



Investigating managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging

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DECLARATION

I, A. Johnson (23721774), declare that the mini dissertation titled: **“Investigating managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging.”** submitted to the North-West University Business school, under the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences for the Master of Business Administration (MBA) has not been previously submitted for any other degree or at any other university. I further declare that this is solely my work, and that acknowledgment has been given to any relevant person.

DEDICATION

I would like to thank the Almighty God for the strength and courage he has given me throughout this journey. The Lord has been faithful and has made me courageous till the end. I would also like to thank my loving and supportive husband, Koos Johnson, and my children, Jayla, Keagan, and Jacqueline Johnson, who have stayed up late nights and given me moral support. I am incredibly grateful for the time they allowed me to sacrifice our family vacations and outings to complete my work. I dedicate this report to them.

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Next, I would like to thank the principals of the selected schools for this study for allowing me to engage with staff members. I would also like to thank the study participants for allowing me to interact and engage with them on their perceptions and views on school management and leadership.

Lastly, I want to thank my employer and colleagues for their support and for having my back when I was on leave.

A. Johnson

ABSTRACT

The research study investigated participants' views to understand the perceptions of staff members employed at public primary schools. Public primary schools are organizations that provide teaching and learning. The school belongs to the Gauteng Department of Education, which has employed various staff members to help in the daily functioning of the school. In addition to the staff members, the DBE appoints a School Management Team. The SMT are managers of the school who assist with the functioning of these public primary schools. However, the school management team is placed in schools with limited skills as the team is placed in these roles merely based on experience and not expertise. Schools have noted that when managers of the school are unable to display appropriate skills, staff members tend to be influenced. This can then cause schools not to function correctly.

The research study followed a qualitative approach to achieve the primary research objectives. The primary research objective focused on the views and perceptions of staff members employed at selected public primary schools in Vereeniging. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with various public primary school staff members (educators, administrative, and maintenance workers). The discussions took place in a hybrid setting, including face-to-face and zoom online interviews. Data from eighteen (18) interviewees were collected, sixteen (16) were analysed and interpreted. Thematic data analysis was used to code and develop relevant themes.

The findings which emerged from the thematic data analysis revealed that there is a presence of adverse influence of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools. The SMT's use of skills, positively or negatively, influenced how staff members performed tasks within the organization and the functioning of the school.

Key terms: Managerial skills, Leadership skills, School Management team, Public primary schools

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SMT: School management teams

DBE: Department of Education

EMSREC: Economics and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee

PAM: Personnel Administrative Measures

CHAPTER 1 : NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Leadership skills form the foundation of most functional organizations. Their effectiveness is outlined as *an “essential element for sustainable development for organizations, and their core conceptualization revolves around the capability of leadership to manage self, subordinates, and relationships”* (Darling & Nurmi, 2009:202). Furthermore, leadership is *“a personal skill encompassing the abilities to vision, act, communicate, and influence people in the organization”* (Darling & Nurmi, 2009:203). Over the years, there has been a decline in employee morale due to a lack of leadership skills displayed by school management teams (Malesela & Mokgadi, 2020:1). The decline has led to various public primary schools not functioning in an optimal way. Principals, deputy principals, and Heads of Departments (HoDs) form part of the basis of the School Management Team (SMT).

Literature reveals that most SMT members lack essential leadership and managerial skills (Malesela & Mokgadi, 2020:1). This is partially due to the skills not being included in the initial training of principals and other members of the SMT (Malesela & Mokgadi, 2020:1). SMT members are employed to various positions meeting the basic requirements of the vacant post primarily based on prescribed years of experience (Sinyosi, 2021: 2). Bush and Sargsyan (2013: 31) assert that schools need committed and trained teachers. For this reason, school leaders need requisite skills to facilitate guidance and support for the organizations they lead. When the SMT lacks leadership skills, the school will likely end up poorly managed.

To this end, the current study aims to investigate the influence of the managerial and leadership skills of the SMT on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Sedibeng District, Vereeniging. This was achieved by outlining the background and problem statement of the study. The researcher established the objective of the study as well as the research question which aimed at answering a question pertaining to why the study was undertaken. The study further defined crucial concepts that were used in study and highlighted the research methodology that was used.

1.2 Background and problem statement

The optimal functioning of a public school is essential (Akea, 2017:287). Hence the current study, by investigating managerial and leadership skills at selected public primary schools, will enable schools or similar organizations to run their operations effectively with the findings. Leaders

influence various aspects of the school environment, their leadership further promotes excellent service delivery, innovation, and motivated teachers and learners. According to Bush and Sargsyan (2013: 31), there is an increasing recognition that schools need influential leaders to provide the best possible education. Leadership is an essential component of all social undertakings. It facilitates guidance and support for the school as an organization (Malesela & Mokgadi, 2020:1).

Leadership is critical for student achievement and work performance in schools. School leadership has an impact on all aspects of education. This includes teacher motivation, the conditions and atmosphere in which teaching-learning take place, as well as the interactions with the larger community (Malesela & Mokgadi, 2020:1). September (2012: 1) adds that leadership is a process that involves working creatively with all stakeholders to seek out the potential of people and develop this potential in a supportive environment.

Khan (2020:4) found that many schools in South Africa are not functioning properly due to inadequate or incompetent school management. The reason is that SMT members are often appointed without appropriate training for their positions (Khan, 2020). September (2012: 2) posits that these SMT members were unprepared to take on their new responsibility. Management and leadership, in this case, likely lead to failure of schools to function at their optimal best. This deficit functioning and management stand a great chance of jeopardizing the education structure, when schools lack a solid basis and clear direction, staff members ultimately suffer (Khan, 2020).

School leadership, in addition, has risen to the top of international education policy agendas (Naicker & Mestry, 2018). This significantly impacts school outcomes by influencing teachers' motivations and capacities, as well as the school atmosphere and environment. Effective school leadership and management are critical for increasing the efficiency and equity of education (Naicker & Mestry, 2018). Leadership furthermore involves influencing stakeholders to renew their thinking while motivating them to be productive (Sinyosi, 2021: 2).

As schools and countries strive to adapt their education systems to the needs of modern society, expectations for schools, school leaders, and managers are shifting (Naicker & Mestry, 2018). There is a great interest in educational leadership. This is because quality leadership makes a significant difference to school and learner outcomes (Bush & Sargsyan, 2013: 31). Hence, the study will investigate the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools. In doing so, the study will analyse the sound and inadequate skills that contribute to the adequate performance of schools.

1.3 Aims and objectives

1.3.1 Primary aim

The study's primary objective was to investigate the views of staff members on managerial and leadership skills in the proper functioning of public primary schools. The researcher used qualitative research as the study aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of a phenomenon.

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

- Investigate what management and leadership skills encompass
- Investigate how management and leadership skills support the effective functioning of a school
- Discover the effect of good managerial and leadership skills in schools
- Discover the effect of inadequate managerial and leadership skills on staff members

1.4 Research questions

The primary research question was aimed at assisting the researcher gain first-hand knowledge regarding what is already known about managerial and leadership skills in public primary schools in the Sedibeng East District, Vereeniging. The primary research question in this study gave the researcher insight into the developments and new leads of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging, the research question is as follows:

1.4.1 Primary research question

How do managerial and leadership skills assist with the functioning of public primary schools in Sedibeng East district, Vereeniging?

1.4.2 Secondary research questions

The secondary research questions investigated what prior literature states on managerial and leadership skills, and what the influence of these skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools. The questions are as follows:

- What are the reasons for poor managerial and leadership skills in schools?
- How do poor managerial and leadership skills affect the running of the schools?
- How do staff members support managerial and leadership decisions?

1.5 Clarification of concepts

- **Leadership skills**

Bolden (2009:10) defines leadership as generic and further states that it must be applied in context. Leadership has to do with a person's ability to influence, inspire and motivate others (Bolden, 2009:13). As a leader, you do not necessarily have to be at the forefront where everyone sees you, but your actions and behaviour need to represent you and show your followers how they may be their best. Bolden (2009: 13) explains that anyone can be a leader, and they may be able to do it at any level. Leadership, however, begins with self-awareness. Taking up a leadership role without seeing your flaws might affect your discretions. In leadership style, leaders need to relate to their employees (Bolden, 2009). Leaders need to be able to listen to other people and analyse them to lead in a better way. This requires specific skills, and a lack thereof might have a negative impact.

Poor leadership, according to Akea (2017: 285), decreases the employees' motivation, creativity, satisfaction, productivity, commitment, performance, health problems, stress, and burnout. Good leaders encourage and bring about change in the working environment (Akea, 2017). If the leadership is not functional in an organization, employees are harmed which may lead to employees being unproductive and not reaching organizational goals (Akea, 2017). If the leadership were to be positive, employees would blossom and be able to attain their organizational goals. Positive leadership allows employees to blossom and be able to attain their organisational goals, permitting them freedom to be productive which helps them reach organisational goals.

- **Managerial skills**

Management is defined by Lush (2019:21) as dealing with and controlling things or people to reach the desired goal. Good leadership is acquired through effective communication and requires good delegation of responsibilities and accountability (Lush, 2019: 2). A managerial process is needed for any organization that employs more than three employees (Akea, 2017:285). The process allows leaders and managers to direct and organize their employees to reach organizational objectives (Akea, 2017: 286). If the management in an organization is not functioning, it may turn the organization into a toxic environment where employees are despondent and unable to reach organizational goals. In reverse, if the management in an organization is positive, it may lead people to do their work more willingly, be productive and reach organizational goals (Akea, 2017:285).

Hence management and leadership go hand in hand; one feeds off the other (Mulcahy & Perillo, 2017:123). For organizations not only to have a positive impact on but also to bring change positively in the country, good management and leadership should be maintained in single organizations (Mulcahy & Perillo, 2017:123). Managerial and leadership skills are essential. Managers and leaders should be able to incorporate a range of skills and leadership styles to direct the organization in the right direction (Mulcahy & Perillo, 2017:123). Furthermore, the management and leadership in any organization should be individuals willing to take responsibility for leading and managing people.

1.5.1 Conceptual definitions

1.5.1.1 Definition of Key concepts

Table 1 below gives a description of the key concepts of the research study.

Table 1-1: Definition of concepts

Concept	Definition
Leadership	<i>A practical skill encompassing the ability of an individual, group, or organization to "lead," influence, or guide other individuals, teams, or entire organizations (Bolden, 2009:10). The term permits the study to comprehend what the role of leadership surrounds.</i>
Management	<i>The administration of an organization, whether a business, a non-profit organization, or a government body. It is the art and science of managing (Mulcahy & Perillo, 2017:123). The term was studied to understand aspects and traits of management.</i>
primary school	<i>A primary education school for children aged four to eleven (sometimes up to thirteen). The term was explored to recognize the context in which leadership and management are applied.</i>

Source: Developed by author

1.6 Theoretical framework

In this study, two theories were applied to investigate the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the functioning of public primary schools. The first theory comprises the contingency theory, whereas the second discusses the management theory. Booysen (2007:38) outlines the Contingency theory as a "situational theory" because its focus is the context and situation of the leader. The thesis outlines how a condition that affects the leader can cause members to succeed or fail (Booyesen, 2007:38). Within the contingency theory, leaders' effectiveness is determined by their situation. Leaders, in this case, can change their leadership style based on a problem. The contingency theory will be applied in the study as it will assist the investigation in understanding the influence a lack of these skills can have on staff members at a school to succeed or fail.

The second theory applied is the management theory. Jackson (2017:566) explains that the theory comprises supervising, organizing, and looking at how a team performs. Leaders in this theory operate based on giving and taking. The theory can be seen as a transactional leadership style (Jackson, 2017). Employees are rewarded for positive behaviour, while punishment is administered for failure and negative behaviour (Jackson, 2017:572). Hence, the management theory was applied as the second theory since the theory revealed actions to be taken to manage and lead school staff members.

1.7 Scope of the study

The study investigated the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools. The scope of the study was limited to staff members which included educators, administrative workers, and maintenance workers employed at selected public primary schools in the Sedibeng East District in Vereeniging.

1.8 Significance of the study

In alignment with prior and existing literature, the study may benefit school managers (the SMT) on skills to use to run the school optimally. This may help to influence staff members positively to perform duties effectively and help with the proper functioning of public primary schools. More benefits of this research study are as follows:

School Management Team: Gain insight on various styles of leadership to help better the management of public primary schools.

Researcher: The researcher is adding to the existing knowledge and may uncover with more relevant information for future researchers and students who would like to investigate public primary schools further.

Staff members: To better understand, and be able to identify when the SMT uses, negative or positive managerial and leadership skills.

1.9 Field of the study

The study field was focused on public primary schools in the Sedibeng East District in Vereeniging. Public primary schools need to be managed and led daily to ensure that all staff members' duties are performed to ensure the school functions optimally. Public primary schools have policies that stipulate the various roles of managers and how they need to lead and manage the organization.

1.9.1 Demographics of the study

The study was conducted in selected public primary schools in the Sedibeng East District in Vereeniging

1.10 Research Methodology

According to Wilkinson (2000: 56), a research methodology is a technique or process that the researcher uses to identify and analyse the overall study's validity and reliability. In this section, the researcher chooses, analyses, and processes the information on the research topic. The research methodology process is discussed by Saunders *et al.* (2007:111), as the following processes: firstly, a research paradigm which is used by the researcher to examine a social phenomenon. Understandings of these phenomena can be gained, and explanations attempted (Saunders et al., 2007:11). The study aimed to investigate the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of selected public primary schools in Vereeniging, the researcher attempted to develop meaning in the running and structure of schools. In so doing, the study attempted to make sense of the organization. The researcher put themselves in the respondents' shoes to try to make meaning of the phenomenon. The interpretivist philosophy paradigm is applied in this study and consists of the following:

- Learning how humans make sense of the world around them.
- Permitting the researcher to develop an emphatic stance.
- Using prior research to create understanding through their point of view.

Interpretivism is outlined by Saunders et al. (2007:106-107) as they state that the researcher needs to understand the differences between their role as social actors. Since the interpretivist philosophy conducts its research study only with humans, the participants included selected staff members from public primary schools who enable the everyday proper functioning of the school.

This is followed by the research approach study entailing qualitative research. The reason therefore is that qualitative research permits the reader to understand social reality with detailed descriptions of people and their interactions (Bryman, 2019:41). The interpretivist study is aimed at understanding a phenomenon. Interpretivist studies are based on the following assumptions (Nieuwenhuis, 2011: 61):

- Human life can only be understood from within. It cannot be observed from some external reality. Interpretivist focuses on people's subjective experiences of how people construct the social world by sharing meanings.
- Social life is a distinctively human product. Reality is not objectively determined but socially constructed.
- The human mind is the purposive source of the origin of meaning. By exploring the phenomenon's richness, depth, and complexity, we can develop a sense of understanding of meanings imparted by people to phenomena and their social context.
- Human behaviour is affected by knowledge of the social world.
- The social world does not exist independently of human knowledge.

This study investigated the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging. This purpose was to get in-depth understanding of how the phenomenon occurs.

Lastly, research design which is defined by Nieuwenhuis (2011: 70) *as a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data-gathering techniques to be used, and the data analysis to be done.* The research design used in this research study is the form of a case study. Case study research is a systematic inquiry into an event, or related events, which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon (Fossey *et al.*, 2002: 718). Further characteristics of a case study are that it strives toward a holistic understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation and how they make meaning of a phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2007: 75).

A case study conducts an empirical investigation on a phenomenon within its real-life context (Saunders et al., 2007:139); Staff members within a school were asked eight open-ended interview questions. These questions investigated understanding the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of schools. This allowed the researcher of to gain insight into participants' views on the leadership skills of the school management team. This case study research was conducted with staff members employed within a school; the school, in this case, was the research site. The study used semi-structured interviews to obtain deeper insight and seek new light on the phenomenon.

1.11 Trustworthiness

According to Bryman *et al* (2015: 44-45), trustworthiness in any study needs to meet the following criteria:

Credibility is needed in a study to ensure that the research conducted is in good practice. For this process, the researcher returned to the participants after the study to ensure that the data analysis was credible. The researcher showed the participants transcripts and ask if the data had been interpreted correctly. The second criterion is transferability. Transferability involves the intensive, in-depth study of a small group of individuals sharing the same characteristics. The study provided sufficient details to the participants to ensure methods and techniques were applied in a similar context. Dependability: The audit phase included keeping a record of all the stages of the research processes. For this, the researcher outlined the research processes in-depth, from the data formation to the end of the process. Lastly, Conformability ensures the researcher can see allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations to influence the research. The researcher used peer review to limit personal matters interfering with the data analysis (Bryman, 2015: 44-45). Peer reviews were obtained from students who were conducting research studies in the same field, in this case humanities.

1.12 Limitations

The following limitations were experienced:

- Face-to-face interviews. With Covid being a hindrance to human contact, the researcher had to conduct some of the semi-structured interviews online.
- Conducting the semi-structured interviews online resulted in some participants experiencing technical issues; load shedding was another factor. For example, some participants struggled to log in to the platform correctly and some participants obtained a weak internet connection.

- The researcher conducted this study using only semi-structured interviews. Document analysis and reports as well as other data instruments used assisted in obtaining in-depth information about the title.
- The researcher struggled to get voluntary participants in the Sedibeng East District, Vereeniging, even though this district predominantly consists of public primary schools, available teachers, administrative workers, and maintenance workers.

1.13 Ethical consideration

As ethical consideration is highlighted in every study, the research looked at the following:

The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the North-West University Business School before the study could take place. Secondly, permission was obtained from the Department of Basic Education to conduct research within the public schools.

After obtaining these forms, the researcher would identify schools to request permission to include employees in the study. Informed consent forms would be given to participants, informing them that the study would be voluntary and that they could withdraw any time they wished to do so (Fossey *et al.*, 2002: 721).

Furthermore, identities and names would be replaced with pseudonyms to ensure that the uniqueness of participants remained private (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:87). The consent form outlines that important information regarding the study will not be shared with anyone. This aligns with the POPIA Act, which stipulates the rules which should be followed when processing information about individuals. This Act grants individuals the right to respect their information (Werksmans, 2020).

Finally, the researcher ensures that all data collected were locked up in a place of safety and not easily accessible to anyone.

1.14 Outline of the dissertation

Proposed layout of study:

CHAPTER 1: Nature of the study

This chapter provides an overview of the research study. This includes introduction and background, the research problem, research question, objectives as well as the definition of concepts.

Chapter 2: Conceptual framework

This chapter provides a literature review on the leadership and managerial skills needed for the functioning of public primary schools.

CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research processes in detail; this includes the research methodology, data collection and analysis, and sampling strategies.

CHAPTER 4: Research Results

This chapter presents the raw data, provide an analysis of the data, and give the findings of this study. The results will be based on the open-ended interviews.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter summarizes the results and provide a conclusion following the results of the study. The limitations and recommendations of the study will also be clearly outlined.

1.15 Summary

Chapter one outlines the nature and scope of the research study. This chapter further summarizes the problem, the objectives, and the research methodology needed to investigate the study. The participants and the field of the study were introduced and will guide the literature review in chapter two.

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In chapter two, the literature was reviewed to get a theoretical background on the main topic of the study. This is to investigate the perceptions and views of managerial and leadership skills in prior literature and discover how this may have influenced the functioning of organizations.

The literature review started with a managerial and leadership skills background needed for the successful running of a business, guided by the primary research objective. It then outlined and discussed theories of leadership and management. This is to review how theorists and theories formed the foundation of the literature. The study further examines the unique themes outlined in the secondary research objectives, which include leadership, management, the effect of both, and the positive and negative influence of both on public primary schools. The study also looks at what public primary schools are, the managers, and the various roles of these managers.

2.2 Background and Theories

Managerial and leadership skills are crucial for any organization with multiple employees (Darling and Nurmi, 2009: 208). The organization must be managed daily to ensure it operates and functions effectively (Gordan: 2022). To ensure that the organization uses or works as it should, there needs to be managers or leaders appointed (Darling and Nurmi, 2009: 208). Darling and Nurmi (2009) further explain that these managers or leaders must possess specific skills to run the organization, as these skills may influence how the organization functions.

The organization may have hostile staff members when managers or leaders have poor managerial or leadership skills (Schilling, 2016:2), whereas staff members are optimistic when the managers or leaders have good organizational and leadership skills (Gordan, 2022). Nixon (2003) therefore asserts that positive or negative staff members influence the way the organization may function. Therefore, from these authors, it can be concluded that managers or leaders must have the appropriate managerial and leadership skills. In public primary schools, managers are in fact appointed to help govern the school (September 2007:57).

2.2.1 Management and Leadership Theories

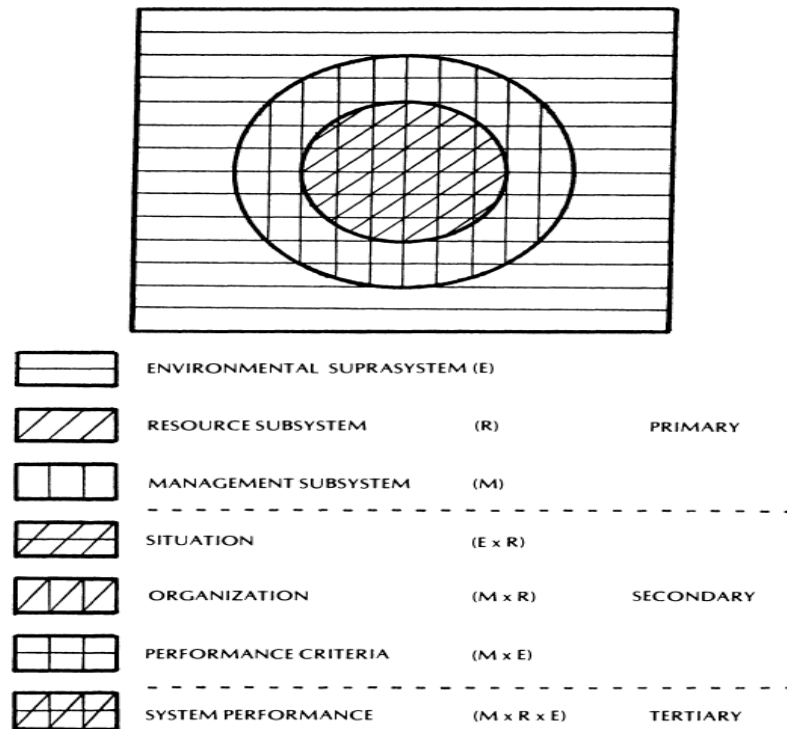
The two leadership and management theories are discussed and explained to help investigate the theoretical foundations of managerial and leadership skills. The approaches to be addressed include the Contingency Theory and the Management Theory.

Contingency Theory

Luthan and Stewart (1977:184) define and describe with Wolinski (2010) that the contingency approach is situational. This theory analyses an organization and explains that there is no perfect way to order an organization, lead a company or make decisions within the specified company (Wolinski, 2010). The contingency theory is essential as it analyses two crucial variables, the independent and dependent. These variables establish whether if the work environment is conducive for work performance, the employees find the work environment appealing, there is an overall success, and the organization attains set goals and objectives.

Luthan and Stewart (1997:185) state that this approach is defined by performance, management, and the environment. Moniz,Jr. (2010: 125) adds that variables like the style of leadership, the job design, participation in decision-making, and the organizational structure are vital to better understanding of what leads to an excellent managerial objective.

Figure 3 below shows the relationship between the various variables of the contingency model of organization:



Source: Luthans and Stewart (1997: 186)

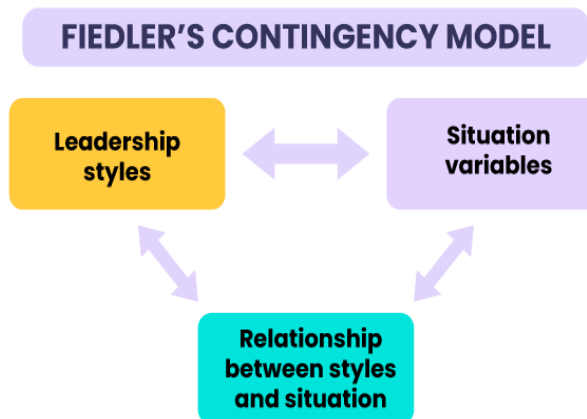
Figure 2-1: The contingency model of the organization

Contingency theory of leadership

The effectiveness of leadership is one quality that retains most employees. Various theories argue for the different leadership styles and their suitability to improve team productivity and maintain employee morale. The contingency theory of leadership is subsequently discussed and outlined. The contingency leadership theory suggests that a leader's leadership style may reflect its effectiveness; the contingent leader uses the relevant leadership style to match the situation when making decisions or leading the company (Wolinski, 2010).

It further states that the leader will tend to choose a good leadership style following the situation at hand.

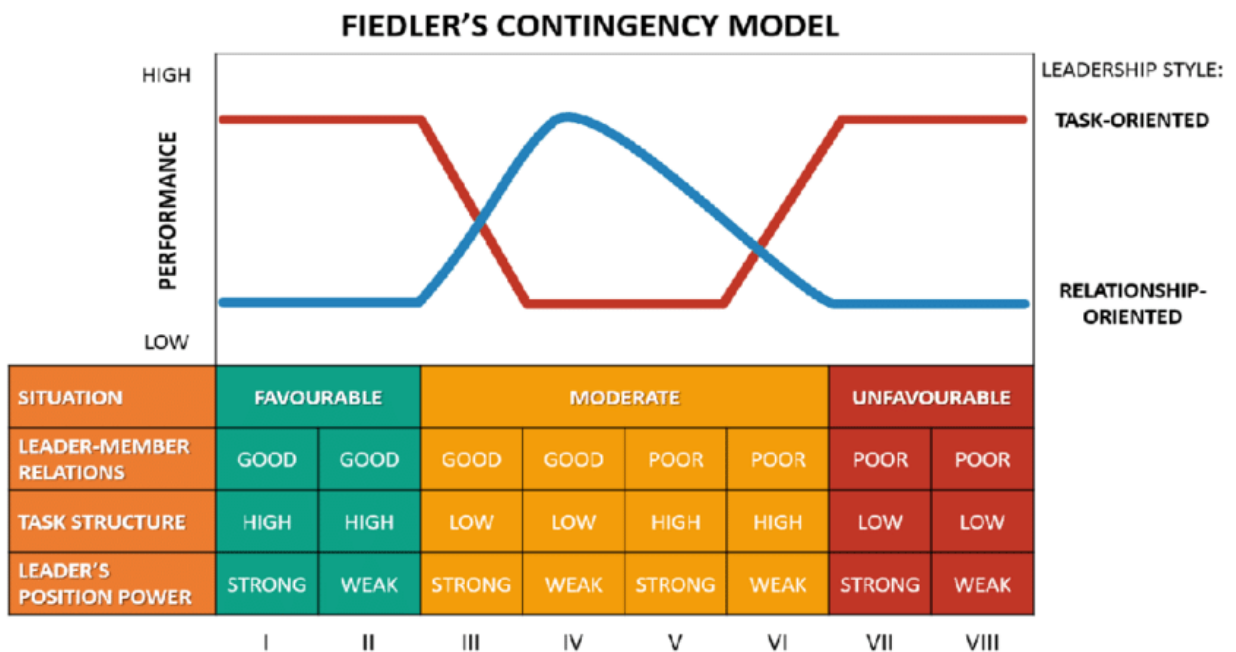
Fiedler's contingency model is shown below and depicts the relationship between the leadership style, the situation, and the relationship between the two variables. It can be seen from the figure that these all work interchangeably.



Source: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_73.htm February 4, 2021

Figure 2-2: Fiedler's contingency model

Figure 5 below shows that leaders may use the leadership style of their choice and may need to choose high or low performance per situation.



Source: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_73.htm February 4, 2021

Figure 2-3: Fiedler's contingency model

The environmental contingency theory

The environmental contingency theory investigates the stability of the domain. There could be significant instability when there is rapid change within the organization. In the environmental approach, the employees in the organization also play a vital role in the kind of environment the organization turns out to be. The background should further allow for flexibility.

Management Theories

Management theories are explained by Birt (2019) as a group of theories that suggest rules and recommendations for how to manage an organization. These theories further outline how managers on supervisory levels implement strategies that will assist in attaining organizational goals and retaining employee motivation to perform to the best abilities (Birt, 2019).

The table below summarizes the various management theories (Nixon: 2003):

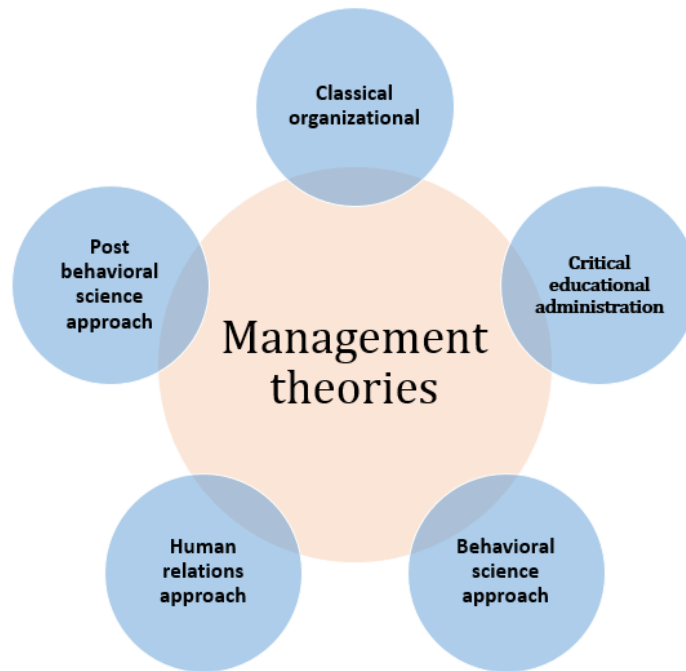
The table outlines the various management theories, names the different theorists in each of the ideas as well as explains in detail the focus of each of the approaches.

Table 2-1: Theories of management

Theory	Theorist	Focus
Scientific, classical, and behavioural management	F.W Taylor Henry Fayol Max Weber	<p>Taylor: systematic and scientific approach towards work and standardizing jobs by finding the best way to perform tasks. This leads to the productivity of labour, more efficient business, and profitability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four major principles: • Replace the rule of thumb method • Cooperation between workers and management • Scientific selection of workers • Equal division of responsibility between workers and supervisors. <p>Fayol: the practice of management is a circular and continuous process and involves four interdependence functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Organizing • Controlling and • Leading

		<p>Max Weber: Create an ideal type of organizational structure. The structure is known as bureaucracy characterized by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair division of labour; specialization of activities • Detailed rules and regulations • Impersonal relations
Human relations theories- Behavioural	<p>Elton Mayo Chester Barnard Douglas McGregor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners could achieve productivity goals if they created and designed organizations and work environments that were more humane and reflected the needs of workers. • Management should create a work environment that recognizes “individuals” and employees’ work needs. <p>Characteristics of these theories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase worker productivity by considering work needs to be rewarding and exciting. • Training should be provided to employees • Recognition for contribution • Team based • Management should be concerned with motivation • Communication and leadership • Workers not rigidly supervised but held accountable and be responsible • The chain of command shorter
Systems, contingency and political- an integrated approach to management	<p>David Boje Daniel Katz Robert Kahn Herbert Simon Peter Drucker Charles Handy</p>	<p>Recognize that existing organizational structures and management practices could not effectively deal with the new so-called environment challenges such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergent technologies • globalization • hyper communication • social responsibility • customization of products • and product life cycle <p>Organizations are seen as open systems. Organizations need to adapt to changing environments if they are to survive.</p>

Source: Developed by author



Source: https://medium.com/@skywingskochi?source=post_page-c68e5a6c0b1e

Figure 2-4: Management Theories

2.2.2 Summary of the Theories

Both theories (contingency and management) above prove that managers and leaders must attain organizational goals and objectives. The contingency theory suggests that leaders make decisions based on the situation, while the management theories indicate that managers must have a strategy to manage the organization. Both approaches further suggest that employees are essential for the organization's success. Employees need to be satisfied to perform duties optimally.

Below, management and leadership, managerial skills, as well as leadership skills, will be defined in detail, the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of both skills will be discussed, and public primary schools and the managers of the schools will be explained broadly, referring to the literature reviewed before this study. This assists in investigating the perceptions and views that participants have.

2.3 Management and leadership

In reviewing the literature, the study's investigation proves that old and emerging theories agree that having the appropriate managerial and leadership skills is crucial for job satisfaction and achieving organizational goals. In early research from Leithwood et al. (1999:4), one can see that leadership and management are about the empowerment of others. It further states that it is about trying to hit a target and moving as much as possible (Leithwood et al., 1999:4). This can be linked to recent studies that suggest that leadership and management are about goal setting and goal achievement. The leader or manager needs to set a target (a goal) and aim at moving forward (achieving the plan) to ensure the organization functions effectively.

Recent research further supports that the type of managerial and leadership skills of leaders and managers is more than the prescribed behaviour and traits of being authoritarian in the organization (Schilling, 2016:2); however, one further needs to establish a style for leading the organization to function optimally.

Managerial and leadership skills influence how an organization functions and how people attain organizational goals set by management. Positive leadership and management are linked in prior literature and recent research to job satisfaction, motivation, and competency. Negative leadership and management, on the reverse, are related to employee despondency, lack of interest, and the inability to perform tasks satisfactorily. However, Schilling (2016:2) argues that this might not be the case, as limited research outlines that negative leadership and management are linked to or influence non-satisfaction while doing the job. He states that some employees can still work under leaders and managers who lack managerial and leadership skills (Schilling, 2016:2).

This literature review will use empirical studies to analyse how leadership and managerial skills could influence the functioning of public primary schools. This meant that management and leadership became defined and outlined. Furthermore, analyses of effective and ineffective leadership were discussed, and compatible leadership styles considered. Lastly, management and leadership were distinguished to see if they could be used interchangeably in an organization.

2.3.1 Definition of management

Management processes in an organization, according to Lunenburg (2013:15), involve how it plans and budgets and organizes, staffs, controls, and solves problems. The management process further stabilizes the organization and assists in its functioning. In public primary schools, management plans pre-exist, and there are systems, processes, and structures in place that

determine how the school is governed and functions (September, 2012:1). This means that managers come into the organization where management plans are already in place. The Department of Education appoints a school management team in public primary schools to help manage the school. The School Management Team, like in any other functional organization, helps with preparation to plan, coordinate, and organize activities to achieve organization goals (Puri, 2021:74). This links to what Lunenburg states and alludes to: that the management process in school involves staffing, control and solving problems. The Education managers (SMT) within the school are furthermore responsible for managing administrative and supervisory activities that assist the school in functioning.

2.3.2 Managerial skills

Management skills assist the manager in organizing, planning, controlling, and staffing. As outlined in the following definition, “*good management skills transform a leader’s vision into action and successful implementation*” (Lunenburg, 2013:17). On the other hand, Asah *et al.* (2015: 311) define managerial skills as *the stock of competencies, knowledge, and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform manual labor*. A manager needs to have the knowledge and skills to lead an organization. Prior literature has found a positive association between performance and growth and strategic planning practices linked to the correct usage of managerial skills (Asah *et al.*, 2015: 312).

The lack of managerial skills in reverse may fail to plan and control the organization. In public primary schools, School managers are appointed using personal and educational characteristics, as Puri (2021: 74) explains, and their administrative and managerial skills are not assessed for the job. How the school needs to be managed by the SMT is formed on a collective agreement by the Department of Education and applies to all public primary schools in South Africa (September 2021:4). The school managers, therefore, manage the school using predetermined administrative and supervisory skills. These skills may exclude skills required to help individual schools function effectively.

2.3.3 Effective managerial/ management skills

The literature reviewed over a decade ago by Latif (2002:379) defines practical managerial skills using the Teaching management skills model. From the article, one can outline that effective management includes possessing complex knowledge; furthermore, effective leadership is “*inexplicably connected to the interaction of other people.*”

To manage an organization and attain the goals set, Kiaei *et al.* (2013) add that there needs to be practical managerial skills acquired by managers. Latif (2002) discusses and explains effective managers' roles and behaviours in table 4 below.

Table 2-2: Roles and behaviours of effective managers

Essential roles of effective managers	Behaviours of effective managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlling the organization's environment and its resources 	I.e., the ability to be proactive and stay ahead of environmental changes in both short and long-range planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing and coordinating 	The manager organizes subordinates' behaviours around tasks and coordinates interdependent relationships to accomplish organizational goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information handling 	Using information and communication channels for identifying problems and for understanding the changing environment to make effective managerial decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing for growth and development 	The manager's role is to provide opportunities for their professional growth as well as subordinates professional development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivating employees and handling conflict 	The manager enhances the positive aspects of motivation to foster a climate whereby subordinates are encouraged to perform well
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic problem solving 	The manager takes responsibility for their own decisions and ensures that subordinates effectively use their decision-making skills

Source: Developed by (Latif, 2002:379)

Latif (2002) outlined the most cited managerial skills below; the list comes from previous researchers to differentiate effective managers from ineffective ones. It can be noted that managers need a variety of skills:

2.3.3.1 Most Cited managerial skills (Latif, 2002: 3)

- Verbal communication (including listening).
- Managing time and stress.
- Managing individual decisions.
- Recognizing, defining, and solving problems.
- Motivating and influencing others.
- Delegating.
- Setting goals and articulating a vision.
- Self-awareness.
- Team building.
- Managing conflict.

According to Kiaei *et al.* (2013), “*Managers at different levels should have characteristics, capabilities, competencies, and specific skills to contribute to effectiveness.* This adds to the most cited managerial skills outlined by Latif (2002). This shows that not only top managers should possess these skills. In public primary schools, the SMT is hierarchical, meaning that all members should have specific skills that contribute to the effectiveness of ensuring a functional organization.

2.3.4 Ineffective managerial/management skills

Practical managerial skills include competencies and specific skills managers use to contribute effectively to the organization. In reverse ineffective organizational skills could be seen as not contributing effectively to the organization. As cited in Ruiz *et al.* (2017:69), inadequate managerial skills are “*behavior which, if it occurred repeatedly, or was seen once in certain circumstances, might cause you to question or doubt the ability of that particular manager in that instance.*” In the study, Ruiz *et al.* (2017) used the empirical method to analyse and determine which managerial skills could be classified as ineffective. The findings are listed below and indicate the possible behaviours that managers might display.

2.3.4.1 Core behavioural categories (CBDS) for ineffective managerial skills (Ruiz et al.: 2017:66-67).

- Poor work scheduling, direction, judgment, and control
- Overloads staff with work
- Shows a lack of concern for staff safety, health, personal well-being, and home life
- Manages staff in an inappropriate autocratic non-listening/consultative way
- Is unfair, inconsiderate, and inconsistent in the way staff are treated
- Exhibits selfish/ self-serving behaviour
- Gets angry and yells at staff
- Belittles and demeans staff in front of others
- Exhibits slackness and procrastination
- Ignores and avoids addressing poor performance, interpersonal conflict, or lousy staff behaviour
- Omits to provide staff with clear expectations and guidance and does not provide feedback on their performance
- Withholds information on changes affecting staff
- Deprives staff of recognition/ reward for good performance and needed help/support

Looking at the above behavioural categories, it is evident that no specific skills underpin the manager as having ineffective managerial skills. Some of the behaviours outlined may affect how the manager behaves and make the subordinates feel. This proves that more research is needed to establish standard/ set skills to show that the managers are using ineffective managerial skills. This will further assist in ensuring that the organization attains set goals and that the skills used influence the organization's functionality.

2.4 Definition of leadership

In the literature reviewed by Ndaipa (2016: 107), leadership is defined as *an interaction between leaders and followers where the leader attempts to influence followers to achieve a common goal. Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills.* Leadership ensures that the organization reaches its organizational objectives and goals, and the influence of leaders on followers attains it through constant communication and interaction. In previous literature reviewed, Bush (2007:2) defines

leadership in agreement with Ndaipa (2016) as influencing others to achieve desirable ends. Bush (2007:3) further outlines that in leadership, the leader shapes the goals, actions, and motivations of others.

Schilling (2016:1) argues that the definition of leadership is not limited to Ndaipa and Bush's definitions. The author states that leadership is not defined to influence, resulting in employees being committed and wanting to achieve goals. The literature further notes that leaders using punishment or authority instead of rewards are not leading. The definition of leadership should, therefore, not ignore the fact that leaders can use destructive ways, and these will not be labelled as leading (Schilling, 2016:1)

Leadership in education means that the SMT in public primary schools would need to influence staff members to reach organizational goals. According to Lunenburg (2013:15), leadership processes are crucial and involve an organization that creates a vision and aligns its employees with the idea through constant communication. The techniques further ensure, through motivation, that employees are empowered and fulfilled and bring about change in the organization (Lunenburg, 2013:15). Bush (2007:3), however, argues that even though leadership is required to influence followers, in this case, staff members to maintain good schools and achieve goals set, there is still much fewer clarity that behaviours are most likely to produce the most favorable outcomes.

2.4.1 Leadership skills

The leadership skills which include effective leaderships and ineffective leadership skills were outlined below as follows:

2.4.2 Effective leadership skills

According to Lumand and Kitur (2017), effective leadership is a process in which an individual or group influences others. This is done to achieve the shared goals or outcomes set by the organization. Effective leadership in a school setting would mean that staff members are empowered to complete tasks assigned to them. Lumandi and Kitur (2017) add that effective leadership further ensures that these staff members can play a notable role in shaping the school's culture and norms. Effective leadership is intentional and persuades, with influence, the person to achieve organizational goals (Dlamini, 2017:19). Lumandi and Kitur (2017) support research conducted over the centuries that effective leadership uses the effect of the leader on the followers.

This influence encourages followers to carry out the leader's shared vision to reach organizational goals Kitur *et al.* (2020: 402) state that for leadership to be effective, the organization's leader must choose an effective leadership style. According to Van der Vyver *et al.* (2020: 90), a leadership style is a sound approach used by leaders to motivate and manage subordinates. In schools, it is the approach the SMT uses to maintain relationships with staff members and deal with grievances if there are any. There are various leadership styles, and transformational leadership is discussed below as an effective leadership style that can be used in a public primary school.

2.4.2.1 Transformational leadership

Ndaipa (2016: 107) describes transformational leadership as a democratic leadership style and further explains that this type of leadership transforms the value and needs aspirations, prioritizes the followers, and motivates those led to exceed expectations. The transformational leadership style positively correlates with job satisfaction (Ndaipa 2016: 108). Bush (2003) adds that transformational leaders in a school setting succeed as they gain the commitment of educators through building school vision, establishing school goals, modelling best practices, and demonstrating high-performance expectations. When correctly used, this leadership style can yield positive results. Bush (2007:395) further argues that *this form of leadership assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organizational members. Higher levels of personal responsibility for organizational goals and more excellent capabilities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity (Leithwood et al., 1999:9).*

Below, Van der Vyver (2021:91) and Leithwood, cited in Bush (2007:396), conceptualize dimensions of the transformational leadership styles. Van der Vyver outlines the sizes for the transformational leadership style in an organization. Leithwood, cited in Bush (2007), on the other hand, outlines the dimensions of the transformational leadership style within a school. The literature research conducted by the authors indicates that how the transformation leadership style can be used within an organization is positively aligned to influence commitment and performance by subordinates.

Transformational leadership styles have five dimensions, discussed in the table below (Van der Vyver *et al.*, 2020: 91). The explanation further shows how transformational leadership can motivate and manage school staff members.

The table below will provide the dimensions of a transformational leader’s behaviour; it will look at various factors and define each factor in detail.

Table 2-3: Dimensions of transformation leadership styles

Dimension of leadership behaviour	Factors	Explanation
Transformational	(a) Idealised influence (attributed)	The ability to influence followers as a role model in values and morals.
	(b) Idealised influence (behaviour)	The ability to motivate and inspire followers to accomplish objectives through extra effort.
	(c) Inspirational motivation	The ability to communicate the leader’s vision and mission and find the means to realise these objectives.
	(d) Intellectual stimulation	The ability to stimulate followers to think in new and creative ways, challenge others and be innovative in problem solving.
	(e) Individualised consideration	The ability to meet followers’ unique individual needs and develop them to realise their full potential.

Source: (Vyver et al, 2020:92)

The eight dimensions of transformational leadership are listed below. These dimensions are for a school setting to ensure commitment to goals set by the organization as well as the capacities of subordinates to perform tasks.

2.4.2.2 Leithwood (1994): Eight dimensions of transformational leadership

- Building school vision
- Establishing schools’ goals
- Providing intellectual stimulation
- Offering individualized support
- Modelling best practices and critical organizational values
- Demonstrating high-performance expectations
- Creating a productive school culture
- Developing structures to foster participation in schools.

The distinguished dimensions reveal that choosing the correct leadership style can influence an organization's performance.

In addition to choosing the correct leadership styles, Ibarra (2021:14), in recent research, concurs with the above authors and the findings that organizations need leaders who will transform them. However, this can be achieved by using relevant critical leadership skills. The writer further argues that brainpower and engagement should be for top leaders and everyone in the organization. Furthermore, their research outlines that leaders must be innovative and agile in changing times. Below are the leadership skills the writer outlines as effective.

2.4.2.3 Five critical leadership skills (Ibarra,2021:14)

- Cross-cutting developing networks that extend to a diversity of people
- Collaborating: fostering psychological safety to increase team performance
- Coaching: having critical conversations that develop others' potential
- Culture shaping: shaping organizational culture by moulding corporate practices
- Connecting: growing in empathy and authentic leadership.

2.4.3 Ineffective leadership skills

Ineffective leadership is the reverse action of effective leadership. Aboyassin and Abood (2013: 69) agree that this leadership contrasts with successful leadership. Effective leadership has a positive influence on achieving common organizational goals. At the same time, ineffective leadership, on the other hand, may have adverse implications on people's motives to achieve organizational goals. The leader, in this regard, may influence others negatively while attaining organizational goals. Jason and Lawson (2016: 1) align with Aboyassin and Abood and describe ineffective leaders as individuals who impair communication, undermine staff members' commitment to the organization, and stifle the development of staff members and other leaders within the organization.

Aboyassin and Abood (2013: 69) outline the following to define ineffective leadership, "*ineffective leadership is a set of negative characteristics and inadequate capacities in the leadership that can lead to below-par results in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and ethics which prevent a company from accomplishing its goals and developing and motivating its employees to the fullest extent.*" Aboyassin and Abood (2013: 69) use the following terms to describe ineffective leadership: harmful, destructive, evil, and weak, all of which describe poor and unacceptable

leadership qualities. They further state that this kind of leadership is detrimental to the organization. Ineffective leadership may fail to achieve the desired organizational goals; this might be due to a leader’s poor personal traits, skills shortage, and negative leading strategies (Aboyassin and Abood, 2013: 70).

In a public primary school, ineffective leadership may mean that the SMT will fail to motivate employees to achieve organizational goals. This will impact the quality of education provided as staff members must perform appropriately.

2.4.4 Ineffective leadership styles

Contrary to effective leadership, which yields positive outcomes, negative leadership produces adverse effects. Ineffective leadership, like effective leadership, can influence how an organization is managed and led and how it functions, negatively. The leadership style chosen to lead and manage the organization is important: weak leadership will have negative results as leaders are influential.

2.4.4.1 Destructive leadership style

According to Schilling (2016:103), destructive leadership can be defined as a style of leadership where the indirect or direct behaviour of the leader prevents personal and organizational goals. Burns (2017:34) adds that this leadership style is systematic, and the leader uses repeated behaviour that interrupts the organization from attaining goals and demotivates employees and job satisfaction. In public primary schools, Destructive leadership can mean that the SMT, as managers and leaders of an organization, can display behaviour that may cause staff members to attain the goals set.

Besides the leadership mentioned above, these ineffective leadership styles can be seen in public primary schools. Leadership skills may influence how staff members attain organizational goals and how the school functions.

2.4.4.2 Ineffective leadership styles (Burns, 2017)

Table 2-4: Ineffective leadership

Ineffective leadership style	Explanation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abusive leadership 	Characterized by how a leader throws unnecessary tantrums, is very inconsiderate, and ridicules others in public

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toxic leadership 	<p>Characterized by its disruptive behaviour that causes severe damage and harm to followers in the organization. This type of leader uses influencing behaviour traits and tactics to cause harm, extremely and harshly.</p>
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Source: Burns (2017)

From the above ineffective leadership styles, it is clear that leaders can use inadequate skills to influence employees. This may distract them from achieving set goals, as the effective leadership style would.

2.5 Public Primary schools in South Africa

Public primary schools in South Africa are learning institutions that offer formal education to learners between the ages of six to thirteen. September (2007:51) adds that public primary schools as organizations are tasked with remaining relevant while providing a promising future. Schools are social institutions and require leadership and management like any other operational business (September, 2007:52). The school should, with management and leadership, offer a safe environment for all within it. This includes all staff members that work within the school. Smit (2010), cited in September (2007:52), agrees and argues that schools are like any other business or commercial endeavour, and their success lies in utilizing the correct leadership and management.

In public primary schools in South Africa, formal education is provided. However, September (2007:52) argues that unlike in other businesses, the education sector follows a hierarchical leadership style. The leadership style means that the principal is seen as the head of the school. He has the deputy principal as the second head and the Heads of Department. Instruction, therefore, follows a particular order, and the head (principal) is the primary manager and leader. He makes the final decision and shares it with the rest of the managers and leaders. However, he further states that South African public primary schools can import different leadership styles used in organizations to help improve the functioning of schools.

2.6 School Management Team

The school management team (SMT) of public primary schools comprises the principal as the head of the organization, the deputy principal is the assistant head of the organization and departmental heads (DHs) for each of the phases in the school. The SMT is placed in schools by the Department of Education to lead and manage the organization. The SMT is further responsible

for evaluating, developing, and improving the school (Ntsetso, 100). Their duties are predetermined by the Department of Education and outlined in the PAM (Performance Administrative Measures) document.

Dlamini (2017:8) emphasizes the significance of their duties as managers and leaders of the school, which is that the SMT need to ensure quality teaching and learning. Furthermore, the author states that the SMT is responsible for working collaboratively with the entire staff to ensure that the goals set for the organization are achieved. When the SMT of the school cannot lead and manage the school; the organization will not function optimally.

2.6.1 Staff members at public primary schools (Dlamini: 2017:10)

- **Teachers:** Teachers are responsible for delivering curriculum within the schools.
- **Administrative staff (secretaries/office workers):** The administrative staff is responsible for clerical and organizational tasks within the school.
- **Maintenance staff:** The maintenance workers include gardeners, cleaners, and caretakers. These staff members are responsible for keeping the school environment clean and safe.

2.7 Management versus leadership

Findings of this literature review

In this literature review, management and leadership were looked at and broken down in detail, and it has been outlined that both influences how an organization function. Below is a comparison of leadership and management to summarize how each leader or manager would behave.

Table 2-5: Comparison between Leadership and management

Category	Leadership	Management
Thinking process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on people • Looks outward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on things • Looks inward
Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulates a vision • Creates the future • Sees the forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executes plans • Improves the present • Sees the tree
Employee relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowers • Colleagues • Trust and develops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls • Subordinates • Directs and coordinates

Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the right things • Creates change • Serves subordinates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does things right • Manages change • Serves superordinate's
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses influence • Uses conflict • Acts decisively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses authority • Avoids conflict • Acts responsibly

2.8 Summary

Chapter two reviewed old and new literature pertaining to managerial and leadership skills, while executive and leadership skills theories were defined and explained. Effective and non-ineffective managerial and leadership skills, leadership styles for each, and the influence of each on the functioning of public primary schools were investigated. The literature review revealed the importance of each skill and discussed its relevance. The next chapter will look at the research methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This qualitative philosophical research study investigated the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging. The approach of the study allowed the researcher to understand the perception of staff members employed in schools. In this chapter, a detailed description of the philosophical and interpretivist theory of the study is given. Furthermore, the methodology, study participants, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter.

3.2 Research questions

The research study used a philosophical theory intending to answer the following research questions:

- Primary

How do managerial and leadership skills assist with the functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging?

- Secondary

- What are the reasons for poor managerial and leadership skills in schools?

- How do poor managerial and leadership skills affect the running of the schools?

- How do staff members support managerial and leadership decisions?

3.3 Framework

This philosophical study followed a theory described by Nieuwenhuis (2012: 58) as interpretivist. The approach aimed to investigate staff members' perceptions of how managerial and leadership skills influence them. This research study aims at understanding the participant's perception of their social surroundings. According to Nieuwenhuis (2012: 59), interpretivist research analyses people's assumptions and moves them to reality using social constructs such as language, consciousness, and shared meaning to understand the importance of a phenomenon.

3.4 Case study research

The researcher used a case study for this qualitative study. A case study is defined and explained by Nieuwenhuis (2012:75) as an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon

within its real-life context when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not evident and when multiple sources of evidence are used." Case study research is a systematic inquiry into an event or selected events to describe the phenomenon of interest (Cousin, 2005: 421).

This study was conducted using a case study method as the researcher wanted to understand how certain events influenced participants within real-life contexts.

In agreement with Cousin (2005:422), the case study ensured that the voiceless and powerless could voice opinions. The study was conducted to investigate school management, and employees tend not to have a voice when addressing management.

3.5 Data gathering

The participants of this research study included staff members (educators, administrative workers, and maintenance workers), currently employed in the selected public primary schools. The designated public primary schools are within the Sedibeng East District in Vereeniging.

Population and sampling

There needs to be a population and a representative sample to investigate and explore a research study. The study population refers to the universe of units, like people, nations, cities, regions, firms, and more (Bryman, 2011:170). For this study, the population included educators, administrative workers, and maintenance workers currently employed in three selected public primary schools.

3.6 Sampling

The sampling theory has been developed to suggest ways of drawing "scientific" samples, that is, random samples representative of the population whose findings tell us more about the people (Maree, 2015: 172). Sampling in qualitative research is flexible and often continues until no new themes emerge from the data collection process- called saturation (Nieuwenhuis, 2012: 79). The study applied a non-probability sampling method to identify participants. Non-probability sampling avoids random selections of the population (Maree, 2015: 176). The sampling strategy covered for this study is convenience sampling.

According to Maree (2015: 177), convenience sampling refers to situations when the population elements are selected since they are conveniently available. Bryman and Bell (2019: 178) explain that this strategy eliminates much preparation and offers the researcher easy access through

availability. The sample units were selected for this research study based on availability and easy access. The participants included staff members at public primary schools who report to the school management team (SMT). The participants of this study were pre-determined, selected, fitting the study's criteria.

Participants, in this case, included staff members (educators, administrative workers, and maintenance workers) employed in selected public primary schools within the Sedibeng East district in Vereeniging. The study started with 18 staff members and carried on until no new themes emerged. More staff members would have been approached if needed, until no new themes emerged or saturation was reached. Cresswell (2014: 78) specifies that semi-structured interviews, which are in-depth by nature, require a minimum sample size of between five and twenty-five.

The composition of staff members, the number of staff members required, and the description of the duties are outlined in the table below:

Table 3-1: Staff member composition (participants of the study)

Number of Staff members required	Criteria	Description of Duties
2	Staff members: Teachers	These are all the employees responsible for the curriculum, which includes teaching and learning activities.
2	Administrative staff: Office workers	The employees include all the workers responsible for administrative duties as well as paperwork in the school.
2	Maintenance workers: General assistances and grounds mans	These employees include all workers responsible for the maintenance, cleaning, and safeguarding of the school

Source: Developed by author

Educators included all teachers from the various phases, Foundation (Grades R to three), Intermediate (Grades four to six), and Senior phases (Grade 7), which are responsible for curriculum delivery and co-curricular activities. Educators report to the various SMTs for different reasons. The Educators report to Departmental heads on phase-related issues, the deputy principal concerning resources, and the principal on general issues.

Administrative Staff included all the office staff members that work with the general administrative work in the school. The office workers report to part of the SMT, which consists of the deputy principal and principal. Therefore, these members' management and leadership skills influence how these staff members function.

Maintenance workers included all the general workers within the school; these staff members consisted of the gardens, cleaners, and caretakers. All the maintenance workers report directly to the SMT (deputy principal and principal). Managerial and leadership skills influence their duties even though these workers need to work more closely with the entire SMT.

3.7 Research Methodology

To attain the research objectives and gain answers to the specified interview questions, the study will follow a qualitative research approach with an interpretivist paradigm. According to Nieuwenhuis (2012:50), qualitative research attempts to collect rich descriptive data for a specific phenomenon to understand what is studied. Furthermore, it focuses on how individuals view and understand the world.

3.8 Data collection

Data collection is essential when gathering information that will help you understand a phenomenon better. According to Polkinghorne (2005:137), data collection is done through social interaction with participants. It includes collecting data through observations and interviews.

An interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participants questions to collect data (Barrett, 2018: 63). The researcher in this research study used semi-structured interviews to collect the data needed. Semi-structured interviews (through a qualitative lens) aim to see the world through the eyes of the participants (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 316). A semi-structured interview surrounds the discussion process where the interviewer is not compelled to ask the questions presented sternly, strictly.

Instead, the interview allows for discussion instead of simply asking and answering questions. All interviews of this study took place in a hybrid set, which included virtual (on Zoom version 5.1.1 (2022) owing to the Covid 19 rules and regulations) and face to face at schools after the Covid-19 pandemic rules and regulations were eased. All protocol was observed.

To understand the participants' perceptions of a particular phenomenon, the researcher gained approval from the University's ethics committee to conduct the study. The researcher further requested permission and access at public primary schools to interact with participants. The

researcher explained the nature of the research and the objectives and importance to the participants. Ethical clearance and approval were granted by the North-West University Business School ethics committee to conduct the study.

Upon approval by the public primary schools to conduct the study, the researcher issued Consent and indemnity forms to the participants who volunteered and took part in the interviews. Due to the covid 19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted in a hybrid setting; some were via zoom meetings, while others were face-to-face. Communication with the participants/respondents was sent via WhatsApp or email. Participants/respondents who chose face-to-face interviews had schedules showing the date, time, and place of their consultation emailed or via WhatsApp. All sessions were recorded and saved on a password-encrypted device to which only the researcher had access. The interview sessions each lasted between 10-20 minutes. Eighteen interviews were conducted and transcribed.

The researcher aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of managerial and leadership skills by seeking participant's perceptions of the phenomenon.

3.9 Data analysis

After the data collection process, the data obtained needs to be analysed. Data analysis, in this case, refers to various approaches, processes, and procedures whereby researchers extract a form of explanation, understanding, or interpretation, from the qualitative data collected from the participants and situations the researcher investigated (Wong, 2008: 15). Fossey *et al.* (2002: 720) further explains that in qualitative research the researcher aims at examining the meaning and symbolic content of the data. It establishes how the participants make meaning of specific phenomena by analysing their participants' perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings, and experiences (Niewenhuis, 2011:99).

Content analysis, in this case, was applied as a systematic approach to identify and summarise the information content (Niewenhuis, 2015:101). The data were used to develop meaning and understanding of the primary research question.

Following the content analysis, the inductive approach was utilized since this approach surrounds the outcome of a qualitative study (Bryman, 2019: 11). The inductive approach draws generalizable inferences out of observations. The researcher will first generalize effects by immersing themselves in theory, then analyse the data to see if the researcher's words are in line with what prior theory has confirmed (Bryman, 2019: 11). Lastly, the thematic analysis was used to arrange the common patterns when forming similar themes:



Source: Developed by author

Figure 3-1: Thematic analysis

Braun and Clarke (2019: 36) define thematic analysis as *describing data*. The process also involved coding through interpreting and constructing data into relevant themes. Thematic analysis is an approach to understanding people's views, opinions, and perceptions in a qualitative study (Braun & Clarke, 2019: 40). The process was done by converting semi-structured interviews into transcripts and familiarizing oneself with the data. The researcher read through the entire interview transcript and identified unique themes. The researcher recognized the themes when looking at repetitive data that will indicate themes.

Data were analysed using thematic data analysis. According to thematic data analysis is, these are the steps that the researcher followed using thematic analysis to analyse the data.

- The researcher familiarized themselves with the data by immersing themselves in it.
- The researcher generated general codes directly from the transcripts to start the initial coding. The aim was to organize the data into meaningful parts.
- The researcher then created themes from the open codes, where the researcher sorted the initial codes into similar codes. These similar codes were classified as themes.
- The researcher then reviewed the themes, and checked if the themes made sense and supported the collected data.
- The researcher defined the themes and said what each theme represented after the different themes had been reviewed.
- The researcher wrote a report on the themes and what they entailed.

The researcher arranged the recordings of the interviews in the order they had been collected, and coded the transcripts in batches. This allowed the researcher to revisit the interview questions as new theories emerged from the data. The researcher used coding to assist in understanding the perceptions of the participants and to analyse the shared experiences. In a case study, research coding will further ensure that a phenomenon is understood within the real-life context of the participant to have a holistic understanding of how participants relate to a specific situation (Nieuwenhuis, 2012:75).

Placing the data in codes further prevented the researcher from overly emphasizing selected aspects and assured gaining a thorough analysis of the entire interview. To ensure saturation, continuous reviewing of previous stages of the coding was completed for connections to be maintained. This was done with constant comparison, a term described by (Birks & Mills, 2011) as analysing, reanalysing, and comparing new data to existing data.

3.10 Open coding

Opening coding was done by the researcher, where each line of the transcribed interviews was coded. Open coding is explained as a line-by-line coding of transcriptions. In a case study research, line-by-line coding is essential as it will assist with the multi-perspective analysis related to the method of inquiry. This coding method assisted in answering the researcher's *why* questions in the primary and secondary questions. The coding method further helped the researcher have an in-depth view and analysis of the data collected and transcribed.

Atlas, a computer program, was used to help with the data analysis.

3.11 Ethical consideration

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the (EMS-REC) Economics and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee to proceed with the study. All study participants were aware that the study was voluntary and agreed to participate. On the day of the interview, the participants were given consent forms that needed signatures as acceptance. The informed consent further explained to the participants that confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed in the study.

The study objectives were again outlined to ensure that the participants understood why the research was conducted. The participants were reminded that the responses to the study were kept confidential. Responses of the study would be used as a collective to improve gaps found in the study.

3.12 Summary

Chapter three outlined the research methodology used in the research. It discussed the design extensively. The study followed a qualitative approach and used the case research design. The interpretivist paradigm was used to understand the participants' views and perceptions.

Chapter four focuses on the data analysis and interpretation of the data collected via recorded semi-structured interviews. A pilot study was conducted, however the results were not interpreted. The pilot study was completed with three staff members, one from each school that was different from the main sample. This was to ensure that all research protocols were observed. Furthermore, to ensure that the research instrument was correct and ready for the main study. A pilot study is crucial as it ensures that there are no technical problems when completing the main study (Nieuwenhuis, 2012:75).

CHAPTER 4 : DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the analysis and interpretation of data to understand staff members' perceptions of managerial and leadership skills within a public primary school. The themes that stood out in line with the qualitative research objectives are managerial skills and leadership skills, and the influence of these skills on the effective functioning of public primary schools. Transcriptions on Microsoft Office Word (2010) easily analyse the data. Furthermore, the chapter covers the interpretation of data, which was done by establishing open codes from the transcripts, codes, and themes. Outlined below are the participant's responses, the data collection tool, the procedure used for data analysis, how trustworthiness was ensured, and the discussions of results.

4.2 Participants

The study participants included 18 staff members (Educators, Administrative workers, and Maintenance workers) from three public primary schools in the Sedibeng East district in Vereeniging. Data saturation was reached on the ninth participant; however, the researcher continued until the 18th interview, as intended to interview 2 of each of the three categories in each school.

4.3 Data collection tool

Semi-structured interviews with eight pre-determined questions were used in this study. The questions aligned with the research objectives, namely:

- Investigate what management and leadership skills encompass
- Investigate how management and leadership skills support the effective functioning of a school
- Discover the effect of good managerial and leadership skills in schools
- Discover the effect of inadequate managerial and leadership skills on staff members.

The literature review about the influence of managerial and leadership skills was cross-referenced with the findings. The interview questions were reviewed and tested to ensure that participants would understand and be able to provide answers.

The interview schedule and questions were divided into Topics to better understand and interpret the data. The topics were formulated in accordance with literature with the literature reviewed and the major themes that emerged from the research's primary objective, the topics were as follows:

4.4 Interview schedules and questions

4.4.1 Theme 1: Understanding of school management teams (SMT)

Question 1: What is your understanding of a school management team (SMT)?

4.4.2 Theme 2: Appropriate leadership

Question 2: In your own words, how would you define appropriate leadership and management skills?

4.4.3 Theme 3: School management and leadership

Question 3: In what ways does the SMT lead the school?

Question 4: How does the SMT help you perform tasks?

4.4.4 Theme 4: Managerial and leadership skills

Question 5: How would you describe good managerial and leadership skills to be?

Question 6: What do you perceive negative managerial and leadership skills to be?

Question 7: What skills do you think an SMT should have and why?

Question 8: What skills help you perform your duties more efficiently?

4.5 Informed consent

Before the interviews commenced, participants were issued informed consent forms example on, annexure A, via email and at the research site. The informed consent form outlined the nature of the study, and it explained to participants that the research study was voluntary and confidential, and that the anonymity of the participants was guaranteed. Furthermore, it explained that participants could withdraw from the study anytime. The interviews were conducted via zoom and at the research site and ranged in time from 10-20 minutes. Each interview session was recorded on a password-safe device that only the researcher could access.

Of the 18 interviews, 16 were transcribed using Otter ti, Basic plan (2022), and (2) were not transcribed. The two (2) that were not transcribed were not audible and transparent and therefore could not be transcribed.

4.6 Data Analysis procedure

4.6.1 Trustworthiness,

As described and explained by Bryman and Bell (2019:45), trustworthiness is used as a criterion for evaluating qualitative research. This research study focused on two primary criteria for assessment, namely trustworthiness and authenticity (Bryman & Bell, 2019: 45). It further made use of four measures of trustworthiness that are discussed below (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability):

4.6.2 Credibility

The study ensured good practices. The researcher submitted the findings to the participants to confirm if the study understood the participants' social worldview.

4.6.3 Transferability

This research study focused on a small group of staff employed at public primary schools. The investigation was to understand how managerial and leadership skills influence schools and their functioning. These findings are unique and may be used to assist schools to operate better, as the results revealed a connection between the participant's views and the literature reviewed.

4.6.4 Dependability

The records of this research study, including the recordings of the semi-structured interviews, will be kept safe and, if needed, can be audited and made available on request. Creswell (2007: 59) states that researchers should follow an auditing approach to ensure trustworthiness. It is further noted that complete records of the study of all phases including the problem formulation, selection of research participants, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts, and data analysis decisions. The supervisor of the study acted as auditor to check if all processes were followed and that they were justifiable.

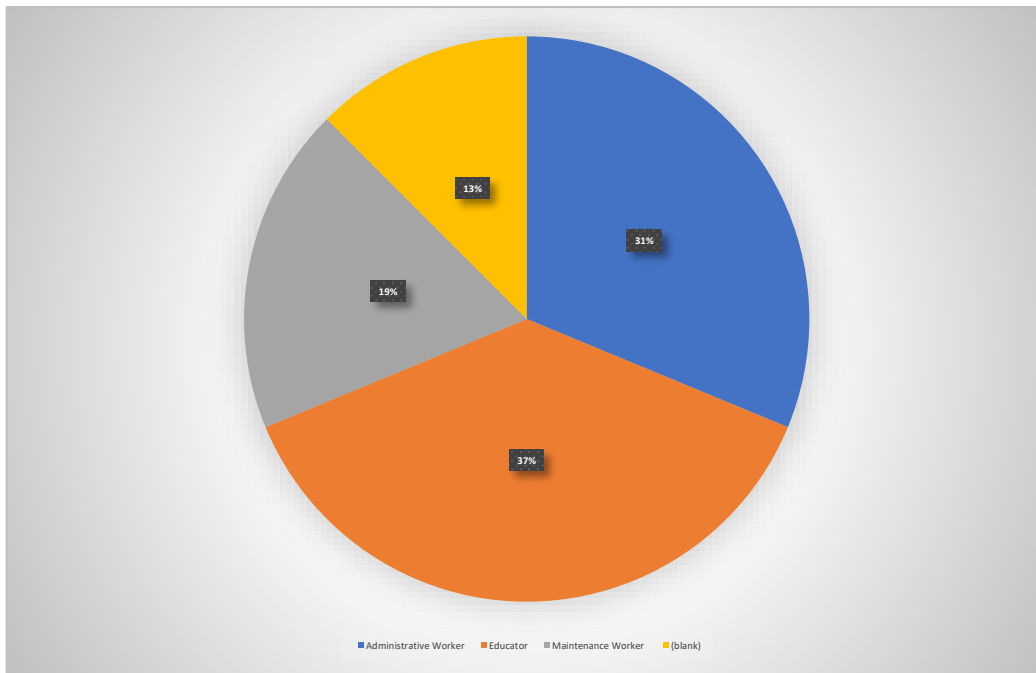
4.6.5 Confirmability

The researcher ensured that the research study was free from bias. This was attained by always remaining objective and inclusive and not allowing the views of participants to be personal. The main reason for conducting this study was to understand the participants' social world.

4.7 Results and discussions

Braun and Clark, (2019, 34), outlined the thematic data analysis in chapter 3 and the processes are used in this data analysis and interpretation section, the following results were yielded and presented as follows:

The research's primary objective was to investigate the views of staff members on managerial and leadership skills in the proper functioning of public primary schools, the research question was, "How do managerial and leadership skills assist with the functioning of public primary schools in the Sedibeng East district, Vereeniging?" To achieve this objective and answer the primary research question, the researcher interviewed 18 employees in different roles in selected public primary schools in the Sedibeng East District, Vereeniging. The interviewees had to know, understand, and interact with, the school's management and leadership teams. Respondents were asked eight questions related to the secondary research objectives with all protocols observed. The interviews were held online using the Zoom system version 5.11.1 (2022), and the conversations were recorded per the respondents' agreement and are available on request. The agreement (See annexure B) to the recording and the full consent (See annexure A) to continue with the analysis were accepted. The recordings were then transcribed for analyses on MS Word Windows 10 (2010).



Source: Developed by author

Figure 4-1: Respondents of the interview

4.8 Roles of the respondents

Of the respondents, five (5) administrative workers, six (6) educators, and three (3) maintenance workers, two (2) opted not to provide the roles during the interviews. The two (2) did not want their roles to be recorded by the researcher.

4.9 Analysis of major topics

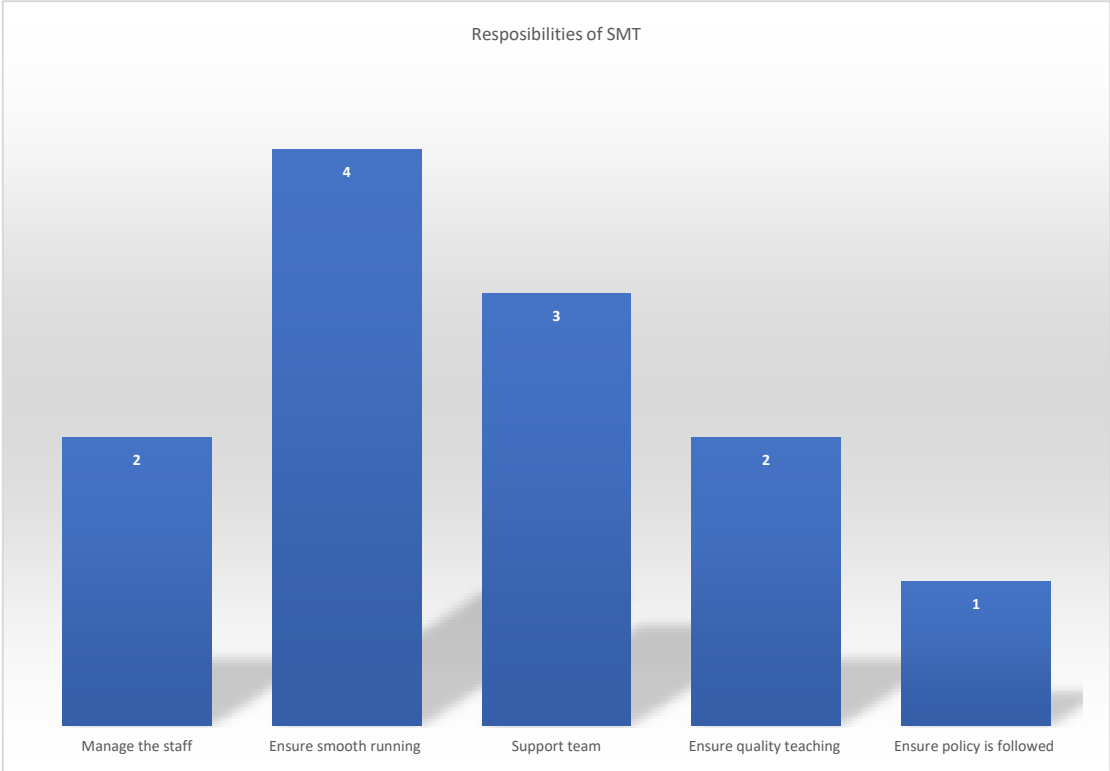
The following section reviewed the responses of participants using major topics of the research schedule. This is aimed at understanding the responses of respondents' views and perceptions.

4.9.1 Theme 1: Description of School management team (SMT)

To break the ice and ensure that the correct respondents are participating in the study, respondents were asked what their understanding of a school management team is. This question was answered according to four themes as per the thematic analysis below. The themes were description, responsibilities of the school management team, role players in the school management team, and expectations from the school management team.

In the first theme it is outlined that, eight (8) of the sixteen (16) respondents described the School Management Team as is and repeated that the SMT are indeed the “*team of managers of the school.*” Then three (3) of the respondents described them differently, saying that the school management team is a “*team of leaders,*” and the one described them as “*managers in front of the train.*” Six (6) of the respondents were not specific as to what SMT is. September (2012) stated that the School management team, are the drivers of what the predetermined policy has stipulated and are the managers of the school who ensure that the school functions properly.

Responsibilities of the SMT



Source: Developed by author

Figure 4-2: Responsibilities of SMT

Most of the respondents (11 of 16) used the responsibilities of the SMT to voice their understanding of the school management team. According to the respondents, the School Management team's primary responsibility is to ensure operations are running smoothly. This confirms literature by Puri (2021:74) that outlines that the main function of the SMT helps with preparation to plan, coordinate, and organize activities to achieve organization goals.

This is coupled with them being a support team and able to manage staff in the school. One respondent provided a fuller narrative about the School Management Team.

*“The school management is the principal. First and foremost, it consists of the deputy and a few HODs, who are responsible for teaching and learning in the school and ensuring that it **goes smoothly and everybody is fulfilling their duties**. The principal is, like I said, number one. Then each HOD, they've got a HOD for foundation phase, intermediate and senior phase, and then **make sure that everything runs smoothly in their departments**, and then if **there are problems, they report upwards**.”*

4.9.2 Theme 2: School Management and leadership

The third theme identified was the roles within the school management team. The respondents named the parts that make up the School Management Team. Fourteen (14) of the 16 respondents narrated their understanding of a School Management Team by listing the role players. Most respondents identified the principal, heads of department, and deputy principal to be the team that makes up the School Management Team. It was also noted that three of the six educators listed different combinations of roles. One educator indicated that the School Management Team comprises staff members, stakeholders, SGB, and the community. A second educator indicated that the School Management Team included the principal and his secretary. The third educator said that the School Management Team comprised the principal and the heads of department only.

4.9.3 Theme 4: Expectations of school leadership

The last theme that came across as strong in the analysis was the expectations. The respondents listed what they expected from the School Management Team. Only nine (9) out of 16 respondents used what is expected from the School Management team to clarify what they understand about the School Management Team. Below are the narratives as provided by the respondents. One respondent indicated that SMT is nothing; in essence, SMT is led by policies as much as the policies also show the staff members.

*“Everything should be run according to the policies of the school. **In a sense, SMT is nothing; the policies are the ones the SMT follows and everything**.”*

While the general sentiments around expectations of what the School Management Team must be are positive and set standards of a kind and supportive team that provides direction in case of need, they are also seen as the most influential people in the school and need to be respected as such. One respondent indicated that the school “train” would break down without them.

“In a sense, SMT is nothing; the policies are the ones the SMT follows”.

“Without them, the whole train breaks down”.

“If there are problems, they report upward”.

“They are critical people; they assist a lot here at school”.

“We must respect leadership”.

“Understand the point clarity”.

“Must know they work, and they must know how to work together, must know how to divide work amongst each other, must have someone who can lead amongst them and can give more clarity of what we need to do”.

“People who need to be polite and honest with us. They should always laugh, and we should always do that every time, people who need to be polite and honest with us”. This is in agreement with (Gordan: 2022) study about good leadership qualities. Leaders need to portray

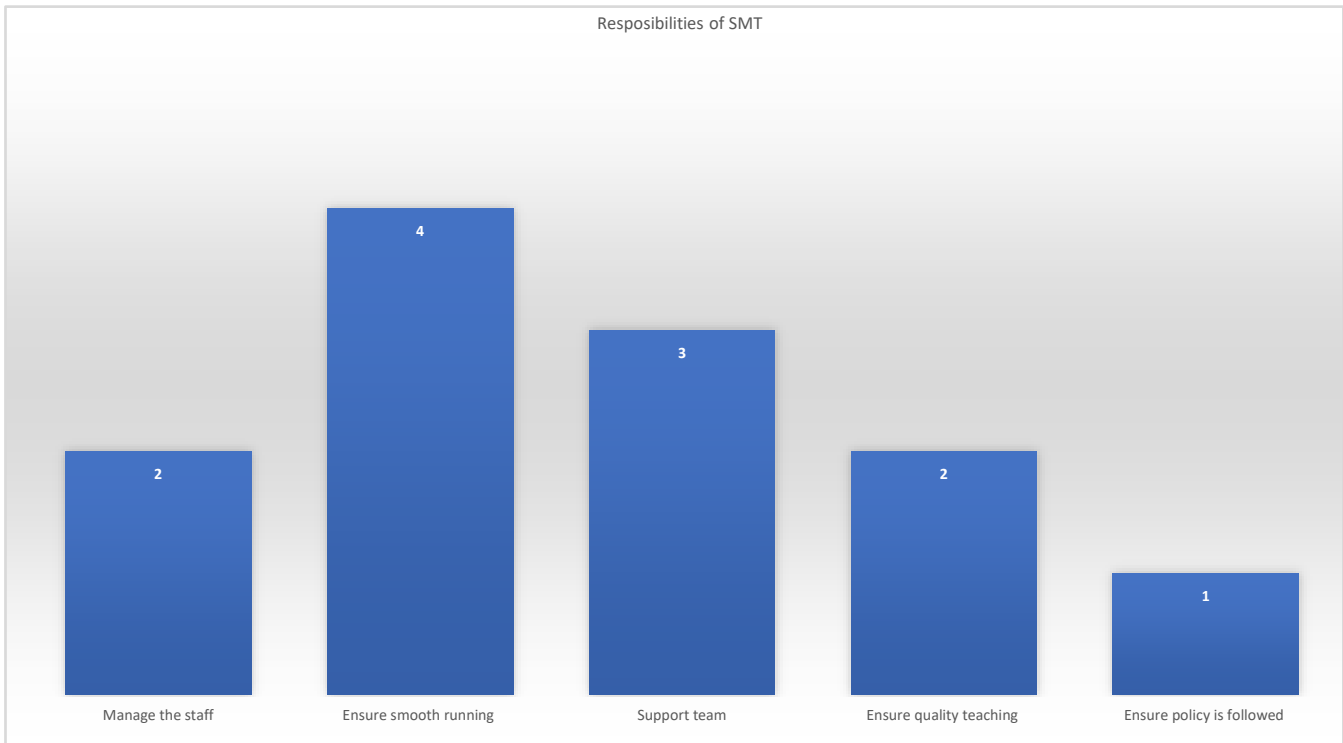
In conclusion, the general understanding of the school management team is that they are a team of managers made up of the principal, the deputy principal, and the heads of departments. Their role is to ensure the smooth running of the school; they must be supportive, manage staff and provide good quality of education. They are the most important people at school and must be respected.

Investigate what management and leadership skills encompass

Three questions were posed to the respondents to investigate the management and leadership skills composition. The first question asked was to gather insights from the respondents about how they define appropriate leadership and management skills.

Topic 1: Responsibilities of the School Management Team

The graph below indicates the responsibilities of the school management team as per the expectations of the respondents.



Source: Developed by author

Figure 4-3: Responsibilities of SMT

The diagram below indicates that the respondents believed that the key skill used to single out appropriate leaders and manager is humanity. Six (6) of the respondents identified humanity as the vital skill, Humanity means that the individual is humble, is ever smiling and pleasant, knows how to speak to other people, and takes others' best interest to heart. The ability to plan, being a subject matter expert, and the ability to lead people were equally identified as second to humanity. The third group of skills was about being supportive, problem-solving, able to delegate, policy drivers, and being able to manage



Source: Developed by author

Figure 4-4: Key skills

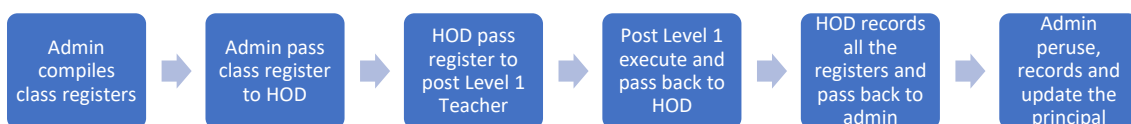
4.9.4 Theme 2: Appropriate leadership

The below skills were only mentioned once by the respondents: patience, team player, communication skills, passion, time management, decision making, emotional control, accountability, must have vision and mission. In the study of effective leadership Lush (2019:12) outlines the above mentioned skills, this proves that effective leaders display positive skills.

Second, to identify the appropriate leadership and management skills, the respondents were asked to describe how the SMT led the school. This question was answered in a multifaceted way. Firstly, some respondents seemed contradictory and provided scenarios where the process followed by SMT went wrong and had a personal impact on them. The second dimension was where the hypothetical examples were provided and did not address the question asked. The third dimension was where the respondents understood the question and clarified what SMT does daily.

The first respondent who provided an example of how the SMT led the school where the process went wrong said that when the SMT is not supportive, they can come across as sabotage to the educators. If the teacher had to rate the expected ways of leading against how it is done, they would rate it a 1 out of 10. When a teacher submits a task ahead, the SMT member responsible seems to not take into consideration the submissions and puts them at the bottom of the pile. The submission is not reviewed and authorized in time, making the teacher look undedicated and irresponsible. The teacher also felt that this process and behaviour of SMT is sabotaging and prompting the teacher to be out of the job.

In the second example provided by a respondent (role not disclosed) on how the SMT led the schools and where the process went wrong, the respondent reflected on their personal experience. The registers are done daily. According to the process, the registers are supposed to be handed to the HOD, the HOD shares them with the post-level 1 teacher to process, and they must return to the HOD, who keeps a record of all the registers. The HOD then must send it back to the respondent for them to peruse, record, and update the principal.



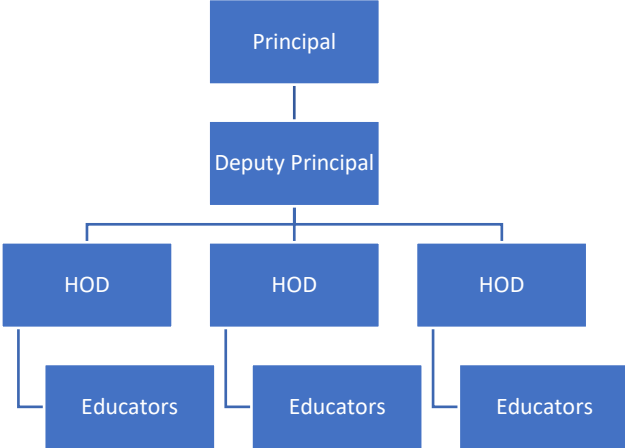
Source: Developed by author

Figure 4-5: Processes followed by SMT

However, the respondent was not satisfied and indicated that how it is done is different from the process. The respondent claims that the registers can go from them straight to classes; sometimes, they need to do it themselves. The registers are sometimes given to the learners, and they come straight to the respondent, and they do not interact with the HOD at all. The respondent further complained that with this process, some of the class registers get lost, and in their words, “SMT doesn’t function.”

In instances where the respondents understood the question and clarified what SMT does daily, one respondent provided a narrative of the hierarchy at schools.

“HODs lead the educators, and then the deputy leads the educators, and the HOD and the principal lead everyone in the school.”



Source: Developed by author

Figure 4-6: Role of SMT

4.9.5 Theme 4: Managerial and leadership skills

Most respondents indicated that the SMT leads the schools by conducting morning check-in meetings to plan for the day, update one another and resolve issues. They also ensure that all resources are available for the daily run, provide understanding, guidance, and support to the teachers concerning the subject taught or personal issues, communicate with the teachers, and ensure that the school is hygienically acceptable.

The last question asked about the investigation of what management and leadership skills encompass was to understand how SMT helps respondents to perform their tasks. Three (3)

themes were identified for this question. The first was *Value added* by the SMT, the second was the *Value taken* by the SMT, and the last was *Recognition*. Those whose value was added narrated the positive side of how the SMT helped them perform their tasks. Those who said the matter was taken away from them by SMT narrated the negative side of how the SMT is not helping to perform their job. Some of the respondents from both groups also identified recognition as one way the SMT assists them in achieving their tasks.

4.9.5.1 Value Added by SMT:

Three (3) respondents who agreed that SMT assists them in performing their tasks indicated that it is done through teacher development activities like IQMS or QMS and workshops. Others suggested that the SMT adds value to their daily tasks by answering questions, providing advice and support, and developing a contingency plan for solving problems. They also arrange for daily resources like papers, stationery, and printers. The SMT also adds value because they assist in holding the teachers, parents, and learners accountable by communicating and reprimanding them if the need arises.

4.9.5.2 Value removed by SMT:

Almost all respondents who believe that value is taken away by SMT and that SMT is not assisting them in performing their tasks indicated that it is because they are doing the work that SMT must do.

“You know they don’t make any task easy because if I observe carefully most of the work is done by admin.”

Below are some of the issues raised by respondents:

“SMT cannot allow me to perform fast or do things on time”.

“I don’t get the skills that I see I need. When I go outside and meet other admins from other schools, I become surprised because I get information that they have and I don’t have, and I have since been working for five years”.

“They deprive me of information”.

“They don’t develop me the way they were supposed to develop me”.

“They don’t run things accordingly to the law.”

“I didn’t get an effective management team that tells me, ok, this is how things are run”.

“They never help me on my side; I help them”.

“They can help a lot if they can do their work”.

In general, the sentiment of SMT not enabling respondents to perform their tasks is stronger than those who believe they were enabled. This is in agreement with Ruiz *et al.*, (2017:69) that states that an ineffective leader displays behaviour which is repeated and might cause one to question or doubt the ability of a particular manager.

4.9.5.3 Recognition:

It appeared that respondents are usually motivated by compliments and recognition received from SMT. The respondents are demotivated when the SMT does not provide credit for the efforts they put in. For example, respondents indicated that when the SMT does not process their paperwork and does not provide feedback, then they would appear in the office as a bad educator. The other showed that most of the time, SMT only becomes aware of their activities and efforts if they do something wrong and are seen by others. Only then will the SMT come to assist. Another respondent indicates that the SMT overlooks them when money issues are involved. In this case, the SMT will take over the collection and safety of funds even though those are the responsibilities of the administrator.

On the other hand, the respondents were motivated by recognition from SMT.

“Most of the time when you have tools, you can do your work, and even then, they can recognize that you worked well and you worked very hard, and your work is excellent.”

Those who receive positive feedback seem motivated and embrace being requested to do more than they are contracted for. They believe that the more work you are given, the more it proves that you are trusted and considered a good person to work with.

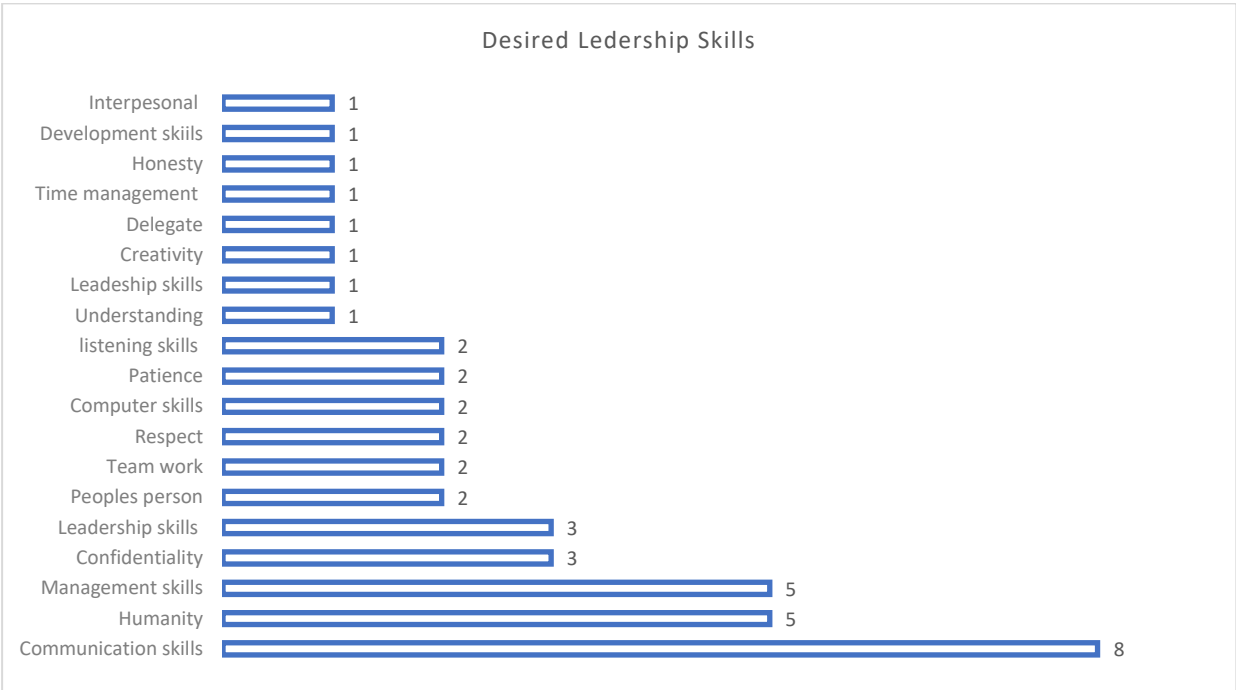
In conclusion, in the investigation of what management and leadership skills encompass, it was found that humanity is the number one skill expected from the SMT, followed by the ability to plan, lead people and be a subject matter expert. There was a significant finding of how they manage the school. No clarity was provided as the respondents who highlighted practical examples indicated that the process defined is not the process followed and that if there is no healthy relationship, then there is no process, and sabotage prevails. It also needed to be made clear if

the SMT enables the respondents to perform their tasks as most sentiments indicated that SMT removes value, and that recognition of effort makes a difference.

4.9.6 Theme 4: Managerial and leadership skills

Investigate how management and leadership skills support the effective functioning of a school.

The type of skills expected to be present in an SMT member and the type of skills required by the respondents to perform their duties more effectively were investigated, as well as how management and leadership skills support the effective functioning of a school.



Source: Developed by author

Figure 4-7: Desired leadership skills

Respondents indicated that for most of them all, the SMT should be good communicators; with good communication skills, so that educators would be able to know what is expected of them. It is followed by humanity - they must show kindness and confidence in others, and they must be concerned about the wellness of others. Management skill was also identified as the key skill required when an individual is on SMT.

“According to me they must have best communication skills. Communication is very important, because if you don't communicate, we cannot follow. We cannot understand what is needed from us. So, the best one is communication skills.”

“SMT to have a better communication. They, they are very bad. They are very bad in terms of communication. So, I would love for SMT leaders to have a better communication in terms of what they want what they don't want, so that everyone would know what is supposed to be done. Instructions to be clear, should be made clear to everyone.”

What also mattered was the leadership and respecting others' confidentiality. Being a people person, encouraging teamwork, having respect, being computer literate, being patient, and having listening skills, were all mentioned twice.

“His problems at home or apartment should be left there, and when he comes to school, be another person, he should be free and healthy.”

When asked what skills they would say would help them perform their duties more effectively, the respondents indicated that they would perform their work more efficiently if management were strong enough to provide them with direction. The majority should have mentioned the exact skills they require but focused on the strength they need from SMT.

“When a leader is a good person, a right person who knows how to talk to people and discuss with people. I will do everything right and in accordance and not do a wrong thing because is a good person who leads.” This is in agreement with Akea (2017) study on poor leadership, which states that a lack of communication portrays poor leadership.

However, at least two respondents indicated that they would like to be developed into a level 1, which can be achieved if the school sends them to workshops. The other respondents indicated they need access to a mentor who will show them the ropes in the school. They complain that most of the tasks they learn on the job and make mistakes that could be avoided.

Discover the effect of good and negative managerial and leadership skills in schools

4.10 Top eight qualities of positive and negative managerial and leadership skills

The respondents have identified the top eight qualities that describe good managerial and leadership skills in order of preference to be:

1. Humanity
2. Bring peace among staff members
3. Accountability
4. God Fearing
5. Positive Attitude
6. Clear Communication
7. Consistent and Firm
- Leading by example

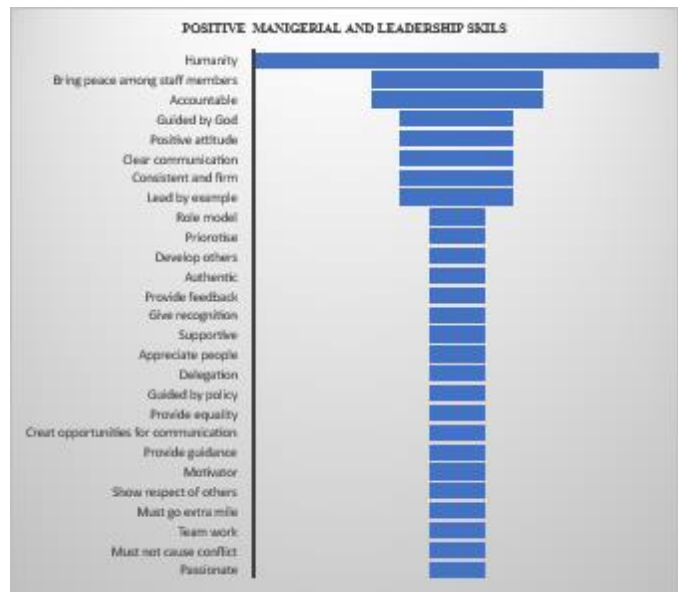


Figure 4-8: Positive managerial and leadership skills

The Positive managerial and leadership skills are reflected in Leithwood (1994) study of transformational leadership and adds to the responses of the participants. This shows that a leader's positive behaviour can influence individuals positively and help attain organizational goals.

They also identified the top eight negative managerial and leadership skills in order of preference to be:

1. Unequal treatment
2. Negative attitude
3. Not giving credit when due
4. Bad delegation
5. Lack of patience
6. Bad communication skills
7. Unapproachable
8. Not Subject matter expert



Figure 4-9: Negative managerial and leadership skills

The Negative managerial and leadership skills agree with Burns (2017) study on Ineffective leadership which states the leader's abusive and toxic way of leading or managing.

4.11 Summary

Chapter four outlined the data collection and tools used to collect data. The analysis was conducted with participants to understand perceptions and views on how managerial and leadership skills influenced the functioning of public primary schools. The data analysis process followed was explained, and how the researcher ensured trustworthiness through the data analysis. Lastly, the results were tabled and discussed in accordance with the interview schedule which was in line with the research objectives.

The next chapter, chapter 5 will deal with the final remarks and conclusions of the research.

CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the research study. In this chapter, the recommendations will also be presented. The conclusion and recommendations are aligned with the results and discussions presented in chapter four. The above mentioned aligns with the study's primary research objective, which is to investigate managerial and leadership skills, and participants' perceptions of how these skills influence the proper functioning of public primary schools in the Sedibeng East district in Vereeniging.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study aimed at investigating the effect of managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools. The study undertook a qualitative research approach as its focus was on collecting non-numerical data and interpreting it for better understanding of a phenomenon. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants. The questions were based on the questions derived from the secondary objectives as well the study's main research question. The research findings revealed that there was a link between the main research objectives and that the main research question was answered.

5.3 Conclusions

The main research question was, how do managerial and leadership skills assist with the functioning of public primary schools in Sedibeng East district, Vereeniging? The secondary questions linked to literature reviewed were:

- What are the reasons for poor managerial and leadership skills in schools?
- How do poor managerial and leadership skills affect the running of the schools?
- How do staff members support managerial and leadership decisions?

The study answered the primary and secondary research questions and proved that there is a link between managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of schools in Vereeniging schools. The study showed similar themes emerge, the themes through thematic data analysis in chapter four revealed that the inappropriate use of these skills had an influence on how the participants carried out duties. The duties are what ensures the schools functions properly. In reserve the study proved that the appropriate use of these skills ensured that participants carried

out duties and this ensured the proper functioning of public primary schools in the Sedibeng east district, Vereeniging.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the participants' perceptions and views outlined by the thematic analysis used in chapter 4, the research indicates that managerial and leadership skills influence the proper functioning of public primary schools. Recommendations will be discussed below on relevant leadership skills. The proposals will outline managerial and leadership skills and the effectiveness of the study and how these skills may help improve the functioning of public primary schools will be opined on.

The School Management Team of schools can be advised to move away from a management style of operating the school to a more leadership-centric way. The leadership styles and skills mentioned prove that leaders can use positive behaviour to positively influence employees to perform tasks better,

5.5 Suggestions for further research

This research study was based on the views and perceptions of participants and offers insight into the findings. This study can therefore be used in conjunction with previous theories and literature to assist public primary schools in functioning more optimally. School managers can use the research study to help better the managerial and leadership skills of the various members of school management team. Furthermore, the study will allow SMT members to see the perceptions of staff members on how management and leadership skills influence the proper functioning of the school.

5.6 Contributions of the study:

The study also got to identify the possible benefits that could emerge from obtaining data. These include:

- Sharing knowledge and techniques to run successful schools effectively
- Strengthening communication between staff and management
- Team building and cooperation
- Recommending ideas and suggestions to assist similar schools

- Advise/council areas to improve
- Learn from successful schools and share their techniques
- Adopting a method that is applicable in many schools
- Minimizing disorder and mismanagement in schools
- Prevent the closure of schools.

5.7 Limitations

The study was only conducted in three public primary schools in the Sedibeng East District in Vereeniging; therefore, the findings only represent the sample; the research excluded private primary schools and other learning institutions like special schools.

5.8 Conclusion

The study's conclusions were drawn from the data analysis and interpretation done in chapter four using thematic data analysis. The findings show that staff members employed in public primary schools are aware of and understand what school management teams are (SMT). The staff members are aware of what school management and leadership entail. The findings further revealed that staff members were aware of the positive and negative managerial and leadership skills and the influence of each.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A

Informed Consent Statement

North-West University MBA

Economics and management studies

Research study: Investigating managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging

Researcher: Ayanda Johnson

Cell: 072 148 8928

E-mail: ayanda.johnson.aj@gmail.com

Dear respondent,

You are cordially invited to take part in a research study for a mini-dissertation project in the Economics and Management sciences faculty. Kindly take time to go through the Informed Consent Statement, which will outline all the details of the study. Please ask the researcher for clarity if you have any questions or misunderstandings at any given time of the project.

This **Informed Consent Statement** serves to confirm the following information as it relates to the study on Management and Leadership skills in public primary schools.

1. This study aims to obtain information from staff members about the skills required for a school.
2. The research procedure to be followed is a qualitative research design, using qualitative research methodologies. Semi-structured interviews will be utilized for respondents to communicate their views.
3. The estimated time for the completion of each interview is 15-20 minutes

4. Kindly note that the findings of this study will be used for research purposes and may be published via scientific research articles to share knowledge.
5. If the respondent feels uncomfortable at any point of the interview, the respondent will have the opportunity to make their discomfort known and immediately end his/her participation.
6. It should also be emphasized that participation in this study is voluntary and with the consent of the respondent without any form of coercion.
7. The **anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy** of respondents are guaranteed.
8. The summarized copy of the final report will be made available to respondents upon request.
9. Should you require any further information or assistance with the study at any given time. Please contact Ayanda Johnson @ ayanda.johnson.ai@gmail.com or (0721488928).

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the content of the Informed Consent Statement and give my full consent to **Ayanda Johnson 23721774** to use the information for the research study.

Declaration of respondent

I have read the consent form and, agree to participate in the research study and fully understand what is required of me in this research project.

Declaration by Researcher

I declare that I will keep to what the Informed Consent Statement stipulates.

ANNEXURE B

Permission letter to Participant

Dear Participant

I am an MBA phase two student at the North-West university business school. I am currently busy with my research project. This research project aims to gather data from employees employed within a school. The title of my study is “Investigating managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools.” Prior research has outlined management and leadership as essential for an organisation’s optimal functioning. To complete my study, I must gather data through one-on-one interviews with you.

I would kindly like to request your permission to interview you (via recording). The interview will consist of a set of questions attached to this letter that are in line with the research project objectives. This is to assist me in identifying the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the functioning of schools.

Please be assured of the following:

- The name of the school and the participants’ identities will not be disclosed. All reports will use pseudonyms for the research site (the school) and the participants (workers).
- All recordings, transcripts, interview notes, and activity booklets will be stored on a password-protected computer and treated confidentially. Only the researchers and the supervisor will have access to the data gathered.
- The data generated will only be used for academic purposes.
- Participation is entirely voluntary, and the participants will have the right to withdraw at any time and without prejudice.
- No participant will be exposed to any acts of deception or risk of any kind.
- No incentives will be offered to any research participants or the school.

When you permit me to interview you for the study, it will allow me to understand this research project better. This will be beneficial for the school as well as the university.

Yours sincerely

Ayanda Johnson (23721774)

A. Johnson

0721488928

Prof C Botha (Supervisor)

Please indicate your willingness to participate in the study by completing the section below.

I _____ at this moment permit **Ayanda Johnson (23721774)** to conduct the interview. I understand the nature of this research study and therefore consent to be recorded and for my information to be utilized by the University for Information Purposes. I also know that the study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any given point.

Signature

Date

ANNEXURE C

Dear Participant,

Please help in answering the following questions to the best of your ability, you may use examples to elaborate your answers if needed. The interview will take between 5-20 minutes.

Interview schedule and questions

1. Understanding of school management teams (SMT)

Question: What is your understanding of a school management team (SMT)?

2. Appropriate leadership

Question: In your own words, how would you define appropriate leadership and management skills?

3. School management and leadership

Question: In what ways does the SMT lead the school?

Question: How does the SMT help you perform tasks?

4. Managerial and leadership skills

Question: How would you describe good managerial and leadership skills to be?

Question: What do you perceive negative managerial and leadership skills to be?

Question: What skills do you think an SMT should have and why?

Question: What skills help you perform your duties more efficiently?

Thank you

ANNEXURE D

North-West University MBA

Economics and management studies

Research study: Investigating managerial and leadership skills on the proper functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging

Researcher: Ayanda Johnson

Cell: 072 148 8928

E-mail: ayanda.johnson.aj@gmail.com

Permission letter

Dear Principal

I am an MBA phase two student at the North-West university business school. I am currently busy with my research project. This research project aims to gather data from employees employed within a school. The title of my study is "Investigating managerial and leadership skills on the functioning of public primary schools in Vereeniging." Prior research has outlined management and leadership as essential for an organisation's optimal functioning. To complete my study, I am required to gather data through one-on-one interviews with staff members.

I request your permission to conduct interviews with staff members at your school. The interviews will be conducted via recording. The discussion will consist of a set of questions to this that are in line with the research project objectives. This is to assist me in identifying the influence of managerial and leadership skills on the functioning of schools. Informed consent and permission letters will be made available to the staff members. They may choose to take part or not partake in the research study.

Please be assured of the following:

- The name of the school and the participants' identities will not be disclosed. All reports will use pseudonyms for the research site (the school) and the participants (workers).

- All recordings, transcripts, interview notes, and activity booklets will be stored on a password-protected computer and treated confidentially. Only the researchers and the supervisor will have access to the data gathered.
- The data generated will only be used for academic purposes.
- Participation is entirely voluntary, and the participants will have the right to withdraw at any time and without prejudice.
- No participant will be exposed to any acts of deception or risk of any kind.
- No incentives will be offered to any research participants or the school.

When you permit me to conduct the interviews for the study, it will allow me to gain a deeper understanding of this research project. This will be beneficial for the school as well as the university.

Yours sincerely

Ayanda Johnson (23721774)

A. Johnson

0721488928

Prof C Botha (Supervisor)

ANNEXURE E

Thematic Data analysis

[..\..\Chapter 4\Data Collected .xlsx](#)