on data collection, participants were trained on how to use disposable cameras. A discussion was held on aspects of the school environment that should be captured and the parts of the school that were not to be captured. Participants were further cautioned not to take pictures of human beings, the name of the school, or any other thing that could reveal the identity of the school.

Participants were to take 30 photos: 10 had to be for those factors that were regarded as working well in the school environment in supporting the wellbeing of educators; 10 for those that were not working well, thus, constraining the wellbeing of educators; and the remaining 10 for those that needed to be improved. Participants were given a time frame for the collection of data. Data collection by use of cameras started on 2nd August 2019 and ended on the 23rd of August 2019. The week of the 27th of August was for the collection of all the disposable cameras from the participants for processing. Codes were allocated to each camera: P001 to P010 and each participant knew what their code was. It took two weeks for the photos to be processed. The processed photos were put in separate envelopes each bearing the code of the participant. During the first focus-group interview, participants were given envelopes according to their codes with the photos that they captured about various aspects of the school environments that support, constrain the wellbeing of educators, as well as those that needed improvement. My choice of using this method of data collection was based on the fact that it allows researchers to capture useful information that ordinary observations and interviews might miss (Budig, Diez, Conde, Sastre, Hernán, & Franco, 2018). The next phase after the collection of visual data was focus group interviews.

5.6.1.2 Focus group interview

A focus group is a group of participants that are interviewed together, thus prompting a discussion (Tsvara, 2013). They are used to collect rich, descriptive data in a small group from the participants who have consented to focus on a topic of interest. The face-to-face focus group interviews allowed participants more latitude to express their views about the data they gathered using visual methods. The focus group interview took place at the school, at times and dates agreed upon by the participants and researcher. Each focus group took approximately one hour per group interaction, after an hour participants were allowed to take a break of 15 minutes and have refreshments. The break was important for this group as the participants were all above the age of 40 of whom some with comorbidities. It was impossible to have one group interview for this research; we, therefore, planned for four sessions in order to generate enough data to a point of data saturation.

I took into consideration what Fouche and Roestenburg (2021) suggested that the focus group should not be too small or too large. A small focus group allows one or two members to dominate the discussion over the others. However, if a focus group is too large it could end up making it unmanageable. To avoid the dynamics of working with a small or too large group, the focus group in this study consisted of 10 participants. I opted to include all participants in order to have a heterogeneous group composed of SMT members, SGB members, educators and a district official. The reason behind this decision was that: “a heterogeneous group brings different group members together, with the potential for diverse views” (Braun & Clarke, 2013:114).

As indicated in the foregoing paragraphs, there were four focus group discussions. In the first focus group discussion session (06.07.2020), the researcher advised discussants that the aim is not to reach a consensus, but rather to explore different viewpoints. Since the discussion was conducted in a group setting, participants were allowed to hear and learn from each other's comments. I explained the procedures to be followed, the purpose of the group, and why the discussion was recorded. This discussion session lasted for about 2 hours. The main aim of this group session was to share data gathered by means of photos on factors that were found to be promoting the wellbeing of educators. The session dealt with the sorting of processed photos and distribution to the participants who captured them and the discussion about the photos of things that they perceived as working well in terms of supporting the wellbeing of educators. After having sorted their photos and selected those they wanted to present as examples, the participants took turns in sharing information about their photos. In telling their stories they followed prompts such as: why did you take this photo? Why do you think it represents an aspect of the environment that promotes the wellbeing of educators? The photos were analysed according to the contents of the image and discussed with the audience. After the presentation of photos by each participant, the members of the audience took turns in asking questions to the presenter about the

photos. After five participants presented there was a break of thirty minutes, where participants were allowed to relax and have refreshments. The session continued with presentations by the five remaining participants. In this session, only one set of data was shared (factors that promote the wellbeing of educators) by each participant as the group members agreed not to exceed two hours per session.

As indicated in 5.6.1.1, each participant collected 3 sets of data: factors promoting wellbeing; factors constraining wellbeing; and those factors that needed to be improved. In the second focus group discussion session (20.07.2020), the participants focused on the factors of the school environment that constrain the wellbeing of educators and those factors that needed to be improved. This session followed the same procedure as the first one with regards to the presentations, the prompts, and the discussions. However, the second prompt was about the question: Why do you think it represents an aspect of the environment that constrains the wellbeing of educators? This session lasted for two hours with a break of 30 minutes after the first hour. In the first hour, participants managed to present the first set of data and the second hour was dedicated to the second set. Before the session ended, participants had to agree on the date for the next discussion session which was about action plans.

The third focus group discussion (24.08.2020) dealt with prioritizing aspects of the school environment in order to develop action plans. A scribe was nominated to take notes as the discussions proceeded. In this discussion, the participants were reminded of the aspects of the school environment that were shared by them in the second discussion session regarded as constraining the wellbeing of educators. These included lack of steel cabinets, dilapidated roofing, broken window panes, potholes on the floors of classrooms, poorly maintained electricity system, dirty toilets, poorly maintained toilets, inadequate number of toilets, and littering. These were listed on the flip chart so that all participants could see them. The next step was to sort them, starting with those that needed urgent attention. Action plans were developed and presented in a table as depicted in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5-2: Categories of factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators

| Factors that need urgent attention | Factors that needed attention but were less urgent | Factors that will take years to resolve |
|---|---|--|
| Broken window panes | Lack of steel cabinets | Dilapidated roofing |
| Potholes on floors in classrooms | Poorly maintained electricity system | Falling ceilings |
| Dirty and poorly maintained toilets | | |

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Shortage of toilets | | |
| Littering | | |

In the first column of table 5.2 factors that were regarded as needing urgent attention are listed. In this column, participants chose aspects that they felt could be fixed within a short space of time. Participants agreed to focus on developing action plans for the factors in the first column. The information on how the plans were to be implemented, when, by who, and finalization dates were discussed and recorded in table form as presented below:

Table 5-3: Action plans and dates of implementation and evaluation

| Action plan | Starting date | Responsible persons | Funding | Finalization date | Evaluation date |
|--|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Increasing the number of toilets for educators | February 2021 | SGB | Donations | March 2021 | 04.05.2021 |
| Littering | February 2021 | SGB | Donation | April 2021 | 04.05.2021 |
| Cleanliness of toilets | February 2021 | SMT | No funding | Continuous process | 16.04.2021 |
| Repair of potholes | February 2021 | SGB | Norms and standards | February 2021 | 04.05.2021 |
| Fixing broken window panes | March 2021 | SGB | Norms and standards | April 2021 | 04.05.2021 |

According to Table 5.3 above, increasing the number of toilets was prioritized. The amount of money needed for this project was R47 000.00 for two blocks of toilets, one for females and the other for male educators. The SGB was tasked to ask for donations from local businesses to fund the project. The people selected to oversee this project were the principal and the SGB. The project commenced on the expected date i.e. February 2021, and there were no delays as it was finalized in March 2021. The team was alerted of its completion by the principal and on a set date (04.05.2021) the group members evaluated the project and they were satisfied with the results.

The second project prioritized was on littering in the schoolyard. The amount of money needed for this project (digging a refuse pit) was R3 500.00. The SGB was tasked to get 3 quotes for digging the refuse pit and the cheapest quote of R3 500.00 was agreed upon. This money was to come from donations requested from local business entities. The principal and the SGB were given a responsibility to oversee this project. The project commenced in February 2021 and was finalized in February 2021. The team was alerted of its completion by the principal and on a set date (04.05.2021) the group members evaluated the project and they were satisfied with the results.

The cleanliness of toilets did not need funding to be completed. It only required cleaning materials and the human resources which were readily available at the school. The project commenced on the expected date (February 2021). No completion date was set as this was a continuous project. The project was continuously monitored by the SMT to ensure that toilet cleanliness became a habit at the school. On the 16th of April 2021, the group members evaluated the cleaning project and they were satisfied with the results.

The repair of potholes on the floors of five classrooms was prioritized as well. The amount budgeted to roll out this project was R3 900.00. This money was to come from the school's Norms and Standards Fund. The SGB was tasked to get 3 quotes for the repair of potholes. The cheapest quote of R3 900.00 was agreed upon. This project was overseen by the principal and the SGB. The project commenced on the expected date (February 2021) and there were no delays. The project was finalized in February 2021 as anticipated. The team was alerted of its completion by the principal and on a set date (16.04.2021) the group members evaluated the project and they were satisfied with the results.

Broken window panes were another project that was prioritised. There were 87 window panes to be repaired, the budget for this project was R5 850.00. The SGB was tasked to get 3 quotes for window repairs, the cheapest quote of R5 890.00 was agreed upon. This money was to come from the Norms and Standards Fund. The responsible people to oversee this project were the principal and SGB. The project commenced on the expected date i.e. March 2021 and there were no delays and it was finalized in March 2021. The team was alerted of its completion by the principal and on a set date 04.05.2021 the group members evaluated the project and they were satisfied with the results.

The fourth focus group discussion session (04.05.2021) took place after the implementation and evaluation of action plans. In this session, the participants discussed the successes and failures of the action plans and the following views were expressed by the participants:

- The digging of the refuse pit has minimized the problem of littering as litter was now contained in the refuse pit.

- There was a positive behavioural change in the use of toilets as both learners' and educators' toilets were always kept in a hygienic condition.
- A school maintenance policy was drawn and adopted to ensure that the school buildings are kept in good condition.
- Members of the SMT frequently monitor the cleanliness of school toilets and ensure that a cleaning rooster is followed.
- The study brought awareness about the importance of a healthy school environment to their wellbeing.

This session was important in that the extent to which the research project and the goals as indicated in the action plans had been achieved, the level of skills development, the empowerment that had taken place and the benefits of the project to the school and its community were discussed. My role as a researcher was to ensure that during the focus group discussion, I keep the discussion on track, I was a timekeeper and I organized refreshments for the participants. I had to make sure that the plan, as developed in the initial stages of the project, was followed. I had to conduct individual interviews with the principal of the participating school. The process of the interview is presented below.

5.6.1.3 Individual interviews

In this study, individual face-to-face interviews were used to collect data from the school principal of the selected school. The interview aimed to get and record information on the principal's role in promoting healthy school environments. Using an individual interview as a data collection tool is imperative as it focuses directly on the research topic and it is insightful. The individual interviews were conducted in a private setting in the principal's office after teaching hours when all educators had left the school, to allow the principal to express himself fully without reservations and disturbances. Two interviews were conducted with the principal: the first on the perception of the role that principals play in promoting healthy school environments and the challenges in playing such a role; and the second on the role the principal plays in promoting the wellbeing of educators and the challenges they are faced with in playing this role. Each of these interviews took an hour to complete.

To increase the accuracy of data in the interviews, an audio voice recorder was used. The audio voice recorder could capture voices to a radius of ± 4 meters. Before the start of the first interview, the participant has been reminded about the consent to audio recording the interview. The audio recorder was used because working from the recording could be more reliable compared to working with notes that were taken during the interview (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). The audio recorder ensured that the entire interview is captured and therefore helped in providing a complete set of data. It also ensured that cues that could have been missed were recognized when listening to the recording (Reed & Ashmore,

2000). During the interviewing process, I concentrated on listening to the interviewee without being distracted by writing every minute detail said by the participant (Rutakumwa, Mugisha, Bernays, Kabunga, Tumwekwase, Mbonye, & Seeley, 2020). Thus, the audio recording allowed the discussion to flow smoothly without interrupting and distracting the interviewee. After each interview, the voice recording was transferred to the researcher's computer to ensure that raw data were not lost.

Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal. Before the commencement of the first interview, I had to make sure that I had a firm overview of the relevant literature on the promotion of healthy school environments and prepared questions to be asked in the form of an interview schedule. The interview schedule was used as a guide so that the open-ended nature of the study is not compromised. Each interview guide had a few questions of 5 and 6 respectively. Once each interview schedule was developed, I requested my supervisor to review them and provide inputs where necessary. After the revision of the interview schedule based on the comments of the supervisor, the data gathering process commenced. The individual interviews were conducted with a fairly open agenda that allowed for two-way communication to take place.

My roles also included:

- Guiding, supporting, facilitating and training team members to implement the project appropriately.
- Facilitating communication among team members, schedule meetings, and meet the training needs of the researcher participants.
- Supervising the activities of the project and facilitate decision-making.

5.6.1.4 Observation

The semi-structured observation was used to evaluate the implementation of action plans. This was semi-structured in the sense that although the evaluation team knew what they were going to evaluate how the following was fixed: broken windows, potholes, littering, inadequate toilets, and dirty toilets. Team members were at liberty to come up with their own ways of evaluation. Thus, participants were at liberty to use their discretion when evaluating the implemented plans. On the set dates (16.04.2021 and 04.05.2021), the evaluation team visited the case study school. They moved around the school observing the implementation of action plans as indicated in Table 5.3 above. The next section elaborates on how the data were analysed.

5.7 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis entails the way in which the researcher works with data collected to answer the research question (Sutton, & Austin, 2015). In this current study, data collection and data analysis were done

concurrently. Thus, as data were gathered, it was analysed at the same time. This allowed me to move back and forth between the existing data. In qualitative research, data interpretation seeks to understand how the people being studied perceive the world, how they describe it, and or what it means to them (Sutton, & Austin, 2015). To that end, data analysis was done in phases, after each data set was finalized.

The analysis of visual data was done collaboratively by all group members certain themes were developed by the group members: factors that were supporting the wellbeing of educators; factors that were harming the wellbeing of educators; and factors that could be improved. Each member who presented their photos, elaborated on reasons why they think each photo should be categorized under each theme. Thus, group members were codifying the issues and themes that arose from their photographs. The themes that were developing from the stories based on photographs were documented in charts which I took home in order to compile a document with all the themes, supporting statements and photographs.

The data that was collected through individual interviews with the school principal of the sampled school was transcribed verbatim directly from the audio recording after each interview. This process included listening to the audio recordings several times to make sure that the data is captured as it was said by the participants. I decided not to source the services of a professional transcriber, as I thought that I would understand the data better than a person who was not in the interviews. I, therefore, transcribed the data myself. I was aware that the transcription process is laborious, however, transcribing the data myself had an added benefit, an opportunity to familiarise myself with the data. After transcription of all interviews, I listened to the audio recordings again to check for accuracy. In cases where I found some discrepancies, the process was repeated until a state of harmony was reached. Through repeated listening of the audio recordings and reading of written scripts, I was able to understand some of the hidden meanings in the data. The closeness to the data that I achieved during this process jumpstarted the other steps of the data analysis process.

In the fourth focus group discussion session the evaluation team discussed the findings of the observation on the implementation of action plans. A scribe was nominated and members of the evaluation team took turns presenting their findings. The minutes of this meeting formed part of the transcripts that were coded and thematised as in the textual data presented above.

There are a variety of methods in qualitative research that are used to analyse data of which no one is better than the other but they depend on the type of research. In this study, I applied thematic analysis which is the most commonly used method in qualitative research. It involves the generation of themes whereby broken bits of collected data ought to be understood in the context of themes (Roberts &

Pettigrew, 2007). Thematic analysis is a suitable method for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences as well as generating unanticipated insights (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Thematic analysis is also useful for summarising key features of a large data set, as it forces the researcher to take a structured approach to the handling of data.

The first step, as indicated above started by familiarising myself with the data through reading and re-reading transcripts. This was followed by the generation of initial codes which were formed through disassembling the data, taking it apart and creating meaningful groupings. I identified similarities and differences in the data. The codes served as tags that I used to retrieve and categorize similar data so that I could pull out and examine all of the data across the dataset associated with the code. The data were coded and re-coded until no new codes were coming up from the data.

I then grouped the codes into categories and themes. Themes are patterns in the codes, they take the numerous pieces of related code to show a bigger picture of what is being portrayed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I had to gather all relevant data into each potential theme and continuously review each theme to determine if it was robust in relation to the coded extracts and data sets. After this process, the groupings of data were taken back to the participants to review and validate if they were consistent with the raw data.

The interpretation of data happened during photovoice group sessions. For instance, when the participants presented their photos and narrated stories about them, they were also interpreting their own data. The major themes that were developed from the data gathered by means of photovoice and individual interviews became the starting point in interpreting how the themes relate to each other.

Data from various methodologies were triangulated using different forms of triangulation in this research. The first form of triangulation involved the use of multiple methodologies. Data triangulation is the use of multiple methodological resources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Data triangulation is particularly important in PAR for obtaining a fuller picture of the situation being investigated in order to come up with clear action plans that would change situations. In this study, I chose to use multiple methodologies (cf. 5.6) rather than relying on a single method. Triangulation of multiple methodologies enabled me to cross-check the data so as to seek convergence among several and different sources of information for the development of themes (Campbell, Goodman-Williams, Feeney & Fehler-Cabral, 2018).

The second method of triangulation included multiple data sources. In this kind of triangulation, researchers may perform observations of a phenomenon at different periods in time (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this research, participants collected data at the start of the project in 2019, as a way of fact-finding and at the end of the project in 2021, for evaluation of the implementation of action plans.

The use of multiple researchers is another form of triangulation, which involves multiple researchers collecting and or analysing data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this research, 10 participants' collected and analysed data, this number comprised two members of the SMT including the principal, two educators who were members of the school health committee, three educators whose subjects registered high learner enrolments, two members of the SGB who represented the parent component, as well as the district official (cf. 1.9).

5.8 Trustworthiness of the study

In the qualitative research context reliability and validity are conceptualised as trustworthiness and the term is used to provide alternative frameworks for establishing rigour and the truth value of the research project appropriately (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It has to do with how an inquirer persuades their audience that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to and worth taking account of (Polit & Beck, 2014). In this study, trustworthiness was obtained through several strategies, namely, credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

5.8.1 Credibility

Credibility has to do with how a researcher maintains honesty throughout the research study (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). In other words, the results of the research study are credible if they are free from bias and possible error. To ensure the credibility of the study, I stayed for a long period in the field, starting from the first meeting with the participants in the participating school in August 2019 up to the time when we finalized the project after evaluation of action plans in May 2021. The prolonged engagement with the participants in all stages of the research enabled me to gather information-rich data.

Credibility was also achieved through member checking. Member checking is a situation whereby data collected are tested with members from whom they were originally collected as indicated in 5.7 above. After the analysis of data, the themes and supporting statements were taken back to the participants for validation. After finalizing the research findings, I took them back to the participants to check if they were accurate. This provided the participants an opportunity to check whether the research findings were true to their experiences. Moreover, the researcher shared the research detailed notes on the interpretation of data, audio-voice recordings, and transcribed raw data with the participants so that they assist with checking for contradictions and identifying biases. The purpose of member checking was to provide the participants an opportunity to check if the information that they provided was not altered or distorted by the researcher during the process of data transcription.

I also ensured that the transcription from audio recordings to written scripts was done word-for-word. This was meant to eliminate all bias and possible errors.

As Flick (2008) opines that triangulation is the most valid strategy to enhance credibility, in this study triangulation included the use of multiple methodologies, multiple data sources and multiple researchers as discussed in 5.7 above.

5.8.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study are applied in other contexts or with other participants (Polit & Beck, 2012). It is the extent to which the research findings can be transferred to other settings or groups. To increase the transferability of the data I collected, I made it a point that I provide the readers with the following information:

A detailed description of the setting in which the research project takes place. The research setting is described in detail in 5.5, the description of participants who partook in the research and the socio-economic background of the school population are described in 5.5.1, and the data collection methods that I used in the research project are presented in detail in 5.6. This was done so that readers of this research project can make their transferability judgments.

5.8.3 Dependability

Dependability has to do with the suitability of data over time under various conditions (Elo, Kääriäinen, Pölkki, Utrianen & Kyngäs, 2014). It questions whether the findings of the research can be replicated if similar tools and data collection procedures were conducted in other studies with the same sample and the same research conditions. Dependability is used to establish the trustworthiness of the study and to audit the research process. As dependability is measured by the standard by which the research is conducted, I ensured that each process is reported in detail.

Another way that I used to establish dependability was to use multiple researchers to conduct the inquiry, analyse and interpret data. This was done to endorse the accuracy of the research findings as well as ensuring that the findings are supported by data sources.

5.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which the research findings are the focus of the inquiry and not the result of the researcher's bias (Rangongo, 2011). This implies that the data collected and the findings thereof are the true representation of the participants' views and opinions and are not distorted by the researcher. To increase the confirmability of the current study, I made it a point that the collected data

speaks for itself, instead of speaking for it as a researcher. In other words, I distanced myself from manipulating the research data so that the research findings reflect the voice of the participants rather than my perspectives, biases, and motivations as the researcher. Moreover, the interview recordings were transcribed word-for-word after the interview to increase the objectivity of the process. When coding data, I further increased the objectivity by allowing myself to understand the deeper meaning of what has been said by the participants through their transcripts rather than trying to enforce the data to conform to anticipated results. In other words, when dealing with data I affirmed that they are grounded on the evidence that comes from the participants' statements. As conformability of the study guarantees that the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study concur with the data which have been collected and analysed (Polit & Beck, 2012).

5.9 Ethical aspects

Ethics entail a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or a group which set out rules and behavioural expectations about the subjects, participants, and other researchers (Greenwood, 2016). In dealing with ethics I constantly reminded myself of the fact that ethics has to do with the good and bad, right or wrong. Furthermore, I ensured that the contents, method, reporting, and outcomes of an investigation adhere to the ethical principles that are set. Good ethical practices are substantial when conducting research and they should be adhered to throughout the research process. It was therefore imperative to familiarise myself with general agreements shared by researchers about what is proper and improper when carrying out a scientific investigation, and for this reason, I did a course in ethics in March 2019. In this course, I completed three modules: introduction to research ethics; research ethics evaluation; and informed consent (Appendix 4). The following is a list of ethical aspects that I took into consideration when conducting this study:

5.9.1 Ethics clearance

I applied for ethics clearance from the Ethics Committee EduRec of the North-West University before the commencement of the research study. The process entails submitting an application form detailing all the steps and procedures that were going to be followed in conducting the research and all necessary documents that support the application to EduRec. An ethics clearance is one way in which an institution that allows a research project to be undertaken ensures that the inquiry is carried out through acceptable means that neither brings harm to participants nor the institution into disrepute. The clearance certificate was issued in April 2019 (Appendix 1).

5.9.2 Access to premises

Carrying out successful research depends on the research site's accessibility to the researcher, establishment, and maintenance of relationships with gatekeepers and research participants. Before I embarked on conducting a research study, I had to practice good ethics by obtaining permission from the authorities of the institutions that partook in the project. I sought permission from the Limpopo Provincial Education Department to research Shamavunga Circuit. In the Limpopo Provincial Education Department permission was granted by the Head of Department (HOD) at the provincial level and the granting of such permission was communicated to the District Office by the HOD. The written permission was then issued by the Mopani East District Education Department (Appendix 2). The next step was to approach the gatekeepers which are people who are responsible for controlling access to premises either formally or informally. The gatekeepers in this study that I had to negotiate with before I could be allowed to conduct research at the school were the principal and the chairperson of the SGB. I wrote a letter to the principal of the sampled school to request permission to conduct research at his school. The letter is attached as an appendix in this thesis (Appendix 3). After obtaining permission from the gatekeepers, I visited the sampled school to discuss with the school principal and the chairman of the SGB, the nature and purpose of the study and to seek permission to start with the research project.

5.9.3 Informed consent and voluntary participation

Carrying out a research investigation means that I, as a researcher, got quite involved in the lives of the participants. This implies that participants have to reveal information about themselves or their activities, that is, information that is not known to other people. For that reason, before I commenced the study, I disclosed all the information about the research project to the participants. The purpose of this was to provide participants with sufficient information to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether to participate in the study or not. I also informed them in writing that partaking in the research study was voluntary as no participant would be forced to take part in the research project. It was also indicated to them that they should participate in the research investigation as long as they were free to do so. This means that participants were free to withdraw their participation at any time they felt like it, without being penalized. At the end of my presentation, participants were allowed to ask questions for clarity before the actual investigation started. All participants were given the latitude to express their voluntary willingness to participate in the study and this was obtained through written consent. A copy of the written consent is attached (Appendix 4).

5.9.4 Anonymity

Anonymity is a situation in which the names of the participants are not revealed or kept secret (Willes, Crow, Heath & Charles, 2008). This means that during this study, the names of the participants and the participating school were concealed in the presentation of the research findings. Before the participants were engaged in the study, they were assured that their responses would only be used for the research. Furthermore, their names would be kept anonymous throughout the research study. To ensure this, participants were allocated codes P001 to P010 to conceal their identity or real names. Another important aspect that I took into consideration was to conceal the identity of the school that participated in this research. The school is presented as any other school in the Shamavunga Circuit.

5.9.5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality has to do with a situation where the researcher knows the subjects of the research but takes precautionary measures to protect their identity from being revealed to the readers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This implies that protecting the confidentiality and privacy of the participants is very imperative. In this study, I maintained confidentiality by keeping data records secured through the use of pass-worded files and data encryption when saving data and when sending it to my supervisor. I also recorded information in such a way that it did not link the responses to the participants. This was achieved by making use of codes that are only known to them. This study involved the capturing of photos using disposable cameras which would cause risk if not properly managed. To curb this, participants were not allowed to take photos of staff members, human beings, or anything that may reveal their identity and that of the school. At the end of the research study, the research findings were reported in a way that did not compromise the privacy of the participants or that of the school.

5.9.6 Privacy

Privacy is concerned with who has access to personal information and records about the participants as well as privacy during the focus-group or individual interview. In this study, I made sure that there is privacy throughout the research process. To achieve this, the identity of the school and that of the participants were kept anonymous. Furthermore, the researcher indicated to the participants in the consent form that the information collected during the interview and discussion sessions should be kept private. Since this study involves the use of disposable cameras, the researcher collected all the cameras immediately after capturing photos to curb the risk of some photos being leaked by the participants. This means that the researcher personally took the cameras for photo processing. Moreover, the researcher made it a point that non-participants do not access the venue in which the interview or focus-group discussions were conducted. After the completion of the research study, all

photos, focus-group discussion records, and transcripts of individual interviews were stored in the lockable steel cabinet in the supervisor's office, for seven years as per the university rule.

5.9.7 Protection from harm

In any research study, the researcher has a responsibility of ensuring that the participants are not exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm. To achieve this in the current study, I made it a point that participants were not subjected to undue physical discomfort. This was realized by ensuring that there were comfort breaks during the focus-group discussion sessions so that participants do not get exhausted.

5.10 Chapter summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the research design and the methodology used in this study. A participatory strategy of inquiry was followed to obtain data to answer the research questions. Site sampling and the sampling procedures were clearly explained. The data collection tools, namely, photovoice, focus group interview, as well as individual interviews were discussed. This was followed by data analysis and interpretation. Several strategies used to attain trustworthiness in this study, namely, credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability were also discussed. The chapter concluded with the ethical aspects that were adhered to when conducting this study. The next chapter deals with data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 6

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with describing the contextual location of the school and its historical background. This is followed by the description of the socio-economic background of learners and educators' profiles. The key focus of this chapter is to give a detailed account of data analysis based on the responses of the participants. It presents the data gathered using photovoice, individual, and focus group interviews as indicated in Chapter 5. Thematic data analysis was used to determine themes, sub-themes and sub-categories that emerged from the data. Data were presented according to the three themes as identified by the participants. The researcher used the participants' responses verbatim; the quotations that support themes are presented in italics.

6.2 Background of the school

Data were collected in one school in the Shamavunga circuit. The school was purposely sampled as indicated in Chapter 5. Shamavunga is one of the five circuits in the Giyani cluster of circuits which falls under Mopani East Education District, in Limpopo, South Africa. The school is situated in a rural village established in 1968 under the Group Areas Act of the Apartheid government. The population of this village comprises predominantly Black South Africans of Shangaan/Xitsonga ethnicity. The majority of people in this community are living a low-class lifestyle as is the case with many rural communities in the country. The community surrounding the school is characterized by single-dwelling houses on plots of tribal land. Most houses are bricks and cement structures although there are few thatched huts made from mud and grasses. Churches (of Christian faith) are found interspersed between houses. There are some small (spaza) shops that are run from private homes. The village does not have running water from the municipality; they only access water from boreholes. All streets in the community are not tarred except for the one which extends over the distance of three kilometres to the main road.

The school was established in January 1987 as a public school for secondary school learners who were racially classified under the then South African Government as Blacks. Since its establishment, the school has been managed by three school principals including the current one. During the time of data collection, the school was thirty-two years old. Under the leadership of the current principal (the one in whose tenure data was collected), the school adopted a progressive and political vision of ensuring that the demographics of the learner population include all learners from the other ethnic groups. The current

principal was appointed thirteen years ago. His leadership style is described by most educators as democratic and progressive.

At the time when data was collected, the staff establishment consisted of twenty-three educators. The school is categorized as a big school as its enrolment stood at six hundred and seventy-eight. Of the twenty-three educators, six of them including the principal were males whereas the remaining seventeen were females. Twenty-two educators (principal included) were appointed permanently and were paid by the state, while one was appointed temporarily but also paid by the State. All educators spoke English fluently and all of them could speak Xitsonga. The principal describes the educators as cooperative and their absenteeism rate was described as being moderate. Although the school does not produce good results in grade 12, it is perceived by the school governing body (SGB) as a good school that is characterized by caring and supportive staff. The vision of the school is proudly displayed on the notice board in the principal's office.

The school is enclosed with a palisade fence. The school infrastructure comprises six blocks of classes that were used for different purposes. Of the six blocks of classes, four were face brick and cement structures that did not require plastering, whilst the remaining blocks were cement brick structures that were plastered. Two classes from one block of four classes (the face brick one) are used as the administrative offices and the remaining two as staffrooms. This means that the school did not have a formal structure built specifically as administrative offices hence a block of classrooms was converted to serve this purpose. Two of the six blocks classes (cement brick structures that were plastered) were built by the community. Out of the two community-built blocks of classes, two classes were designated as computer and science laboratories respectively. At the back of the classrooms, there is a school hall and a storeroom. These buildings were built by the community hence their poor quality. Next to the school hall, there is a kitchenette for the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). The school does not have running water from the municipality but depends on underground water from the borehole for drinking, irrigation, and sanitation as is the case with its community. The flushing toilets were cement structures that were used by the educators. Learners were using pit toilets that were also made of cement bricks. The appearance of school buildings leaves much to be desired as most of them were dilapidated and required serious revamp. Although the school is struggling in terms of infrastructure, it tries to keep the school grounds free from litter. The sporting facilities such as the netball courts and soccer fields were poorly developed and needed renovation. The school offers several extramural activities such as soccer, netball, athletics, and music.

Approximately 95 percent of the learners in the school are Xitsonga speaking and come from the three neighbouring villages. All educators could speak Xitsonga and it is easy for them to code-switch to Xitsonga when learners experience a language barrier in learning. The school principal and the sampled

educators described the socio-economic conditions of learners as varying but the majority of them were living a lower class lifestyle. Most of the home environments are stable as learners live with one or both parents, while some were raised by grandparents or guardians. Both the school principal and the educators describe learners as exposed to the impact of poverty, migration of families as a result of work, and unemployment. The school is a quantile two school and for that reason, it has a National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) that is supported by the Limpopo Provincial Education Department.

Generally, learners could be described as ill-disciplined. Learners must first be calmed down by educators before teaching begins. Furthermore, they spend much of their teaching time addressing social issues, and this impact negatively on teaching and learning.

The next section is about the characteristics of the participants.

6.3 Characteristics of participants

This section presents a summary of the characteristics of the participants. The total number of participants who participated in the study was ten ($n=10$) and they were allocated codes P001 to P010. The educators sampled for the research were both males and females and were purposefully sampled. The majority of these educators had more than ten years of teaching experience except for one whose teaching experience was five years. For this reason, it is assumed that these educators were familiar with the various factors in the education system that impacts their wellbeing.

The members of the SGB that participated in this study were the chairperson and the secretary. This was informed by the fact that these two members were the most active and they were involved in the day-to-day governance of the school. At the time of the research, the members of the SGB were serving the second year of their three-year tenure.

The researcher also deemed it necessary to include a departmental official who was employed at the wellness section of the Department of Education. The reason for his inclusion pertains to the fact that he was familiar with the wellness issues that affect the wellbeing of educators in performing their daily tasks. Furthermore, he was knowledgeable about the various strategies that are employed to support the wellbeing of educators from a departmental point of view.

Additional information related to the characteristics of the participants has been provided on the table hereunder:

Table 6-1: The profile of the participants who took part in the study

| CODE OF PARTICIPANT | GENDER | AGE | WORK EXPERIENCE | CATEGORY |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| P001 | Male | Between 41 and 50 | Between 21 and 30 | Principal |
| P002 | Male | Between 41 and 50 | Between 11 and 20 | Departmental representative |
| P003 | Female | Between 51 and 60 | Between 31 and 40 | SMT member |
| P004 | Female | Between 51 and 60 | Between 11 and 20 | Educator |
| P005 | Male | Between 31 and 40 | Between 01 and 10 | Educator |
| P006 | Male | Between 41 and 50 | Between 11 and 20 | Educator |
| P007 | Female | Between 41 and 50 | Between 11 and 20 | Educator |
| P008 | Female | Between 41 and 50 | Between 21 and 30 | Educator |
| P009 | Male | Between 61 and 70 | 02 Years | SGB member |
| P010 | Female | Between 41 and 50 | 02 Years | SGB member |

The table above provides information about the general profile of the participants. It provides their genders, ages, experience as well as the category in which each of them belongs, for example, member of the SMT, member of the SGB, educator or the departmental representative.

The next section expounds on the results of empirical data that was gathered using photovoice, group interviews, individual interviews and observations.

6.4 Research results

This section presents three themes that were developed through the use of thematic analysis: school safety and security, working environment and the role of the principal in school health promotion.

6.4.1 School safety and security

It emerged from the participants' responses that safety and security played a significant role in the wellbeing of educators as they all seemed to prefer to execute their duties in safe and protected environments. In this study, participants mentioned and took pictures of some safety features that were believed to be providing safe school environments. These included the palisade perimeter fencing, access control, and burglar proofing. The figure below depicts the palisade fencing that surrounds the school premises.



Figure 6-1: Palisade Fencing

The participants' views revealed that proper and well-maintained fencing provides a safe environment for educators to work in. The participants indicated that a good fence that is well maintained protects the school property from theft and vandalism as well as the victimization of educators such as being physically attacked, their personal properties forcefully taken from them, or being threatened.

The following statements from the participants provide evidence about their perceptions on safety and security provided by the school fence:

“The school took drastic measures by removing the old wire fence that initially surrounded the school and replaced it with the palisade fencing. This makes it difficult for intruders and thieves to invade the school. The palisade fence is an advantage as it guarantees the safety of school property as well as that of the educators and learners” (P006); the palisade fence provides a safe environment to work in as it always receives regular maintenance. It also prevents the victimization, threatening of educators as well as theft

from educators within the school premises” (P005). Apart from providing a safe environment for the school, a well-designed school fence makes the school look more attractive” P002).

The statements expressed by the participants about the availability of the palisade fence specify that they were pleased with the safety of educators at the school. Musu-Gillette, Zhan, Wang, Zhang, and Oudekerk (2017) indicate that poor school security caused by broken fence structures allows gangs access into and out of the school. In support of the above, Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014) point out that through these openings gangs can enter the school and sell drugs, and commit other criminal activities (cf. 2.5.1.4.3).

The following figure provides evidence that burglar proofing was identified by participants as a strategy to ensure safety.



Figure 6-2: Burglar proofing

Participants' views show that the school has a good burglar-proofing system in major school buildings. Participants indicated that burglar proofs were installed on doors and windows of staffrooms, administrative offices, and specialized rooms such as the laboratory and computer centre. During the focus group interview, participants revealed that burglar proofing is one of the most important aspects of safety and security as it deters thieves from stealing school properties and the personal belongings of educators.

The following statements from the participants provide evidence regarding burglar proofing at the school:

“The computer centre has good security as there are burglar proofs on the doors and windows. This security feature prevents thieves from accessing the contents of the computer centre (P007). The availability of burglar proofs on the doors and windows of the staffrooms is an advantage because at times educators mistakenly forget to close the windows when they knock off. Consequently, burglar proofing deters thieves from entering the staffroom and access valuable belongings that are left in (P008). Burglar proofs on the windows and doors of the staffrooms provide a safe environment for educators as they can lock themselves in when learners protest or threaten their safety” (P010).

The utterances expressed by the participants above were an indication that they were concerned about their safety, that of their personal belongings, and that of the school. A study by Tseloni, Thompson, Grove, Tilley, and Farrell (2017) found that burglar proofing is the most fundamental safety feature that supports the wellbeing of educators as it successfully deters thieves due to their visibility (cf. 2.5.1.4.2). However, these authors recommend that burglar proofing could be augmented by other security devices such as CCTV cameras, burglar alarms, and window locks as additional safety features that increase the security of school buildings (cf. 2.5.1.4.2).

Another aspect of safety identified by the participants was access control. The figure below provides evidence that access control was also a strategy that provides a safe school environment.



Figure 6-3: Access Control room

The participants' opinions revealed that the school has a system in place that was used to control school users and visitors who enter or leave the school premises. The participants indicated that posting

security personnel at the gate created a conducive working environment for educators as their safety was guaranteed. Furthermore, recording the particulars of those who visit the school in the access control register helped to curb the level of crime by the outsiders in the school premises. An access control room was also found next to the school gate with signages of objects that were prohibited at the school.

The following comments from the participants provide evidence about their view on access control at the school:

“All parents, visitors, and departmental officials are to access the school through the gate which is manned by the security officer. The visitors have to register their names, identity numbers as well as contact numbers in the access control book (P001); there is a guardroom that is nearby the school gate, which makes it easy for the security personnel to see everything that is happening at the gate. It also has signages that caution visitors, learners, and educators of things that are prohibited at the school (P002)”.

The expressions by the participants about the management of access control at the school provided evidence that they seemed to feel secure within the school premises. Good access control at the gate deters intruders from accessing the school premises without authorisation as this threatens the security of both the educators and learners. Thomas and Galla (2013) maintain that access control allows only authorised personnel, learners, and visitors to enter, move within, and leave the institution (cf. 2.5.1.4.3). Fisher, Mowen and Boman (2018) recommend that numerous safety measures such as metal detectors as well as requiring students and staff members to have identification cards may boost the effectiveness of access control at the gate (cf. 2.5.1.4.3).

From the results of the study, it was found that the aspects of safety and security that supported the wellbeing of educators were palisade fencing, burglar proofing, and access control. Palisade fencing as it was perceived as deterring gangs from entering the school premises to commit criminal activities such as theft and vandalism of school properties. Burglar proofing provided a safe school environment as it protects educators' belongings and other properties found in the buildings from theft. Access control was also believed to be contributing to the promotion of the wellbeing of educators as it reduces the possibility of unauthorised people entering the school. Searching visitors for dangerous weapons and other unauthorised items at the gate prevented criminals from gaining access to the school to commit their criminal acts. From the participants' perspective - the fact that the palisade fence was well maintained, buildings burglar proofed and access into the school controlled at the gate could suggest that the wellbeing of educators was promoted.

6.4.2 Working environment

It emerged from the participants that the environment in which educators do their work plays an important role in their wellbeing. The aspects of the working environment identified by the participants in the case school were offices, staffrooms, classrooms, water and sanitation including toilets, as well as the school surroundings.

Commenting about the working conditions of educators, the principal of the case school said:

“The wellbeing of educators can be enhanced by providing educators with a good working environment that improves their productivity, reduce their stress, absenteeism, and turnover rates. A healthy workplace environment helps to lighten educators’ moods and enhance their concentration span” (P001).

The figures below depict the office environment at the school.



Figure 6-4: Office environment



Figure 6-5: Office environment

The perception of Participant 1 revealed that the principal and the deputy principal's offices provided a conducive environment for them to work in. He indicated that both offices were furnished with high-quality furniture which enables them to work long hours without getting tired. The large executive tables found in the offices of the principal and the deputy principal provide a large surface area for them to work on.

The following statement from the participant provides evidence that although he was not satisfied with the general design of the offices, he was impressed by the quality of furniture in these offices:

“Although the offices were initially designed for classrooms, they have been partitioned in such a way that they look more attractive. The offices have beautiful chairs with comfortable back support. This enables the principal and the deputy principal to work more effectively without getting tired. The offices have big executive tables that provide large surface areas for the principal and the deputy principal to work on” (P001).

The views expressed by Participant 1 on the **ergonomic** comfort of chairs and tables in the offices show that Participant 1 was impressed by the quality of furniture in the offices. This is consistent with López-García, García-Herrero, Gutiérrez, and Mariscal (2019) who argue that **ergonomic** factors play a significant role in the health, wellbeing, and productivity of educators (cf. 2.5.1.3). On the contrary,

Grainger, Forest, and Hamilton (2013) maintain that poor ergonomic comfort resulting from poor furniture results in excessive effort, fatigue, and employee discomfort of staff members (cf. 2.5.1.3).

Another aspect of the office environment that was identified by participants related to thermal comfort. According to the participants, the offices of the principal and the deputy principal were installed with air conditioners that provided a favourable temperature for them to execute their duties.

The following figures provide evidence about the thermal comfort in the offices of the principal and the deputy principal.



Figure 6-6: Thermal comfort



Figure 6-7: Thermal comfort

The participants revealed that installing air conditioners in the offices of the principal and the deputy principal enabled them to regulate the office temperature to the required level. The following statement from Participant 2 provides evidence that he regarded thermal comfort as important for wellbeing:

“The principal and the deputy principal’s offices have been installed with air conditioners which help to regulate the temperature conditions of the offices (P002).

The views expressed by participant 2 on the availability of air conditioners in the offices of the principal and the deputy principal seem to provide the physical comfort which is associated with good health. Constant and favourable air temperature has health benefits. Alair (2015) shares the same sentiments that air conditioners purify and circulate the air and thereby reduce the risk of spreading germs in the office (cf. 2.5.1.2). In the same vein, Bluysen (2015) supports that optimal thermal comfort promote job satisfaction, work engagement and job performance of education (cf. 2.5.1.2).

Office machines mentioned by participants as supportive to the wellbeing of educators were the photocopier, RISO, and printer. The following figure depicts the availability of office machines that were perceived as supporting the wellbeing of educators.



Figure 6-8: Office machines

The perceptions of the participants about the office equipment revealed that their availability supported the wellbeing of educators. Participants indicated that educators had access to this office equipment. For

that reason, educators were able to use them to print and duplicate typed documents so that they share them with fellow colleagues or learners.

In support of the above participant 09 has this to say about the office machines found in the administrator's office:

"The office of the administrator is always clean and it has a photocopier, printer, and a RISO machine. Educators have access to these machines, which makes their job easier as typed documents can be printed, duplicated, and distributed to learners or shared with fellow colleagues" (P009).

The statement uttered by the participant suggests that using technological equipment found in the administrator's office makes the work of educators easier. According to Okokongo et al. (2015), availability of teaching and learning resources makes teaching more effect. It can be assumed that if educators are effective in their teaching their wellbeing will be positively affected.

Another aspect of working conditions identified by the participants pertains to the availability of the refrigerator and air conditioner in the staffrooms. The refrigerator and air conditioner are represented by the figures depicted below



Figure 6-9: Refrigerator

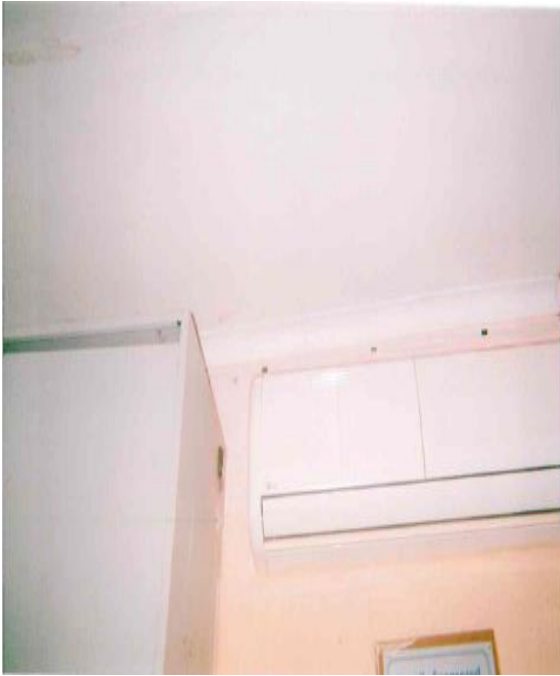


Figure 6-10: Air conditioner see figure 6.6 and 6.7

The perceptions of the participants about the staffroom environment revealed that it promotes a healthy environment for them to do their work. The availability of the refrigerator in the staffroom enabled educators to keep their foodstuff uncontaminated due to the cold environment that prevents foodborne pathogens from contaminating it. Furthermore, educators were able to keep their beverages at the required temperature level.

The following comments from the participants reveal that the availability of refrigerators in the staffrooms contribute to the wellbeing of educators:

“The staffrooms have refrigerators in which educators keep their food uncontaminated and beverages cool” (P003). The refrigerators enable educators to keep their beverages at the required temperature level” (P001).

The statements uttered by the participants about the availability of refrigerators in the staffrooms is consistent with Gallagher, Pauillot, Hoelzer, Tang, Dennis, and Krause (2016) who assert that keeping food in the refrigerator at the temperature of five degrees Celsius or below prevents the contamination of food by foodborne pathogens.

The perception of participants regarding the installation of air conditioners in the staffrooms shows that they were pleased with them. Air conditioners provide a favourable environment for educators to work in as they refresh them when they come back tired from classes. The following statements by the participants provide evidence that they were pleased with the air conditioners installed in the staffrooms:

“All the staffrooms have been installed with air conditioners that provide favourable environments for educators to work in as they refresh them when they come tired from the classrooms (P004); To increase the comfortability of the staffrooms, the SGB has installed the staffrooms with air conditioners” (P006).

The expressions given by participants above suggest that air conditioners in the staffrooms provided a relaxed environment for the educators particularly when the temperature is very high. The results of my findings are consistent with Csobod, Rudnai, and Vaskovi (2010) who maintain that when the thermal environments of school buildings are conducive to work in, the wellbeing of educators improves as well (cf. 2.5.1.2).

The staffroom environment was identified by the participants as one of the aspects that impact the wellbeing of educators.



Figure 6-11: Staffroom condition

Although participants showed several aspects that supported the working environments of educators in the staffrooms, there were other issues of great concern that had been identified. Participants indicated that the physical outlook of the staffrooms was not attractive. Furthermore, participants indicated that

educators did not have adequate staffroom equipment such as steel cabinets that are used to keep their teaching resources and personal belongings safe. This made it difficult for them to keep their staffroom tidy as their teaching resources were lying around the tables. Moreover, the lack of lockable steel cabinets exposed their valuable items to a risk of theft.

Commenting about the physical conditions of educators' staffrooms the participants had this to say:

"Educators have packed their teaching resources in a disorderly manner due to lack of steel cabinets to keep them. This leads to the staffroom looking unattractive (P004); although there are aspects in educators' staffrooms such as air conditioners, refrigerators, etc. that promote the wellbeing of educators, there are many things that still need to be improved. The physical outlook of the staffrooms is unattractive and educators lack steel cabinets to keep their valuable items" (P001).

The expressions uttered by the participants above could suggest that a poor workplace environment resulting from a lack of steel cabinets makes their staffrooms look unattractive and un conducive to work in. Consequently, this could lower the morale of educators as they prefer to work in a healthy work environment. This resonates with a study by Geiger and Pivovarova (2018) with Arizona public school educators that found that educators in schools with good working environments are more job satisfied than the ones working in difficult working environments. Furthermore, schools with good working environments register low attrition rate than those with poor working environments (cf. 2.5.2.4). Similarly, Brown, Charlwood, and Spencer (2012) affirm that workplace attractiveness has a positive effect on the recruitment and sustainment of good employees. Haegerstrand and Knutsson (2019) share the same sentiment that an attractive workplace environment increases job satisfaction and wellbeing of employees, gives them higher levels of work commitment as well as reducing their urge to look for employment elsewhere (cf. 2.5.1.2).

The views of the participants regarding the classroom environments revealed that they were not conducive for teaching and learning. Participants found that the conditions of classrooms exposed both educators and learners to life-threatening risks. The major areas of concern identified by the participants pertained to the dilapidated conditions of classrooms. This includes amongst others, dilapidated roofing, broken ceiling, broken window panes, potholes on the floors, and an electrical system that exposed classroom users to the danger of electrocution.

The figure below depicts the roof conditions of the classrooms at the school.



Figure 6-12: Dilapidated roof

The perceptions of the participants reveal that the roofing system of the school was dilapidated and was on the verge of collapse. The participants described the classroom roofing system as a death trap as the roof trusses were cracking, making it dangerous for the educators and learners to be in the classroom.

The following statements from the participants provided evidence about the condition of roofing at the school:

“The roofs of classrooms are dilapidated and on the verge of collapse. The roof trusses have cracks and nails are no longer attached to timber. Termites are visible on the roofs and they can be easily blown away by the wind (P002); One of the classrooms is no longer in use as it has big ceiling holes all over the roof. This produces an unpleasant smell during rainy seasons that may cause respiratory diseases (P006).

The utterances given by the participants suggest that the roofs of school buildings were a matter of serious concern at the school. It seems that the foul smell during the rainy season might be the result of a leaking roof that caused wetting to roof insulators. Such smell has the potential of triggering health conditions of both educators and learners. Similar sentiments were shared by Simons, Hwang, Fitzgerald, Kielb, and Lin (2010) who argue that the conditions of the school buildings, particularly leaking roofs, have been associated with school absenteeism of both educators and learners. Leaking roofs affect the roof insulators leading to the aggravation of respiratory infections such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, pneumonia, and lung cancer (cf. 2.5.2.2).

The following figure represents the condition of the ceiling in the classrooms.



Figure 6-13: Broken ceiling

The views of the participants about the condition of the ceiling in the classrooms reveal that they were dilapidated. They indicated that the ceiling inside the classrooms and on the verandas was falling apart allowing bats to take hiding in them. The broken ceiling could fall at any time causing injuries to both educators and learners. The broken ceiling has left the electrical system inside the roof bare, exposing the classroom users to the dangers of electric shock. Furthermore, bats taking a hiding in the ceiling produce a foul smell that triggers respiratory ailments in both learners and educators.

The following comments from the participants provide evidence about the conditions of the ceiling in the classrooms:

The falling ceilings in the classrooms leave the electrical supply system dangerous to classroom users as some of the electric cables are dangling (P006); the ceiling is falling apart and it poses danger to the safety of both educators and learners. It also allows noise from the adjacent classrooms to disturb the teaching process (P002); the veranda of the classrooms has its ceiling falling apart, bats hide inside the ceiling of the classrooms. The bats produce a foul smell which causes a health hazard to educators and learners who suffer from respiratory-related ailments (P003).

The expressions given by the participants show that the condition of the ceiling in the classrooms was not conducive for teaching and learning. This could mean that classrooms without ceilings have no sound reduction coefficient and therefore could lead to high noise levels from the adjacent classrooms. This resonates with Barrett, Davis, Zhang, and Barrett (2015) who opined that ceiling in school buildings was

not only meant to conceal and protect the plumbing and electrical systems of the buildings but it enabled the building dwellers to have private conversations as it has high sound reduction coefficient (cf. 2.5.2.2).

Broken windows were also identified by the participants as one aspect that affects the wellbeing of educators. The following figures depict the broken windows at the case school:



Figure 6-14: Broken windows in a classroom

The views of the participants on the conditions of the broken window panes revealed that they contribute negatively to the wellbeing of educators. The participants indicated that the broken window panes in the classrooms could cause injuries to both the educators and learners. In the same breath, broken window panes could steal the full attention of learners during the teaching period as they can see things happening outside. Broken window panes allowed dust to enter the classroom making it dirty. On cold days, broken window panes allow cold air to get into the classroom and learners and educators could be exposed to the extremely cold environment.

The following comments from the participants provide evidence about the condition of window panes in the classrooms:

“Some of the classes in the school have broken window panes, which are a risk to learners and educators as the glass remains may accidentally injure them (P006); windowpanes allow dust to enter into the classrooms and thereby make them look dirty (P005); on cold days both educators and learners are exposed to the cold environment making them susceptible to flu” (P001). Broken window panes invite thieves to access the school buildings stealing and vandalising school properties (P004).

The utterances made by the participants above could suggest that the broken window panes have an adverse effect on the wellbeing of educators. Broken windows invite outsiders and trespassers to access

the school buildings and steal or vandalise the school properties. Furthermore, broken window panes could cause disturbances whilst the educator is teaching. IOL News (2012) shares the same sentiments that broken window panes do not only damage the authentic appearance of the school but can cause a distraction to both educators and learners during teaching time. This would lead to learners obtaining poor results causing educators to experience a sense of job dissatisfaction about their work performance (cf. 2.5.2.2).

The condition of classroom floors was another aspect identified by the participants that had an impact on the wellbeing of educators. The following figure depicts how the floors in the classrooms look like.



Figure 6-15: Potholes on floors

The views of the participants regarding the conditions of floors in classrooms revealed that potholes obstruct educators whilst performing their duties. Participants indicated that the potholes on the classroom floors could injure educators as they move around whilst teaching.

The following statements from Participant 6 provide evidence that potholes on the floors of the classrooms impeded educators whilst teaching:

“Most of the classrooms have potholes which are serious infringements on the movement of educators during teaching. This impedes educators from moving around checking the work of the learners as the holes can cause injuries on educators when they fall in (P006)”.

The comments given by the participant about the potholes on the floors of the classrooms show that potholes harmed job satisfaction and the wellbeing of educators. It seems that participants were implying that potholes could cause serious injuries to both educators and learners as they could step and fall in. This resonates with the report by North Coast Courier (2017) that reveals that at Aldinville Primary School in Groutville the classroom floors had big potholes which were covered by old chalkboards to protect both educators and learners from falling in and thereby sustaining serious injuries (cf. 2.5.2.2).

The electricity supply system was also identified by the participants as a factor that affects the wellbeing of educators. The following figures depict the electricity supply system in the classrooms.



Figure 6-16: Electricity supply system



Figure 6-17: Electricity supply system

The perceptions of participants revealed that the state of the electricity supply system in the classrooms needs serious maintenance. The participants indicated that the falling ceiling damaged the electric supply system leaving the electric wires on the roof dangling. This exposed both educators and learners to the risk of being electrocuted. The electric plugs inside the classrooms had been removed and were no longer functional as a result of acts of vandalism. The general state of the electricity supply system in the classrooms was life-threatening as repairs were not conducted after the acts of vandalism were committed.

The following statements from the participants provide evidence about the general state of the electricity supply system in the classrooms:

“Inside the classrooms, there are electric wires that are dangling as a result of the falling ceiling. The exposed electric wires that dangle on the roof are death traps as educators and learners can be electrocuted” (P006); the electric plugs in the classrooms have been vandalized. The plugs have been removed. The electric wires are bare without insulation at the terminal end. This may lead educators and learners to the danger of electric shock” (P008).

The comments given by the participants show that they were concerned about the safety risks posed by the electricity supply system to both educators and learners. Possibilities are that educators might feel endangered by the electricity supply system that was unsafe as a result of poor maintenance. This is consistent with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (2018) who affirmed that the wellbeing of employees was reduced when they were expected to work in the physical conditions of the workplace that were too dangerous such as exposed wiring, hazardous materials, or asbestos that could expose employees to an unsafe working environment (cf. 2.5.2.2).

The availability of water in the school was another aspect identified by the participants as the factor that promotes the wellbeing of educators. The following figures depict measures taken to ensure the availability of water at the school.



Figure 6-18: The borehole



Figure 6-19: The water tanks

The views of the participants about the availability of water reveal that the school has an adequate supply of water. Participants indicated that the school had a borehole as its water source. Two water tanks have been installed at the school that served as temporary storage for water in case there is electricity load shedding. The water is used for watering the school vegetable garden, flowers, cleaning, and sanitation purposes.

The following comments from the participants provide evidence about the availability of water at the school:

“The school has a borehole as its water source since there is no running water from the municipality (P001); there are two water tanks to ensure that there is adequate water supply. The water is used for watering the vegetable garden, sanitation, and cleaning purposes (P008); educators’ toilet uses underground water for flushing. The water tank next to the toilet is used to store water so that the water is always available for sanitation use” (P003).

The utterances expressed by the participants about the availability of water at the school indicated that the school did not have a shortage of water for drinking and domestic use. This can be applauded as many schools in rural areas have a shortage of water. Using good quality water may reduce educators' absence from school as a result of diseases related to poor water quality. This is consistent with the findings of the study by Komarulzaman, de Jong, and Smit (2019) on the effect of water on absenteeism in Indonesia. The study confirmed that both learners and educators find themselves absent from school as a result of the effects of diarrhoea caused by unsafe water (cf. 2.5.2.3).

In this study, the participants found that sanitation was another aspect associated with the wellbeing of educators. The following figure depicts the sanitation facilities at the school.



Figure 6-20: Sanitation

The views of the participants about sanitation revealed that they were content with certain aspects of it. The participants indicated that school toilets were built from high-quality bricks that did not require plastering. This made the building look more attractive. Consequently, the buildings did not require regular repairs and painting.

The following comment from Participant 9 provides evidence about his view on toilet buildings:

“The toilets are built from high-quality bricks that do not need any plastering. This makes the school look more attractive compared to the toilets erected by cement bricks that require renovations and paintings from time to time” (P009).

The comments given by Participant 6 about the quality of the toilet facilities seem to suggest that they supported the wellbeing of educators. It seems that the participant was implying that having well-designed and good-looking toilet buildings could be an indication that educators were respected and valued. This is consistent with Reeves, Priest, and Poore (2012) who confirm that good design, layout, and choices of finishes and fittings made school toilets look attractive, admirable, safe, and durable with low maintenance. Good-looking toilets encourage users to value themselves as well as their facilities (cf. 2.5.2.3).

Although there were certain aspects in the area of sanitation that supported healthy school environments, data obtained from individual and focus group interviews as well as the photovoices revealed that there were areas of great concern about sanitation. This pertains to the cleanliness and maintenance of the school toilet facilities as well as the areas surrounding the toilet facilities. There was also a shortage of toilets for educators as males and females were sharing a toilet.

The following figures depict the conditions of the toilets at the school:



Figure 6-21: Dirty learner toilet



Figure 6-22: Dirty educator toilet

The views of the participants about the toilet facilities reveal that both the flushing toilets (used by educators) and pit toilets (used by learners) were untidy and poorly maintained. Participants indicated that the cleanliness and the general upkeep of both the learners' and educators' toilets were in an unacceptable state. They indicated that the floors of the toilets were filthy making it difficult for educators to use them. The floors of learners' toilets were covered with urine. Furthermore, there were papers soaked in it and the environment of the toilet was smelly. This made it unbearable for both educators and learners to relieve themselves. Participants indicated that using unhygienic toilets could subject learners and educators to the risk of contaminating infectious diseases.

The following comments from the participants provide evidence about the conditions of the toilet facilities at the school:

“Although educators use flushing toilets, they are dirty most of the time stripping them of their dignity and respect (P003); The toilets seats of learners' toilets are very dirty and unhygienic which subjects them to the risk of infection by various diseases (P007); there is a shortage of toilets for educators as we all share one toilet (P003); learners' toilets are characterized by an unpleasant smell and it is not desirable to enter (P004); learners' toilets are very dirty and there is urine on the floor. Moreover, some papers are soaked in the urine making it unbearable for one to relieve oneself (P010); both learners' and educators' toilets are in a bad state; although we have good quality toilets, the school does not have enough cleaners. As a result, they are not in good condition for use. The department does not allow us to use the money for norms and standards to appoint cleaners hence this untidiness” (P001).

The comments made by the participants about the condition of the school toilets suggested that the dirty and unhygienic toilets could be the breeding haven for germs which posed a health risk to toilet users. This is supported by Wu, Lam, Chan, Lam, Zhou, Xu, Sun, and Ho (2019) who affirm that it is bacteria and germs in toilets that infect human bodies. Clean and hygienic toilets prevent the spread of novel infectious diseases and the reduction of common respiratory, diarrheal as well as gastrointestinal illnesses. These illnesses could harm the health and wellbeing of educators. They also contribute to the absenteeism and loss of workdays by educators (cf. 2.5.2.3).

Poor toilet maintenance was also identified by participants as an aspect that affects the wellbeing of educators. The figures below depict the poorly maintained toilet facilities.



Figure 6-23: Poorly maintained toilet



Figure 6-24: Poorly maintained toilet

The perceptions of participants regarding the maintenance of the toilets revealed that they were discontent with how the school toilets were maintained. Participants indicated that the flushing toilets used by educators had leaking plumbing systems and the toilet cisterns were without lids. The roofing of learners' toilets had loose corrugated irons that could be easily blown away during stormy weather. Poor maintenance of toilet facilities could be a death trap to toilet users as they could collapse whilst using them.

The following statements from the participants provide evidence that they were disgruntled by how the toilets are maintained:

“The plumbing system for educators' toilets is leaking and there are no lids on the cisterns (P010); learners' toilets are appalling and the corrugated irons on the roof are loose to an extent that it can be easily blown away by the wind as the nails are no longer attached to the timber. If the school toilets are not properly maintained, it may turn to be a death trap for the toilet users as they could collapse and kill or injure them” (P007).

The statements uttered by the participants about the poor maintenance of the toilets seem to suggest that it harms the wellbeing of educators. This could mean that poorly maintained toilets were not only uncomfortable to use, but they were also a death trap as they could collapse whilst using them. This resonates with the report by Mail & Guardian (2018) that was entitled “South African schools' toilet facilities: A shame and disgrace”. The report presented a fatal incident in which Viwe Jali, a five-year-old girl drowned in a pit toilet at her Eastern Cape School. The incident was preceded by the death of

Michael Komape, a five-year-old boy from Limpopo who fell into the school pit toilet and died in 2014. Such situations might affect the wellbeing of educators as they have to deal with the trauma that they experienced.

The other aspect of the working conditions identified by the participant that has an impact on the wellbeing of educators was the toilet surroundings.

The following picture depicts the environment surrounding the toilet facilities of learners:



Figure 6-25: Toilet surroundings

The views of the participants about the surroundings of the school toilets showed that it harmed the wellbeing of educators. Participants indicated that the area surrounding the toilets was covered with thick grass which was a concern for the safety of toilet users. The place was bushy and covered with grass and shrubs that could be a potential site for snakes and criminals to hide in. Commenting on the bushy area surrounding the school toilets, participants made the following utterances:

“There is a deserted toilet which was used by the boys. The toilet is surrounded by grass and shrubs which are potential harbouring places for snakes and other dangerous reptiles as boys sometimes use it when their toilets are too filthy (P007); the thick grass surrounding the toilets can be used as a hiding place for people with bad intentions who intend to rape, kidnap or sell drugs to the learners” (P005).

School surroundings were another aspect of the school environment identified by the participants as a factor that has an impact on the wellbeing of educators. The following figures depict the yard on the school premises.



Figure 6-26: Schoolyard



Figure 6-27: Schoolyard

In this study, it emerged from the participants that the school had a big yard. The participants indicated that the big yard was of utmost importance for the promotion of healthy school environments for

educators as it could be used for the erection of new facilities such as the information technology centre, ablution facilities, and sporting facilities which were currently lacking at the school. Moreover, the yard could be used for the construction of the new classrooms.

The following remarks from the participant painted a picture about their perception of the big yard at the school:

“The school has a very big yard. The big yard is advantageous for the new school infrastructural development that will promote the wellbeing of educators such as the information technology centre, ablution facilities, sporting facilities and additional classes that are currently lacking” (P003).

It seems that the remarks given by the participant concerning the availability of the big yard indicated that they were aspiring that new physical facilities with new technological equipment ought to be constructed.

In this study, participants identified landscaping as one of the aspects of the school environment that promotes the wellbeing of educators. Participants indicated that the scenery of the schoolyard that was covered with lawn and had flowerbeds supported the healthy school environment. The following figure depicts the landscape at the entrance of the school.



Figure 6-28: School landscape

The following comments from the participants provide evidence about their views on school landscaping:

“One can realize that the school entrance is so invitational and attractive because of the flowers grown on either side of the gate. Next to the school entrance, there is a water tank which stores water for watering the flowers and a school vegetable garden. There is a lawn grown in front of the staffrooms and administrative office. This makes the school more invitational (P004); there is a rockery surrounded by the lawn on which flowers are to be grown to make the landscaping of the school look more attractive” (P008).

The utterances made by the participants indicate that they were pleased with the landscape condition of the school that was covered with lawn and had flowerbeds. It seems that participants were implying that the attractive landscapes of the school provided healthy school environments that increased the wellbeing levels of educators. Bryant (2014) shares the same sentiments that looking at the school landscape with trees and plants through the window contributes to an improved quality of life as it lowers the blood level and reduces the effects of stress (cf. 2.5.2.1). The landscape covered by lawn absorbs carbon dioxide and breaks it into carbon and oxygen making oxygen readily available for respiration. Moreover, a landscape with lawn and trees reduces temperature level by 20 to 30 percent compared to asphalt or pavement surface (Bryant, 2014) cf. 2.5.2.1). This is important in Limpopo in a province where temperatures can be higher than 40 degrees during summer months.

Although participants were pleased with the portion of the yard covered with lawn and flowerbeds, they were not happy that the larger parts of the yard were bare or covered with thick grass. The part of the schoolyard that was covered with scrap metal materials made the schoolyard to look careless and untidy. The figure below depicts the untidy yard of the school that was covered with scrap metal materials:



Figure 6-29: Scrap metals

Interactions with the participants revealed that they were discontented with the unattractiveness of the schoolyard. They indicated that the larger part of the schoolyard was covered with long, thick grass. An articulation by Participant 3 supported the fact that the yard is unattractive as a result of long thick grass and shrubs in the schoolyard.

The following comment from Participant 3 gives the perception the participant has about the long grass and shrubs in the school:

“Part of the schoolyard is covered with thick grasses and shrubs. This posed the danger of snake bites particularly on hot days as snakes prefer to stay in buildings because they are cooler” (P003).

Furthermore, Participant 6 indicated that there were broken chalkboards and furniture that have been thrown all over the schoolyard that also make the schoolyard look unattractive. Commenting about the unwanted materials thrown all over the schoolyard, Participant 6 had this to say:

“There are stacks of unwanted and broken furniture that were constantly laying along the palisade fence. Broken chalkboards are also thrown here. This makes the schoolyard looks ugly” (P006).

The expressions given by Participants 3 and 6 above suggest that the part of the schoolyard covered with tall grasses may pose safety risks to school users as sharp metal objects were laying around that can injure them. This is supported by Posner (2000) who argues that sharp objects on the schoolyard

could cause severe injury to educators and learners to an extent that it can result in permanent loss of sensation and movement (cf. 2.5.2.5).

Another area of concern regarding the unattractive schoolyard pertained to littering. The figure below provides evidence that there is littering at the school:



Figure 6-30: Littered yard

The views of the participants about littering reveal that it could harm the wellbeing of educators. They indicated that certain parts of the schoolyard were full of litter making the appearance of the schoolyard look ugly.

The following statements share the views of Participant 5 about littering at the school:

“The yard has papers flying all over. Some of them are trapped on the palisade fence that is erected between buildings. This is caused by the fact that the school has a shallow refuse pit to keep papers in” (P005).

This attestation aligns with what has been articulated by Participant 1 who indicated that the problem of littering could be solved by ensuring that a deep refuse pit is dug so that all litter could be thrown in and be kept there even during windy conditions. Commenting about littering at the school Participant 1 commented as follows:

“The issue of littering could be solved by ensuring that a deep refuse pit is dug so that litter can be thrown there. The deep pit would prevent litter from spilling out causing the schoolyard to look unattractive” (P001).

As a way of improving the general outlook of the schoolyard, Participant 1 further suggested that planting lawn and increasing vegetation on the schoolyard can create an invitational appearance to the schoolyard. Commenting on how the outlook of the school can be improved, Participant 1 had this to say:

“To improve the outlook of the schoolyard that is bare and desolate, we need to grow a lawn and increase the number of trees in the school premises” (P001).

The statements expressed by the participants indicate that growing lawn and green plants had a positive effect on the wellbeing of educators. This is supported by Kopeva, Khrapko, and Ivanova (2017) who argue that lawn is an important part of any green space and growing it as part of the school landscape promotes wellbeing. A dense green landscape has calming and therapeutic effects on learners and school personnel (cf. 2.5.1.1).

In this study, the participants indicated that although the yard in front of the educators’ staffrooms was attractive as it is covered with lawn and flowers; there were other parts of the school that were spoiled by rubble. During the focus group interview participants indicated that the front part of the educators’ staffrooms had rubble. This aspect impeded the easy movement of educators and posed a risk of injury to both the learners and educators. The following figure depicts the rubble found in front of the educators’ staffrooms:



Figure 6-31: Rubble

The following comments from the participants provide evidence that participants were concerned about the rubble in front of the staffrooms:

“In front of the educators’ staffroom, rubbles are laying all around. This exposed educators to the risk of their legs being injured” (P001).

The statement expressed by Participant 1 seems to suggest that cleaning and maintaining the schoolyard supports the wellbeing of educators. This is consistent with Barrett and Barrett (2016) who argue that the school should safeguard the health and safety of all members of the school community. This could be attained by ensuring that the schoolyard is maintained on a routine and preventative basis.

In this study, participants identified the parking of educators’ cars as one of the aspects that constrained the wellbeing of educators. The following figures depict the place where educators parked their cars:



Figure 6-32: Car parking



Figure 6-33: Car parking

Interaction with the participants indicated that their cars were the most valuable assets that they own. They indicated that the environment in which they parked their cars was not conducive as there were no carports or garages at the school to keep their cars safe during school hours. Only a few cars are accommodated in the shades of trees that were found at the school. As a result, educators resorted to parking their cars all over the schoolyard exposing them to direct sunlight which damages the paintwork of these cars. Participants further indicated that learners cause scratches to their cars whilst parked in the schoolyard. Participants reveal that when they wash their cars at home, they find scratches caused by learners and they had to repair them at their own cost.

Sharing their sentiments about the environment in which educators' cars were parked, Participant 1 and Participant 7 commented as follows:

“Our cars are the most valuable assets that we own. Due to the lack of proper parking, they are exposed to many risks of damage. There are no carports or garages at the school for the safekeeping of our cars. During breaks, learners play around our cars which could result in windscreens being damaged (P001); At times when you wash the car at home, you find that the car had been scratched by learners and one had to repair those damages. During the summer season, we are bound to park our cars in the sun as there are very few trees to provide shade for our cars, and this results in the paint of our cars being damaged” (P007).

It seems that the participants were not pleased with the parking environments of their cars. Participants' views seemed to imply that keeping their cars in carports or garages reduces the chance of damaging the interior and exterior condition of these cars.

6.4.3 The role of principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators and healthy school environments

This section will first present data gathered on the role of principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators and then give an account of the role in promoting a healthy school environment.

6.4.3.1 Role in enhancing wellbeing

In this study, it emerged that school principals play an important role in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. These roles included among others, facilitation of the implementation of wellness programmes, close relationships with educators, facilitation of professional development on wellness, and urgency in decision making and changes.

Developing partnership and collaboration with external stakeholders and community members

The role of the principal in developing partnerships and collaborations with external stakeholders and community members to access resources could assist in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. It was clear that the school principal regarded the services provided by the local businesses as of utmost importance.

The utterances below show the importance of developing social partnership and collaboration with local business entities:

“As a school, we collaborate and partner with local businesses to access resources for the school. For example, we request donations from the local businesses to support us with the construction of sporting facilities that enable both educators and learners to live active lives. During fun days, educators use these sporting facilities to play volleyball, soccer and netball”.

The expression by the school principal suggests that collaboration between the school and the external stakeholders such as local businesses assists in accessing resources that promote the wellbeing of educators. This is consistent with a study by Francis, Blue-Banning, Turnbull, Hill, Haines and Gross (2015) who conducted a study on strong school-community partnerships in schools. The study found that schools benefitted from increased resources, support and relationships that result from the development of trusting school community partnerships (cf. 3.3.3).

Close relationships with educators

The issue of close relationships with educators was mentioned by the principal as imperative in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. It was indicated that a close relationship between the principal and educators contributes to improved job performance. A close relationship between the principal and educators prevails in situations where there is an atmosphere of trust and respect that allow educators to confide to the principal when faced with challenges.

The following statements by the school principal highlight the importance of a close relationship between the principal and the staff members:

“There is a need to create a close relationship between educators and the principal. When educators have a close relationship with the principal, their job performance improves as they do not want to disappoint the principal. A close relationship between the principal and educators is enhanced when there is an atmosphere of trust and respect among them. This can be achieved when school principals create a safe space that enables educators to confide in them”.

The comments made by the school principal suggested that a close relationship between the principal and the educators takes place when there is an atmosphere of trust and respect. Where the principal creates a safe space, educators will confide in him. This resonates with Brown, Gray, McHardy, Taylor (2015) who assert that educators working in schools where there is an atmosphere of trust and respect are more likely to experience a sense of belonging, job satisfaction, with little intention to leave the school (cf. 2.7.3).

Building healthy staff relationships and motivating them to work together is one of the roles of school principals. For example, school principals should build these relationships by creating platforms that enable educators to interact. Commenting on building staff relationships, the principal said:

“As a school, we organize fun days where educators come together and engage in various sporting activities such as playing soccer, netball, and volleyball. This is an initiative of each school, educators always look forward to fun days. This enables educators to strengthen relationships and also creates a platform for team building”.

The expressions made by the school principal suggest that building staff relationships may assist in improving the wellbeing of educators. This resonates with Blum (2007) who found that a positive relationship between the school principal and educators is very fundamental in fostering the wellbeing of educators as this enables them to enjoy their work and increase their willingness to contribute to the positive learning environment of the school (cf. 2.7.3).

However, there were challenges to the formation and maintenance of staff relationships. Expressing his views about the challenges, the principal commented as follows:

“Some of the educators do not show any interest in promoting healthy staff relationships. For example, during fun days where educators are expected to have fun together and perform activities together, some of them absent themselves from school to avoid social interaction on these days.”

The utterances above suggest that some staff members do not understand the importance of building and maintaining good relationships among staff members. For that reason, school principals have to play a crucial role in encouraging educators to work together so that they can develop positive staff relationships. Supporting the above assertion, Pozo-Munoz, Salvador-Ferrer, Alonso-Morillejo and Martoz-Mendez, (2008) show that principals who fail to motivate educators to work together by developing social support systems are prone to experience professional disengagement (cf. 2.7.3).

Facilitation of professional development of educators on educator wellness

The facilitation of professional development of educators was mentioned by the school principal as one of the key roles of the school principal. It was indicated that it is important for school principals to create opportunities for educators to acquire skills that would enable them to adapt to changes taking place in the education system. Such skills include problem-solving skills, communication skills, etc. Commenting on the professional development of educators, the school principal said:

“One of my key roles as a school principal is the professional development of educators. Due to the ever-increasing changes in the education system, educators should be developed to enable them to adapt to the changes. Such development will increase the effectiveness of educators”.

The comments made by the school principal suggested that the professional development of educators plays an important role in equipping educators with the necessary skills that enhance educator performance and wellbeing. This is supported by Buchanan (2012) who shows that educator development helps educators to adapt to the changes taking place in the education system (cf. 2.7.1).

The school principal indicated that some of the aspects of professional development that they engage their educators in, include organizing workshops on emotional management where staff members are trained how to manage their emotions. Commenting on professional activities that educators are subjected to, the principal said:

“There are several professional activities that we conduct in our school. For example, organizing school workshops to train educators on how to control their emotions”.

The utterances by the school principal show the importance of developing educators on issues of emotional intelligence to able them to cope with negative emotions. Consistent with these findings, Petrovici and Dobrescu (2013) revealed that school principals should ensure that educators are trained on issues of emotional intelligence and identification so that they can cope with negative emotions in the workplace (cf. 2.7.4).

Although schools engage educators in professional development programmes, there are certain challenges that they encounter, for example, lack of willingness on the part of educators to participate in professional development programmes, the attitude of educators towards workshops as most of them are conducted towards the end of the school day when they are tired as well as insufficient workshops that deal specifically with educator wellbeing.

The following statements provide evidence about the challenges experienced when conducting professional development programmes:

“There are several challenges that we experienced when conducting professional development programmes. These challenges include among others lack of willingness by some educators to participate in these programmes leading to others feeling discouraged. There are very few workshops that deal specifically with educator wellbeing. The last and most important challenge pertains to lack of time.

Although there are several challenges pertaining to attendance of workshops for professional development of educators, such as lack of willingness to partake in professional development programmes and the insufficient number of workshops that address educator wellbeing, the school principal seemed to suggest that lack of time was the main challenge. Darling-Hammond, Hylar and Gardner (2017) suggest that for development programmes to be effective, they should last for weeks, months, or even academic years, with ongoing engagement in learning by educators (cf.2.7.1). These authors suggest continuous professional development instead of a once off. Although this is important the issue of time need to be addressed at school level.

Involving educators in decision making and changes

The principal highlighted the importance of the involvement of educators in matters of their wellbeing. As a result of their involvement in issues affecting their wellbeing at the school, they feel valued and appreciated. In addition, they execute their duties in a meaningful way.

The following statement is evidence that educators who are involved in decision-making feel valued and appreciated:

“When educators are involved in decision making they feel valued and appreciated leading to a positive impact on their work. Involving educators in decision-making enables educators to own the decision and thereby strive to execute their duties in a more meaningful way. Furthermore, they develop a stronger sense of work commitment and problem-solving skills that leads to the promotion of their wellbeing”.

The comment by the school principal seems to suggest that educators who are involved in decision-making are more committed to their work. This is consistent with the study by Sarafidou and Chatziioannidis (2013) with a sample of 143 primary schools in Greece that found that educators involved in decision making have high levels of job commitment and job satisfaction (cf. 2.7.2).

6.4.3.2 Role in promoting healthy school environments

In this study, it emerged that school principals play an important role in the promotion of healthy school environments. These roles include among others, facilitation and implementation of educator wellness programmes, vision building and sharing as well as the involvement of educators and learners in the implementation of programmes.

Facilitation and implementation of educator wellness programmes

Facilitation and implementation of educator wellness programmes were mentioned by the school principal as roles of the school principal. The principal made mention of several wellness programmes that are included in health education programmes (LO and Life Skills) such as good eating habits, the importance of maintaining normal body weight were mentioned by the school principal. However, these wellness programmes focus much on learners than on the wellbeing of educators. Commenting on the wellness programmes implemented in their school, the principal said:

“We have several wellness programmes that we run in health education, stress management programme as well as recreational programme. Other wellness programmes are included in health education programmes (LO and Life Skills) such as good eating habits, the importance of maintaining normal body weight. Although these programmes are wellness-related, they do not focus much on the wellbeing of educators but more on learners. As a result, only Life Orientation and Life Skills educators benefit from the information as these wellness topics are found in Life Orientation and Life Skills curriculum”.

The comments made by the school principal shows that school principals play an important role in the implementation of school wellness programmes. Although the school participates in wellness programmes, the majority of them are learner-orientated with little focus on educator wellbeing (cf. 3.3.4.2).

The issue of the Educator Assistance Program (EAP) was mentioned as one of the programmes that was meant to support the wellbeing of educators. The principal elaborated on how the programme works, its intent to support educators, problems with confidentiality, and his role. Some of the benefits associated with the use of EAPs include among others resolving personal problems that affect performance, such as alcohol abuse, frequent absenteeism, financial and marital problems. Commenting about EAPs the school principal said:

“If properly implemented, employee assistance programmes (EAPs) can play a key role in addressing work-related problems among educators as they are key in resolving personal problems affecting the performance of educators. For example, EAPs can be used to assist troubled educators who are experiencing poor work performance resulting from such behaviours as alcohol or substance abuse, financial and marital problems. Educators can receive personalised counselling”.

The comments made by the principal about the EAPs show that EAPs can be used as an intervention strategy to deal with challenges experienced by educators that are experiencing life problems and personal matters. This can be applauded as it may provide troubled educators to get the necessary assistance they require (cf. 3.3.4.3).

Providing support to educators experiencing life challenges and personal problems was mentioned as one of the roles of school principals in the implementation of EAPs to troubled educators. Educators must be able to approach the principal when they experience challenges. They should also encourage educators to speak up before the problem become more challenging. Commenting on his role in implementation, the principal said:

“My role as a school principal is to give educators support so that they are able to deal with the problems they are facing. I also create an invitational space that encourages educators to approach me so that we discuss the challenges that they are facing”.

The comments made by the school principal seem to suggest that school principals play a crucial role in the health of educators. By adopting health promotion leadership, they can assist educators to cope with health-related challenges that they face. The results of my study are congruent to the study by Bregenzer, Milfelner, Žižek, and Jiménez (2020) who assert that health-promoting leaders can influence the health of employees directly or indirectly. Regarding the former, leaders can influence by encouraging them to participate in health promotion activities (cf. 3.4.4).

The school principal highlighted some of the challenges he experiences in implementing EAP programmes. These challenges relate to the unwillingness of troubled educators to cooperate with the principal when referrals are to be initiated. In addition, the district office takes a long time to refer an

educator to rehabilitation centres or to give them counselling on issues that affect them. Expressing his challenges with assisting troubled educators the principal commented as follows:

“The challenges I face when assisting troubled educators to access the necessary help pertains to their unwillingness to cooperate when referrals are made. Some just decide not to honour the appointments with district officials. This is caused by the fact that the district office takes a long time to organise rehabilitation centres for the troubled educators”.

The statements by the school principal seem to suggest that that the Department of Education is not taking educator wellness seriously as it works at a snail pace in dealing with challenges faced by educators. In this regard, the Employee Assistance Professional Association (EAPA) (2005:45) recommends that “the Head of Department should allocate adequate human and financial resources to implement health promotion programmes and, where appropriate, form partnership with other departments, organisations and individuals who are able to assist with promotional health programmes” (cf. 3.3.4.3).

Vision Building and vision sharing

There are two responsibilities mentioned by the school principal, namely, vision sharing and vision building. The vision of the school on the wellbeing of educators is to ensure that educators flourish in their jobs. The principal mentioned that the building of the school vision requires the engagement of various stakeholders such as learners, parents, educators, and the whole school community. Commenting on the building of shared vision, the principal said:

“To enhance the wellbeing of educators, the vision of the school should be built based on the collaboration between educators, learners, parents and the entire members of the school community”.

The utterances by the school principal seem to suggest that building a shared vision depends on the collaboration of all members of the school community. This is consistent with Mombourquette (2017) who accentuate that formulation of shared vision should be built from a collaborative process that includes educators, learners, parents, and the entire school community (cf. 3.4.1).

Having a vision that is not shared with all the members of the community is meaningless as they would not know what the intention of the school is and will not be able to participate. There is a need for all members of the school community to know and live according to this vision. For that reason, the vision of the school should be communicated to all members of the school community in a formal meeting and be encouraged to live according to its expectations. Commenting on how the vision is shared, the principal said:

“After building a shared vision, we hold a meeting with members of the school community to share it. This is very important because it enables them to understand the vision and be able live according to the shared vision as we keep on reminding them to live according to its expectations”.

The utterances made by the principal seem to suggest that vision building should be a group effort. All members of the school community should be aware of it and be communicated to all. The findings of my study resonate with Mombourquette (2017) who espouses that a good school vision is formulated from a collaborative and inclusive development process that includes educators, learners, parents and the entire school community. Collaborators are involved from the formulation of a vision through to the implementation of operational plans, monitoring and evaluation. The vision should be communicated to all members of the organisation (cf. 3.4.1).

Certain challenges were highlighted by the school principal in the building and sharing of the school’s vision. For example, since the building of the shared vision is a group effort, some members of the school community dominate the discussions leading to others withdrawing from expressing their inputs. As a result of this, some members of the school community do not own the shared vision as they feel that they were not actively involved in the formulation of the shared vision. Very few parents are willing to participate in school activities. The following comments provide evidence of the challenges faced when formulating and sharing the school’s vision:

“The major challenge that we experience when formulating and sharing the vision of the school relates to the domination of a certain fraction of the school community in the discussions. This domination leads to certain members to withdraw as they consider their voices not being heard. Very few parents are willing to participate, this results in very few members of the school community knowing and understanding the school vision”.

The remarks by the school principal on the challenges encountered in vision building and sharing show that all members of the school community should be involved in vision building and sharing. Furthermore, school principals must see to it that in vision building all categories of the school community are given equal opportunity to contribute towards vision building and sharing. This would enable all members of the school community to own the vision and embrace it as their own. Consistent with the above, Mombourquette (2017) concurs, adding that a good school vision is formulated from a collaborative and inclusive development process that includes educators, learners, parents and the entire school community (cf. 3.4.1).

Involvement of educators in the implementation of programmes

Involving educators in the implementation of school health promotion programmes was mentioned as one of the crucial roles of the school principal as they are role players in the formation of the school health committee. Educators are involved by being elected as members of the health-promotion committees such as the safety and school health committees. On how the principal involves educators in the implementation of health promotion programmes, he said:

“Educators are major role players in the formation and running of school health promotion committees instituted in schools such as the school health and safety committees. For these committees to be effective, school principals should see to it that educators involved are willing to participate, know their roles and policies on health promotion”.

The statements uttered by the principal may suggest that educators play a salient role in implementing health promotion programmes. They are also involved in the formation of health promotion committees. To ensure that these committees are functional and effective, school principals must train them to know their roles and the health promotion policies that guide them in running health promotion programmes (cf. 3.3.2).

However, the principal cited some challenges in involving educators in health promotion programmes. For example, school health promotion committees are sometimes not functional. This is due to educators’ lack of knowledge of the policies guiding the implementation of health promotion programmes as well as their unwillingness to participate in school health promotion programmes. Commenting on the challenges faced in involving educators in the implementation of health promotion programmes, the principal had this to say:

“The challenges we encounter in involving educators in health promotion programmes include educators’ unwillingness to participate in these programmes due to their other responsibilities and teaching load. Secondly, educators are ignorant about policies that direct the health promotion programmes”.

The comments made by the school principal seem to imply that health promotion programmes are unsuccessful because educators lack knowledge about the policies that direct health promotion programmes. This resonates with the study by Ingemarson, Rubenson, Bodin and Guldbrandsson (2014) who emphasises that educators can implement health promotion programmes if they possess knowledge of health promotion policies (cf. 3.3.2).

The principal cited his role in supporting educators in the implementation of school health promotion programmes as ensuring that educators are not forced to be committee members of health promotion committees, but they are encouraged to willingly participate. In addition, school principals should ensure that educators are trained in policies that guide the implementation of health promotion programmes. The

following comments were made by the school principal in supporting members of health promotion committees:

“My role as a school principal is to ensure that I support them by ensuring that they receive training on policies that govern the implementation of health promotion programmes. Furthermore, I have to see to it that those elected in health promotion committees are not forced as this often leads them to become passive members of the committees”

The comments made by the school principal seem to suggest that involving educators in school health promotion is of utmost importance in the implementation of school health promotion programmes. This implies that educators should know school health promotion policies to ensure that the programme is well implemented. This is in line with Obembe, Osungbade and Ademokun (2016) who elucidate that when educators are aware of school health promotion policies, the success of school health promotion programmes is more likely to be guaranteed (cf. 3.3.2).

With regards to the involvement of learners, the school principal showed that learners also play a crucial role in the promotion of school health promotion programmes.

The principal's role is to ensure that learners are trained and guided as change agents of health promotion programmes. However, this depends on how they are involved in health promotion activities. A principal has to see to it that learners are involved in the planning of school health promotion programmes and engage them in health promotion activities such as cleaning campaigns, planting of trees, or school garden projects, etc. where they are told what to do. To ensure the school health promotion programmes are successful, (a) learners should be involved in the planning of health promotion programmes, (b) a peer education approach should be adopted where learners encourage other learners to be more involved in the implementation of the school health programmes.

On how school principals involve learners in the implementation of school health promotion programmes the principal said:

“Learners, like educators play a crucial role in implementing school health promotion programmes if they can be trained and guided accordingly. They should be involved in the planning of school health promotion programmes so that they take ownership of this programme.”

The utterances by the school principal suggest that learners play a salient role in school health promotion programmes provided they are well guided and trained. The involvement of learners in school health programmes should not only be confined to cleaning campaigns and tree planting. Learners should be involved in planning by adopting a peer education approach that encourages learners to gain more

interest in health promotion activities. This resonates with McNab and Kasangaki (2012) who assert that treating learners as recipients of health programmes could result in learners isolating themselves from these programmes (cf. 3.3.2).

6.5 Evaluation of the implementation of strategies developed to enhance the wellbeing of educators.

As indicated in Chapters 1 and 5, the strategy of inquiry used in this study is participatory action research (PAR). It is based on the understanding that people should be aware of their problems and should seek to decide on the action to be taken that would culminate in their emancipation (Okeke & van Wyk, 2015). As PAR aims to transform social realities through participants' engagement and insight so that the existing situation is transformed to achieve the most desired one (Bergold & Thomas, 2012) the participants endeavoured to change the factors in the school environment that were regarded as detrimental to the wellbeing of educators into those that promote it.

First, participants were requested to identify aspects of the school environment that had an impact on the wellbeing of educators through photovoice, they shared their perceptions in a focus group interview. In the focus group interview that was scheduled for action plans, the participants were reminded of the factors they perceived as having a negative impact on the wellbeing of teachers. After that, they had to prioritise those aspects that they thought to have the most impact on the wellbeing of educators and were feasible to solve. The participants came up with five aspects that they prioritised and developed strategies to solve them. These aspects were: Littering in the schoolyard; cleaning of the school toilets, repair of broken windows, repair of potholes on classroom floors as well as increasing the number of toilets at the school. Every aspect of the school environment that was prioritised was assigned to responsible persons as well as the time frame for completion of the responsibility assigned as indicated in 5.4.

We (the researcher and the participants) developed intervention strategies to address various aspects of the school environment that were prioritised and used certain criteria and processes to set priorities. A process is a series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular end (MacMillan Dictionary, 2002). The process followed was participatory and inclusive of all participants, as they represented all educators who were affected by or concerned with the issue of the wellbeing of educators.

Priority refers to something that is more important than other things and that needs to be done or dealt with first (MacMillan Dictionary, 2002). The MacMillan English Dictionary (2002) refers to criteria as principles or standards by which something may be judged or decided. Three criteria were used to examine the set of issues, namely, aspects that needed (1) maintenance through norms and standards (schools get funding from the department for maintenance and school administration) (2) those that needed donations from business entities as well as (3) those that could be addressed without funding. Each criterion is discussed based on its successes or failure.

6.5.1 Criterion 1: Aspects that were to be addressed through the Norms and Standards Fund.

The Norms and Standards Fund is the money that is allocated to the school to run its daily expenses.

Two out of the five aspects of the school environment that were prioritised had been classified under this criterion, namely, the repair of potholes on the floor and broken window panes in the classrooms.

6.5.1.1 Repair of potholes on classroom floors.

According to the participants, the repair of potholes on the floors of classrooms was prioritised as it posed a threat of injuries for both educators and learners, thereby, affecting physical wellbeing. Secondly, it restricted the movement of educators during teaching as they had to move around giving individualised assistance to learners. To repair potholes on the floors of classrooms, participants delegated this responsibility to the members of the SGB (cf. 5.4). This was informed by the fact that the SGB is responsible for managing the school finances, so during their meetings, they could persuade other members that were not part of the project to support the funding of this project. This project was given a month to complete, which was the month of February (cf. 5.4), after a consensus about the budget by the school community. This time frame was informed by the fact that at the end of November every year, the Department of Education deposit the second budget allocation of the Norms and Standards Fund into the school coffers. So by February, the school would still be having enough funds to fund this project, even if it was not budgeted for, as schools are encouraged to budget for emergencies. Of the 20 classrooms in the school, 5 had potholes that needed repair. The school spent R3 900.00 on this project. When the researchers visited the school to evaluate the implementation of the strategy on the 4th of May 2021, it was found that the repairs were already done. The following figure provides evidence of the repaired potholes on the floors of the classrooms:

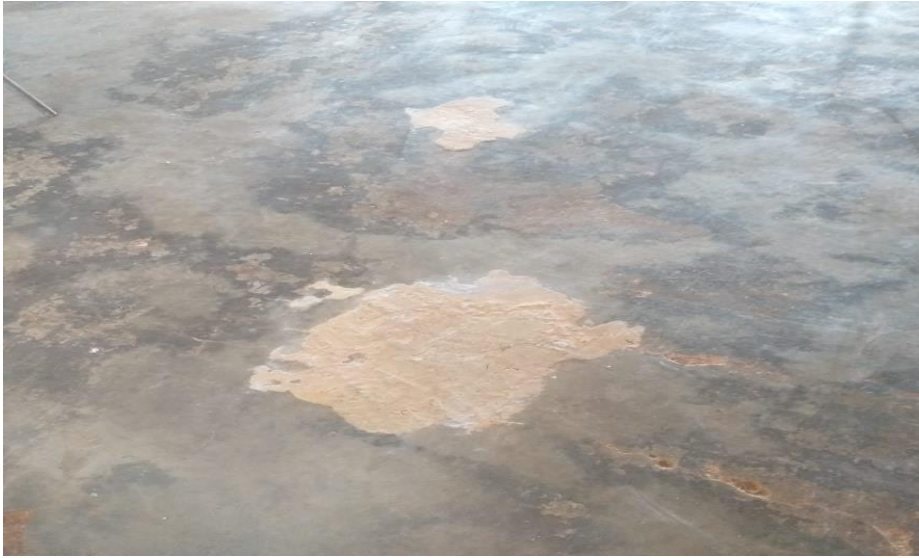


Figure 6-34: Repaired potholes



Figure 6-35: Repaired potholes

The figures above depict the floors of classes after the repair of potholes.

The next project in this category was that of repairing broken windows.

6.5.1.2 Repair of broken window panes

The participants prioritised the repair of broken window panes for two main reasons; firstly, the glass that remains on the window frame may cause injuries to both educators and learners. Secondly, the winter season (May, June, and July) was approaching and both learners and educators could be exposed to the extremely cold environment. Both these factors had a negative impact on the physical wellbeing of educators. The SGB was again tasked with the responsibility of repairing the window panes using the norms and standards fund. The repairs were scheduled for March and April 2021 just before winter started. The chairperson of the SGB and the secretary (a teacher who was an SGB member), counted the windows to be repaired. This was important in order for them to get a quotation for the repairs. There were 87 broken windows in the school, with an estimated cost of R5 850.00. The budget for this project was approved at the end of March and the project started in May, as there were delays pertaining to decisions about contractors. During the evaluation visit, on the 4th of May 2021, the researchers found that repairs were still in progress but it was finalised in June, a month later than planned. The figure below bears evidence of the repairs:



Figure 6-36: Repaired window panes



Figure 6-37: Repaired window panes

In Figure 6.36 all the window panes which were broken were repaired. In Figure 6.37 only two window panes that were broken were repaired.

It was agreed that the projects could run concurrently as they were not implemented by the same group of researchers. To that end, the category of projects that were to be addressed through donations started with their first phase in November 2020.

6.5.2 Criterion 2: Aspects that were to be addressed through donations from local businesses.

In this criterion, the participants identified two aspects from the 5 that were prioritised that had to be solved through asking donations from the business community. These aspects were littering of the schoolyard and increasing the number of toilets at the school. The implementers were given two months to ask for donations from the business community for each of the projects. The plan was to start with each of the projects in March or April depending on the availability of enough funds. Each of these aspects is discussed hereunder.

6.5.2.1 Littering of the schoolyard

The participants prioritised littering of the schoolyard indicating that it may cause health hazards to school users. To curb the problem of littering of the schoolyard, participants came up with the strategy of digging a deep refuse pit in which litter could be thrown in. This could prevent litter from scattering all

over the schoolyard. To realize the digging of a deep refuse pit, the school principal and the SGB had to ask for a sponsor from business companies with excavating machines. Since this project required them to seek donations from the business companies, the time frame was set to be between November 2020 and April 2021. A letter was written to different business companies. Muvuri Business Consultant offered to dig the pit for the school free of charge instead of charging R3 500.00 from the quotations made. Muvuri Business Consultant responded first because they are operating in the village where the case study school is situated and they own excavation machines. The researcher visited the case school on the 4th of May to check the progress of the project and it was found that a deep refuse pit has been dug through a donation from Muvuri Business Consultants and littering was very minimal. The figure below attests to the fact that the school managed to get an excavating machine to dig a deep refuse pit where litter will be thrown.



Figure 6-38: Newly dug refuse pit



Figure 6-39: (Newly dug refuse pit)

The pictures above depict the newly dug refuse pit. As a result of the rurality of the school, digging a refuse pit is one of the options used to control litter. Learners are requested to put all litter into the refuse bins and take it to the refuse bin. At the refuse pit, a school janitor assists learners in dumping the refuse pits. This is a precautionary measure to protect learners from falling in. When the refuse pit is full, the school close it and a new refuse pit is dug.

6.5.2.2 Increasing the number of toilets at the school

The participants prioritised increasing the number of toilets at the school because they were inadequate. There were 5 toilets in the school, one for the educators, two for girls and the other two for boys. These toilets were few considering the enrolment of the school which was 678 in 2019. For this number of learners, the school was supposed to have 19 toilet seats (1:35). Male and female educators were also sharing one toilet and were uncomfortable as such. As a way of resolving the problem of an inadequate number of toilets, participants came up with a strategy of asking for donations from the business community to build two blocks of toilets. The first block of toilets has 3 toilet seats and it is for female educators. The second one is for the males with 3 seats as well. The old toilet which the male and female educators used to share was allocated to learners to relieve the shortage of learners' toilets. The responsibility of requesting a sponsor was allocated to the principal and the SGB. The first phase of looking for a donor in this project was expected to start in October 2020 and be completed by the end of January 2021. The project started in February as the school succeeded in securing a sponsor from Hollywood Bets to build the two blocks of toilets. The procedure that was used to find a donor included writing letters to local businesses to help the school with the erection of two school toilets i.e. for the male

and female staff members. The donation was not in monetary terms, but the donor bought the building materials and hired a building contractor who built the two toilet blocks. The figures below depict the two blocks of toilets donated by Hollywood Bets. At the end of March, this project was completed. The newly built toilets are depicted in the figures below:



Figure 6-40: New toilets for females



Figure 6-41: New toilets for males

The pictures above depict newly built educators' toilets after requesting donations from Hollywood Bets.

6.5.3 Criterion 3: An aspect that was to be addressed without funds

In this criterion, only one aspect was prioritized, namely, the cleaning of school toilets. No funds were required to address this problem, only the human resource personnel was required which already exist at the school.

6.5.3.1 Cleaning of the school toilets

The participants prioritised the cleaning of school toilets indicating that unhygienic toilets were a health hazard. The intervention strategy used to address this problem was through ensuring that the SMT draw a toilet cleaning rooster which indicated the intervals by which the toilets were to be cleaned by the school cleaner and the school general assistants who were hired through the presidential youth employment programme. Members of the SMT were assigned the responsibility of checking compliance with the rooster. The project was expected to kick off in February 2021 until such a time when the cleanliness of school toilets would be a norm. On the 16th of April 2021, the researcher visited the school to check the implementation of the project and it was found that the toilets were clean and hygienic. The following picture depicts the cleanliness of learners' toilets:



Figure 6-42: Clean learners' toilets

The toilet above depicts the conditions of learners' toilets after engaging in cleaning them.

From the researchers' point of view, the research project was a success as all the aspects of the school environment that were prioritized were successfully realized. The other aspects of the school environment that were not prioritized were to be addressed by requesting the Department of Education to

assist in the general renovation of the school. This responsibility was assigned to the SGB and the school principal.

6.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the researcher presented the empirical data that was collected through photovoice, individual and focus group interviews and observations. The data are in three sections: school safety, working environment, role of principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators and healthy school environments and evaluation of the implementation of strategies. From the data presented the picture that emerged indicated that there are certain factors in the school environments that support or constrain the wellbeing of educators. The results also showed that principals can play a significant role in promoting the wellbeing of educators and healthy school environments.

In the next chapter, the researcher will discuss the findings that emerged from the data presented in Chapter 6. The discussion in Chapter 7 focused on establishing and explaining findings on the research questions.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher made a presentation of results of empirical data that was analysed by means of thematic analysis and yielded three themes. In this chapter, I present a summary of the study findings based on the three themes that were offered in Chapter 6. The discussion of the research findings is based on the following research objectives as indicated in Chapter 1, namely:

- To report on what educator wellbeing entails;
- To discover the essence of promotion of healthy school environments
- To reflect on factors that promote the wellbeing of educators in the school environment;
- To investigate factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators in the school environment;
- To explore the role of school principals in promoting the wellbeing of educators; and
- To understand the role of school principals in promoting healthy school environments.
- To develop a theory-based framework for school principals to create healthy school environments that will enhance the wellbeing of educators.

The sections below expound on findings on each of the above objectives with the intention to answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1. In the subsequent sections, I discuss the findings from the literature review and empirical research:

7.2 What educator wellbeing entails

Educator wellbeing in this study is referred to as a state in which an educator is in harmony with the various aspects of the school environment. Wellbeing is affected by factors in the school environment, in that there are those that are perceived to be promoting it and those that are constraining it. Factors that are perceived to be promoting educator wellbeing are those that they are satisfied with, on the contrary those that constrain wellbeing are those that they are not happy with. In that case, educator wellbeing is a multidimensional construct that includes emotional, physical and cognitive wellbeing. A positive wellbeing has to do with being happy, satisfied and comfortable with the school environment factors. It is

associated with factors that provide physical comfort, physical and emotional safety, thermal comfort, availability of water and resources and beautiful school surroundings. A negative wellbeing entails not being happy with numerous factors of the school environment. It is associated with lack of cleanliness of classrooms and staffrooms, poor maintenance of physical facilities and shortage of toilet facilities.

7.3 The essence of promotion of healthy school environments

The understanding of the essence of the promotion of healthy school environments was also done through a literature search. The school environment in this research pertains to the school buildings, classrooms, toilets and school surroundings. These areas are healthy if they are kept in good condition in so much that educators perceive them as promoting their wellbeing. On the contrary, school environments are unhealthy if the condition of the buildings, classrooms, staff rooms and toilets is appalling and regarded as constraining the wellbeing of educators. Promoting healthy environments include involvement of educators, focusing on programmes that promote wellbeing, creating opportunities for educator involvement in decision-making, developing close relationships and teamwork while collaborating and partnering with other stakeholders to strengthen the initiative. The school principal plays an important role in managing and providing leadership in the implementation of programmes.

7.4 Factors that promote the wellbeing of educators

This section focused on elaborating on the finding of the research objectives above. The question that guided data collection on these factors was: what factors promote the wellbeing of educators? The participants gathered this data using photovoice, as indicated in 5.6.1. The results of my study identified some factors that were acknowledged as having a positive impact on the wellbeing of educators: safety and security; an office environment with ergonomic office furniture, resources and thermal comfort and availability of water. Each of these factors was discussed hereunder exposing their effects on the wellbeing of educators.

7.4.1 Safety and security

The findings of my study revealed that the environment in which educators perform their work plays an important role in their wellbeing as they prefer to work in a safe and secure working environment. The study found that a safe and secure environment promotes both the physical and emotional wellbeing of educators. For example, Kwatubana and Nhlapo (2020) espouse that school safety influences the wellbeing, health, and productivity of an individual. For that reason, it can be concluded that educators cannot have enhanced wellbeing in an environment that is unsafe for them and learners. This implies that the wellbeing of educators flourishes in a conducive working environment that is characterized by the

absence of crime and violence (Kapur, 2018). The safety features identified in this study that promote the wellbeing of educators were palisade fencing, burglar proofing and access control.

7.4.1.1 Palisade fencing

The palisade fencing surrounding the school was identified by the participants as a safety feature that promotes the physical and emotional wellbeing of educators. The participants exposed that good and well-maintained palisade fencing guarantees the safety of both learners and educators, thereby, safeguarding both physical and emotional wellbeing. It also protects the school properties from theft and acts of vandalism as well as the victimization of educators such as being physically attacked, being threatened, or their personal belongings forcefully taken from them. Poor safety and security in the school contravene the rights of learners and educators that are enshrined in Chapter 2, section 24(a) of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa that states that everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or wellbeing.

The results of this study on the importance of school perimeter fencing are supported by other research studies. For example, May (2014) maintains that poor security fencing in schools threatens the safety of educators and learners as unsafe and insecure school environments make schools prone to violence and criminal activities. Consistent with the above, other studies show that poor security subjects staff members to criminal acts such as physical and verbal abuse which leads to reduced physical and emotional wellbeing (Kapur, 2018; Grobler, 2018). In addition, the lack in safety and security in the school environment makes the school vulnerable to sexual harassment, fighting, use of derogatory language, stabbings and violent murders (White, Gina & Coetzee, 2018).

Grobler (2018) adds that schools with poor security are easy sites of school violence and they have a negative impact on the physical and emotional wellbeing of educators. Similarly, Benevene, De Statio, Fiorilli, Buonomo, Ragni, Briegas, and Barni (2019) maintain that violence perpetrated on educators due to poor security in schools hurts their physical, social, and emotional wellbeing as well as the quality of teaching.

The second safety feature that was identified as having a positive impact on educator wellbeing, is discussed below.

7.4.1.2 Burglar proofing

The empirical study revealed that burglar proofs were installed on the doors and windows of the major school buildings such as the staffrooms, administrative offices, computer and science laboratories. This safety feature was identified as most effective in deterring thieves and vandals from accessing the school

buildings due to their visibility, thereby, providing a feeling of being safe. The nature of burglar proofs installed could hinder thieves from entering the staffrooms and stealing their personal belongings as well as their teaching resources.

Several studies concur with the findings of this study about the importance of burglar proofing as it has higher success in preventing burglaries. For example, Pease and Gill (2011) show that schools without burglar proofing have 75% more chances of being burglarized than those installed with burglar proofs. Perhaps, it is the fear of burglaries and forced entries that affect the wellbeing of educators. Furthermore, burglar-proofed buildings result in higher failed burglaries. In the same vein, Tseloni, Thompson, Grove, Tilley and Farrell (2017) accentuate that schools without proper fencing and burglar proofing make it easy for thieves to break in and steal and vandalize school properties. The availability of burglar proofs and security fencing make it difficult for them to get in. Although several studies were found that confirm the importance of burglar proofing in schools, I did not come across a study that directly links educator wellbeing and burglar proofing.

The third feature with a positive effect on educator wellbeing is discussed below.

7.4.1.3 Access control

The way in which people enter or leave the school premises has to be monitored, otherwise, it would pose safety and security risks to the lives of educators and learners. This study found that access control at the gate that regulates the movement of people in and out of the school premises is regarded as having a positive impact on educator wellbeing. A security officer was always deployed at the gate to conduct security checks on individuals entering the school premises. The availability of access control at the gate can create a sense of being safe for educators as they perceive their safety as guaranteed.

The study found that the particulars of the visitors were recorded in the access control book. This helps to curb criminal activities by outsiders inside the schoolyard as this can harm the physical and emotional wellbeing of educators. It also assists in tracking visitors who might have committed criminal acts at a particular time at the school. Furthermore, the access control room had signages with warnings and objects that were prohibited on the school premises. This makes visitors and school users to be aware of the objects that are not allowed at the school. The availability of access control at the gate was perceived to promote the physical and emotional wellbeing of educators and thereby, reduce the possibility of unauthorized people entering the school.

Studies on school safety and security have been conducted by various researchers and most of them support the findings of this study. For example, Vasile, Margaritoiu and Eftimie (2011) contend that the wellbeing of educators is threatened by working in a workplace environment where their safety and

security are not prioritized. This leads them to experience a high sense of insecurity. Feelings of not being safe can trigger anxiety which has a negative impact on the emotional wellbeing of educators. For that reason, the Department of Basic Education in South Africa emphasises the importance of access control at the gate and the signing of visitors' registers (The National School Safety Framework, 2015).

In summary, the study found that safety and security play an important role in supporting the wellbeing of educators as they prefer to work in a safe and secure workplace environment. For that reason, one can conclude that safety and security is a prerequisite for educators to experience a sense of positive wellbeing.

The next section focuses on the findings pertaining to perceptions on the office environment and wellbeing.

7.4.2 An office environment with ergonomic furniture, resources and thermal comfort

The study revealed three aspects of the office environment that were perceived as having a positive impact on the wellbeing of educators, namely, comfortable office furniture, availability of office resources and office thermal comfort.

7.4.2.1 Ergonomic office furniture

The study revealed that the offices of the principal and the deputy principal were conducive to work in. These offices were characterized by high-quality furniture with good ergonomic comfort, beautiful chairs with comfortable back support. This furniture could enable the principal and the deputy principal to work effectively without getting tired. This type of furniture may reduce the risk of aggravating health-related problems such as chronic back pains which has a negative impact on the functional comfort of educators leading to low levels of physical wellbeing. Furthermore, the large executive tables in the offices of the principal and the deputy principal provided a large surface area that provided space for a comfortable work area.

The findings of my study concur with numerous studies that attest that office furniture with good ergonomic comfort has a positive impact on the physical wellbeing of educators (Van Niekerk, Louw, & Hillier, 2012; O'Sullivan, McCarthy, White, O'Sullivan & Dankaerts, 2012; Curran, O'Sullivan, Dankaerts & O'Sullivan, 2015; Gouvêa, Viera, Paranhos, Bernadino, Bulgareli & Pereira, 2018). A literature study by Terek, Sajfert, Zoric and Isakov (2014) on the impact of ergonomic comfort of furniture of staff members in the workplace, reveals that the wellbeing of staff members flourishes when the working environments have ergonomically comfortable furniture. This could mean that office furniture with poor ergonomic comfort may constrain the wellbeing of educators leading to a reduced level of physical wellbeing.

7.4.2.2 Availability of office resources

Resources are materials that individuals perceive as of assistance to them in achieving their goals. The study revealed that there were adequate office resources in the administrative offices. The workplace resources found in the administrative offices were the RISO, photocopier, and printers. The availability of these office resources was perceived as having a positive impact on the physical wellbeing of educators. The availability of these resources enabled educators to perform their duties with ease as typed documents could be printed, duplicated and shared with learners and colleagues.

Consistent with the findings of this study, several studies confirm that the availability of workplace resources supports the wellbeing of educators. For example, a study by Ohide and Mbogo (2017) in South Sudan with a sample of 10 school principals and 100 educators in 10 private primary schools, found that poor workplace resources are associated with a reduced level of wellbeing and poor learner achievement. Similar findings were reported by Nielsen, Nielsen, Ogbonnaya, Käsälä, Saari and Isaksson (2017) in their study on workplace resources to improve both employee wellbeing and performance. The study reported that workplace resources have motivational importance on individuals and have the potential of increasing the wellbeing of educators. Through intrinsic motivation, the resources may fulfil the basic needs of individuals such as the need for competency, autonomy, and relatedness. Furthermore, through intrinsic motivation, workplace resources may enable individuals to attain their work goals leading to better performance and enhanced wellbeing. Furthermore, a study by Geiger and Pivovarova (2016) with Arizona public school educators found that educators in schools with good working environments that are well resourced are more likely to experience a high level of physical wellbeing than the ones working in difficult working environments.

7.4.2.3 Office thermal comfort

Another aspect of the office environment identified in this study as having a positive impact on the wellbeing of educators was the availability of air conditioners. The findings of my study revealed that air conditioners provided a conducive thermal comfort to office users as they could regulate the temperature of their workplace environment to the required level. This could lead to educators being more productive as too high or too low temperature could affect concentration span, productivity, and consequently their physical wellbeing.

Consistent with the findings of my study, Charles, Readon and Magee (2005) accentuate that a poor office environment (without air conditioners) can cause thermal discomfort which harms the health and physical wellbeing of employees. Alair (2015) shares the same sentiments that air conditioners purify and circulate the air and thereby reduce the risk of spreading germs in the office. Working in too high or very

low temperature creates health-related problems that are associated with decreased job performance and decreased physical wellbeing (Lan, Lian & Pan, 2010).

In summary, this finding highlighted the importance of physical comfort for educator wellbeing in particular, in office furniture and thermal comfort. The aspect of comfort is added in the definition of wellbeing by Holmes (2005). However, it is not clear what it refers to and what aspects are involved in “comfort”. Although there are numerous studies in health sciences that link physical comfort to wellbeing, none could be found in education and specifically in schools.

The findings above are supported by previous studies on the working environments of educators that confirm that physical comfort plays a salient role in the physical and emotional wellbeing of educators. In this study physical comfort is the feeling of wellbeing brought about by environmental conditions that are experienced as agreeable and associated with contentment and satisfaction. Atyah (2020) attests that the physical comfort of a workplace plays a salient role in enhancing the physical wellbeing of educators.

7.4.3 Beautiful schoolyard environment with water

The study revealed two facets of the school environment that were perceived as having a positive impact on the wellbeing of educators, namely, attractive surroundings and the availability of water.

7.4.3.1 Attractive school surroundings

The general outlook of the schoolyard was perceived as playing an important role in the wellbeing of educators. The parts of the schoolyard that has lawn and flower beds were appreciated by the participants and regarded as creating an attractive environment that improves the quality of their lives.

The findings of the study correspond with other studies that found that an attractive landscape supports the wellbeing of educators. For example, Kopeva, Khrapko and Ivanova (2017) found that the schoolyard with a properly planned landscape with vegetation creates a stimulating environment that promotes the wellbeing of both learners and educators leading to an improved quality of life. Similarly, Bryant (2014) accentuates that a landscape with trees and plants contributes to an improved quality of life as it lowers the blood pressure level and reduces the effects of stress.

7.4.3.2 Availability of water

Water was identified as a factor that has a positive impact on the wellbeing of educators. The study revealed that there is an adequate supply of good quality water at the school. The availability of good quality water supported the wellbeing of educators as it is associated with the increased level of educator

physical wellbeing. The water supply was used for irrigation of the school's vegetable garden, domestic use as well as sanitation purposes.

In the literature review that I conducted on the impact of good quality water, I did not come across a study that links good quality water with the wellbeing of educators. However, numerous studies accentuated the importance of good quality water. For example, Morgan, Bowling, Bartram, and Lyn (2017) contend that schools should have an adequate supply of safe drinking water to ensure that the general cleanliness of the school environment is maintained and the physiological needs of educators are met. Similarly, WHO (2019) highlights that in most rural schools there is a lack of purified drinking water and handwashing facilities and this has a negative effect on the health of educators and learners.

Although this study is consistent with most of the studies supporting that a conducive working environment has a positive impact on the physical wellbeing of educators, I came across few studies that contravened the findings of this study. The study by Tokuda, Hayano, Ozaki, Bito, Yanai, and Kozumi (2009) as well as that of Rafiq, Javed, Khan, and Ahmed (2012) contend that there is no relationship between working environment and educator wellbeing. These studies contend that extrinsic rewards such as money are regarded as the best motivators that increase the general wellbeing of educators. However, a study by Harries, Davis, Christensen, and Hanks (2019) refutes these findings elucidate that, in terms of importance, educators' financial rewards are least important compared to a supportive work environment.

7.5 Factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators

The results of this study found that there is a connection between the working environment and the wellbeing of educators. The question that guided data collection on these factors was: what factors constrain the wellbeing of educators in the school environment? The participants gathered this data through photovoice, as indicated in 5.6.1. In this study, the following aspects of the school's physical environment were identified as impacting negatively on the wellbeing of educators, namely, disorderly staffroom environment, bad conditions of classroom and school environments.

7.5.1 Disorderly staffroom environment

The findings of this study revealed that the general outlook of the staffrooms was not conducive. The study found that the staffrooms were arranged in a disorderly manner as educators did not have adequate staffroom resources such as lockable steel cabinets to keep their teaching and personal belongings safe. Lack of lockable steel cabinets exposed educators' belongings to the risk of theft and misplacement and contributed to untidiness in the staffroom. This study found that a staffroom that is

disorderly and untidy could lower the morale of educators as they preferred to work in an environment that is orderly and ensures the safety of their belongings.

In support of the above, the study by Berrett and Zhang (2012) that sought to understand educators' opinions regarding the comfortability of their working environment with a sample of educators from five schools, found that a lack of private storage and a lack of ability to personalise their workplaces harms their wellbeing. Furthermore, schools with good working environments as well as adequate resources register lower attrition rates than those with poor working environments (Burkhauser, 2017). Haegerstrand and Knutsson (2019) share the same sentiment that an attractive workplace environment with sufficient resources increases the wellbeing of employees, gives them higher levels of work commitment as well as reduces their urge to look for employment elsewhere.

7.5.2 Bad conditions of the classroom environment

In this study, the classroom environment was identified as playing an important role in the wellbeing of educators as they spend most of their time interacting with learners. The study found that the classroom environment was poor, due to dilapidated, leaking roofs and broken ceilings, broken window panes, potholes in the floors, and an electrical system that exposed classroom users to the danger of electrocution.

7.5.2.1 Leaking roofs and broken ceilings

The findings of this study revealed that the roofing in some classrooms was dilapidated and on the verge of collapse. The roof trusses had cracks and were infested with termites. This means that the roofing system exposed educators and learners to life-threatening risks as the trusses could easily be blown away by the wind and cause injuries and death to the occupants.

This finding is supported by Simons, Hwang, Fitzgerald, Kielb and Lin (2010) who argue that the conditions of the school buildings, particularly leaking roofs, have been associated with school absenteeism of both educators and learners. Leaking roofs could have a detrimental effect on the physical wellbeing of educators. Consistent with the results of the study by Simons *et al.* (2010) above, Draga (2017) maintains that classrooms in most rural schools in South Africa are in a poor physical state with holes in floors, broken ceilings, and leaking roofs that cause a stuffy smell.

Furthermore, this study revealed that the dilapidated condition of ceilings in the classrooms had a negative impact on the physical wellbeing of educators. The ceilings in the classrooms and on the veranda were falling, exposing learners and educators to the risk of injuries. The broken ceilings in the classrooms left the electric system bare, exposing classroom users to the danger of electric shock.

Furthermore, the openings caused by the broken ceilings became a hiding place for bats and thereby caused a foul smell to the classroom environment. The foul smell produced by bats could result in health hazards to learners and educators especially those who suffer from respiratory-related conditions.

The link between the availability of a roof's neat and proper installed ceiling and the wellbeing of educators has been noted in a study by Barrett, Davis, Zhang, and Barrett (2015). The study reveals that the availability of a ceiling has a positive effect on the wellbeing of classroom users as it can provide better air circulation that prevents the classroom from being stuffy and thereby triggering respiratory problems. A study by Ahluwalia and Hegazy (2010) on roof deterioration and its impact on the wellbeing of building occupants found that broken ceilings allow noise from adjacent rooms to get through making it difficult for staff members to concentrate.

7.5.2.2 Broken window panes

In this study, broken window panes were found to have a deleterious effect on the physical and mental wellbeing of educators. The glass pieces of window panes left on the window frames have the potential of causing injuries to educators and learners. In addition, this study found that broken window panes can divert the attention of learners during instructional time as they could be disturbed by what is happening outside. This could lead to poor performance on the part of learners. Furthermore, broken window panes allow dust and other foreign substances from outside to enter the classroom. This makes the classroom look dirty and unattractive. The situation may lower the morale of educators as they may prefer to work in a classroom environment that is neat and free from health hazards.

7.5.2.3 Potholes in the floors

The findings of the study revealed that the potholes on the floors of the classrooms were perceived as having a negative effect on the physical wellbeing of educators. These potholes were seen as an impediment during the teaching and learning process as they obstruct the movement of educators whilst executing their duties. This implies that the potholes expose educators to the risk of injury which is associated with reduced physical wellbeing.

The findings of this study are congruent to the study by Draga (2017) who maintains that classrooms in most rural schools in South Africa are in a poor physical state with holes in many of the classroom floors. Similarly, the report by North Coast Courier (2017) exposed that at Aldinville Primary in Groutville, the classroom floors had big potholes that were concealed with old chalkboards in order to protect learners and educators from injuries. Consistent with the above, a report by the Department of Basic Education and MIET Africa, (2010) indicates that infrastructure is of grave concern in South Africa. It exposes that

most rural schools are characterized by crumbling classrooms and toilet facilities that are in a horrendous state. However, no studies were found that linked potholes in classrooms with the wellbeing of educators.

7.5.2.4 Poorly maintained electric system

In this study, it was found that the electric system was not properly maintained. The poorly maintained electric system was perceived as constraining the physical wellbeing of educators. The electric system in the classrooms was not concealed as a result of the broken ceiling leaving the electric wires bare and dangling. The electric plugs on the walls of classrooms had been vandalized leaving the electric wires bare. This implies that the state of the electricity supply system in the classrooms was life-threatening as it exposed learners and educators to the risk of electrocution.

The findings of this study on poorly maintained electric systems resonate with the report by the Occupational Health Administration (2018) that confirms that working in a dangerous workplace environment exposes employees to the risk of injury. The report accentuates that the physical wellbeing of employees is affected when employees are expected to work in an environment that is dangerous such as exposed electric wiring that subjects them to an unsafe working environment. Similar sentiments were shared by Veriava, Thom, and Hodgson (2017) who attest that indeed the worst infrastructure conditions are prevalent in former Bantustan areas particularly the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo province.

7.5.3 Bad conditions of the school environment

The school environment pertains to physical facilities and the school surroundings. The factors that were perceived as having a negative effect on educator wellbeing in this facet are: poor sanitation, poor maintenance and lack of toilets; unattractive school surroundings and littering.

7.5.3.1 Poor sanitation, and poor maintenance of school toilets

The study revealed that the general state of the school toilets was unhygienic and this was perceived as harming the physical and mental wellbeing of educators. Even though the toilet facilities were erected from high-quality bricks, their cleanliness and the general upkeep thereof were intolerable. The study found that the toilet facilities were smelly and unbearable to use.

Numerous studies concur that lack or poor sanitation facilities had a negative effect on the wellbeing of educators as female educators avoid drinking water whilst at school to suppress the need for using the toilet (Freeman, Greene, Dreibelbis, Saboori, Muga, Brumback & Rheingans, 2012; Garn, 2013; Morgan, Bowling, Bartram, & Lyn, 2017; Chard, Trinies, Moss, Chang, Doumbia & Lammie, 2018). The practice of

suppressing the drinking of water at work to avoid using the poor toilet facilities has a negative impact on the wellbeing of educators as it is associated with dehydration and poor performance (Sorenson, Morssink & Campos, 2011).

The study found that lack of maintenance of school toilets has an impact on the wellbeing of educators. The plumbing system of the flushing toilets in the case study school was leaking and the cisterns were without lids. This made the floors to be untidy leading to educators avoiding toilets due to their unhygienic state. In addition, the findings of this study exposed that the roofs of some toilets were poorly maintained as they had nails that were detached from the roof timber. This exposed educators to the risk of injury particularly on windy days as the roof could be blown off, causing injuries to educators.

The results of this study on poor maintenance of school toilets are supported by the reports of local newspapers that schools, indeed have poorly maintained toilets. For example, The Citizen (2021) reported that Section 27 approached the High Court in Limpopo to compel the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education to replace the unsafe school toilets with safe latrines. Similarly, the report by IOL News (2012) revealed that at Meadowridge Primary School in Lentegour, Mitchells Plain, 1192 learners were using 32 toilets which were poorly maintained. The plumbing system was very old and corroded. Although there are reports that confirm that toilets in schools are poorly maintained, there are no studies found that link poor maintenance of toilets with the wellbeing of educators. .

7.5.3.2 Shortage of toilets for educators

Shortage of toilets for educators was identified by the participants as affecting the wellbeing of educators. It was found that both male and female educators were sharing a flushing toilet with two seats. This made the female educators feel uncomfortable and thereby they had to suppress their need of going to the toilet.

The findings of this study are supported by Ross, Cumming, Dreibelbis, Andriano, Nana and Greco (2021) who conducted a study on the impact of sanitation on peoples' quality of life in the low-income areas of Maputo, Mozambique. The study found that females were concerned about sharing toilets with males for fear of lack of privacy as males could enter the toilet without knowing that there is someone inside. A South African study by Gonsalves, Kaplan and Paltiel (2015) about reducing sexual violence by increasing the supply of toilets in Khayelitsha showed that the shortage of toilets subjects women to the risk of sexual assault as they have to take an average round trip of 210 meters to the toilet location. Similarly, Mbele (2011) conducted a study on the evaluation of toilet facilities in the Matlosana Local Municipality area. The study found that in Nkagisang Public School, there were a limited number of toilets. Female educators were sharing toilet facilities with learners while male educators had to take a

fifty to hundred meters to walk to private houses to ask for help when they want to relieve themselves. From the studies cited above, one can realise that they all attest to the fact that indeed, shortage of toilets make females uncomfortable sharing toilets with males. However, no studies were found that directly confirm that shortage of toilets has a negative impact on the wellbeing of educators.

7.5.3.3 Unattractive school surroundings

Some parts of the schoolyard, namely, a bare part with nothing growing on it, one covered with thick grass as well as a part covered with heaps of scrap metals, were regarded as constraining the wellbeing of educators. These parts of the schoolyard were unattractive and unappealing. The part of the schoolyard covered with tall grass and scrap metals may constrain the wellbeing of educators as sharp mental objects that were laying around, may injure them.

Supporting this finding, Posner (2000) argues that sharp objects lying on the schoolyard could cause severe injury to educators and learners that could cause permanent loss of sensation and movement. Similarly, a quantitative study was conducted by Foellmer, Kistemann and Antonj (2021) on the effect of green space on employees' wellbeing in Hofgaten in the University of Bonn, Germany with a sample of 11 000 employees. The results of the study found that the green space environments were attractive and characterised by positive mood, happiness and calmness whereas the opposite is true with the unattractive and uninviting environment.

7.5.3.4 Littering

Another aspect of the schoolyard that was perceived to be posing a serious problem on the attractiveness of the schoolyard was littering. The results of my study found that littering was caused by scrap metals from broken furniture and a shallow refuse pit that could not contain the papers. These papers were blown out of the refuse pit causing litter all over the schoolyard.

I found that there is a scarcity of studies that linked littering to educator wellbeing. However, I only came across one study by Mapotse and Mashiloane (2017) that attests that littering is a problem in schools. The study reveals that throwing litter all over the schoolyard chokes the school drainage system. The choked drainage system may lead to a bad smell that causes air pollution.

The next section focuses on the role of the principal in enhancing the wellbeing of educators.

7.6 The role of the principal in enhancing the wellbeing of educators and healthy school environments

In this section, two roles will be discussed that of enhancing: educator wellbeing; and healthy school environments. This study contends that the principal has a crucial role in both these tasks. It is also believed that these two tasks are closely related and intertwined in that a healthy environment may lead to enhanced wellbeing.

7.6.1 Role in enhancing educator wellbeing

The findings of this study revealed that school principals play a major role in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. These roles include developing partnerships and collaboration with external stakeholders and community members, creating a close relationship with educators, facilitation of professional development for educators as well as involving educators in decision making.

7.6.1.1 Developing partnerships and collaborations

It is the role of the school principal to develop and sustain partnerships and collaboration with external stakeholders. Through partnership and collaboration with local businesses, the school principal can access school resources that schools are in need of. For example, the school principal can collaborate and partner with business entities to source donations that assist in the construction of sports fields that learners and educators use on fun days.

Kwatubana (2019) highlighted the importance of collaborations and partnerships for schools, and the role and key characteristics that principals should possess in order to be effective in their role. This study further states that due to the lack of resources in South African schools, these collaborations are regarded as a means for the acquisition of resources. The results of my study correspond with the findings of, Francis, Haines, Hill, Blue-Banning, and Turnbull (2015) with 40 participants in six elementary and middle schools in the United States (US). The study found that partnership and collaboration between the school and the external stakeholders create a platform for schools to access resources.

7.6.1.2 Creating a close relationship with educators

One of the roles of the school principal in enhancing the wellbeing of educators as alluded to by the principal of the case study school is to develop a close relationship with educators. A close relationship between educators and the school principal prevails when there is an atmosphere of trust and respect among them. The close relationship enables educators to confide in the school principal.

The results of this study are consistent with Shah (2012) who conducted a literature study on the importance of positive educator relationships in schools. The study found that close relationships based on trust and respect contribute to high levels of educator wellbeing. In addition, Akinyemi, Rembe, and Nkoki (2020) conducted a study with a sample of 79 participants purposefully selected from 10 schools on trust and positive working relationships among educators. This South African study found that good working relationships among educators enabled them to assist their colleagues and confide in them when they experience difficulties in terms of their work.

7.6.1.3 Facilitation of professional development for educators on educator wellness

One important role of the school principal in enhancing the wellbeing of educators is to facilitate their professional development. Through educator development, school principals can create opportunities for educators to acquire skills that would enable them to adapt to the changes taking place in the education system.

The findings of my study resonate with the study by Abubakar, Tengku, Tengku, and Fauzia (2020) who conducted a study on the role of school leaders in educator professional development with a sample of 380 secondary school educators in Bauchi State in Nigeria. The results of the study revealed that through professional development, school principals can provide educators with the skills to cope with their job.

7.6.1.4 Involving educators in decision-making and changes

Involving educators in decision-making was mentioned by the principal as one of the roles of the school principal. In this study, it was found that engaging educators in decision-making can make educators feel valued and appreciated. Through this involvement, educators develop a strong sense of job commitment and this enables them to execute their duties in a meaningful way.

The findings of this study correspond with that of Baraka and Luicensi (2017) who conducted a comparative study between public and private secondary schools in Arusha Municipality, Tanzania. The study investigated the participation of educators in decision-making and educator commitment. The results of the study found that there is a relationship between participation in decision-making and educator commitment.

The findings of the empirical study are consistent with a study by Kurnia and Jabar (2020) on participatory decision-making styles of principals of vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District in Indonesia, with a sample of 67 educators. The results of the study found that involving educators in decision-making makes educators feel valued and recognised.

7.7 Role in promoting healthy school environments

The results of this study found that school principals play a significant role in the promotion of healthy school environments. The roles of the school principal in the promotion of a healthy school environment include the facilitation and implementation of educator wellness programmes, vision building, and vision sharing as well as the involvement of educators in the implementation of programmes.

7.7.1 Facilitation and implementation of wellness programmes

The principal mentioned facilitation and implementation of educator wellness programmes as one of the roles of the school principals in promoting healthy school environments. Among the wellness programmes mentioned by the school principal, the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) was identified as crucial as school principals can use it to resolve personal problems that affect the performance of troubled educators such as alcohol, financial and marital problems.

A study by Roman and Blum (2002) concurs with the results of my study that addresses an employee's off-the-job drinking through alcohol education programs conducted at the worksite. These programs usually are associated with an EAP, a health promotion program, or both. The goal of these education programs often is to encourage behavioural change or use of the associated services (i.e., self-referral to an EAP).

7.7.2 Building and sharing of vision

One important role of the school principal is building and sharing the vision of promoting healthy school environments. The results of this study revealed that building a shared vision should be based on the collaboration between learners, educators, parents, and all members of the school community. To ensure that the shared vision works effectively, the school principal should ensure that all members of the school community should understand this vision, and capacitate them to work for the vision.

The study also found that the vision formulated can be rendered useless if it is not communicated to the school community. This implies that after the formulation of the shared vision, a meeting should be called where the shared vision is communicated to the entire staff members. This enables the school community to understand the shared vision and live according to its expectations.

Aligned to the findings of my study, a study by Burhanuddin and Aspland (2015) shows that developing a shared vision that enjoys broad support from people, the school principal needs to involve the stakeholders to refine the key ideas into a vision. The stakeholders may include parents, learner

representatives, members of the school governing body, and other community members who are affiliated with the school.

7.7.3 Involving educators in the implementation of programmes

Involving educators in the implementation of school health promotion programmes was mentioned by the school principal as one of the roles of the school principal. Educators are major role players in the formation and establishment of school health and safety committees. To ensure the effective functioning of these committees, school principals are to support educators by encouraging them to participate in these committees. In addition, school principals can support educators by training them to understand their roles and policies that direct health promotion programmes.

Consistent with my study Mwoma (2012) conducted a study on the role of educators in decision-making processes in Gucha District Secondary schools in Nyaza Province, Kenya. The results of the study found that the style of decision-making was to a great extent autocratic and educators need to be more involved in decision-making processes.

7.8 Chapter summary

This chapter commences with the elucidation of what educator wellbeing entails as well as the essence of promotion of healthy school environments. My study found that safety and security play an important role in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. These findings were supported by studies that were previously conducted. Although burglar proofing was found to play an important role in ensuring safety at the school, I did not find a study that links burglar proofing to the wellbeing of educators. This could mean that there are no studies that were conducted that link burglar proofing to educator wellbeing.

My study found that the wellbeing of educators was supported by the office environment with ergonomic furniture, the availability of office resources, office thermal comfort, the availability of water and the beautiful schoolyard. These findings were consistent with other studies previously conducted. Although there were studies that confirmed the importance of the availability of water at the school, I could not find a study that link the availability of water to the wellbeing of educators.

With regards to the factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators, my study found that the disorderly staffroom environment, poor conditions of classrooms, namely, leaking roofs and broken ceilings, broken window panes, potholes on floors and poorly maintained electricity; as well as poor conditions of the school environment such as poor sanitation, shortage of toilets, and unattractive school surroundings harm the wellbeing of educators. Although the majority of these factors were backed by previously conducted studies, no studies were found that linked broken window panes, poor maintenance of toilets

and shortage of toilets to the wellbeing of educators. This could mean that no studies have been conducted as yet on their impact on the wellbeing of educators.

The chapter concludes with the role of school principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators and the promotion of healthy school environments. The following chapter focuses on the development of the framework for principals to promote healthy school environments for educators.

CHAPTER 8

A FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE THE WELLBEING OF EDUCATORS

8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the research findings of the empirical research. In this chapter, I started by revisiting the various models and frameworks developed by different researchers that deal specifically with the wellbeing of educators. The reasons advanced for taking this route were (1) to learn lessons about the wellbeing of educators from these models/frameworks, (2) to identify the approaches used by these researchers in trying to address issues of wellbeing that impact educators. Consequently, I came up with a theory-based framework that school principals can apply in their respective institutions that can assist them to increase the wellbeing of educators. This framework is empirically derived.

The issue of employee wellbeing has been documented by various authors. These authors developed models and frameworks that aimed to address the wellbeing of employees. For example, the Headey and Wearing's dynamic equilibrium model of wellbeing (1981); Allardt's model of wellbeing (1989); Ryff's six-factor model of wellbeing (Ryff, 1989); The broaden-and-build model of emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), the model of subjective wellbeing homeostasis (Cummins, Gullone, Lau, 2002); Konu and Rimpelä's model wellbeing in school (2002); the job-demand resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006), the model of positive school leadership for flourishing educators (Cann, 2019), Social Cognitive model of wellbeing (Lee, Lee & Shin, 2020); and the conceptual framework for the caring school community (Lester, Cefai, Cavioni, Barnes & Cross, 2020) to mention just a few. ; These models and frameworks approach wellbeing from different perspectives. For example, some approach it from the learners' or educators' perspective while others approach it from the perspective of employees in general. The following section is on the discussion of wellbeing models that have been developed to assist educators.

8.2 Discussion of wellbeing models

In this study, numerous models and frameworks have been outlined that aim to address the wellbeing of employees in their jobs. However, only three models/frameworks will be discussed, namely, the model of positive school leadership for flourishing educators, the conceptual framework for the caring school community and a grounded theory model of the key dimensions of the principal's role in supporting the wellbeing of teachers in a school in challenging conditions. The following reasons are advanced for the selection of these models and frameworks:

(a) They are applicable in a school context

(b) They focus on the wellbeing of educators

(c) They focus on education management

(d) They contain valuable information that can be applied in the promotion of healthy school environments that can enhance the wellbeing of educators.

It was important to identify functional elements of successful models before developing a framework for this research. I had to study existing interventions, analyse the critical features of each model that has addressed the issue at hand. The evaluation of the models was directed by the following: aspects or a combination of features that were used in the model; theories that guided the development of the model (the theory behind the change of identified conditions); the contexts for which the models were developed; and client characteristics. The model that is discussed below is that of school leadership for flourishing educators.

8.2.1 Model of positive school leadership for flourishing educators

The model of positive school leadership for flourishing educators has been developed by Cann (2019) to represent the three leadership habits and their interaction with other factors that influence the wellbeing of educators. This model accentuates that school leaders (principals and senior leadership teams) have a responsibility to guide schools to attain their goals. To realize this, they should create situations where schools flourish and provide a fertile environment that promotes the wellbeing of educators, learners and support staff. The model of positive school leadership is presented in the figure below:

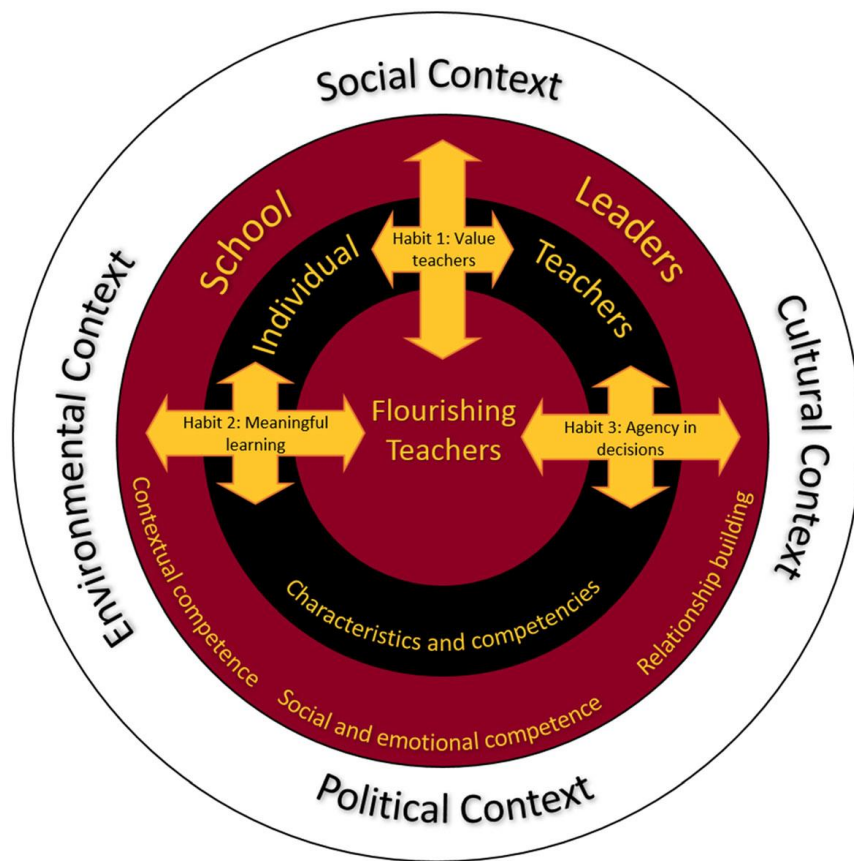


Figure 8-1: Model of positive school leadership for flourishing educators

Adapted from Cann (2019)

To ensure the wellbeing of educators, the model proposes that certain habits have to be followed. These habits are discussed hereunder.

Habit 1: The significance of educators feeling that they are valued

This model emphasizes that for educators to experience a sense of wellbeing, they should be appreciated, valued and recognized by school leaders. Educators are appreciated and recognized by their leaders when they are given positive comments and provided with promotion opportunities, this makes them flourish and respond positively in their jobs (Hone, Jarden, Duncan & Schofield, 2015). Educators whose strength has been recognised through promotion have an increased level of wellbeing and an increased sense of meaning and accomplishment. This is consistent with some studies that show that a strength-based approach in the school or workplace promotes educator wellbeing (Hone, Jarden, Duncan & Schofield, 2015; Cherkowski, 2018; Murphy & Louis, 2018). However, this model demonstrates that providing educators with promotion opportunities does not guarantee a positive impact

on the wellbeing of educators as some educators may not be interested in taking on leadership roles. This could be the result of seeing school leaders being overwhelmed by workload and believing that occupying leadership roles may compromise their ability to make a difference in class (Cameron, Berger, Lovett & Baker, 2007).

Furthermore, this model shows that educators differ on how they prefer appreciation to be demonstrated. They also differ on the degree to which individuals feel valued as this depends on whether a leaders' behaviour corresponds to their preferences (Hamstra Sassenberg, Van Yperen & Wisse, 2014). For that reason, school leaders must first consider the kind of appreciation that is appropriate for every individual educator. Educators also feel valued when school leaders listen and show interest in their opinions and ideas. Cann (2019) accentuates that educators with high levels of wellbeing felt that their voices were heard most of the time. This means that giving an ear to educators' voices is crucial in creating an opportunity for them to influence their work and it is very key in the development of teams and their self-efficacy (Murphy & Louis, 2018). On the contrary, educators with low levels of educator wellbeing withheld their voices to school leaders as they felt that they would not be listened to. They perceived their leaders as unappreciative of the effort they are putting into their work which consequently leads to a feeling of frustration. Therefore, school leaders need to listen effectively and demonstrate empathy towards educators. This could increase the positive emotions of educators and brings out the best in them (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013).

Habit 2 The impact of meaningful development

This model advocates that meaningful professional development plays a significant role in increasing educators' morale (Leithwood, 2006) and the wellbeing of educators (Murphy & Louis, 2018). Professional development is seen as meaningful when it is consistent with the development needs of educators as it is linked to improved educator wellbeing. To support the wellbeing of educators, they should be provided with a choice in their professional development in order to take ownership of their learning. On the other hand, educators with low levels of wellbeing had a negative attitude toward professional development as they perceive it to be irrelevant, too directive and failing to meet their developmental needs. To avoid this, the professional development of educators should be adapted to meet and respond to their learning. This model cautions that school leaders should be concerned with the flourishing of all the members of the school community as well as their needs for growth and development (Murphy & Louis, 2018). When school leaders facilitate professional development programmes that satisfy the individual educators' need for growth and development, their level of wellbeing increases.

Habit 3. Consequences of enabling educator urgency in decision-making and changes

This model shows that educators with high levels of wellbeing are confident to approach their leaders as they feel that they are listened to. This made them feel valued and encouraged them to partake in decision-making processes at the school. The degree to which educators influence decisions at the school is linked to improved self-efficacy (Leithwood, 2006), higher levels of wellbeing (Pisanti, Gagliardi, Razzino & Bertini, 2003) and experiencing positive emotions about change (Hargreaves, 2004). Educators with low levels of wellbeing on the other hand see the way in which change is implemented as unacceptable citing that the pace of change is too fast. A fast pacesetting style of leadership can lead to educators feeling overwhelmed (Fullan, 2001) and drained (Laine, Saaranen, Ryhänen, & Tossavainen, 2017). Such educators have negative emotions as they felt that their voices were not heard and could not influence decisions and thereby experience less urgency in their work. As a result of a lack of control of decisions in their workplace, educators become more susceptible to stress which has a negative impact on their wellbeing (Marmot, 2004). To overcome this challenge, school leaders should allow educators to buy into the changes being proposed, without imposing them (Fullan, 2001) or commanding changes because that could result in negative emotions. Instead, school leaders should employ an inclusive change process where educators' views are taken into account (Hargreaves, 2004) and avoid unrealistic timelines so that the energy of both the leaders and educators are sustained in the change process. Positive school leadership should avoid a problem-focused approach to change by listening to the needs and concerns of educators (Murphy & Louis, 2018). The inclusion of all educators in decision-making will lead to high levels of educator wellbeing. It is therefore imperative that school leaders model the three habits outlined by Cann (2019) to succeed in enhancing the wellbeing of educators in their school environments.

There are three lessons that I learned from this model. First, the principal is at the centre of driving the initiatives that support the wellbeing of educators. Secondly, there are certain roles that principals are responsible for, including ensuring that educators are valued and recognised, facilitating their engagement in decision-making and meaningful professional development that is meaningful and relevant to them.

8.2.2 The conceptual framework for a caring school community

This framework was developed by Carmel Cefai and Valeria Cavioni to explain how caring members of the school community can provide context for and promote the wellbeing of educators and the entire school staff. Cefai and Cavioni (2014) interpret staff health and wellbeing within a multidimensional system framework that shows how the school can operate as a health-promoting institution and provide opportunities for members of staff to sustain and maintain their wellbeing through supportive and collegial relationships, meaning, and influential engagement. This approach moves from perceiving wellbeing from an individual point of view to a more socially embedded understanding of health where schools function

as caring communities for all staff members (Sonnentag, Unger & Nägel, 2013). This framework adopted a whole-school approach where schools can promote a sense of belonging and foster meaningful relationships among staff members, support positive school culture and provide staff an opportunity to engage in addressing and promoting their wellbeing. Supportive and caring relationships among members of staff enable all members of the school community to feel valued, supported, respected and have all their needs met. The conceptual framework for a caring school community is represented in Figure 8.2 below.

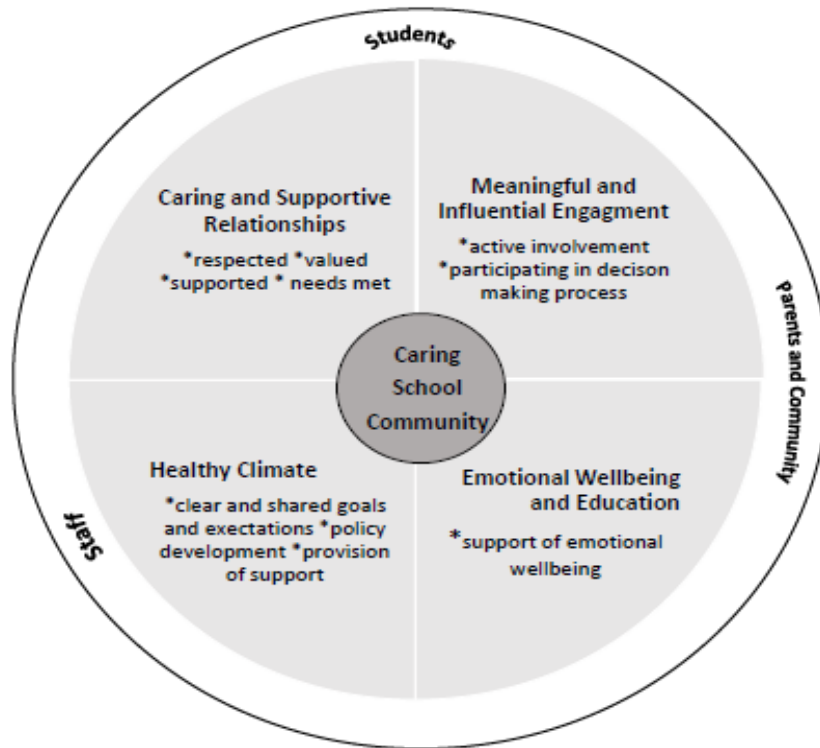


Figure 8-2: Conceptual framework for a caring school community

Adapted from Lester, Cefai, Cavioni, Barnes and Cross (2020)

The wellbeing of educators is supported by the school culture that is collegial and supportive where the school leaders provide opportunities for members of the school community to communicate and develop quality interpersonal relationships (Harvey, Joyce, Tan, Johnson, Nguyen Modini & Groth, 2015). Schools with positive school culture can reduce burnout and promote retention among school staff. According to this framework, indicators of school culture include a safe, welcoming, supportive and well-

maintained environment with clear policies that outline the expectations about staff behaviour, practices and relationships.

This framework also identifies meaningful and influential work engagement as an aspect that impacts positively on the wellbeing of staff members. Engaging educators in work-related issues enables them to have passion and energy when performing their duties. It also encourages them to be happily immersed in their work leading them to positively deal with their job demand (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Staff work engagement indicators in the school context include the engagement of staff members in planning, conflict resolution, participation in professional learning as well as the development of school policies. Providing staff members with an opportunity to partake in decision-making and giving them positive feedback and praises were found to be key organisational factors that promote staff wellbeing and resilience (Gu & Day, 2013). Conversely, staff members with low levels of autonomy in their jobs can experience depression which has a negative effect on their mental wellbeing. The final aspect of this framework entails the emotional wellbeing of staff members. Emotional wellbeing refers to a positive state of wellbeing where an individual can function effectively and cope with the demands of everyday life (Galderisi, Heinz, Kastup, Beezhold & Sartorius, 2015). Staff members with positive emotional wellbeing can have positive mental health which is associated with reduced stress and anxiety, improved self-esteem, work performance and productivity, as well as increased coping skills and resilience (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). This implies that in a school with positive school culture, positive relationships, work engagement and emotional wellbeing interact to enhance the mental health, wellbeing and resilience of staff members (Harvey *et al*, 2015). For this framework to achieve its intended goals, school principals should take a lead in monitoring the implementation of the framework. This could lead to increased staff work engagement (Gu & Day, 2013), improved self-esteem, reduced stress and anxiety (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002), improved interpersonal relationships (Harvey, Joyce, Tan, Johnson, Nguyen Modini & Groth, 2015), a supportive school culture as well as a supportive school environment (Lester, Cefai, Cavioni, Barnes & Cross, 2020).

The conceptual framework teaches about the importance of school principals in developing a caring school community. School principals need to create an environment that promotes (1) caring relationships based on trust and respect, (2) meaningful and influential engagement of educators through active engagement, (3) emotional education supporting the wellbeing of educators as well as (4) healthy school climate with clear shared goals and expectations.

8.2.3 A grounded theory model of the key dimensions of the principal's role in supporting the wellbeing of teachers.

This model was developed by Collett (2013) in a case study on teachers' perceptions of the role of primary school principals in supporting their wellbeing. The purpose of this model is to assist school principals to promote the wellbeing of educators by providing them the necessary support. This model shows that the wellbeing of educators is enhanced by school principals who are willing to give support to educators. The model is represented in Figure 8.3 below.

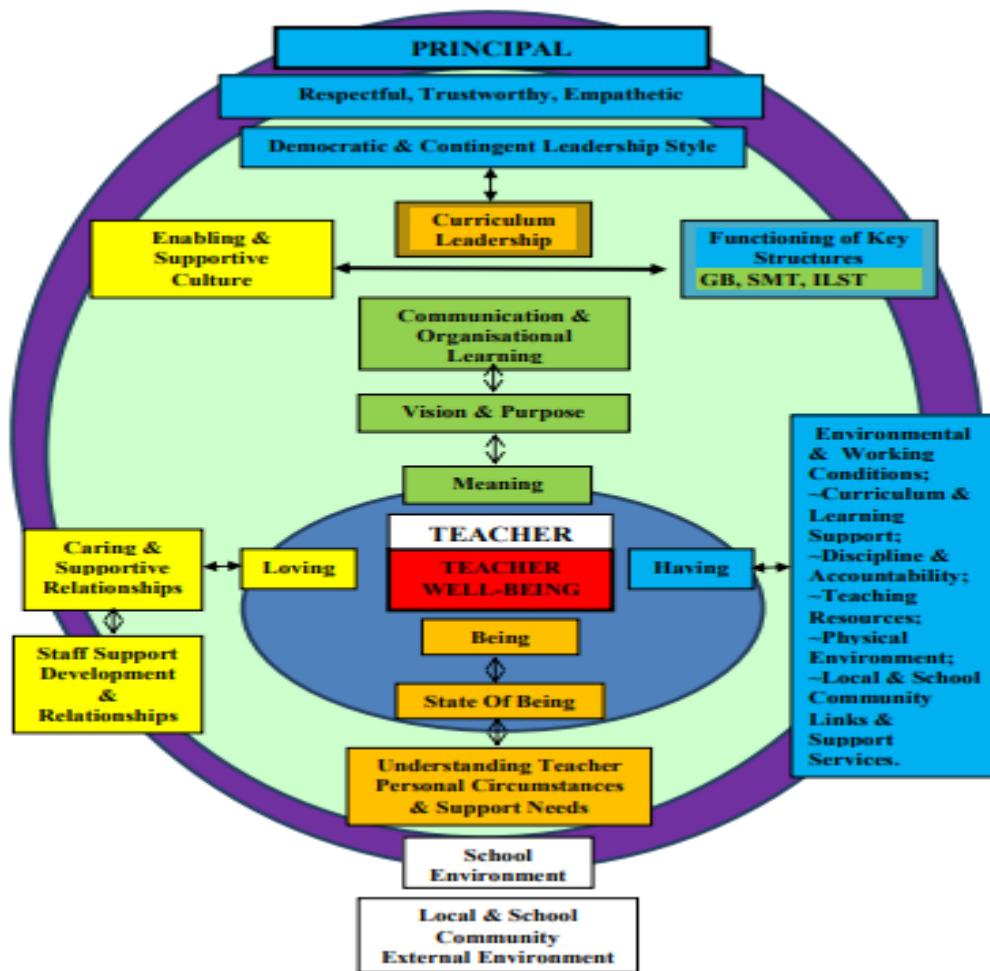


Figure 8-3: A grounded theory model of the key dimensions of the principal's role in supporting the wellbeing of teachers: Adapted from Collett (2013)

The model accentuates that educator wellbeing is a dynamic and holistic state of having, loving, being and meaning. These aspects of wellbeing are interrelated and they influence the professional and personal abilities of educators as they enable them to cope with the demands of their jobs. According to

this model, loving has to do with the support that educators receive from the principals through caring and supportive relationships. An educator needs to ensure that there is effective teaching and learning by embracing both the material and non-material resources. The state of being is related to the state of mental, physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing. It also includes the educators' ability to maintain work-life balance and job demand. Meaning is related to the sense of purpose and job satisfaction that educators gain from performing their duties and being part of the school community. It also has to do with the vision and values of the school that are congruent to the educators' personal and professional values and desires.

As school leaders, principals play a crucial role in providing support to educators that aim to increase their job resources as well as reduce their job demands. The model advocates that policies and support systems are to be put in place to provide support to the wellbeing of educators. The type of support that educators receive from their principals should include, among others, building the capacity for having, being, loving and meaning. This should take place at the personal, professional and school community level to increase job resources. In supporting educators to reduce their job demands, the school principal should see to it that the needs for having at the school level are addressed.

The model further emphasises that the wellbeing of educators is enhanced by school principals who practice different leadership styles that promote the effective functioning of school structures as well as a caring and supportive school culture. The leadership style adopted by the school principal in supporting the wellbeing of educators should include a democratic and contingent leadership that focuses on the personal, professional and whole-school needs of educators. On the issue of supporting the state of being, the key aspects that school principals should address include building a link between the professional and personal goals of educators as well as organisational goals, ensuring that policies develop to promote a healthy work environment that focuses on the personal circumstances and support needs of educators. The aspects of support for having had to do with providing adequate teaching and learning materials and ensuring the effective functioning of school structures such as the school governing body (SGB), school management team (SMT) and the institutional learner support team (ILST). The aspect of support for meaning includes encouraging staff members and the entire school community to have a sense of excellence in attaining educational achievement, the development and promotion of democratic values of the school community, encouraging effective communication and organisational learning as well as providing opportunities for educators to partake in distributed leadership.

From this model, the lesson learned is that school principals can enhance the wellbeing of educators by applying different leadership styles and providing support in the form of resources. This helps educators

develop a sense of purpose and job satisfaction making educators feel part of the school community. School principals also have to create caring and supportive relationships.

Although positive psychology interventions have been used before with relative success in schools (Knoop, 2013; Norrish, Williams, O'Connor & Robinson, 2013; Kern, Waters, Adler & White, 2015), the focus has tended to remain on activities delivered by 'expert' facilitators, who bring their expertise to schools where educators just become recipients of such services. Such interventions do not enable educators to create sustainable processes within the school to enhance wellbeing on a long-term basis. This study intended to engage educators to come up with solutions to their problems, identify factors that affect their wellbeing in the school environment and develop action plans in order to increase those factors that promote wellbeing. It is believed in this research that their involvement in the identification of the problem and in coming up with plans to address the matter will enable them to use such skills in the future even for challenges other than wellbeing.

8.3 A THEORY-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROMOTION OF HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS TO ENHANCE THE WELLBEING OF EDUCATORS

This empirical study aimed to develop a framework for the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators. The data yielded three important findings, namely, factors that enhance the wellbeing of educators (*cf.* 7.4), factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators (*cf.* 7.5), and the role of school principals in the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators (*cf.* 7.6). Four constructs for the framework were developed from these findings. The four constructs included a focus on 1) school buildings 2) school surroundings 3) physical and emotional safety, and 4) resources. The role of principals is integrated into these principles and constructs as discussed in consequent sections.

Following an empirical study, I developed a theory-based framework to assist school principals in promoting healthy school environments for the support of the wellbeing of educators. The framework is grounded on the established theory of Senge about a learning organisation (*cf.* Chapter 4). As indicated earlier, the findings of this research highlighted three important facts: factors that promote the wellbeing of educators exist in school environments; the aspects that constrain the wellbeing of educators pertain to the working environment, school surroundings and lack of resources; and that principals can play a role in promoting healthy school environments that can enhance educator wellbeing. I regard the framework as an invaluable contribution to the body of knowledge. I propose that using a scientific theory to develop a framework for principals to promote healthy school environments can provide (a) a diagnostic approach allowing principals to use the theory to better understand the current status of their school environments as well as the factors that enhance or constrain the wellbeing of educators to inform

future efforts (b) and a mechanism for principals, School Management Teams, education officials dealing with educator wellness in schools to carry out theory-based monitoring and evaluation to enhance the wellbeing of educators. The presentation of the framework is provided in Figure 8.4 below. This will be followed by a discussion of what the framework entails.

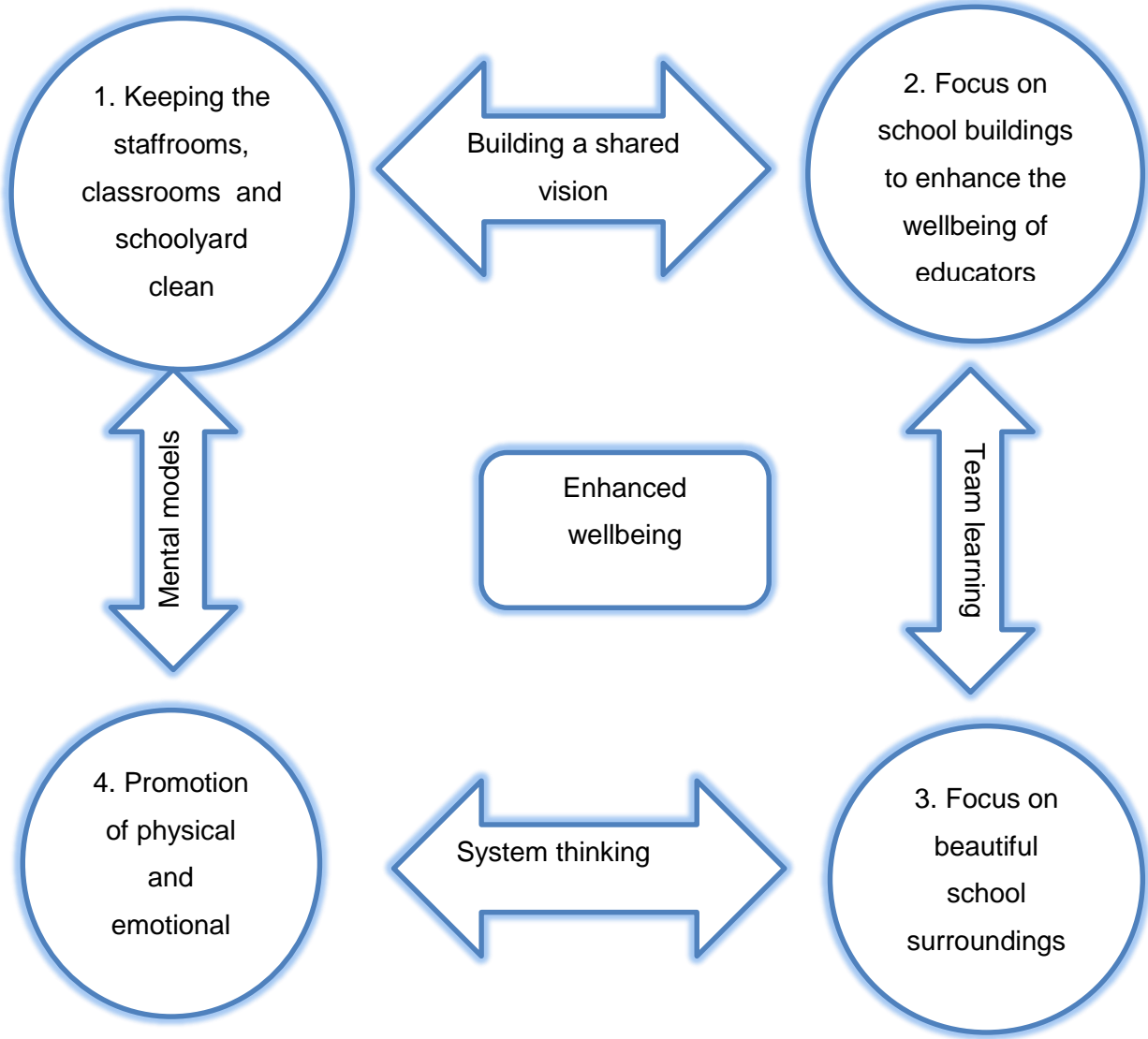


Figure 8-4: Framework for principals to promote healthy environments for educator wellbeing

8.3.1 Overview of the framework

This framework is the driving force behind this study, which explored the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators in public schools. The framework is based on the findings of the empirical study that found that the wellbeing of educators is affected by some factors in the school environment. It was also informed by the data gathered during the implementation and

evaluation of the action plans in this research. The literature and empirical research in this study highlighted the importance of school principals in playing a crucial role in promoting healthy school environments to enhance the wellbeing of educators. Effectiveness in this role enables educators to flourish in their jobs (Cann, 2019) leading to high levels of educator wellbeing. The main roles of principals that came out clearly in Chapter 7 included developing partnerships and collaborations, creating a close relationship with educators, facilitation of professional development for educators on wellness, involving educators in decision-making and changes, facilitation and implementation of wellness programmes, building a shared vision and involving educators in the implementation of programmes. It is the view of the researcher that a theory-based framework would assist school principals as leaders of organisations to see a richer and more potent picture of how to promote healthy school environments that support the wellbeing of educators.

It would have been impossible to design the theory-based framework without establishing what the problem was that required intervention. In this study, this refers to the wellbeing of educators that were perceived to be affected by factors in the school environment. It was also important to understand the causes of the problems identified and the effect of these problems on the school community members that participated in this research. As indicated in Chapter 1, the promotion of healthy school environments is regarded as a solution to the problems of wellbeing in this study. The following schema is presented for understanding the framework and the research in this study:

X → O → P

X in this research is regarded as the wellbeing of educators as a matter of concern. Thus, the interventions designed must have a specific impact upon educators so that a positive state of wellbeing can be achieved. O pertains to the school environments and their elements that hinder or promote the wellbeing of educators. The situations in the school environments were perceived to have a positive/negative impact on educator wellbeing, in a unique and concerning way in the context of the participating school. P is regarded as an intervention (action plans and theory-based framework) that can be effective if principals play their role in promoting a healthy school environment.

8.3.2 What the framework entails

As alluded to, this theory-based framework is developed from the findings of the empirical study. The findings of the empirical study show that the working conditions of educators have an impact on the wellbeing of educators. The framework is based on the various components of Senge's theory of a learning organisation, namely, the shared vision, team learning, systems thinking, and mental models.

This framework suggests that Senge's components can be used as driving forces by principals to deal with the four constructs mentioned in Figure 8.4 above.

8.3.2.1 Building a shared vision

A vision entails a clear picture of what members of the organisation want to achieve to bring the problem at hand and to bring about the necessary changes. This picture is formulated collaboratively, agreed upon and shared among the members of the school community. A shared vision is regarded as the most relevant vehicle that can be used to focus on keeping the school clean while maintaining school buildings, firstly because it can serve as a source of motivation for members of the school community to achieve its goals. Secondly, it may encourage innovative thinking among the members of the school community. Building and sharing a vision is one of the most fundamental aspects of Senge's theory of a learning organization that can enable members of the school community to be on common ground about the issues of the school environment and how they can be improved for better educator wellbeing. For that reason, a shared vision can be used as means to focus on specific aspects of the school environment with an intention to improve them. The vision will provide members of the school community with a drive and a purpose to attain the desired goals.

In building a shared vision, members of the school community (i.e. staff members, parents, and learners) are allowed to formulate their individual visions on how to change the existing situation, for example, maintenance of school buildings. This process can be done in different groups: educators, parents, and learners. The question that guides the building of a shared vision in this initiative is: how would you want the school buildings to look like? If the school community members have an answer to this they will have created mini-vision statements. This process has to be flexible to allow as many members of the school community to participate. The initiatives of the school improvement often fail before they even start due to schools envisioning in isolation from the other members of the school community. Parents can send their individual visions through their children. It will be the responsibility of each class educator to collect the vision statements to be transcribed by the secretary of the SGB. Members of each group share their visions about the school buildings and keeping the school clean in separate meetings. The visions from different members of the school community are then discussed, followed by a collaborative adoption of a shared vision. The individual visions are combined to formulate a common vision. In that way, the aspirations of each member are captured in the shared vision.

The shared vision then serves as the driving force for educators to achieve the change they truly desire. It is spread and reinforced to the rest of the school community. When members of the school community with similar interests and a common shared vision unite, they develop a sense of commitment making it easy for them to achieve the organisational goals. The shared vision serves to lay out what the school

buildings should look like in 5, 10 and 15 years. A visioning exercise can create a sense of ownership in the school community to the extent that they would want to see the vision come to fruition over a period of time. The visioning process will provide the direction for the master plan for a healthier physical environment of the school.

The school principal and the chairperson of the SGB play a crucial role in facilitating the visioning process. They should see to it that the shared vision is built through the collaboration of all members of the school community. It is the responsibility of the school principal to safeguard imposing on the school community in a top-down manner, but should be the result of a group effort. Therefore, the role of the principal would be to motivate and encourage members of the school community to participate by sharing their individual mini vision statements. As a shared vision is not an instant process, time and energy need to be dedicated to this initiative. There is a need for the understanding of the topic/s in order to articulate and assist in its development and determine feasibility. This means the school community members must have understood what vision building is about. In that case they will not talk about building a whole block of new classes from scratch instead this has to be about how to maintain the school buildings and ensure that they are kept in good condition. The principals must have developed the skills of leadership and communication in order to instil these qualities to the school community members in order for the latter to fully engage in the process. Providing good leadership has to do with giving guidance on the processes to be followed. These processes have to be communicated continuously so that the members are kept abreast of the new developments. The shared vision has to be communicated and articulated constantly. The school community has to be reminded whenever an opportunity prevails. In that case, the school vision is shifted to the centre of every activity in the school. The principal has to assess the progress towards the envisioned school buildings.

It is believed that building and implementing a shared vision is a form of team learning, which will be the focus of the next section.

8.3.2.2 Team learning

Team learning is one of the most important components of Senge's theory of a learning organisation. It entails an initiation taken by members of the school community who come together to learn how to deal with the problems that affect them. Team learning is collaborative and cooperative, people learn something together. The school community members can organise themselves into learning teams with an intention to improve the school surroundings. This strategy fits well in the SHP initiative as it is a team effort. Team learning intends to attain its objectives by means of discussion and dialogue, conflicts and defensive routines, and practice within a group.

Team learning can commence with a formulation of a team with members from different groups of the school community. This research advocates for heterogeneous groups as members have the potential of bringing a wealth of knowledge and skills that are unique to each member to the benefit of the team. The School Health Promotion initiative advocates for such groups, indicating for example that a health committee can have educators, learners, health professionals, community members and members of a business community. This is due to the fact that the School Health Promotion project cannot only be the sole responsibility of the school, a whole school approach has to be adopted for effectiveness.

In team learning, team members engage in a dialogue between members of the teams and genuine thinking together. In this case, the dialogue can be about the importance of having beautiful surroundings. The members of the team can take turns in sharing their views on the matter. It is believed in this research that understanding of benefits and importance of, for instance having beautiful, clean surroundings would encourage and motivate team members to participate in such search for knowledge. People become eager to engage in tasks that are of value to them. Team members will then be encouraged to promote inquiry and dialogue on issues of the school surroundings and put ideas on the table for discussion.

Teams should ask themselves questions on how best they can improve the school surroundings. They have to explore different ideas, discuss differences and resolve them with the aim of co-constructing a new understanding of the improvement of the school surroundings. As members are engaged in dialogue, knowledge is transferred from an individually-held property to a team-held property. This means that for members who possess certain knowledge and understanding, for instance through furthering their studies, once they share the knowledge they acquired during the time when they were studying. Once they share this knowledge in teams, it becomes the teams' collective knowledge. It is, therefore, not surprising that the team would share the same mental models as discussed below. Learning teams then develop strategies to be used to create attractive school surroundings that enhance the wellbeing of educators.

The focus of team learning can be on any of the four constructs depicted in Figure 8.4, the construct of beautification of the school surroundings is merely used as an example. What is important here is to keep the focus on what has to be learned, which in the case of this framework is how to make the school surroundings beautiful and welcoming. Members can also seek to learn the importance of beautiful welcoming surroundings for the wellbeing of the school inhabitants. The collective knowledge of the team has to translate to changes and improvements in the school surroundings due to team learning, over time. In that case, learning is the start, while the end result is the application of acquired collective knowledge to the benefit of the school organisation. Team learning starts with describing the processes

that lead to actions. This means that there should be an agreement on shared values and knowledge by team members, this may determine their level of acceptance of knowledge sharing by members.

For example, members of the school community can learn about the effect of school surroundings on wellbeing. The aim of team learning is to develop a shared understanding of the issue at hand in order to develop collective knowledge. The team members can set a date where they will be deliberating on the issue of the impact of school surroundings on the wellbeing of educators. In this session team members can have a discussion or debate among themselves on the benefits of having a clean, attractive school surrounding wellbeing. Thus, team members will be sharing knowledge on their understanding of the aspect under discussion. In this process, individual knowledge is shared to the benefit of team members. Individually held knowledge is integrated into the team knowledge state. At the end of this process team members have the same understanding of the benefits of a clean, attractive surrounding on wellbeing. This knowledge and understanding have to translate into actions, members ensuring that the surroundings are kept clean and attractive for enhanced wellbeing.

Engaging teams in organizational dialogue encourages regenerative thinking and generative listening. As team members are sharing ideas and interact on the issue at hand, they learn from each other. Team learning provides an opportunity for members to put their ideas on the table to be analysed by others and for them to think about their own thinking. This process is empowering and developing, as members learn to articulate their ideas and put them into action.

Principals can play a major role in the formulation of the learning teams. Team members need support and encouragement in order for them to commit to the initiative. People take part in activities that they regard as of value to themselves or to significant others. Earlier on, it was indicated that visioning can lead to team learning. The shared vision that the school community members developed could be used as a motivator for them to commit to team learning in order to operationalise the vision. Working in teams is not easy because of the dynamics involved. It becomes imperative for the principals to monitor these teams while giving them space to solve the problems they might be experiencing. To successfully engage in team learning, school principals should develop the capabilities of learning teams. Team learning requires the exchange of ideas, discussing differences, and resolving them with the aim of co-constructing new understanding. They should encourage team members to engage in healthy dialogue and be willing to accept criticism. Moreover, they have to encourage team members to engage in regenerative thinking and generative listening. Realisation of the above can result in changing the unattractive school surrounding into an attractive one that promotes the wellbeing of educators.

8.3.2.3 Systems thinking

Systems thinking is a way of critical thinking where situations are perceived holistically and where relationships between parts of the systems are analyzed to understand the situation at hand for better decision making. The physical and emotional safety of educators was perceived as playing an important role in enhancing the wellbeing of educators in Chapter 7. The issue of school safety is complex and it can become intricate if not properly attended to. There are general concerns that poor safety in schools has now become an incubus in our schools. As schools are microcosms of the communities they reside in, it would be of no use to address school safety without the involvement of community members. This research is based on the understanding that school safety is too complex to be solved only by the school system without the involvement of other systems. Systems thinking is regarded as most suitable for solving complex environmental problems (Stroh, 2015).

In the collective understanding of school safety, the starting point could be the analysis of the current situation. In this study I do not advocate for a slice-and-dice approach where the issue of school safety is broken down into different parts or incidences, for example, school burglaries, vandalising of schools by community members, school violence, etc. and analysed separately. Instead, it must be understood in terms of a whole as the examples given here are not parts of unrelated pieces. This deeper understanding of the current system may enable the school to move from where it is to where it is supposed to be.

The fear of school burglaries by participants in this research and their concern for their own safety should be a cause for concern not only to the Department of Education and the schools but to all other systems. It is the elements in the school system that influences the patterns of behaviour, contributing to safe or unsafe schools. It will take the relationship between the different systems to deal with the issue of school safety. The use of systems thinking is important in understanding the prospective causes and the dynamics of the factors that might be at play in matters pertaining to school safety. In systems thinking the problem at hand is very important, thus people must be aware of it and its features.

For example, to address issues of safety at the school, the problem has to be dealt with holistically. This implies that members of the school community, namely, educators, parents and learners have to approach the problem in its totality rather than tackling it in parts. To be more specific, if the school experiences safety risks caused by poor access control at the gate, members of the school community must consider addressing it in conjunction with other aspects of safety such as fencing and burglar proofing. This prevents situations where safety problems could resurface as a result of attending to one aspect of safety and neglecting the other. Moreover, school safety can be addressed by involving other

systems such as the community and the police systems. Approaching school safety in that way could result in the problem at hand being brought under control.

Traditionally, school principals depended on a single-leader model that is no longer effective in addressing the dynamic nature of the education system (Day, Gu & Summons, 2016). As Shaked, Benoliel, Nadav and Schechter (2018) suggest that principals can adopt the following roles in order to be effective in using systems thinking:

- Evaluating significance - This refers to the principals' ability to envision school life based on their significance. This implies that school principals should envision the interventions that will bring about physical and emotional safety in the school system.
- Openness to various opinions - The principal should be willing to listen to other people and be ready to learn from them.
- Leading wholes - This refers to the ability of the principal to see a bigger picture of the system and not its individual parts.
- Adopting a multidimensional view - This entails the principals' contemplation of the various aspects of a given issue simultaneously.

Four systems considerations can be integrated to form part of a systems-based view to address complex health promotion concerns in schools. First, with regards to systems knowledge, schools can

- determine the types of information and resources most important to the system and who controls access to such information and resources. With regards to the physical and emotional safety of the members of the school community, schools have security personnel who are responsible for control at the gate making sure that there is access control. Security personnel conduct searches on all visitors and members of the school community, registering personal information of all visitors accessing the school. However, with all these security measures schools are still broken into, vandalised and acts of violence by intruders happen daily in South African schools. The issue of school safety cannot be the sole responsibility of the school. It is therefore, important for schools to rope in other systems that can assist in dealing with the issues of safety. The starting point would be to look outside the school for other systems, and then determine the information available that will enable them to better secure the school. It is believed in this research that solutions to the problems of safety in schools can be found in the same communities in which the schools reside. It is also important to check the resources that can be accessed from other

systems in order to deal with the issue. If school communities take pride in their schools, they will protect them.

- identify practices not in place but needed to fully support the goals and philosophies of change. To ensure the physical and emotional safety of members of the school community is enhanced, it is recommended that metal detectors are used to scan all visitors entering the school premises to ensure that no weapons access the school premises. Metal detectors and cameras are not available in schools in rural communities. This suggestion is linked to the above, if schools had identified the system, and the knowledge and resources that they can get, they will know where they can access aspects that are not in place.

Second, pertaining to modelling, schools can

- Identify the current assumptions that support or impede the system. The assumption with regards to ensuring safety in schools is that it is the responsibility of the Department of Education and the school. This assumption becomes an impediment to various systems in the school community in working together to ensure school safety. This way of thinking has to change in order to allow for systems in the school community to function better.
- Explicate multiple causal pathways leading to change. To intensify the security system at school, different strategies have to be explored. Having a security guard who controls access and a visitors register is a starting point. There is a need for more action to be taken in order to curb unsafety in schools. It is at this point that other measures of involving parents, community members, police, councillors can be explored and deliberated on.
- Identify potential unintended consequences that might surface due to systems change. In this regard, unintended consequences may pertain to schools shifting their responsibility of ensuring safety to other systems that could be regarded as more effective than schools dealing with safety. The ideal is to involve such systems in the activities of the school in order to learn from them and to garner their support.

Third, relating to organisation, schools can:

- design new decision-making structures needed to support the goals of the initiative. The new decision-making structures can be made up of the chairperson of the safety committee, the principal, a member of the SGB, members of organisations from external structures such as the

police, a councillor and any other organisation in the vicinity of the school that deals with safety issues.

Fourth, regarding networks, schools can:

- Identify the social ‘movers and shakers’ of the system and how they are connected. Social movers and shakers are people who have the power and influence over particular activities. Schools are the microcosms of the environment in which they are found. It is recommended that they work in collaboration with various community stakeholders (such as the community policing forums, business people and the community members in general) to garner their support in promoting the general safety of the school system. In many communities there are people that stand out from the crowd, those that are prominent leading figures and loved by community members. These are the people that can be made ambassadors of the school, advocating for the safety of the school.

8.3.2.4 Mental models

Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalisations, images, and pictures that influence how people understand their environment and how they take action. Mental models are important because they guide peoples’ perceptions and behaviours. Mental models are about how people understand life, solve problems they are faced with and make decisions. Mental models can be used to address the issue of keeping the staff rooms, classrooms and the school surroundings clean. Therefore, educators have to break the old traditions and step out of their preconceived mental models so that they can focus on doing things differently.

There is a general perception that schools put very little effort into the improvement of the school environment due to increased workload. Staff members put much of their energy on instructional and administrative responsibilities neglecting the maintenance of a healthy school environment. As a result, the school surroundings, classrooms and staffrooms become filthy due to years of neglect. These are the areas where educators spend most of their time teaching or attending administrative matters. The impact of the neglect of these school areas becomes negative for the whole school community. Additionally, from my own experience, the cleanliness of the school surroundings is usually not prioritised due to the perception that it is neither the responsibility of the educators whose responsibility is to teach nor learners who are at school to learn. These negative mental models have to change in order for the school to be kept clean and attractive to the benefit of all in the school.

Successful change of mental models can be done by encouraging and facilitating for instance educators to meet and deliberate on the issue of the cleanliness of the school. These debates should be open to everyone to contribute. A non-judgemental environment has to be created in order for participants to feel free to contribute. It is important not to have right or wrong answers, instead, each idea should be discussed and deliberated on. It is with such interactions and exchange of ideas that new mental models are developed. Mental models are shared. If the whole group of participants shares negative attitudes about the issue of maintenance of clean school environments, their mental models cannot change unless they are interrogated. This means that the strategy has to change, the debate can focus on each negative perception. The group can focus on discussions about how they can change each negative perception and what they can benefit from as individuals. For instance, although they have their teaching load they can spend some time on focusing on clean surroundings. Educators commit to activities if there is a self-benefit or they understand the value in undertaking a certain procedure.

It is when the negative mental models are changed and shared that positive mental models are developed and staff members can deliberate on the strategies to be put in place to keep the staffrooms, school surroundings and classrooms clean. A collaborative decision is taken based on the outcomes of their discussion. To maintain a culture of cleanliness in the school, different teams can be assigned responsibilities of monitoring the general upkeep of staff rooms and classrooms to promote healthy school environments that support their wellbeing. Shifting organisations to new models can be attained by driving teamwork and collaboration through reflective conversation and suspending assumptions. It is believed in this research that changing mental models is not a once-off event, it has to be the norm for the groups to meet and deliberate on issues. Additionally, it is too ambitious to think that all negative mental models can be changed in a short space of time, the drivers of change within schools have to be patient and allow time for things to change.

Staff members have preconceived ideas about the various aspects of the school environment including keeping the staffrooms and classrooms clean. Once these ideas are created, they become fixed and reinforced in the minds of members of the organisation making it difficult to change them. This requires a school principal who can make them aware that there is a need to change their mental models so that they can engage in changing their perceptions about the issue at hand. This can be achieved if the school principal can create a common ground for the building of team mental models that would instil among team members the need to commit to keeping the school clean. It is important for the school to embed cleanliness as one of their core values into the vision and mission of the school, promote individual and team learning on improving the cleanliness of classrooms as well as creating an environment in which people can generate and share information about the importance of clean school environments for wellbeing.

Engaging in reflective conversation to talk about the general state of cleanliness of the school, there is a need for school principals to shift away from the idea that leaders are individuals who dominate others to achieve their goals but must focus on providing leadership with an intent to influence team members of the school community to work collaboratively. In that way, they will achieve their goals through others. Finally, school principals should see to it that organisations should break their old traditions and step out of the preconceived mental models so that they keep abreast with the ever-changing reality.

8.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I identified the various models and frameworks that have been developed on the wellbeing of employees. These models and frameworks focus on the wellbeing of educators in schools. It was anticipated that there would be valuable lessons that can be learned from them as indicated in the summaries that are presented after each model/framework is presented. A theory-based framework for principals to promote healthy school environments for educator wellbeing was developed. The framework is built on four constructs that were established from the findings of this research. The four principles of Senge's theory were used as vehicles to address the challenges presented in each construct. The various aspects of the framework are discussed in detail to give guidance to school principals on its implementation.

The next chapter pertains to summaries, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I gave a detailed account of the frameworks and models for the wellbeing of educators. The chapter culminated in the development of a theory-based framework for principals for the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance educator wellbeing. This chapter concludes the research project by giving a summary of the whole investigation in terms of the research questions posed in Chapter 1. The discussion of the problems, conclusions, recommendations for implementation of the framework will be reported. The significance of the study and the recommendations for further research will be suggested.

9.2 Summary of chapters

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter, orienting the reader to subsequent chapters of the thesis. The background of the study, based on the international, African and South African perspectives is highlighted. This is followed by the statement of the research problem, research aims, objectives, and research questions. It was necessary to clarify the key concepts, this was important in order to avoid a lack of conceptual clarity and also to situate my research.

A theoretical framework based on Senge's theory of learning organisation was introduced. A delimitation of the study was made by inserting a map of Limpopo Province to give readers a clear understanding of where the Mopani District is situated as this is where the research was conducted. The research methods, namely, research paradigm (emancipatory), research design (qualitative), research approach (PAR) and sampling strategy were elucidated. Data collection tools, such as, photovoice, focus group interviews, individual face-to-face interviews, and observation that were used to gather data in this research were explained as well. The chapter concludes with a discussion of measures to ensure trustworthiness, ethical principles observed in this research.

Chapter 2 commenced with the general background on educator wellbeing, its conceptualisation, and its importance. It was emphasised in this chapter that educators need to have enhanced wellbeing as it plays a crucial role in ensuring quality teaching and learning. The

various factors in the school environment, namely, attractive and clean school premises, thermal comfort, ergonomic comfort, safety and security, and the availability of resources were found to enhance the wellbeing of educators (*cf* 2.5.1). On the contrary, overcrowding in classrooms, poor school infrastructure, poor conditions of staffrooms (*cf* 2.5.2) were identified as factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators. This was followed by interventions to promote educator wellbeing, namely, interventions that focus on building social capital (*cf.* 2.6.1) and those that equip educators with skills (*cf* 2.6.2). Interventions that equip educators with skills included problem-solving skills, self-care, and maintaining a work-life balance. The role of the school principal in enhancing the wellbeing of educators was discussed as well. The role included facilitation of professional development of educators, involving educators in decision-making, promoting a close relationship with educators, emotional identification, creation of positive school culture and facilitation and implementation of educator wellness programmes (*cf*, 2.7).

Chapter 3 started off by presenting the concept of school health promotion in order to paint a clear picture of what it entails. The essential components of school health promotion, namely, health-related school policies, ensuring a healthy physical learning environment, safe water and sanitation, skill-based health education, as well as school-based health and nutrition services were presented (*cf.* 3.3.4.1). It was found that school health promotion is complex to be only the responsibility of a school, to that end, collaborations and partnerships with government departments, non-governmental organisations, and community stakeholders were regarded as essential. The chapter concludes with the role of the school principal in health promotion, which includes vision building and sharing, implementation of school health promotion programmes, modeling health promotion leadership, an expedition of collaboration and partnership and the professional development of educators in school health promotion (*cf.*3.4).

In Chapter 4, Senge's theory of the learning organisation was introduced. The rationale for the use of the theory, the conditions for learning organisations to learn, and the importance of transforming schools into learning organisations were explained in detail (*cf.* 4.3.1). The chapter concludes by explaining the essential components of Senge's theory of learning organisation such as systems thinking, mental models, building shared vision and team learning (*cf.*4.4). The four components of Senge's theory were pivotal in the development of the theory-based framework for principals to promote healthy environments for better educator wellbeing in Chapter 8.

Chapter 5 began with a discussion of the emancipatory paradigm and a qualitative research design. The various processes of PAR strategy of inquiry namely, relationship building, problem analysis, information gathering, discussions, developing plans as well as implementation and evaluation were elaborated on in relation to the implementation of PAR in this research (*cf. 5.4*). The information on site selection and sampling was included to provide the readers with a better understanding of the research site and the sample chosen (*cf. 5.5*). How data collection tools, such as photovoice, focus group interviews, individual interviews, and observation were employed in the study was discussed (*cf. 5.6*). Data that were gathered by means of multiple data collection methods were analysed using thematic analysis and triangulated (*cf. 5.8.1*). The chapter concluded with a discussion of measures to ensure trustworthiness and ethical aspects such as ethical clearance, access premises, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and protection from harm (*cf. 5.8*).

Chapter 6 commences with background information of the school that participated in this research and characteristics of the participants in order to provide a context for this study. Data analysis yielded three themes, namely, school safety and security (*cf. 6.4.1*), the working environment (*cf. 6.4.2*), and the role of school principals in enhancing the wellbeing of educators (*cf. 6.4.3*). The first theme included aspects such as burglar proofing, access control and palisade fencing. The second theme pertained to office environment, availability of resources, staffroom environment, classroom environment and school surroundings and toilets. The third theme was two-fold, namely, the role in enhancing the wellbeing of educators as well promoting of healthy school environments. With regards to the role of the school principal in enhancing the wellbeing of educators, school principals were to ensure that they develop partnerships and collaborations with the external stakeholders in order to access the resources and support for the school. The creation of a close relationship with educators was also imperative as this is perceived to create a platform for educators to confide to the principal when needs arise. Of utmost importance, school principals had to involve educators in decision-making as well as the implementation of school health programmes. Through this involvement, educators develop a sense of trust and belonging that is believed to be associated with better wellbeing. Concerning the role of school principals in the promotion of healthy school environments, school principals are at the forefront of initiatives that promote healthy school environments. Such initiatives may come from national, provincial, locally and school-based. For that reason, school principals have to acknowledge the fact that the success of school health programmes depends on the

involvement of educators. Apparently, school principals should see to it that educators are involved and supported in the implementation of these programmes. They should also be involved in building a shared vision pertaining to the implementation of health programmes.

In Chapter 7 the findings of the empirical data were presented. The findings of this study revealed that there were factors in the school environment that were perceived as enhancing the wellbeing of educators (*cf.* 7.4) and those that were professed as constraining it (*cf.* 7.5). Regarding the former, certain aspects were highlighted including safety and security, the office environment, the availability of water as well as an attractive school yard. On the latter, a number of issues were stated, comprising the disorderly staffroom environment, neglected conditions of classrooms and the school environment.

Chapter 8 was about developing a framework for principals to promote healthy school environments for enhanced educator wellbeing. It was important to first present various models and frameworks on wellbeing as a way of recognising their existence and also to learn lessons from such models. The lessons learned comprised of an understanding that: (1) school principals are at the centre of interventions on wellbeing in schools (2) there is a need to value, recognise and involve educators in decision-making processes (3) and that principals can enhance the wellbeing of educators by applying a variety of leadership styles and providing support in a form of resources. The idea was not to copy from these models but to acknowledge best practices. In addition, it would be futile to copy these models as the school contexts for which they were developed are not the same as that of the current study's framework. I intended to come up with a framework that would be easy for principals to understand and apply and suitable for schools in rural backgrounds. Thus, a theory-based framework for principals on the promotion of healthy school environments for better educator wellbeing was developed. The framework is empirically derived. The framework is based on four components of Senge's theory of learning organisations and four constructs that came from the findings of the empirical research.

The next section pertains to the problems that were encountered when conducting this research and their consequences and impact on the finalisation of this study.

9.3 Discussion of problems

Two problems that could have negatively affected the study were identified. However, a disastrous outcome was curbed by the management of these problems in order for them not to have a negative impact on the results of the research project.

The first problem experienced in this study pertained to the collection of data by means of cameras. Data were collected during the third school term of 2019 which was consistent with the permission granted by the Limpopo Department of Education. This meant that we had three months to finalise this process as the Department of Basic Education does not allow for data collection in the fourth term. This implied that I had to ensure that I complete data collection before the beginning of the fourth term. Realising that participants were not easily accessed during weekdays due to work commitments, I had to motivate them to make use of weekends where that was practically possible for them. As a result, the problem did not affect the research project.

The second problem experienced related to the domineering of educators over the members of the SGB. I was expecting this from educators to dominate SGB members and for the principal to assert his position over educators and the SGB while I presumed that the official from the district would affirm his position. The overbearing behaviour was caused by a power imbalance among the different groups. I vowed to be vigilant in checking for signs of this as I was aware of the negative consequences if left unattended. At the start of the first focus group interviews, the domineering behaviour was evident. After realizing this, I decided to give each participant an equal opportunity to express their views and ideas. I also emphasized the fact that each participant has something valuable to contribute to the research regardless of position and status. Despite the problems encountered in this research project, the research study was in no way negatively affected.

The third problem in this study pertained to data collection. I started collecting data in August 2019. I could not continue with the data collection process in term 4 as the letter for permission from the Department of Education clearly stated that research should not be conducted during examination times particularly in term 4 (see Appendix 2 subsection 4.2), so I had to wait until the start of the following academic year in 2020. In the first semester of 2020, I could not continue with the process of data collection due to lockdowns and school closures. I only resumed collecting data in July 2020 when schools finally opened and completed the process in

the first semester of 2021. The disturbances were really frustrating. If this study was not following a PAR approach I would have completed the study in 2020 and finalised the completion of the thesis in the first term of 2021. I had to be patient in order to go through all the processes on PAR in order to come up with a complete report.

9.4 Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, certain conclusions can be drawn as per the following headings:

9.4.1 What educator wellbeing entails

Educators in this research were aware of the factors that have an impact on their wellbeing. Contrary to other studies that focus on wellbeing and relationships, workload, and personal factors, the aspects of educator wellbeing in this study were found in the school environment. Improving the school environments might have a positive impact on educators' wellbeing. The conception of educator wellbeing did not change but it was improved because of this study. The notion of wellbeing now includes safety and security; an office environment with ergonomic office furniture, resources and thermal comfort and availability of water, factors that are not included in the definitions of educator wellbeing.

9.4.2 The essence of school health promotion

The school environment in this research pertains to the school buildings, classrooms, toilets and school surroundings. These areas are healthy if they are kept in good condition in so much that educators perceive them as promoting their wellbeing. In a nutshell, healthy school environments were about cleanliness, safety, usability, attractiveness and availability of resources. On the contrary, school environments are unhealthy if the condition of the buildings, classrooms, staff rooms and toilets are appalling and regarded as constraining the wellbeing of educators. Promoting healthy environments include the involvement of educators, focusing on programmes that promote wellbeing, creating opportunities for educator involvement in decision-making, developing close relationships and teamwork while collaborating and partnering with other stakeholders to strengthen the initiative.

9.4.3 Factors that promote the wellbeing of educators

There are factors in the school environment that are perceived to have an effect on the wellbeing of educators. These factors have to be maintained in order to support educator wellbeing. The adverse effect of neglect of the school environment may lead to constrained educator wellbeing. Therefore, schools should ensure that resources, ergonomic furniture, thermal comfort, safety and security features, beautiful schoolyard and water are made available in order to support the wellbeing of educators. The cleanliness of the staff rooms, classrooms and school surroundings are important factors in promoting the wellbeing of educators. It is important to indicate that as water was not found to be associated with the wellbeing of educators in any studies that were previously conducted, it seems that this is a new finding.

9.4.4 Factors that constrain the wellbeing of educators

There are factors in the school environment that are perceived to have an adverse effect on the wellbeing of educators. When the school environment is characterized by a disorderly staffroom environment; a neglected condition of a classroom environment including leaking roofs, broken window panes, potholes in floors, and a poorly maintained electric system; poor maintenance and shortage of toilets and littering, educators may experience low levels of educator wellbeing. Therefore, schools should see to it that aspects of the school environment that may constrain the wellbeing of educators are addressed in order to bring about a positive sense of wellbeing. Another finding that seems to be new is that of broken window panes, poor maintenance of toilets and shortage of toilets that were associated with the wellbeing of educators.

9.4.5 The role of school principals in enhancing educator wellbeing

School principals play a major role in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. They have to develop partnerships and collaboration with external stakeholders and community members. This role is important in ensuring that the initiatives of the school are supported by the external community. Internally, they have to develop close relationships with educators. There are two intended results for such relationships: for educators to be able to confide in someone they trust; and to enable the principals to detect early signs of distress among educators. Facilitation of professional development of educators on wellness and involving them in decision making and changes are tasks that have to be embarked on in support of educator wellbeing.

9.4.6 The role of school principals in promoting healthy school environments

School principals are at the forefront of initiatives that promote healthy school environments. They play a crucial role in promoting healthy environments that will enhance educator wellbeing. Initiatives for promotion of healthy school environments may come from national, provincial, locally and school-based. It is the principal that can provide direction and guidance on how healthy school environments can be promoted. In this role the principal is responsible for correct interpretation and implementation of health policies, involving all members of the school community, provision of leadership in collaborations and partnerships and strengthening relationships.

9.5 Recommendations for implementation

The recommendations are grounded on the four constructs that were developed from the findings of this research and the principles of Senge's theory, namely, building shared vision, team learning, systems theory and mental models. The four principles of Senge's theory were used as a vehicle for addressing the different challenges in the four constructs of the framework. The recommendations presented here are on how each principle can be used to promote healthy school environments. This section is an extension of the framework that was presented in Chapter 8. The focus of this section is on addressing challenges that might be encountered when using the principles.

9.5.1 Vision building and vision sharing

In addressing the issue of school buildings that constrain the wellbeing of educators, the study recommends that schools should apply the building of a shared vision. Collaborative building of the vision by all members of the school community would enable members of the school community to channel their effort towards the achievement of the shared vision.

Although collaborative vision building and sharing may have a positive effect on the promotion of healthy school environments, certain challenges can be experienced. Firstly, since collaborative vision building and sharing involves the various members of the school community, one category of staff members might dominate the process leading to other members of staff withdrawing from participation. It is recommended that in the vision building and sharing process, members of the school community be advised in advance to guard against

domineering the process so that all members are free to give their input without being intimidated. Equal opportunities for sharing ideas should be given to each member, while they are encouraged to participate as their ideas are important in improving the situation at hand.

Secondly, some members of the school community may be reluctant to give their opinions about the building of the shared vision. From my experience as a principal of a high school for years, this has happened several times. It is the parents who most of the times become reluctant to contribute due to fear that their ideas might not be accepted or they are not good enough. It is recommended that before the commencement of the collaborative vision building and sharing, members are advised that the process is collaboratory in nature and therefore requires the participation of all members of the school community.

Thirdly, some members of the school community might tend to treat other members unrespectfully if they feel that the individual visions that they share are not good enough. To prevent this, members must be informed in advance to treat each other with respect.

9.5.2 Team learning

The study recommends that team learning be applied in addressing problems related to school environments. Through team learning members of the school community learn from each other and come out with strategies that would bring about attractive school environments. For example, team members can learn about the effect of school surroundings and their impact on their wellbeing. However, if not properly applied, it could result in the manifestation of relational problems. For example, during team learning, some members of teams may tend to undermine the contributions of others leading to the triggering of negative emotions. This could result in social relationships being tarnished leading to a lack of interest by some members to participate in team learning. To curb this problem, before team learning sessions start, school principals should ensure that team members are made aware of the importance of their contributions to team learning. They should also be cautioned about the negative effects of triggering negative emotions of other team members as this could lead to unnecessary conflict. This calls for school principals to train team members on how to treat each other in a dignified and respectful manner.

9.5.3 Systems thinking

To promote a healthy school environment this study recommends that systems thinking be used. Through systems thinking, members of the school community would engage holistically with the various aspects of the school environment in a school system to bring about the physical and emotional safety of members of the school community.

Systems thinking can fail to meet its intended purpose of solving safety issues if schools:

- Fail to attend to safety issues in a holistic manner.

When solving safety issues schools must guard against attending to only one issue of safety and neglect others. For example, if a school experiences safety issues caused by poorly maintained fencing, the focus must not be on addressing the problem of fencing only. The whole safety system such as burglar proofing, fencing and access control must be attended to. Attending to one aspect of school safety may result in resurfacing of other safety problems.

- Use one traditional way of solving safety problems

One popular way of solving safety and security issues at schools is the appointment of security personnel. Systems thinking advocate that other safety and security systems have to be put in place in order to intensify school safety. To curb this problem, it is recommended that external stakeholders must be able winkle out information from identified external systems that are more experienced and knowledgeable about such issues, even if they do not intend to share. Schools are in need of the information that they can assist in dealing for example with the issue of school safety, they must be prepared to be aggressive in their approach in coming up with strategies that will work with the help of other systems.

- Failure to engage other systems on issues of safety

The school on its own cannot successfully manage to deal with issues of safety without the engagement of other systems. For that reason, this study recommends that more actions be taken to curb poor safety in schools by embarking on a whole school system approach. It is at this point that other measures such as involving parents, community members, ward counselors, community policing forums, and the South African Police Service can be roped in.

9.5.4 Mental models

In keeping the staffrooms, classrooms and schoolyard clean, the study recommends that the mental models of the members of the school community be changed. Changing the mental

models of members of the school community can enable them to transform their internal mental representations about the aspects of the school environment to the ones that support the wellbeing of educators.

Negative mental models may pertain to failure by staff members to keep staffrooms, classrooms and schoolyards clean, as they may think that this is a responsibility of a certain group of members within the school, particularly cleaners. In dealing with such mental models, members of the school community can be made aware of the value and benefits of keeping their staffrooms clean. It is important in those awareness programmes to talk about the value to the self and not only for others. People buy into an idea if it is of value to them as individuals or to their loved ones. Such knowledge can lead to positive mental models if they are accepted and used by the school community.

Another challenge about negative mental models pertains to educators that oppose change interventions that are introduced in a school. When new changes are suggested to educators they tend to preempt that the new ideas will not materialise even before the change intervention has been put into practice. This requires educators to change their preconceived mental models to one that embraces change. To unlearn this negative mental model, educators must be involved in the discussion sessions in order to analyse the situation, point out reasons why the change intervention cannot work and also come up with solutions on what can be done.

9.6 Summary of contributions

I regard the framework developed in this study as an invaluable contribution to the body of knowledge. I propose that using a scientific theory to develop a framework that provides a diagnostic approach will enable principals to use theory to better understand the current status of their school environments as well as the factors that enhance or constrain the wellbeing of educators and also inform future efforts. This framework becomes a mechanism for principals, School Management Teams, education officials dealing with educator wellness in schools to carry out the theory-based implementation, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives and programmes that are intended to enhance the wellbeing of educators from a health promotion perspective.

The study can be of great value because:

- It creates awareness to school principals, educators, education planners, and the general public of the various factors of the school environment that impact the wellbeing of educators. Through this awareness, stakeholders can develop an increased commitment towards addressing aspects of school environments that affect the wellbeing of educators.
- It contributes to the limited body of research in the area of school leadership support for educator wellbeing and the promotion of healthy school environments. The results of this study will serve as an eye-opener to school principals that they have to play an active role in enhancing the wellbeing of educators by providing the necessary support that will make educators thrive in their jobs.
- The framework developed for the promotion of healthy school environments informs school principals on the steps to be followed on how to execute their role.

9.7 Suggestions for future research

In my engagement in this research project, I have learned that the majority of studies conducted dealt with educator wellbeing in general. For that reason, I deem it imperative to approach it from different perspectives. Consequently, I recommend that further research be carried out on:

- The importance of school health programmes on the wellbeing of educators. Further research on this topic will enable educators to gain a better understanding of the various programmes that promote the wellbeing of educators.
- The importance of workplace comfort on the wellbeing of educators. This will enable school principals, SGB, and the Department of Basic Education to understand the impact of workplace comfort in enhancing the wellbeing of educators and thereby strive to provide the resources that would enhance workplace comfort.

The importance of school collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders in enhancing the wellbeing of educators. This will enable school principals, educators, and the SGB of the importance of developing partnerships and collaborations with various stakeholders that can support the wellbeing of educators.

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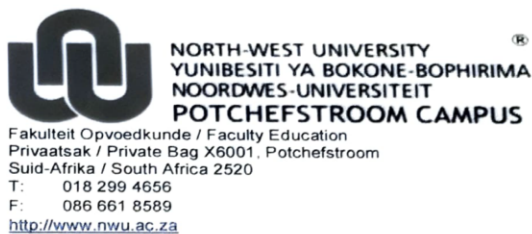
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX: 01



11 April 2019

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby confirm that the amended ethics application, as stated below, was approved at the Ethics Committee meeting of the Faculty of Education of 5 April 2019.

Ethics number: NWU-00656-18-A2

Project head: Dr S Kwatubana

Project team: KK Mabunda

Title: A framework for promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the well-being of educators in public schools

Period: 5 April 2019 – 5 April 2020

Risk level: Low

Should you have further enquiries in this regard, you are welcome to contact Prof Jako Olivier at 018 285 2078 or by email at Jako.Olivier@nwu.ac.za or Ms Erna Greyling at 018 299 4656 or by email at Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

Prof J Olivier
Chair Edu-REC

APPENDIX: 02



REF : 2/2/2

Enq: Sono S.N

Email: Nyikosono33@gmail.com

Date : 25.06.2019

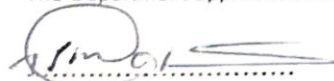
TO : MABUNDA N.K

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: THE FRAMEWORK FOR PROMOTION OF HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS TO ENHANCE THE WELL – BEING OF EDUCATORS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. The above matter refers.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research on the above - mentioned Topic has been approved.
3. Your focus should only be limited to the school listed below:

| NO. | NAME OF CIRCUIT | NAME OF SCHOOL |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | Shamavunga Circuit | Mahumani Secondary |

4. The following conditions should be adhered to:
 - 4.1. Arrangement should be made with the affected school.
 - 4.2. The research should not be conducted during Examinations especially the 4th term.
 - 4.3. During research, applicable research ethics should be adhered to, in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
 - 4.4. Upon completion of the research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
 - 4.5. The research should not have any financial implications to the Department of Education Limpopo Province.
5. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter to the school where you intend to conduct your research since it will serve as proof that you have been granted permission to conduct the research.
6. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your research.


DISTRICT DIRECTOR

2019.06.25.
DATE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MOPANI DISTRICT, Private Bag X 578 GIYANI, 0826



APPENDIX: 03

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520
Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Researcher: Mabunda N.K.

Address: PO Box 6412
GIYANI
0826

Email Address: kennymabundama@gmail.com

Contact No: 082 435 7977

Faculty of Education

(Edu-Lead)

Supervisor: Dr. S. Kwatubana
Tel: 016 910 3062
Email: Sipho.kwatubana@nwu.ac.za
Date: 07.06.2019

Dear SGB Chairperson
Mahumani High School
P.O. Box
Giyani
0826

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH.

My name is Nzama Kenneth Mabunda, and I am a PhD student at North-West University Vaal campus. The research I wish to conduct for my Doctoral thesis is entitled "*The framework for promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the well-being of educators in public schools*". This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. S. Kwatubana, North-West University, South Africa. The research will be conducted at the school where you are serving as the SGB chairperson On the **20th of June 2019**. For that reason, I request for your permission to grant me permission to conduct this action research project. Furthermore, be informed that the research will be conducted after school or during school vacation to ensure that teaching time is not affected.

I will keep all data collected completely confidential, and I will not use your school's name or any staffs or learner's name in any research report. Any information that I present will not be linked to any personal information that could be used to identify individual participants. I am confident that I have taken the necessary steps to ensure that my research is conducted in the way that conform to ethical standards.

Please sign below and return a copy of this letter to me indicating to me whether or not you give me permission to conduct this action research project.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely

Mabunda N.K. (Researcher)

I give permission to you to conduct the action research project.

I do not give permission to you to conduct the action research project described above.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Name of SGB Chairperson: EDWARD CHAUKE | |
| Signature of SGB Chairperson: | Date: 14/06/2019 |

APPENDIX: 04



P.O. Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark

South Africa

Tel: 016 910 3068

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Faculty of Education

Edu-Lead Niche Area

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Dr Siphokazi Kwatubana

ADDRESS: Van Eck Boulevard, North West University, Vaal Campus, Vanderbijlpark

CONTACT NUMBER: 016 910 3570

Dear Participant

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

I hereby request your consent to participate in the research study entitled “A framework for the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the well-being of educators in public schools”. Before you give consent please acquaint yourself with the information below:

The study was approved by the Ethics committee of the Faculty of Education Sciences of the North-West University and it will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission to conduct the research was granted by the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education as well as the Governing Body of the sampled school.

Your participation in the research will be completely voluntary and you are free to decline to participate and will not be negatively affected in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point. Your participation will be anonymous in that you will not be identified and data you share will be handled with utmost confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used in the research report. Data collected will be in the project leader’s safe-keeping in a locked cabinet where no one will have access to it.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the research personnel:

Principal investigator: Mabunda N.K

Cell number : 082 435 7977

Email address : kennymabundama@gmail.com

Work tel. no : 015 007 0937

I _____ confirms that I have read and understood the content of this form and I agree/ disagree to participate in the research.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

APPENDIX: 05

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SESSION 1): THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN ENHANCING THE WELLBEING OF EDUCATORS (SESSION 1)

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this research study. The title of this study is "A framework for the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the well-being of educators in public schools". The interview will last for approximately 45 to 60 minutes and I will ask you questions concerning your experience as a school manager and how you are committed to supporting your staff in wellness issues. I want to remind you that participating in this research is voluntary and you are allowed to refrain from answering those questions that you feel uncomfortable answering. Do you have any questions before we start with the interview?

1. What is your understanding of the concept of "educator well-being"?
2. Based on your experience as the school principal, what are the factors that promote educator well-being?
3. As a school principal, fully explain what are the main factors that constrain the well-being of your educators in your school?
4. What are the effects of the school physical environment on the wellbeing of your educators? Fully elaborate.
5. In your view do you think that as a school principal you have a role to play in enhancing the wellbeing of educators?

Thank you for your time and participation.

APPENDIX: 06

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SESSION 1): THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN SCHOOL HEALTH PROMOTION (SESSION 2)

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this research study. The title of this study is “A framework for the promotion of healthy school environments to enhance the well-being of educators in public schools”. The interview will last for approximately 45 to 60 minutes and I will ask you questions concerning your experience as a school manager on your role in school health promotion. I want to remind you that participating in this research is voluntary and you are allowed to refrain from answering those questions that you feel uncomfortable answering. Do you have any questions before we start with the interview?

1. What is your role as a school principal in school health promotion?
2. Do you involve educators in school health promotion programmes, if yes how?
3. What are the challenges faced by your school in implementing health promotion programmes?
4. What is your role as a school principal in supporting members of the school health committee in implementing health promotion programmes?
5. Do you involve learners in school health promotion programmes, if yes, how?
6. Do you have any recommendations on how schools can improve school environments? Fully elaborate.

Thank you for your time and participation.