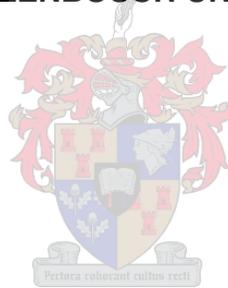


**AN EXPLORATION OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN ENACTING A
CURRICULUM POLICY PLATFORM IN WORKING CLASS SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**

by

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Signature:

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DEDICATION

This doctoral thesis is dedicated to my honourable parents, Manuel and Muriel Ramjee for believing in me first. Your support and understanding during my school career and my further studies, even during adversities, is a display of your unconditional love. Thank you for giving me the proper roots to grow and allowing me to spread my wings and soar; I am and will be eternally grateful.

ABSTRACT

It can be argued that South African schools, particularly those in working class contexts, are struggling to contend with the challenges of curriculum reform. These curriculum reforms, which were introduced in an attempt to alleviate past injustices, are arguably not providing equal educational opportunities for all. Based primarily on their students' poor results on tests and examinations, schools in working class contexts are labeled as underperforming or dysfunctional schools by the Department of Education (DoE). Consequently, this negative positioning of many working class schools places huge pressure on the principals and School Management Teams (SMTs) of these schools.

Based on qualitative research in three selected working class schools, the thesis explores how curriculum policy plays out in working class secondary schools by focusing on the leadership practices enacted by their School Management Teams. The research concentrates on how these SMTs develop and implement a range of leadership practices within their schools in order to enact a curriculum policy platform for optimal teaching and learning. Employing Stephen Ball's theory of policy enactment, the study is an illustration of how the contexts of working class schools impact on the type of leadership practices that are enacted, which, in turn, impact the type of curriculum policy platform that is constructed. A key conceptual assumption of the study is the view that policy enactment is regarded as a process of 'becoming' and not as something fixed or with predetermined outcomes within a school. This thesis elucidates how curriculum policy is received by the formal leadership structure of the school, and shaped and implemented in the 'messy' reality of selected working class schools in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform. The thesis focuses on the processes, mediations and meanings of curriculum policy in selected working class secondary schools. I present the argument that the enactment of leadership practices by the selected schools' SMTs are fundamentally impacted and determined by the schools' 'materiality' and discursive constructions. Their leadership practices, based on narrow and one-dimensional enactment of the curriculum policy, have negative and uneven consequences for these schools' curriculum and teaching and learning offerings.

OPSOMMING

Daar kan geargumenteer word dat Suid-Afrikaanse skole, veral die skole in werkersklas omgewings, sukkel om by te hou met die uitdagings van kurrikulum hervorming. Hierdie kurrikulum hervormings was ingestel met die doel om die onregverdighede van die verlede te verminder, maar dit het egter nog steeds nie gelyke opvoedingsgeleenthede vir almal gebied nie. Skole in werkersklas omgewings word geklassifiseer as onderpresterend of disfunksioneel wanneer studente se resultate in toetse en eksamens laer is as die teikens wat gestel is deur die Departement van Onderwys (DvO). Gevolglik plaas hierdie negatiewe posisionering van werkersklas skole groot druk op die prinsipale en Skool bestuurspan (SBS) lede van hierdie skole.

Gebaseer op kwalitatiewe navorsing in drie geselekteerde skole, ondersoek hierdie tesis hoe die kurrikulumbeleid uitspeel in werkersklas sekondêre skole, deur te fokus op die leierskap praktyke wat deur die skool bestuurspan uitgevoer word. Hierdie navorsing konsentreer op hoe die SBS 'n reeks leierskap praktyke ontwikkel en implementeer binne hul skole om 'n kurrikulumbeleidsplatform, vir optimale onderrig en leer, uit te leef. Deur Stephen Ball se teorie van "policy enactment" te gebruik, illustreer hierdie studie hoe die konteks van werkersklas skole impakteer op die tipe leierskap praktyke wat uitgevoer word en hoe die leierskap praktyke impakteer op die gekonstrueerde kurrikulumbeleidsplatform. 'n Sleutel konseptuele aanname van hierdie studie is die siening van die uitvoer van beleid as 'n wordingsproses, en nie as 'n vasgestelde entiteit, met voorafgestelde uitkomst nie. Hierdie navorsing toon hoe die kurrikulumbeleid ontvang, gevorm en geïmplementeer word deur die formele leierskap struktuur van die geselekteerde werkersklas skole, in die realiteit van hul konteks, in die proses om 'n kurrikulumbeleidsplatform uit te leef. Hierdie tesis fokus op die prosesse, mediëring en betekenis van kurrikulumbeleid in geselekteerde werkersklas sekondêre skole. Ek argumenteer dat die uitleef van leierskap praktyke deur die geselekteerde skole se SBS grotendeels bepaal word deur die skole se 'materiële' en 'diskursiewe' konstruksies. Hul leierskap praktyke, gebaseer op die nou, eendimensionele uitleef van die kurrikulumbeleid, het negatiewe en ongelyke gevolge vir hierdie skole se kurrikulum, onderrig en leer aanbiedinge.

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“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil.4:13).

All glory and honour to my Creator through Whose guidance and sustenance this was made possible.

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Thank you to my parents, Manuel and Muriel Ramjee and mother-in-law Eva for their support and understanding and assisting with taking care of the children and preparing many suppers.

To my children, Caleb and Chiara...your love, patience and understanding were an immense motivation for me to endure and complete this research. To my husband, Quinton, for his love, patience and critical reviews- thank you for taking over the household and allowing me to fulfil one of my greatest dreams. Thank you for believing in me.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
ANA	Annual National Assessments
CA	Curriculum Adviser
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CAT	Computer Applied Technology
C2005	Curriculum 2005
DoE	Department of Education
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
GIS	Geographic Information System
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILST	Institutional Learning and Support Team
INSET	In-service Training
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LO	Life Orientation
Lolt	Language of learning and teaching
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSC	National Senior Certificate
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PGP	Personal Growth Plan
PYP	Progress due to years in phase

RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SBA	School Based Assessment
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

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CHAPTER 1. ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I provide a general orientation of my study regarding leadership practices and the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in working class¹ secondary schools. The chapter commences with the background and rationale for this study. Following this I state the research question and sub questions as well as the aims of this study. This is followed by a demarcation of the study. The chapter is concluded by presenting an overview of each chapter that forms the thesis as a whole.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Educational reform strategies in South Africa were met with much adversity since the abolishment of Apartheid in 1994. Schools in post-apartheid South Africa have experienced numerous new curricula changes which were designed in an attempt to eradicate past injustices. The latest initiative is the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DoE, 2011). It is two decades into the 'new' South Africa and the playing field in the schooling system is still not levelled. For schools in South Africa there remains deep inequality and unequal distribution of resources (Christie, 2008:101). Schools are labeled based on their performance in standardised evaluation and testing systems of the Department of Education (DoE), such as the end of school National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations, the Annual National Assessments (ANA) and the Western Cape Education Department's (WCED) systemic tests for Grades 3, 6 and 9. When schools' results are made public, they are measured with the same criteria, irrespective of the schools' contexts and their unique challenges. Schools have to operate in a performance-driven, neo-liberal environment (Ball, 2003:216) and despite their different contexts they are all expected to produce acceptable results.

¹ The concept of 'working class' in this study encompasses not only the class status of people, but also their race. In the South African context the concept 'disadvantaged' is usually used to indicate mainly black (non-white) people who were disadvantaged in the previous dispensation. There is a lot of contention surrounding the use of the concept 'disadvantage' as it focuses mainly on race and not class. I therefore settle for the concept of 'working class' as I want to depict both race and class in South Africa, how these concepts intersect and how they come together, or play out, in specific contexts.

My motivation for embarking on this study stems from my experiences at school management level and the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), as well as exposure to the literature about leadership practices, curriculum reform and policy enactment. As a teacher and member of the management team of a high school in a working class area, I have experienced the numerous curricular changes and challenges after 1994. From the onset of my teaching in 1996, I was overwhelmed by the number of workshops that teachers had to attend to implement the 'newly' developed curriculum, Outcomes Based Education (OBE), in an effort to implement it effectively. OBE was followed by the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS, 2002) and then followed by CAPS in 2011.

The community that my school serves is in an extremely low socio-economic context. As a Natural Sciences teacher, I experienced that most of these students had difficulty in understanding the concepts I was teaching them. In conveying content such as electricity, I discovered that many of the students did not even have electricity in their homes, hence it was difficult to explain certain concepts to students who did not have this exposure, and even more so in a school that was deprived of resources. This resulted in certain initiatives from the formal leadership structure of the school, the School Management Team (SMT), in an attempt to enhance teaching and learning and to improve students' academic achievement. For example, field trips and visual displays became part of the everyday life of the school to expose students to that which they were lacking. Enrichment activities such as motivation sessions and study methods for students and classroom management workshops for teachers were developed to complement the curriculum. I experienced that the practices employed by the leadership structure of the school played a key role in enacting curriculum policy. I therefore argue that the leadership practices of the schools' management team make a difference in how the dynamics of the school and the school context interact in the acceptance, implementation and consequently the institutionalising of the curriculum.

Based on my experiences, I am aware that the leadership structures of schools face tremendous challenges and expectations from the DoE, parents and the community, to produce certain outcomes and results. These expectations are usually distanced from the contextual challenges and constraints that schools have to deal with and these expectations

shape what schools can do and what they cannot do. This study is an attempt to explain and analyse the ways in which leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform as an expression of the intersection of community impact on schools and their consequent reception and implementation of the curriculum. The curriculum policy platform is viewed as a structure of support and guidance for teachers within the school, which is expected to enrich their pedagogy.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question of this study focuses on how leadership practices shape curriculum policy in the context of working class schools.

1.3.1 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

How do leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools?

1.3.2 SUB QUESTIONS

- How do the working class contextual factors position the leadership practices of schools in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform?
- What role does school management, as a key dimension of leadership practices, play in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in a working class context?
- How do working class schools go about producing discourses for the enactment of a curriculum policy platform?
- How do leadership practices develop and sustain their school's curriculum policy platform for the enactment of curriculum policy?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In this research I aim to do the following:

- To acquire an understanding of the reception and realisation of curriculum policy reform in selected working class secondary schools.
- To understand the relationship between policy and practice, with regard to curriculum policy enactment, via leadership practices in working class secondary school contexts.
- To explore how leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools.
- To analyse leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in respect of the specific social dynamics present in the specific working class context of selected schools.
- To understand school management as a key dimension of leadership practices involved in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform.
- To analyse leadership practices with regard to the generation of a curriculum policy platform in selected working class secondary schools.

1.5 ARGUMENT

I argue that the working class context positions the leadership practices employed by schools, in distinct ways in their enactment of governmentally authorised curriculum policy. This research sets out to explore how the leadership practices of a school's SMT enact a curriculum policy platform that emanates from the reform intentions of government. The enactment of a curriculum policy platform will essentially facilitate teachers' pedagogy in the classroom.

Leadership practices are defined as the product of the interaction between leaders, their followers and the context in which they work (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001:27). By referring to the implementation of curriculum policy, I intend to capture the idea of how the curriculum is 'switched on', shaped and 'set in motion' through the leadership practices of the SMT. The 'doing' or shaping of policy is referred to as policy enactment. Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012:3) describe policy enactment as the creative processes of interpretation and translation of policy ideas into contextualised practices. Policy enactment encompasses how practices are given meaning in the operation of discourses. Enactment thus focuses on action

taken. I assert that leadership practices at school play a central role in the ensuing enactment of a curriculum policy platform, as the formal leadership structure of a school is held accountable for the implementation of the curriculum policy. There is ample evidence in the literature that points to the importance of the SMT in leading the curriculum (Heystek, 2007; Christie, 2010; Grant, 2010). Further, pursuant to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), the members of the SMT are responsible and accountable for curriculum implementation (DoE, 1998). The PAM is the official document indicating the job descriptions of teachers.

Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003:87) argue that a central purpose of leadership is to provide leadership with regard to the realisation of curriculum objectives in a school. This is supported by Christie (2008:183) who indicates that effective curriculum leadership could improve the functioning of schools. I am interested in exploring how curriculum policy becomes part of, and lives in, the specific context of working class secondary schools in South Africa. These schools are characterised by distinct contextual factors, and an understanding of those specific social impacts on the institutional functioning of the school is a key objective of this study.

This study contributes to the debate about curriculum reform in South African schools. It also adds to the research on leadership practices and context which is regarded as an understudied area (Klar & Brewer, 2013:770) and builds on the literature on leadership practices which is a neglected area of study (Naicker & Mestry, 2013:1). The study explores how the current curriculum policy is experienced and becomes part of the daily activities of a working class secondary school through the actions of the SMTs of selected working class schools' leadership practices. Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins (2006) point to four core categories of leadership practices, namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing the instructional program. The realisation of these practices by school leaders in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform in working class schools is explored in this study.

Most of the schools in South Africa which are labeled as underperforming schools, according to DoE criteria, are located in previously disadvantaged working class communities (Christie,

Butler & Potterton, 2007:3; Moloji, 2010:623). This indicates that an exploration of the dynamics of this type of context is significant in the enactment of curriculum policy. A curriculum policy orientation, such as the current CAPS, does not take into account the complex nature of working class school contexts and is figuratively known as a one-size-fits-all curriculum. This type of curriculum policy orientation presumes that all students are the same and should be taught in the same manner (Molosiwa, 2009:6) The study will therefore attempt to explore how 'a one-size-fits-all' curriculum, of which CAPS is an example, is embedded in a working class secondary school. 'Working class' in South Africa is regarded as coterminous with black people living in impoverished locations. Blacks have been disadvantaged in the previous dispensation, but are still at a disadvantage in that they lack material resources, tutors, supportive parents, and well-resourced schools amongst other factors. The working class school context is associated with lack of resources, overcrowded classes, under qualified teachers and multiple factors that have a negative impact on teaching and learning (see Christie, 2008:100; Maringe & Moletsane, 2015; Maringe, Masinire & Nkambule, 2015). This is where the intellectual puzzle of this thesis lies. Context shapes policy as context is constituted of various factors that impact on the execution of the policy. The inability of policy to leverage productive results-driven practices is usually decried by policy makers. Schools are usually blamed for ineffective implementation or 'non-compliance'. I assert that context has an impact on policy implementation and that it shapes the possibilities and limitations of leadership practices. The nature of this shaping and reshaping (policy processing) presents the problematique of this study. This research therefore aims to understand how leadership practices within these working class schools enact a 'one-size-fits-all' curriculum policy, in other words a policy approach that fails to distinguish between different implementation contexts and capacitate these contexts accordingly in order to construct a viable curriculum policy platform.

Conceptually, curriculum enactment refers to processes involving people in their different locations, with their different resources and histories, whereas curriculum implementation refers more narrowly to the realisation of the aims of the policy. Enactment implies that it is an active process. Curriculum enactment refers to the practices involved in 'living out' the intended curriculum policy (as encoded in the policy document) within the school context. According to Bouck (2008:294), this includes subject lessons, management strategies, beliefs

and comments on the issues at hand. It is therefore significant to explore who initially receives the policy in the school, who interprets it and how it is distributed. Governmental policy is authorised at the scale of the state, which is driven by a political logic (see Fataar, 2010:51). Schools however, have different dynamics and cultures which impact on how they interpret, accept and legitimise policy (see Christie, 2008:148). These dynamics are explored in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in the school.

I explore how the curriculum policy is translated into actions and attitudes, in other words, how policy takes on meaning inside the school through leadership practices. These actions and attitudes are associated with beliefs, values, norms and practices. This refers to institutionalisation, which is a process of internalisation (Sieweke, 2014:28) or embedding something (a policy) within an organisation. The focus of this research is on how leadership practices activate the institutionalisation of the current iteration of curriculum policy, namely CAPS. Referring to such institutionalisation, Harley and Wedekind (2003:201) state that the school as an institution is more likely to change the incoming message, than the message the institution. How this message (curriculum policy) is changed (shaped) through leadership practices to fit in, or augment current practices, within the institution, is what will be explored in this study. I had set out to understand, via this study, how curriculum policy takes on a specific institutional form as it is enacted and given meaning in specific school sites in working class locales, with a special focus on the role of leadership practices in this enactment.

The French philosopher Michel Foucault's work with mental patients and their institutionalisation provides valuable insight for understanding practices in a school. He worked with mental patients, homosexuals and prisoners and saw the effects of power in disciplining forces (Jardine, 2005:24). Foucault was interested in how human beings are made subjects of the existing order (Ball, 2013:5). According to Foucault, what is usually normalised in society is not necessarily the case (Jardine, 2005:9) - it is the result of human decisions. This view resonates with the current neo-liberal approach to schooling in which the pursuit of results is accentuated; the narrow and unadulterated pursuit of school results has become the norm. Foucault, however, was not interested in what *should* happen (the intended effects), but in what *actually* happens (Jardine, 2005:31). Like Foucault, this study

explores the actual practices of the leadership in a school in the process of institutionalising curriculum policy.

This research considers the recent history of school curriculum policy and practice and the ways in which current policy discourses position the curriculum in schools. The context of working class schools sets the scene for this exploration of the selected schools' institutionalisation of curriculum policy. This research sets out to illuminate how curriculum discourse is institutionalised through the schools' leadership practices. The lens that I have chosen to study such institutionalisation is that of 'policy enactment' as advanced by Ball *et al.* (2012). Ball *et al.*'s (2012) policy enactment theory indicates that policy enactment consists of three dimensions, namely the material, the discursive and the interpretive. The material dimension refers to contextual factors that impact on the policy, the discursive dimension refers to discursive practices such as events and symbols that are used to portray the policy, and the interpretive dimension refers to how the policy is interpreted and translated. Utilising Ball *et al.*'s (2012) policy enactment theory I focus on how leadership practices of the SMT enact a curriculum policy platform through an exploration of the following aspects: 1) the working class school-community nexus in terms of which curriculum policy is received and mediated in its implementation in schools, 2) management processes as a key dimension of leadership practices and 3) generating and sustaining a curriculum policy platform. By 'curriculum policy platform', I refer to a basis of support and opportunities that is provided for teachers which enables them to enact the curriculum. I want to understand how leaders define, present and carry out their curricular task – what they do and what moves they make (Spillane *et al.*, 2001:25). The theory of policy enactment is developed further in this thesis in Chapter 3. Figure 1.1 illustrates the scope of this study.

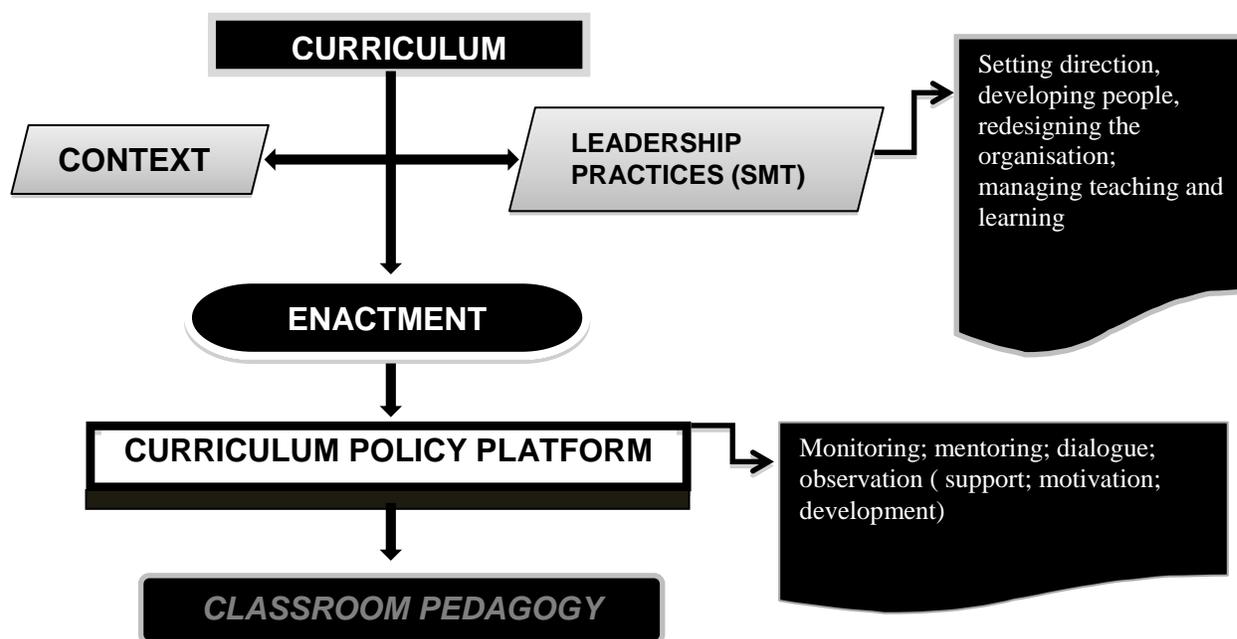


Figure 1.1 Construction of a curriculum policy platform

The diagram (Figure 1.1) indicates the intersection between leadership practices and context, in the enactment of curriculum policy and how this leads to the establishment of a curriculum policy platform. This curriculum policy platform provides a basis of support, development and motivation which assists teachers to perform their pedagogy in the classrooms. The figure shows how leadership practices and context interact, resulting in the enactment of the curriculum. This enactment leads to the establishment of a platform from which teachers can draw to inform their pedagogy in the classroom. This thesis focuses only on the construction of the curriculum policy platform. Teachers' classroom pedagogy is beyond the scope of this study.

Curriculum policy enactment serves as the conceptual lens to help me interpret and understand this institutionalisation. This study draws primarily on the policy enactment theory of Stephen Ball and co-authors, Meg Maguire and Annette Braun, which holds that policy is always 'becoming', it is never static. Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012) policy enactment theory provides different lenses (the material, the discursive and the interpretive) to understand what happens when policy enters the doors of schools, i.e. who receives it, how is it interpreted and how is it transformed into actions? I am interested in exploring how the

curriculum policy becomes part of the school in a working class context, focusing on how the school's leadership practices find and navigate their position in the labyrinth of curricular changes and contextual challenges.

Although acknowledging that a multitude of policies are at play at any one time in a school, I want to draw attention specifically to the curriculum, as the curriculum is the core of teaching and learning. I want to understand curriculum policy against the backdrop of other school policies. Ball *et al.* (2012) refer to this as the intertextuality of policies by which they denote the impact of different policies on each other.

Policy demands certain skills and resources from teachers for which they are not usually equipped. Teachers implement policy and are creative and innovative, but they are also framed by policy. They have to improvise to bring about the requirements of policy, but only to the extent of adhering to the outcomes. The paradox is that policy assumes that certain conditions are present, which it actually intends to bring about. The normative intent of policy, how it is supposed to work, is not as perceived by policy, but it is shaped by the context. Ball (1993) emphasise that what policy says and what practice does is not always the same thing. This paradox is significant in exploring the institutionalisation of curriculum policy. Curriculum policy is enacted in particular institutional contexts, with their own history, resources and challenges. The specific context of the schools, their resources, infrastructure and capital of students which they serve may steer them in different directions in their practices. What is prescribed by policy is not necessarily how it is practically exercised. This highlights the tension between the intention of policy and the actual practice of policy in schools, as there is no direct relation between policy and practice. I locate this study within the post-apartheid curriculum trajectory, as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is the current initiative in a long line of curriculum reform strategies. This study will provide a valuable contribution in the area of leadership practices for curriculum policy enactment in South African working class schools, as I am exploring *what is* and not *what should be*.

My research was in the qualitative methodological framework and the interpretive theory served as its research paradigm. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups provided me with a detailed image of the viewpoints of the participants, the SMT members and principals. I

used these methods to explore the activities, experiences and perceptions of the SMT members and principals. However this limited me to the viewpoints of the SMT members and I did not get the whole picture from the rest of the staff and stakeholders of the school. As the primary researcher, occupying the same position as these SMT members, I adhered to the requirements of ethical research (Punch, 2005:276) and conducted the investigation in an ethical manner.

1.6 LAY-OUT OF THE STUDY

This research is presented in seven chapters. Chapter 1 describes the general orientation towards the study. Chapter 2 provides a literature review on leadership practices, curriculum development initiatives post 1994, curriculum implementation, the importance of context and the generation of a curriculum policy platform utilising Bernstein's pedagogic device. Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework of this study, namely the policy enactment theory of Stephen Ball. In Chapter 4 the research design and methodology are discussed. Chapter 5 presents the data generated from the interviews and focus groups. Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the data and Chapter 7 concludes the study. The data were analysed in terms of the three categories of the policy enactment theory, namely the material, the discursive and the interpretive. The data are further subdivided and discussed in terms of the four core leadership practices, i.e. setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning.

1.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter I provided a general orientation of my study. The background, rationale, research questions, research focus and objectives are discussed. The chapter is concluded with the demarcation of the study and a lay-out of the research. The next chapter discusses the literature relevant to this study.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a literature review aimed at bringing the leadership practices involved in enacting a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools, to academic consciousness. Kamler and Thomson (2006:45) suggest that a literature review should be viewed as a “field of knowledge production” as it emphasises the constructive capacity of the literature to illuminate the research focus. This literature review draws on relevant national and international literature to inform my understanding of leadership practices in schools, with a specific focus on how schools in working class contexts establish a range of leadership practices in order to receive and implement governmental curriculum policy at their school sites. The conceptual focus of the study is on the implementation of curriculum policy in such contexts in order to understand the ways in which the SMTs in these schools go about providing a curriculum policy platform upon which their concomitant teaching and learning practices are based.

The emphasis of the thesis, and hence this literature review, is not on the teaching and learning practices of teachers in the classroom. Instead, it is on the nature and extent of the curriculum reception, institutional orientation and ethos, and the educative or empowering climate that the schools’ leadership practices engender in response to the requirements of governmentally authorised curriculum policy. My aim is to understand how curriculum policy enters and ‘lives’ in working class schools. The assumption of this thesis is that a school’s leadership practices, incorporating people, processes, and structures, are at the centre of establishing such an implementation platform. It is these leadership practices that give curriculum life and inform the way teachers respond to the demands to align their teaching to the policy. I hold that leadership practices set the tone and pace for the ways in which teachers prepare themselves to implement policy, which, in turn, impacts on teaching and learning processes in their classroom. This study explores the practices employed by the leadership of three selected schools, especially its reception of governmentally authorised curriculum policy, how it sets the tone for its implementation and how it lays a conceptual and pragmatic basis for the emergence of a curriculum policy platform in terms of which the teachers proceed to ‘deliver’ the curriculum in their classrooms. I concentrate on how the

leadership practices established at working class schools mediate and shape governmentally authorised curriculum policy within their institutional sites, in other words, how curriculum policy becomes institutionalised in these sites. I locate my study within the curriculum development trajectory of South Africa from 1994 until the enactment of the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (Department of Education (DoE), 2011) in South Africa's schools.

For the purposes of this study I have chosen to concentrate on the construction of the leadership practices around the implementation of the curriculum policy by the School Management Teams (SMT) of the selected schools for my study. The SMT of a school is in a strategic position to play a catalytic role in the implementation of the curriculum as they are responsible for curriculum policy implementation. In a public school, which is the focus of this study, principals and SMT members are empowered through the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) to ensure that policy is implemented. A scan of the literature indicates that the focus in leadership research is mainly on the management aspect of bodies such as SMTs. A focus on leadership practices is a neglected area of study (Naicker & Mestry, 2013:1). Therefore this thesis contributes to the growing literature in this area. Focusing directly on leadership practices illuminates the activities established by leaders in their school context. I support the view that leadership is not only the preserve of leaders such as principals or heads of departments, but that all people can be leaders (see Grant, 2010:29). While people in leadership positions such as the SMT are central to the study, the focus is on the establishment or implementation of leadership practices that may involve processes, people, strategies and institutional decisions made and enacted within given material contexts. The focus is thus not on people per se, but the leadership practices that are constructed out of processes that involve people.

The different aspects of this literature review will be dealt with thematically. I start by exploring literature regarding the importance of leadership practices in the implementation of curriculum policy, specifically focusing on the four core categories of leadership practices as identified by Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins (2006:34), namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing the instructional program. I then go on to discuss the curriculum development initiatives post 1994, describing how

curriculum development has influenced thinking and practice with regard to leadership in schools. Following this, I discuss curriculum implementation and the relevance of context in the implementation of the curriculum, specifically focusing on the working class school context. This will give the reader some background about the socio-economic challenges that the schools in this study are faced with. Lastly, I discuss the generation and sustainability of a curriculum policy platform in working class schools by using Basil Bernstein's pedagogic device (1975) combined with an approach developed in material for the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) (DoE, 2014), a qualification that senior teachers in school leadership positions are expected to undertake. This is presented as a type of heuristic framework to understand how leadership practices contribute to the implementation of a school's curriculum policy platform. A focus on leadership practices in the 'construction' of such a platform will enable me to understand how such practices are given material effect in these working class schools. How the curriculum policy platform is 'instantiated' by the SMT's practices would enable me to understand what happens when the curriculum policy lands at the school. I view the curriculum policy platform as a 'runway' surface which can ensure a smooth 'take-off' of the curriculum, thus 'paving' the way for curriculum policy enactment in the school. I advance the argument that curriculum policy implementation is informed, positioned and shaped through the school's SMT via their leadership practices in response to the contextual circumstances that they confront in their working class contexts.

2.2 EXPLORING THE TERRAIN OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Most of the existing literature on leadership in South African schools favours the person (leader) centred orientation (Heystek, 2007; Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007; Clarke, 2007; Heystek, Niemann, van Rooyen, Mosoge & Bipath, 2008). It focuses mainly on the individual leader's roles, values, skills and routines and how these characteristics are connected to school improvement. What this literature neglects is an emphasis on leadership practices that takes the focus beyond individuals (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins, 2006:7; Grant, 2010; Naicker & Mestry, 2013:1). This study emphasises the importance of leadership practices that, while including individual people, privileges a focus on the dynamic interaction among structures, processes, practices and people as a key way of understanding the implementation of curriculum policy in schools.

Exploring the literature on leadership that focuses on the individual leader, views the principal as the only one who has the power to lead (Grant, 2010:28), as he/she is the official authority in a school. Qualitative research by Hallinger (2003:331) indicates that instructional leadership (with a focus on curriculum) concentrates primarily on the role of the school principal in coordinating, controlling, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction in the school. This points to the 'heroic' role of the principal (Hallinger, 2003:334; Grant, 2010:28) in improving the school, as the principal is regarded as key to school improvement (Botha, 2012:40).

Much of the existing literature on educational leadership in South Africa is found in university textbooks such as *The Handbook of School Management* (Clarke, 2007), *People Leadership in Education in South Africa* (Heystek *et al.*, 2008) and *Education Management and Leadership: A South African perspective* (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008). These studies focus on factors that influence the quality of leaders such as their personality and skills and not on specific leadership practices or collective action (Grant, 2010: 28). For example, Heystek *et al.* (2008) describes ways in which the school leader can effectively lead the school through behaviour that encourages teachers to evaluate themselves and ways to recognise and deal with diversity. These characteristics and behaviours are viewed as the panacea to remedy the challenges that schools face. However, they do not clarify the dynamic and complex practices and interactions that are implemented via leadership practices to bring about change in the unique context of South African schools. This type of writing on leadership, which describes and prescribes certain desired characteristics, is linked with school effectiveness and school improvement research such as the 'Schools that Work' report (Christie *et al.*, 2007). This indicates the technical functional nature of academic understanding on educational leadership in South Africa (Spies, 2012:55). Its emphasis is on improving practice through an infusion of desired characteristics and behaviour.

This study is based on a critical understanding of the nature of leadership practices in working class contexts. The functionalist view foregrounds the person as leader, whereas the critical view emphasises the complexity of leadership practices. In other words the critical view points out that leadership is not vested in one person only. Eacott (2010:265) criticises the functional view on educational leadership as follows:

The quality of scholarship in educational leadership has frequently been questioned both within and beyond the field. Much of the work in the field is limited to the analysis of either individual or structural influences on practice. The resulting lists of traits, behaviours and organisational structures provide little in furthering our understanding of leadership ... I contend that insufficient attention has been devoted to the temporal features of leadership actions.

The above quotation points to the complexity of leadership actions and criticises the functionalist view as it provides lists of characteristics as a 'recipe' for school improvement. Building on this idea, Grant (2010:28) argues for a shift in the field, away from individual leadership towards more participatory forms of leadership practices. She conceptualises leadership as a shared activity which involves a range of people (Grant, 2010:29). Her view is supported by Gronn (2003:87) and Gunter (2010) who emphasise that leadership entails collective action. In line with the view of leadership as a shared activity, this study challenges the functionalist view on the leadership literature in South Africa. This thesis focuses on understanding and analysing the mediation of the implementation of curriculum policy via leadership practices in a working class school context. I consider it necessary to understand the different dynamics in a school's context (Klar & Brewer, 2013) in order to understand how the curriculum is 'lived' in a particular school through the leadership practices that are employed at a specific school site.

In order to understand the concept of leadership practices, it is important to understand the concepts of leadership and management as these concepts are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature. Clarke (2007:2) conceptualises management as being concerned with implementation, transaction and systems, whereas leadership focuses on vision, transformation and people. Management focuses on stability, while leadership entails 'taking risks' and challenging the status quo (Clarke, 2007:2; Christie, 2010:696). This is echoed by Grant (2010:86) when she states that management refers to preserving the organisation, whereas leadership leans towards movement and change. Grant (2010:46) argues that the activities associated with management and leadership complement each other. She explains this as follows:

Schools require leadership which moves the school forward, giving it a sense of direction through the development of a vision for the future in order that it can adapt to

the demands of an ever changing, complex society. Schools also require stability, certainty and security and they develop this through clear, consistent, firm management, provided by the management and staff who know that management is not the goal of the school, but the stable bedrock that supports the fertile conditions where leadership and learning can be cultivated (Grant, 2010:25).

The quotation indicates that management and leadership entail different activities, but they are related and both are needed in an organisation. Christie (2010:697) concurs when she highlights the interrelation between management and leadership. She explains that leadership is a relationship of influence directed towards goals, while management relates to structures and processes by which organisations meet their goals (Christie, 2010:696, 697). The two concepts of management and leadership and the practices that they entail are thus linked and complementary to each other. Leaders have people who follow them, while managers have people who work for them. The authority of leaders is normally conferred on them by those who are subordinate to them, whereas managers have a position of authority vested in them by the organisation. A management style is thus transactional, which focuses on supervision and organisation, whereas leadership entails the development of a vision in a changing society.

The differentiation between leadership and management brings me to a conceptualisation of leadership practices. Naicker and Mestry (2013:1) conceptualise the practices of leaders as “leaders in action”. Leithwood *et al.* (2006:17) agree that leadership practices refer to what leaders “do”. Heystek (2007:493) conceptualises leadership as the “activity of leading people with an emphasis on people and relations”. Echoing this, Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004:3) assert that leadership practices are constituted in the “interaction of school leaders, their followers and their situation”. Implicit to these authors is conceptions of leadership practices as the activities done by leaders through their interactions with people and their context, with a focus on how the curriculum is ‘lived’ in a school.

Eacott (2010:220) conceptualises leadership practices as an effect of actions and interactions that are shaped by the identity of the people and their capital, as well as by the context in which the leadership practices take place. This idea is supported by Gronn (2003:86) who explains that leadership practices entail collective systems of activities. Leadership practices

are thus a complex web of interactions between people and their situation. Grant (2010:30) emphasises the importance of relationships and the connectedness of people in the practice of leadership. Further, she highlights the centrality of teaching and learning in leadership practice (Grant, 2010:30). Leithwood *et al.* (2006:20) elaborate on the importance of leadership practices in teaching and learning and they indicate that leadership practices encompass a range of actions, interactions and processes associated with the implementation of curriculum policy. These actions include defining the school's mission, communicating the school's goals, supervising and evaluating teaching and monitoring student progress (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:20; Clarke, 2007:2-3). These dimensions of leadership behaviour are complemented and supported by Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003:87-88) who explain that leadership practices involve a focus on vision, curriculum, assessment, goals, social relations and management.

What leadership practices entail is key to understanding their scope in schools. Based on qualitative case studies Leithwood *et al.* (2006) present four core categories of leadership practices, namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation, and managing teaching and learning. These core leadership practices will be explored in the different contexts of the selected schools in this study. Each of Leithwood *et al.*'s (2006) core categories involves different kinds of actions and behaviours associated with curriculum policy. It focuses on the setting of goals, the development of people, working towards collaboration and on managing the curriculum.

Leithwood *et al.* (2006:22) explain that their first core leadership practice of setting direction involves activities such as the setting of vision, framing of goals and high performance expectation of students. These activities involve communicating the goals and promote interaction between people to agree on the goals (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:35). This resonates with Clarke's view (2007:2) that emphasises the importance of goals in implementing curriculum policy and discusses how leaders go about to establish the goals. Grant (2010:85) concurs by stating that the core function of leadership is to set direction for effective teaching and learning through collective enterprise. In other words, leadership plays an important role in instructional learning as the leadership of the school is expected to give direction to the school in terms of vision and goals. This view is supported by Lingard *et al.* (2003:19, 76)

when they state that leadership has a key role to play in vision-building and the maximisation of students' academic outcomes.

The second category in Leithwood *et al.*'s (2006) core leadership practices, namely developing people, entails support, understanding, intellectual stimulation and modelling. It challenges the status quo (Clarke, 2007:2; Grant 2010:24) as it encourages teachers to take intellectual risks and to look at their work from a different perspective (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:37). Further, it relates to the motivation of teachers which is considered an important aspect in the development of teachers (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:36; Thoonen, Slegers, Oort, Peetsma & Geijssel, 2011:498) as teachers are motivated by what they will gain in terms of the development (Schunk, Pintrich and Meece, 2008:261). This implies that leaders should know and respect their colleagues' needs in order to build their capacity (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:36). Development of teachers is particularly relevant in South African working class schools as these schools are characterised by emotional turbulence, fragmented relationships, poverty and under qualified teachers (Fataar & Paterson, 2002:7; Christie *et al.*, 2007:65; 89; Molo, 2010:622). Pardee (1990:5) suggests that development activities such as inspirational talks and rewards focus on building relationships and on upgrading teacher qualifications. The literature on the development of people indicates that development activities for teachers enhance the educational outcomes of students and assist teachers to operate more effectively in the classroom by extending the experience and knowledge of the teacher (Martin & Dowson, 2009:347; Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009:475).

Leithwood *et al.*'s (2006:22) third leadership practice of redesigning the organisation focuses on building a collaborative culture and connecting the school to its wider environment. It concentrates on shared beliefs and cooperation among the staff and the school's wider environment and it emphasises the building of collaborative cultures, which points to the relational aspect of leadership practices as highlighted by Heystek (2007:493) and Spillane *et al.* (2004). Lingard *et al.* (2003:8,76) emphasise the need for collaboration and connectedness to the world when they highlight the networks, structures and negotiations which are needed to support teaching and learning. Leithwood *et al.* (2006:41) suggest activities and interactions such as meetings, informal conversations, phone calls and e-mail exchanges to accomplish collaboration. The need for collaboration has been cited repeatedly

in research (Lingard *et al.*, 2003:23; Busher, 2006:31; Dufour & Marzano, 2011:57). Earley and Weindling (2004:175) indicate that collaboration points to the fact that learning is social in nature. Dufour and Marzano (2011:63) elaborate that building relationships through collaboration assists in the redesigning of the organisation as it has the ability to transform a “culture of isolation to a culture of collaboration”. Collaboration enables teachers to take the lead in their classrooms by sharing their practices and it aids in the translation of the requirements of the policy as it involves interaction between people which is an important aspect in leading the implementation of curriculum policy.

Leithwood *et al.*'s (2006:22) fourth leadership practice, i.e. managing teaching and learning, focuses on staffing and providing support and mentoring. These dimensions of leadership behaviour are complemented and supported by Lingard *et al.* (2003:87-88) who explain that leadership practices involve a focus on management. Leithwood *et al.* (2006:42, 43) elaborate that the management of the instructional programme (teaching and learning) involves controlling behaviour, boosting self-esteem and talking and listening to teachers and students. Clarke (2007:217, 228) concurs by suggesting many different activities and procedures such as planning, timetabling, and monitoring performance when managing the curriculum. The management of teaching and learning of the school thus revolves around teaching, establishing standard procedures and monitoring the effectiveness of the school. These practices signify the importance of management functions in leading the curriculum as described by Christie (2010:704).

Leithwood *et al.* (2006:42) elaborate that when staffing the instructional programme, recruiting and retaining staff is a primary task in leading schools in challenging circumstances. This connects the leadership practices of setting direction, developing people and redesigning the organisation to the management of the curriculum. Building on Leithwood *et al.*'s research on leadership practices, Klar and Brewer (2013:801) suggest that it is not the knowledge of leadership practices that determines the success of leadership practices, but an understanding of *how* to lead in concert with one's local context. *When* and *how* to adapt one's leadership practices are paramount in one's ability to have the desired effects on teaching and learning. The leadership practices are thus open to creative expressions which link the policy text to the practice.

In sum, this section of the review has suggested that leadership practices are important to issues of development and support in terms of teaching and learning as leadership practices involve structures, processes and interaction between people. The concepts of leadership, management, and leadership practices were discussed to indicate their interrelation. The literature on leadership practices was given coverage as it is relevant to the research aims and research questions. Leithwood *et al.*'s four core leadership practices and how it relates to teaching and learning were discussed.

The next section of this literature review focuses on curriculum development initiatives post 1994 and its relationship to leadership practices in schools.

2.3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES LINKED WITH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

This section of the literature review focuses on work written on curriculum policy making and implementation in South Africa, specifically after 1994. This provides the context for my specific focus on the implementation and subsequent institutionalisation of curriculum policy, via leadership practices, in working class schools.

School curriculum policy development in South Africa has attracted much attention and criticism both nationally and internationally since the abolishment of Apartheid in 1994. Over the last twenty years governmental curriculum policy has had disparate effects on curriculum implementation in the country's schools. Fataar (2010:149) explains that the curriculum is a statement about the nature and type of society the state chooses to endorse and authorise. Therefore, conflict over the curriculum is representative of wider differences of opinion regarding the nature of citizenship in a society (Fataar, 2010:149). Christie (2008:133) elaborates that the tension associated with curriculum initiatives and implementation stems from our history of the liberation struggle and the influence of globalisation. This tension impacts on ways of thinking and practices employed in the receipt and institutionalisation of curriculum policy in South African schools.

To understand the implementation and institutionalisation of curriculum policy in South African schools, I provide a brief description of curriculum development initiatives since 1994. With the onset of democracy, the South African curriculum was 'cleansed' of derogatory apartheid concepts (Chisholm, 2005:193; Fataar, 2010:151). Such cleansing occurred during a short curriculum revision period at the end of 1994 for implementation the next year. This process was meant to minimally align the old apartheid curriculum with the new democratic human rights orientated constitutional dispensation that emerged during South Africa's negotiated transition (Harley & Wedekind, 2003:198; Fataar, 2010).

A second more intense process that radically overhauled curriculum policy started in 1995 that produced what was labeled Curriculum 2005 (C2005) by mid-1997. Slated for implementation in 1998, C2005 was based on an Outcomes Based Education (OBE) curriculum approach which was intended to transform teaching and learning in South Africa (Fataar, 2010:148) and was expected to be completely phased into all school grades by 2005. Equality and human rights were the guiding principles (Christie, 2008:127). Kader Asmal, the second Education Minister post-apartheid, considered C2005 as a technology that could overcome the passivity and lack of interest that a history of inferior education in black schools, had bred (Chisholm, 2012:94). Schools had been subjected to an apartheid curriculum that perpetuated race, class, gender and ethnic divisions and emphasised separateness, rather than common citizenship and nationhood (see Fataar, 2010:148), the latter being a central normative aim of the new curriculum policy.

As a curriculum orientation, OBE focused on definitive learning outcomes and the development of skills, and not on the content that students should acquire (Mason, 1999:137; Blignaut, 2008:101; Fataar, 2010:149). The OBE approach was intended to replace rote learning which was characteristic of the apartheid curriculum. C2005 therefore required more complex teaching methodologies to assist teachers to develop skills in students. This requirement added pressure on schools to acquire leadership practices that focused on the development of teachers to implement the curriculum and to manage teaching and learning in compliance with OBE requirements.

Jansen (1998:325) stridently criticised this OBE orientation, suggesting that it would fail at the level of school implementation. He argued that C2005 is based on flawed assumptions about what happens inside schools. According to Jansen (1998), the reality of disadvantaged working class schools is far from the ideals purported in OBE. Working class schools are resource-poor contexts, characterised by fragmented relationships, poverty, ill-prepared and under qualified teachers (Jansen, 1998; Mason, 1999:141; Christie, 2008; Fataar, 2010:149; Moloï, 2010;). These conditions make such a curriculum difficult to implement as C2005 did not provide teachers with syllabi or year planners. Harley and Wedekind (2003:208) echo the sentiment that a lack of resources was the most obvious difficulty in working class schools as it determined the extent to which schools were able to implement the policy.

Based on a survey of qualitative case studies, Harley and Wedekind (2003:210) illuminate the uneven and inadequate implementation of C2005 in a diverse range of schools in South Africa. They emphasise the “crash-course” training that teachers had for the implementation of C2005. Teachers were exposed to once-off training sessions which failed to prepare them for C2005’s implementation. The training did not take into account the need for resources and adequate In Service Training (INSET) and resulted in many misconceptions. One of these misconceptions was that teachers accepted group work as the only indication of OBE implementation (Harley & Wedekind, 2003). In the rural and working class schools they found that group work was the only indication of OBE, but that the group work was not used to focus on student-centeredness, it was merely a case of seating arrangements to create more space in the classrooms (Harley & Wedekind, 2003). Whole class didactic transfer modes of teaching in these schools were still the norm. The students’ responses were accepted as valid knowledge, irrespective of their accuracy or relevance (Harley & Wedekind, 2003). Their findings indicate that the management of these schools was not focused on the development of teachers to implement the curriculum. It seems that the main goal of the school management was to ‘display’ their engagement with C2005 by means of group work.

Harley and Wedekind (2003) found that in a middle class school C2005 was implemented what they likened to as a “twin stream” approach, i.e. both C2005 and the previous curriculum were being offered simultaneously. This school’s management seemed well informed on curriculum policy and implemented what worked for them based on their specific focus in

teaching and learning. Further, Harley and Wedekind (2003) indicate that the management of this school was favourably disposed to curriculum change. However, they did not find any evidence of consensus or collaboration in this school setting. This implied that the management of this school was responsible for setting direction for curriculum implementation, with no input from the teachers' side. This finding points to the importance of involving teachers in the leadership practice of setting direction as it informs the development of people, leads to collaboration, as well as improving the management of the curriculum.

The more affluent school that they discussed, on the other hand, implemented C2005 with a focus on developing the curriculum to facilitate learning (Harley & Wedekind, 2003). This implementation can be attributed to the availability of resources and the focus of the school management team on curriculum and teacher development. Harley and Wedekind (2003) found that the school's management team developed the curriculum within the school and they (the school management) implemented C2005 to suit their school context. Leadership practices such as monitoring, development meetings, planning, evaluation and modification were observed in this school. C2005 was thus engaged with in a very comprehensive way.

Harley and Wedekind's (2003) findings indicate that working class schools were placed at a disadvantage, as these schools struggled to comply with OBE requirements due to their infrastructure, whereas middle class schools were able to take advantage of the flexibility that OBE offered them. Previously advantaged schools (the middle class schools) met most of the conditions assumed to be in place for the implementation of C2005, as they were well-resourced and had supportive parents and a supportive management team that focused on the development of teachers, whereas the previously disadvantaged schools, the working class schools, were placed at a disadvantage as they did not have these assets (Jansen & Christie, 1999:196). Ironically, the challenge of implementing C2005 in working class schools failed the intentions of the curriculum (Christie, 2008:133), as C2005 actually exacerbated the inequalities it intended to eradicate.

Fataar (2010:148) and Harley and Wedekind (2003) highlight the situation where, in response to OBE expectations, many teachers became a type of facilitator of learning while the student was expected to play an active role in their learning. They indicate that the implication of

teachers as facilitators is that teachers should be more knowledgeable and have the skills to manage the learning situation, but also that students should be stimulated to be creative and innovative. The teacher as a facilitator was clearly a challenging aspect in the implementation of the OBE curriculum, specifically in working class contexts, due to their impoverished conditions, under qualified teachers and high concentration of students who struggle with the curriculum (Christie, 2008:177). The shifting role of the teacher towards that of a facilitator, impacted heavily on the leadership practices of schools in their development of teachers' knowledge and skills and redesign of the school towards collaboration in delivery of the new curriculum.

Harley and Wedekind's study (2003) is significant as they drew on studies based on observations and in-depth interviews which illustrate the implementation problems that different types of schools in South Africa experienced with the implementation of C2005. They summarise the following as implementation problems: a complex curriculum policy, inadequate coordination and management, insufficient capacity in terms of personnel and finance, inadequate teacher development and limited curriculum development. These implementation challenges led to the uneven implementation of C2005 in South African schools and highlight the importance of leadership practices associated with the implementation challenges.

Due to inadequate implementation of C2005 the curriculum policy was reviewed by a Ministerial committee. The rationale for the review was to find ways to better lay a conceptual platform for the acquisition of formal school knowledge by students (Fataar, 2006:641). The task team's report from the review of the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2009) indicated the flaws of C2005. The report found that the shift from explicit teaching and learning to facilitation and group work resulted in teachers not knowing what to teach. The task team recommended that the design of the curriculum be simplified in terms of terminology and language and that the assessment requirements should be clarified, as well as content added (Report, DoE, 2009:12). Following the review of C2005, the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (RNCS) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grades 10-12 were released in 2002 (Chisholm, 2005; Christie, 2008). These curricula elaborated on the content that was to be learned and used simpler language compared to the

complex terminology used in C2005. With the RNCS, the role of the teacher shifted with the change in the focus of the curriculum. This challenged the leadership structure in schools to change their practices to accommodate the new curriculum. The focus now leaned more towards the teaching of content knowledge, which consequently impacted on the development of teachers in terms of both their content knowledge and pedagogy (Chisholm, 2005:198). In 2009 the RNCS was again reviewed due to implementation challenges (DoE, 1998) as the RNCS still suffered from the same features as OBE. The review of the RNCS indicated that there was no clear and detailed implementation plan and that the message that supported the implementation of the RNCS was that it was not a new curriculum (Report, DoE, 2009:14). This opened up space for teachers and district to blend the RNCS into C2005 which resulted in confusion (Report DoE, 2009:14). The report further indicates that no new assessment policy was developed.

From 2012, following the above reviews, the two National Curriculum Statements were combined in a single document that is known as the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12, with its final implementation in Grades 8, 9 and 12 in 2014 (DoE, 2011). This curriculum is commonly referred to as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) which prescribes the content that should be taught and the way it should be assessed. It is in this space of implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), that this study is located.

CAPS is characterised by an increased focus on the assessment of students. Ball (2003:216) refers to this increased focus on student performance as 'performativity', which he describes as a process whereby schools are evaluated and certain measures are taken to ensure quality. The emphasis on student performance is displayed in the Annual National Assessment (ANA) and Western Cape systemic tests where schools' results are compared across social divides. These tests pose challenges to the school leadership in their implementation of the curriculum (Spies, 2012:44), as leaders are held accountable for the learning in their schools and schools are negatively labeled if they do not achieve results according to DoE criteria. This emphasis on performativity expects school leaders to be competitive (Heystek, Nieman, van Rooyen, Mosoge & Bipath, 2008:10) as schools are labeled as performing or underperforming schools if they do not achieve the results

prescribed by the DoE. The emphasis on performativity challenges the school leadership to lead in new, creative ways (Botha, 2012:42) in terms of leadership practices aimed at setting direction, developing teachers, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning. The focus on leadership practices with the implementation of the CAPS curriculum is at the heart of this study.

There is relatively little literature currently available on the implementation of CAPS. However, Fataar (2015:161) refers to CAPS as being 'teacher-proof' as it is strictly regulated in terms of content and assessment and teachers are positioned to fulfill the performative requirements of a narrow set of curriculum implementation expectations. The implementation challenges of CAPS are yet to be investigated. This study contributes in this area of research as it explores the leadership practices employed in implementing the CAPS, which is highly focused on the performance of students.

In sum, this section indicates that knowledge of the development initiatives of curriculum policy provides valuable insight into understanding the processes that lead to curriculum reform and it creates an awareness of the challenges of curriculum implementation in particular contexts which make proactive interventions by the leadership structure in schools possible. Each of the different curriculum reforms had distinct emphases based on the discourse of that period in time and its requirements challenged the leadership structure of the schools to employ specific practices to implement and institutionalise the curriculum policy in their unique school settings.

The next section of the literature review focuses on the concept of policy implementation and how it relates to leadership practices.

2.4 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Curriculum policy implementation continues to confound policy makers and academics. In the South African context this is illustrated in the discussions and literature around the various school-based curriculum innovations since 1994, which was discussed in the previous section of this literature review. This section of the literature review focuses on the issue of policy

implementation and the factors that either hinder or facilitate it, with a specific focus on how curriculum implementation impacts on the leadership practices of a school.

Kennedy, Chan and Fok (2011:41) highlight different perspectives to understand policy implementation. They discuss Fullan and Pomfret's (1977) 'fidelity' perspective which examines the extent to which the intentions of policy match what teachers do in the classrooms and the practical approach suggested by Aoki (1984) which focuses on the 'practical action' of teachers. This practical approach relates to the focus of this thesis, as the thesis explores the practical actions of school leaders in terms of the implementation of school curriculum policy.

In order to understand how curriculum policy implementation plays out in a school, it is useful to start with an explanation of the concept of policy implementation and the factors that impact on it. Spillane, Reiser and Gomez (2006) describe policy implementation as a 'sense-making' activity as it unfolds in the daily work of classrooms and schools (Kennedy *et al.*, 2011:41). This 'sense-making' is referred to as "meaning making and the cognitive act of taking information, forming it and using it to determine actions and behaviours in a way that manages meaning for individuals" (DeMatthews, 2015:2). This implies that policy implementation is in a continuous state of being shaped and interpreted. Ndou (2008:23) refers to policy implementation as the initial attempts by teachers to effect the intended innovation into various institutions. These attempts refer to the importance of realising the aims of policy in a specific context, thus also implying that policy implementation is context specific. The implication for the school's leadership is that leaders employ practices to implement the policy according to their specific contextual requirements.

Braun *et al.* (2011:586) argue that policy is subject to interpretation in original and creative ways within institutions. Blignaut (2008:103) is of the opinion that what a policy means for teachers depends to a great extent on the repertoire of their existing knowledge and experience. In other words, policy means different things to different people depending on people's knowledge and experience. How policy is implemented is therefore subject to several meanings and interpretations. Understanding the text of the policy is crucial to how the policy is interpreted and subsequently implemented. Kennedy *et al.* (2011:42) and

Blignaut (2008:102) elaborate that there is an interaction between policies and individuals and these interactions are based on complex meaning-making processes that can lead to fundamentally different interpretations of policy intentions. This resonates with Spillane *et al.* (2006) and Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012:43) view regarding the 'sense-making' of policy by teachers and managers and how it is expressed in their practices. In other words, how the policy is understood, is how it will be implemented or 'lived'.

Ball *et al.* (2012:43) state that 'making sense of the policy' takes place in relation to the culture and history of the institution. Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins (2011:585) state that policy implementation depends on resources available and on the interaction between people involved in interpreting and translating the policy into action as a way to institutionalise the policy. These two statements point to the importance of contextual factors in policy implementation. The importance of context in policy implementation is also highlighted by Ndou (2008:23) and Mafora and Phorabatho (2013:118) who indicate that the successful implementation of a curriculum depends on how the policy is understood in relation to the school environment in which it is implemented.

In a case study done by Mafora and Phorabatho (2013) on the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in the North West province of South Africa, it was found that there were barriers to the effective management of implementing the new curriculum. One of these barriers was that principals had a limited understanding of what comprises their role in the management and implementation of the school curriculum. The findings of this case study indicated that the surveyed principals did not share decision-making on curriculum change with their teachers (Mafora and Phorabatho, 2013:12). Rather, they (the principals) considered managing curriculum implementation and teacher development to be the responsibility of the subject advisers and district officials. The limited understanding by principals of their role in curriculum implementation impinged on their leadership practice of their management of the curriculum. Further, it was found that inadequate training of principals and teachers, lack of resources such as libraries, laboratories and staff shortages and a delay in the delivery of textbooks were barriers to the effective implementation of the curriculum (Mafora & Phorabatho, 2013:121). These findings point to the leadership practices of setting direction, developing people and redesigning the organisation in terms of

collaborative work in the implementation of curriculum policy, as they highlight the importance of contextual factors, communication and the professional development of teachers (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:22). Christie (2008:153) explains that policy implementation is not about 'transmission', but about participation and negotiation, thus emphasising the inter-relational aspect of policy implementation.

Numerous studies focusing on instructional leadership have found that leadership is paramount in the implementation of curriculum policy (Lingard *et al.*, 2003; Christie *et al.*, 2007; Christie, 2008; Leithwood *et al.*, 2008). For example, Lingard *et al.* (2003:87) state that leading the curriculum is a central activity of leadership. This is echoed by Christie (2008:183) who indicates that sound curriculum leadership would improve the functioning of schools. Leithwood *et al.* (2006:13) underscore the importance of school leadership on student outcomes. This is supported by the 'Schools that Work' report that indicates that leadership is a key dimension of effective schools (Christie *et al.*, 2007:23, 78) in the implementation of the curriculum policy. Consequently this implies that the core leadership practices of setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning should relate to the curriculum as these involve the setting of goals, supporting teachers, redesigning the school and managing the curriculum (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:22). As leadership involves the exercise of influence over others' practices (Christie & Lingard, 2001; Heystek, 2007), this indicates that they (the leaders) can make a significant contribution to teachers' pedagogy in the classroom and how the curriculum is executed in the school.

Currently South African school principals work in an era of high accountability (Spies, 2012:42), for example, the current curriculum policy (CAPS) is characterised by high performance expectations. They are expected to have curriculum content knowledge, pedagogical expertise and leadership skills to promote student achievement (Ylimaki, 2011:26). With the implementation of the curriculum, these expectations place the emphasis on leadership practices such as setting direction in terms of goals, developing teachers in terms of content and pedagogy, redesigning the organisation to focus on collaboration and managing the instructional programme with a focus on monitoring and evaluating the assessment of students (see Leithwood *et al.*, 2006). How these accountability requirements are interpreted, communicated, shaped and conveyed to teachers and students through the

implementation of leadership practices, are paramount in the implementation of curriculum policy.

Kennedy *et al.* (2011:44) highlight two conceptions of policy. These are 'soft' policy and 'hard' policy. The former refers to recommendations, campaigns, incentives, support and strong advocacy to inform policy implementation, while the latter refers to accountability and non-compliance measures. These two conceptions are expressed in the leadership practices of a school. The 'soft' policy approach is regarded as of a formative nature (Kennedy *et al.*, 2011) particularly in terms of setting direction, developing people and redesigning the organisation as it takes into account the people that are being worked with. It points to the relational aspect of the leadership practice (Heystek, 2007). The 'hard' policy approach on the other hand is more concerned with governance structures and complying with what is expected. It does not lend itself to the dynamics of the activities associated with leadership practices as it is non-negotiable. The 'hard' policy approach leans more towards the management aspect of leadership practices as management entails compliance and maintaining the status quo (Clarke, 2007:2). These two approaches relate to Christie's (2008:153) balance of *pressure* and *support*. She argues that pressure may be used to achieve changes in behaviour (for example, that staff should be at school on time), i.e. the 'hard' policy approach, but that support is necessary to build capacity and motivation (Christie, 2008:153), i.e. the 'soft' policy approach. The expressions of these two policy conceptions in the leadership practices of a school play a key role in the implementation of curriculum policy.

In sum, this section of the literature review focused on the concept of policy implementation and the factors that impact on policy implementation. The section highlights that policy implementation in the South African context is inflected by various interpretations and contextual factors and that policy is continually shaped due to the interaction between these factors. The next section explores and elaborates on the influence of contextual constraints and possibilities on leadership practices in the implementation of curriculum policy.

2.5 THE IMPACT OF CONTEXT ON LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM POLICY

This section of the literature review brings the focus of leadership practices in implementing curriculum policy in working class schools, into view. Ball *et al.* (2012:19) and Mills and Gale (2010:30) argue that context should be taken seriously as it makes a difference in school processes and student achievement. By using the word 'context' in this thesis, I refer to the lived experiences in a school and the external constraints impacting on these experiences, as indicated by Mills and Gale (2010:30). I also focus on the broader social influences that position students and the school in a particular way. Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins (2011) and Christie (2008:149) support the view that context plays an important role in shaping policy implementation. Fataar (2010:7) concurs by stating that policy implementation is largely dependent upon whether the environment is conducive and responsive to the policy. It is therefore significant to explore the reality of the contexts in which the schools are situated to establish what can or cannot be achieved through curriculum implementation.

The importance of context in curriculum policy implementation in South Africa is well illustrated by Jansen and Christie (1999:196) in their comparison of C2005 in previously advantaged and previously disadvantaged schools. They advance the argument that previously advantaged schools were in a more favourable position to implement C2005 as they had the necessary resources and qualified teachers to adhere to the requirements of C2005, whereas previously disadvantaged schools lacked these. This view is supported by Christie (2008:147) and Mills and Gale (2010:31) who indicate that best results are achieved by historically privileged schools. The significance of context is also well illustrated in the South African National Senior Certificate (NSC), WCED systemic and Annual National Assessment (ANA) test results, which indicate that working class schools perform below targets set by the DoE (Christie *et al.*, 2007:50; DoE, 2013:72). This is an indication that there are specific dynamics of the working class context that should be taken into account in the implementation of curriculum policy. Contextual factors such as overcrowded classes, poverty and lack of resources, which are characteristic of working class schools, are mentioned as barriers to the successful implementation of curriculum policy (Christie, 2008:177). Hence the leadership of a school is challenged by the pragmatic concern of managing and leading the implementation of curriculum reform in their specific context. I therefore agree that the working class school context (the contextual focus of this study) should be taken seriously in

light of a one-size-fits-all curriculum, of which the current school curriculum policy (CAPS) is a manifestation.

The Coleman report of 1966 is one of the most prominent studies on context and student performance (Christie, 2008:1). This research tested 570 000 students and 60 000 teachers to ascertain why African American students performed poorly. The report showed that students' personal and family characteristics were more influential than schools in affecting students' life chances, but that facilities and the curriculum have some important effects on these students' school performance (Christie, 2008:167). The 'Schools that Work' report, a study done in South African schools (Christie *et al.*, 2007:99, 104) to explore the dynamics of well-functioning schools in disadvantaged contexts in achieving student success, found that school performance is strongly influenced by context, but that schools can make a difference in terms of their focus on teaching and learning. Implicitly, the findings in these reports indicate that school factors such as leadership practices that take context seriously, can make a difference to the learning experiences of students.

In her book, *Schooling the Rustbelt Kids*, Pat Thomson (2002) provides insight into the dynamics of context and how these intersect with the dynamics of the school and the implementation of policy. She tellingly describes the challenges and struggles of working class contexts and how they impact on school processes. She refers to a 'virtual schoolbag' that students bring to school, which contains all the resources that they have that enable or disable them in their schooling. The 'virtual schoolbag' is a concept built on the premise that all children come to school not only with their conventional schoolbags, but also with virtual schoolbags filled with familial, cultural and linguistic resources (Prosser, Lucas & Reid, 2010:6). This virtual schoolbag in the case of the working class child contains poverty, insufficient resources at home such as unsupportive parents, lack of family structure, fragmented relationships and unique knowledges. This correlates with how Christie (2008) and the 'Schools that Work' report (Christie *et al.*, 2007:26) describe the working class school context of South African schools.

The contents of the 'virtual schoolbag' of students need to be kept in sight and to be worked with, not against (Thomson, 2002). It is with these 'resources' that the curriculum is implemented and it is within this space, between the students' resources and the

implementation of policy that the curriculum is institutionalised. Engaging with these contents of the students' 'virtual schoolbag' shapes leadership practices in response to its contents on a daily basis. How the school engages with policy and their school resources to be able to bring about meaningful education for the working class student, is essential. Ball *et al.* (2012:43) refer to this as the 'messy' reality of school life.

Based on four case studies in secondary schools, Ball *et al.* (2012:43) argue that policies are shaped and influenced by contextual factors. They conceptualise and group the dynamics of context as follows:

- Situated contexts: referring to the location of the school and the school history and intake.
- Professional cultures: referring to values, teacher commitments, experiences and policy management in schools.
- Material contexts: referring to the staff establishment, the school budget, buildings, technology and infrastructure.
- External contexts: referring to the degree and quality of learning area support, pressures and expectations from broader policy context, such as school ratings and responsibilities.

The above four components are crucial in the exploration of school leadership practices for curriculum implementation in the working class school context. These different groups of contextual factors are interconnected and differ from school to school. Where the school is located, its socio-economic status, its geographic location, its history and the background (language and race) of the students whom it serves, is pivotal in the leadership practices that are performed in the school (see Christie, 2008). The various people working in a school environment, their inherent values, dedication, professionalism, attitude, relations, administration and organisation are key to constructing a school's learning environment (Earley & Weindling, 2004; Christie *et al.*, 2007:58). Furthermore, the material resources such as the staff establishment, finances, building, facilities and infrastructure are indicative of their capability to implement much needed intervention. These contextual factors impact heavily on the types of leadership practices that are employed to lead the curriculum.

Linking Ball *et al.*'s (2012) four components of context, as discussed above, to South African working class schools, one can consider the situated context as being characterised by gangsterism, a history of inferior education and low socio-economic status (Christie *et al.*, 2007:89-97; Christie, 2008). The professional culture of working class schools relates to research findings that indicate that many teachers in these schools are under qualified, which links to research on 'dysfunctional' schools (Fataar & Paterson, 2002). Fataar and Paterson (2002) indicate that dysfunctional schools are usually found in working class non-white neighbourhoods. They define and describe dysfunctional schools as disorderly, chaotic environments with intermittent interruptions in the school's daily programme (Fataar & Paterson, 2002:31). According to them, dysfunctional schools do not have the necessary structures and leadership in place and that leadership in these schools is mainly interpreted as mediating between conflicting groups and alliances in schools (Fataar & Paterson, 2002:33).

The material context of working class schools lends itself to issues of lack of physical and human resources, overcrowded classes and poor infrastructure (Christie *et al.*, 2007:65; Moloj, 2010). In the 'Schools that Work' report, it was conveyed that principals mentioned the importance of selecting and retaining good staff due to the movement of staff to district offices (Christie *et al.*, 2007:119). Moreover, expectations from the external environment, such as from parents and the National Department of Education (DoE) place tremendous pressure on the implementation of the curriculum at school level, mainly due to performance related expectations (Spies, 2012:42). Curriculum policy is thus implemented within this 'messy' reality.

School leaders are expected to engage with these contextual factors and act decisively to bring about meaningful education. In other words, how they mediate and construct their actions with the resources they have at their disposal, are essential for curriculum implementation. Engaging with these contextual factors relate to Leithwood *et al.*'s (2006) leadership practices of setting direction in terms of goals, developing people to upgrade their knowledge, redesigning the organisation with an emphasis on collaboration, motivation and an understanding of people's needs, as well as managing the curriculum to ensure effective monitoring of the goals that were set. The specific actions and behaviours associated with

each of these core leadership practices depend on the specific context of the school and is subject to the school's unique needs (see Klar & Brewer, 2013) and this entails 'taking risks' and challenging the status quo (Clarke, 2007:2).

Based on their small scale qualitative study in three 'high needs [dysfunctional]' schools in the United States, Klar and Brewer (2013) found that specific leadership practices are used to institutionalise school-wide reform efforts. They based their study on the four core leadership practices of Leithwood *et al.* (2006), i.e. setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning. In the schools in their study they found that for the category of setting direction, a shared vision and group goals created high performance expectations. Mills and Gale (2010:60) argue that holding high expectations of students is key to making a difference in a disadvantaged context. This is supported by Christie (2008:175) who indicates that having low expectations of students in disadvantaged communities contributes to poor outcomes for these students. High expectations of students are therefore valued as a goal in setting direction in a working class school (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:22). The value of support and consideration is emphasised in the core leadership practice of developing people as indicated in the findings of Klar and Brewer (2013). This correlates with Leithwood *et al.*'s (2006:22) suggestion of emotional understanding and support and it connects with Christie's (2008:65) argument that development is needed to understand the cultural and natural worlds in which we live, to communicate with each other and to act in ethical ways. The execution of these leadership practices plays an important role in how curriculum policy is institutionalised in the working class school.

The schools in the Klar and Brewer study (2013) were characterised by contextual factors such as fragmented relationships, poverty and a lack of parent involvement. The leadership practices in these schools revolved around connecting the school to the community, thus redesigning the school with an emphasis on collaboration. Mills and Gale (2010:52) concur that collaboration is important as it provides opportunities for teachers to recognise and build understanding around issues of group difference- such as multiplicity of cultures, communities, geographies, social classes and learning styles. Aspects of the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning in the Klar and Brewer study (2013) emphasised the role of monitoring and supervision in the responsibility taken by teachers for their work

performance. The importance of the management of teaching and learning is supported by Clarke (2007:2) and Mafora and Phorabatho (2013:119). The findings of the Klar and Brewer study (2013) indicate that the activities associated with the core leadership practices are adjusted as the leadership practices engage with issues of the situated, professional, material and external components of context, as specified by Ball *et al.* (2012).

The expectation is that school leaders should have a good understanding of the context of the school in the implementation of curriculum policy. This expectation is portrayed in an ethnographic study based on interviews and observations done by Fataar (2009a) where three principals in an impoverished black township navigate their schools' social dynamics through creative adaptations and strategic practices to provide a platform for their work. The geography and demography of the schools in Klar and Brewer's study (2013) correlate with that of South African working class schools, thus pointing to their study's significance for leadership practices in South African working class schools. The study shows that there are variations, suitable to the specific immediate context, in how the practices are executed. Leaders are thus expected to be responsive to challenging demographics, and cultural, fiscal and political contexts (Klar & Brewer, 2013:800). If the specific practices do not match the specific context of the school, it may be catastrophic to the implementation of the curriculum. Therefore context matters and it is interwoven in the dynamics of the activity associated with leadership practices. In other words, it is important to not just know the leadership practices, but to know *how* to adapt the practices to different circumstances. Recognising and creatively engaging with contextual factors paves the way to create a curriculum policy platform from which teachers are enabled to execute their pedagogy in the classroom.

The next section of the literature review focuses on how the execution of the core leadership practices leads to the establishment of a curriculum policy platform.

2.6 LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN RELATION TO THE GENERATION AND SUSTAINING OF A CURRICULUM POLICY PLATFORM

This section of the literature review responds to the sub question of this research regarding how leadership practices generate and sustain a curriculum policy platform in the implementation of curriculum policy. The focus here is on how leadership practices create

conditions for teachers to teach in their classrooms within the context of the working class school. These conditions refer to opportunities provided for the development of teachers to transfer knowledge, provision of resources (human and material), learning and teaching support material, monitoring, pedagogical guidance, development of students and the motivation of teachers and students (Christie *et al.*, 2007:58- 88). This section of the literature review is devoted to analysing how leadership practices involve 'reinterpretation' of the policy at the point of implementation of the curriculum, which in turn leads to the construction of a particular type of foundation that make certain types of teaching and learning strategies possible (see Christie *et al.*, 2007:104).

Building on Fataar's (2009b:4) concept of a pedagogical platform which he describes as the kinds of pedagogies that teachers have discursively been positioned to implement, I describe the curriculum policy platform as the teaching strategies that result from the nature of the leadership practices that are implemented at specific schools. The curriculum policy platform is the generic curriculum reception and implementation platform that schools go about establishing on the basis of which teachers pursue their specific teaching activities via their chosen pedagogies. This thesis focuses on the selected schools' construction of such generic and specific platforms that inform the teachers' work in their classrooms. The research stops at the classroom door, in other words the focus is not on the teachers' classroom pedagogy but on the leadership practices and policy implementation practices that produces the school's curriculum policy platform just before it enters the classroom door. The curriculum policy platform will essentially facilitate how the teachers are informed, enriched, motivated, educated, guided and trained to deliver the curriculum in their specific subjects.

School leaders are directly responsible for providing guidance to teachers as these leaders are mandated with the responsibility to implement governmentally authorised curriculum policy (Christie, 2008:185). Making a related point Lingard *et al.* (2003:53) suggest that school leadership practices have to be about spreading the best teacher practices across the work of the school. They (Lingard *et al.*, 2003:145) work from the premise that the focus of all leadership practices needs to be 'leading learning'. In other words, leadership practices create and sustain conditions for learning to take place in the school (Lingard *et al.*, 2003:145). This creation and sustaining of conditions for learning via leadership practices

resonate with how I conceptualise the curriculum policy platform - a metaphorical structure constructed through the interplay between the dynamics of the various policy implementers in a school and their context.

The focus of this thesis is on the nature and extent of the curriculum reception, institutional orientation and ethos as well as the educative and empowering climate that the schools' leadership practices engender in response to the government requirements for the implementation of the authorised curriculum policy as it enters and 'lives' in schools. This focus relates to British sociologist Basil Bernstein's theoretical work on what he calls the 'pedagogic device' (Bertram, 2012). It also relates to the prescripts of the South African Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) training manual (DoE, 2014) for school leadership. The ACE manual provides activities associated with the implementation of the curriculum to facilitate teaching and learning and Bernstein's pedagogic device provides a language and tools to describe and analyse the implementation of curriculum policy in schools, via leadership practices.

To explicate the generation of a curriculum policy platform, I draw on Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device as a heuristic (Wheelahan, 2005; Singh, Thomas & Griffiths, 2013) to understand the implementation of curriculum policy via leadership practices. I align this with the processes and strategies as set out in the ACE training manual for School Management Teams (SMT) (DoE, 2014) to inform the establishment of a curriculum policy platform. Bernstein's work (2000) provides a valuable tool to analyse pedagogic activity in schools in post-apartheid South Africa. His research is underpinned by understanding the production of social inequality through schooling (Bertram, 2012:5). The ACE training manual on the other hand provides a description of activities which South African school leaders are expected to implement to enhance teaching and learning (DoE, 2014). This training manual forms a core part of a module offered to school leadership teams on a Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) approved school leadership course (Heystek, 2007). It is meant to provide these leaders with a language of description deemed important for organising their school's curriculum implementation and teaching and learning activities (DoE, 2014). Combining Bernstein's pedagogic device and the ACE manual's suggestions will inform and frame the formation of a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools.

The following questions are central in the construction of a curriculum policy platform: To what extent does Bernstein's pedagogic device assist an analysis of the recontextualisation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Bertram, 2012:1)? How can the ACE training manual's suggestions be used to construct an operative basis of support for teachers to implement the curriculum in their classrooms? The *what*, *who* and *how* of the implementation process is of cardinal importance. As a response to these questions, this section follows the curriculum message from when the curriculum text (the policy) enters the school (who receives it), to how it moves through the school leaders to the teachers (Singh *et al.*, 2013:465). Following Bertram (2012:2), I explore how Bernstein's pedagogic device and the ACE manual suggestions play a role in the mediation and navigation of the curriculum policy from the school leaders to the teachers, via leadership practices, to assist the teachers in their classroom pedagogies, hence the construction of a curriculum policy platform.

Bernstein (2000:25) describes the pedagogic device as the principles underlying the transformation of knowledge into pedagogic communication. Bertram (2012:5) and Singh *et al.* (2013:467) explain that the pedagogic device refers to the general principles which underlie the conversion of knowledge into pedagogical communication. Singh (2002:571) further describes Bernstein's pedagogical device as the "ensemble of rules or procedures via which knowledge is converted into classroom talk, curricula and communication". This "ensemble of rules and procedures" relates to the curriculum policy platform as suggested in this study. The pedagogic conversation is followed from the time the policy enters the school until the classroom door – that means, how the policy is converted into a platform via its implementation through leadership practices. This conversion of policy involves procedures and rules unique to the particular institution (Bernstein, 2000:27; Christie, 2008:148; Braun, Ball, Maguire & Hoskins, 2011:585). These procedures and rules involve what is taught to whom, when, where, why and how it is evaluated or deemed as acquired (Singh *et al.*, 2013:467). Leadership practices play a key role in these procedures to convert knowledge from when policy is received to how the policy reaches the teachers in their classrooms.

The pedagogic device consists of the pedagogic code and the rules that mediate its implementation (Wheelahan, 2005:2). Bernstein (2000:29) indicates that the rules of the

pedagogic device regulate the pedagogic communication which the device makes possible. Bertram (2012:7) explains the three interrelated rules of the pedagogic device. These are the distributive, recontextualising and evaluative rules. The distributive rule refers to the regulation of power relationships between social groups by distributing knowledge; the recontextualising rules regulate the formation of specific knowledge discourse and the evaluative rules are concerned with what counts as valid realisations of the instructional and regulative (social conduct and manners) content (Bertram, 2012:7-8). The evaluative is thus concerned with specific pedagogic practices. These rules are hierarchically arranged which means that the one follows on the other, i.e. the recontextualising rule follows from the distributive rule and the evaluative rule follows from the recontextualising rule (Bernstein, 2000:28). Bernstein (2000:28) highlights that these rules constitute the 'grammar' of pedagogical discourse.

Further, the pedagogic device comprises of three main fields. These are the field of production (usually universities, e.g. science or history research), the field of recontextualisation (where curriculum policy is developed) and the field of reproduction (referring to what happens in classrooms) (Bernstein, 2000:33; Bertram, 2012:6). Singh *et al.* (2013:465) elaborate that recontextualisation refers to the relational processes of selecting and moving knowledge from one context to another, as well as the distinctive re-organisation of knowledge as an instructional and regulative or moral discourse. The school in its entirety and the classroom as a micro unit for curriculum implementation each serve as a recontextualising field, as the policy is in a continuous process of being interpreted and reinterpreted when it moves from one field to another. Singh *et al.* (2013:465) describe this process as 'code elaboration' (decoding and recoding), which assists with the production of professional development materials, teaching guidelines and curriculum resources. This code elaboration can be illustrated by using the analogy of the scientific phenomenon where light which moves through a prism, is refracted as it moves from one medium (field) to another. In the same way, the policy is moulded and shaped (refracted), via leadership practices as it is recontextualised from the field of production, to the field of reproduction. I am interested in the point of refraction at the level of the school- how the curriculum policy is recontextualised into the field of reproduction through the execution of the four core leadership practices as discussed in this thesis. The pedagogic device is used to describe and analyse ways in which

knowledge is recontextualised from the field of knowledge production into the school system (Bertram, 2012:5).

Bertram (2012:5) considers the field of recontextualisation as the key process of the pedagogic device as recontextualisation involves the continual transformation of the pedagogical message as it moves from one field to another. Bernstein (2000:33) points out that the agents in this recontextualisation create a specific pedagogical discourse through their practices. Recontextualisation thus furthers the understanding of how official state policy is shaped by various agents (leadership in schools) through the practices they employ (Braun *et al.*, 2011:586; Bertram, 2012:5; Singh *et al.*, 2013:467). Singh *et al.* (2013:467) describe the recontextualisation of official policy documents as “processes of fleshing out or being given substance by specialised agencies”. This ‘fleshing out’ of the official curriculum policy takes place through reading, writing and talking (Braun *et al.*, 2011:586), thus involving specific activities to transform the curriculum message.

Further, Singh *et al.* (2013:465) indicate that mid-level policy actors (the leadership teams of schools) are crucial to this work of policy recontextualisation because they are engaged in elaborating the policy text to practical work by teachers. This elaboration involves activities associated with leadership practices such as setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning, specific to the school context. Embedded in these leadership practices in the recontextualisation of curriculum policy are the following questions: Who receives the curriculum policy and what is done with it at entry level to the school? Who reads the official curriculum policy? Is the curriculum policy implemented verbatim or not and how is this message negotiated and mediated? Braun *et al.* (2011) indicate that in many cases the curriculum policy document is never even read first hand. Following this, the recontextualisation of the official curriculum policy at the level of school leadership practices is at the centre of establishing a curriculum implementation platform. In consonance with this statement, Leithwood *et al.* (2006:44) claim that the core leadership practices provide a powerful source of guidance for development. It is these practices that give curriculum life, inform the way teachers respond to the demands to align their teaching to the policy, the ways schools and teachers prepare themselves for the policy, and their impact

on the nature of the concomitant teaching and learning processes in the classroom (see Lingard *et al.*, 2003:71).

Bernstein (2000:33) identifies two fields which are created by recontextualisation. These are the Official Recontextualising Field (ORF) and the Pedagogic Recontextualising Field (PRF) (Wheelahan, 2005:5; Singh *et al.*, 2013:468). The South African curriculum implementation field (created by the state) relates to the ORF while the PRF relates to schools which are responsible for the implementation of the policy (Bertram, 2012:9; Fataar, 2012:4; Singh *et al.*, 2013:468). Some literature indicates that the official South African curriculum policy document which Bernstein (2000) calls the ORF, holds teachers ransom to fulfill the performative requirements of the national curriculum (Fataar, 2009b:4; Spies, 2012:42). This means that teachers mainly teach to achieve student results as expected by the DoE. I proffer that the curriculum policy platform, provided by the ORF, is insufficient to supply in the need for meaningful education in a working class school context, as it does not take into account the challenges that these schools face (see Smyth, 2012:13). This view resonates with Fataar's (2009b:4) description of a 'thin pedagogical platform' which he regards as the kinds of pedagogies that teachers have discursively been positioned to implement as a consequence of the performative regime. It is therefore imperative to understand how leadership practices in the PRF mould, shape and reconstruct curriculum policy, especially in this performative regime, as a means to provide a solid curriculum policy platform in their schools.

In explicating the code unit of the pedagogic device, Bernstein (1975:80) indicates that the pedagogic code refers to the way in which knowledge is classified and framed, where classification and framing refers directly to pedagogy (Wheelahan, 2005:2). Harley (2010:8) and Bertram (2012:10) explain that strong classification refers to strong boundaries between subjects (teaching subject knowledge), thus linking it with power, whereas framing refers to the message system of pedagogy, linking it with control (how you organise your class while you're teaching – for example, strong teaching control with students having no voice or relaxed atmosphere, where students participate). Classification and control refer to how the knowledge is transmitted. In other words, framing refers to "the degree of control teacher and pupil possess for the selection, organisation, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted

and received in the pedagogical relationship” (Bernstein, 1975:80). Even though classification and framing refer directly to pedagogy, it provides a compelling language to analyse curriculum policy documents (Wheelahan, 2005:3) and its transformation via leadership practices, into a curriculum policy platform.

Linking the above descriptions of the classification and framing of knowledge to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), I concur with Fataar (2009b:9) that CAPS is a strongly classified and strongly framed curriculum policy. There are clear demarcated boundaries between subjects and the type of knowledge that should be taught in schools. With CAPS the locus of control is with the Department of Education (DoE) as they, via the curriculum policy documents, prescribed how knowledge and skills are to be transmitted. This leaves little room for school leaders to manoeuvre the curriculum to fit their specific needs. They basically have to comply with the District officials and subject advisers, but each school complies and implements the curriculum differently given these narrow sets of bureaucratic prescriptions and given each of these specific school contexts (Christie, 2008; Spies, 2012:41).

Wheelahan (2005:5) reminds us of the importance of the working class context in the classification and framing of knowledge. She indicates that weakly framed assessments (where students have control) may not favour working class students as they may not be able to recognise the rules within it. On the other hand, she suggests that weakly framed pacing and sequence of knowledge (where students have control) and strongly framed assessments (where teachers have control) favours working class students by giving them much control over their learning and making the goal posts clear (Wheelahan, 2005:6, 7) as students can recognise the kind of knowledge required and they can realise the required outcomes. Schools position themselves, capacitate and orientate themselves (Braun, *et al.*, 2011:586) in relation to the curriculum that comes from the outside via policy and district and lands onto schools in specific contexts and gets implemented by the school leaders via their leadership practices in the creation of a curriculum reproduction platform at the site of their schools. It is at this interface of the classification and framing of knowledge where the establishment of a curriculum platform serves value for teachers and it is here where the pedagogic device is at play.

Embedded in the transformation of knowledge through the pedagogic device are recognition and realisation rules. The principle of classification leads to the construction of recognition rules, referring to the organising of the knowledge content. This refers to *what* knowledge is regarded as important (Bertram, 2012:11). Realisation on the other hand, is derived from framing and it involves working out the procedures, meaning *how* can things be done (Bertram, 2012:11). In other words how to teach the knowledge. The recognition and realisation of knowledge, explored at the level of school leaders, contributes to the constitution of a curriculum policy platform. Recognition and realisation informs how they (the leaders) classify what knowledge to be used and what voice teachers and students have, i.e. the type of classroom pedagogy that is envisaged. The activities associated with the leadership practices of setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:41) are key in recognising and realising the knowledges to be taught.

Following the above discussion on the pedagogic device, I now turn to a discussion of the strategies and procedures as set out in the ACE training manual for the module on Managing teaching and learning (DoE, 2014). These strategies and procedures denote the activities embedded within leadership practices to implement the curriculum within the South African school context and these strategies are part of the recognition and realisation processes. These procedures are not regarded as the panacea for curriculum implementation in working class schools. Rather, their value lies in how they are modified to suit the needs of the specific working class context. I am using the ACE manual precepts to build a heuristic for understanding the various dimensions of the curriculum policy platform that the leadership practices have been building. This heuristic will give me an understanding of how school leaders, via their leadership practices build a curriculum policy platform.

Specifically referring to the curriculum, the manual provides the following procedures to enhance teaching and learning: modelling, monitoring, dialogue, evaluation and observation (DoE, 2014). These procedures are embedded within the leadership practices, viz setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning (see Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:34-43). I will briefly discuss each one of the procedures as set out in the ACE manual (DoE, 2014) in the paragraphs below and how they interlink

with the leadership practices advocated for in this thesis in the process of establishing a curriculum policy platform.

Monitoring is discussed in the ACE manual as one of the strategies to lead and manage the curriculum and it is explained as “knowing what is happening in classrooms” and “analysing and acting on pupil learning data” (DoE, 2014). It is thus the art of knowing what was done, with the aim of improving teaching and learning activities. Closely linked to monitoring, is the strategy of observation which is defined as an everyday activity, noticing what is happening in and around the school and making notes about what is observed (DoE, 2014). Both monitoring and observation are regarded as key strategies in the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:23; Clarke, 2007:2). These two strategies also inform the leadership practices of setting direction in terms of goals, as well as the development of people as they give an indication of the specific development needs of teachers and students. The activities associated with these two strategies lead to the recognition of what is regarded as valid knowledge in the specific school context, thus contributing to the establishment of a curriculum policy platform.

In the realisation of the above procedures of monitoring and observation (how things can be done) the processes of modelling, dialogue and evaluation, as discussed in the ACE manual (DoE, 2014) provide value for how leadership practices are enacted. Modelling refers to ‘setting the example’, or to ‘walk the talk’ (DoE, 2014) with the intention of having a positive influence on people (Heystek, 2011). This strategy is a key dimension of leadership practices as it involves a leader and followers, where the leader is expected to show direction (Spillane *et al.*, 2004). This resonates with Leithwood *et al.*’s (2006:11) view that leadership is about direction and influence. Further, it links with the leadership practice of setting direction, which entails goals that are specific to the school’s contextual challenges (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:35; Christie, 2008:185). Dialogue on the other hand is described as a strategy which involves communication and feedback through meetings, mentoring and conversations (DoE, 2014). The form of dialogue in the process of the recontextualisation of the curriculum policy plays a crucial role in the negotiation and mediation of the policy message as it assists with the ‘fleshing out’ of the policy. Dialogue closely links with the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation as it involves building relationships (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006). This in turn may

lead to collaboration which is much needed in contexts characterised by fragmented relationships (Christie, 2008), such as the working class school context. The next strategy mentioned is evaluation, which is linked with monitoring (DoE, 2014). Evaluation refers to the assessment of the attainment of knowledge (DoE, 2014), which in turn informs the leadership practices. The way in which these strategies are 'lived' in a school is central in the constitution of a curriculum policy platform. Said slightly differently, the recognition and realisation of what constitutes valid knowledge create the school's curriculum policy platform as it allows the school's leadership to make important decisions about the professional development needs of the teachers and the improvement of learning, given the specificity of each school's context.

In sum, this section of the literature review focused on how each school can design their own repertoire of strategies and activities which enables them to implement the curriculum in a unique way. Bernstein's pedagogic device and the ACE training manual strategies provide a suitable tool for the exploration of the generation and sustaining of a curriculum policy platform. An understanding of the official curriculum policy via Bernstein allows the leadership of a school to recognise and realise how they want the curriculum to play out in their school. It is the creativity in employing and combining the strategies suggested by the ACE training manual and the language presented by the pedagogic device, relevant to the contextual demands of a school that will ensure the stability and sustainability of the curriculum policy platform.

2.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I provided an overview of the literature relevant to my research question on leadership practices in implementing curriculum policy in working class schools. The focus of this chapter was on the four core categories of leadership practices and how they relate to curriculum policy. This was done by using relevant national and international literature. This chapter explored the field of leadership practices and highlighted the curriculum developments in South Africa post 1994 and discussed how these impact on current leadership practices. Further, factors hindering and facilitating the implementation of curriculum policy were reported, with a specific focus on the impact of context. Lastly, the build-up of these factors into a sustainable curriculum policy platform was explored by using Bernstein's pedagogic device and the ACE manual for leadership training as a heuristic. It is

evident that the leadership field in South Africa is still in its infancy stage and this thesis aims to contribute to the growing literature on leadership, specifically by focusing on the actual leadership practices in South African working class schools. The thesis is interested in how the leadership practices receive the new policy, go on to set the tone for its implementation and lay a conceptual and pragmatic basis via the establishment of a curriculum policy platform for policy implementation. The next chapter focuses on the theoretical framework of this study.

CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the literature pertaining to leadership practices in implementing governmental curriculum policy in working class schools. The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework and analytical lens for this thesis' research focus which is an exploration of leadership practices in working class secondary schools in implementing governmental curriculum policy. The focus of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework for understanding how leadership practices shape and reshape curriculum policy within the reality of working class schools. In other words, the chapter builds a set of lenses to analyse how policy is adapted, via leadership practices within the context of working class schools.

I am interested in what *actually* happens to curriculum policy when it enters the school doors. This resonates with research on leadership practices such as that done by Leithwood *et al.* (2006), which focuses on the actual practices of leaders. What is important for me is that policy is implemented in particular and distinct institutional contexts, each with their own history and background. This results in policy implementation taking place in unique ways, given the impact of these specific contexts. My research explores the actions and processes that arise from the interpretations of the policy by the leadership teams of schools and considers how they react to, and adjust the policy expectations that are governed by the specificity of their school context. To remind, I explore how these leadership practices lead to the establishment of a curriculum policy platform from where teaching and learning in the school proceeds. Theories such as those of Singh, Heimans and Glasswell (2014), Astiz (2006) and Choi (2012) provide insight into the context, community, the importance of the individual teacher and the role of research in policy enactment. For this thesis however, I am theoretically informed by the policy enactment theory of the British sociologist Stephen Ball and his colleagues Maguire and Braun (2012) as they provide the tools with which to explore the different dynamics of context, particularly how the working class context impacts the type of leadership practices that are employed, as well as the discursive dimensions which inform them. These two dimensions, the contextual and the discursive, are complemented by the

interpretive dimension. Together, these three dimensions inform the focus of this study, namely how leadership practices interpret and translate the policy. I thus unfold the different dimensions of Ball's policy enactment theory in the exploration of leadership practices in implementing curriculum policy.

I approach this chapter as follows: I start by discussing the genealogy of Ball's theoretical approaches that will provide the reader with background information about the theorist and how he developed his policy enactment theory. Following this I give a brief description of Ball's conceptualisation of policy and his perspective on policy research and interpretation (Ball, 2006a:44). I then discuss the differences between policy implementation and policy enactment. This is followed by a discussion of Ball's policy enactment theory which provides an analytical lens to describe the way policy is 'lived'. Here I focus on the three dimensions of Ball's theory, namely the material, the discursive and the interpretive which I will use as lenses to analyse leadership practices in enacting a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools. Following this, I briefly raise some criticism relating to Ball's policy enactment theory, which is intended to provide some nuance and augmentation for how this theory is applied in research context. Lastly, I discuss how I use Ball's policy enactment lenses to explore leadership practices in working class schools.

3.2 GENEALOGY OF STEPHEN BALL'S THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Stephen Ball was born in 1950 in England. He is currently the Karl Mannheim professor of Sociology of Education at the University of London, Institute of Education. Ball's main area of interest is in education policy analysis and social theory and his underlying theorists are Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu (Apple, 2013). Ball's current areas of study focus on the relationships between philanthropy and education policy, global education markets, policy enactment in secondary schools and the educational strategies of the middle class. Ball uses sociological theories and methods to analyse policy processes and outcomes. In his article, *The Violence and Necessity of Theory* (2006b) Ball indicates that theory is necessary as it provides the tools for reflexivity and for understanding the social conditions of the production of knowledge. He also states that there is a certain violence in theory as it challenges conservative orthodoxies.

Ball's published work is vast, spanning more than 30 years. I will therefore only highlight some of his work which directly impacts on this thesis. Ball started by exploring the sociology at work in schools, policy making, class strategies and the education market. Ball's initial work in the 1980s revolved around policy processes relating to the curriculum and to the school system in the field of Education in England (Gunter, 2013:219). He wrote an influential article in the early 1990s in which he connects three dimensions of policy, the context of policy influence, policy text production and policy practice (Lingard & Sellar, 2013:1), as part of what he regards as the policy cycle at play in policy processes. Ball's policy cycle perspective is widely used in education policy research (Heimanns, 2012; Mainardes & Gandin, 2013).

Ball's focus shifted towards the global framing of policy. This shift to a global awareness is evident in his 1998 article '*Big policies/ small world: an introduction to international perspectives in education policy*'. In this article he highlights the significance of globalisation in national policy developments indicating that we should be aware of general patterns of international education policy across specific localities. Ball then started to focus on how market values and social class impact on policy processes in schools. In his article *Ethics, self-interest and the market form* (1998) he indicates that policies create a new moral environment which results in a new framework for judging social behaviour. Ball indicates that this new framework produces dilemmas within which a shift in values takes place (Ball, 2006). This shift in values led him to explore how neoliberalism affects schools. With his article *The Teacher's Soul and the Terrors of Performativity* (2003) he drew attention to how targets and statistics govern the person. This specific article focuses on how neo-liberal policies shape teacher identities and with this article Ball created an awareness of the impact of policy on the lived experiences within a school.

Following this work he started to focus on policy enactments in secondary schools. In his study on policy discourses in school texts, Ball explored how schools 'do' policy and how discursive practices, events and texts are situated within policy enactments. In their article *Policy discourses in school texts* Maguire, Hoskins, Ball and Braun (2011:597) point to the importance of discursive practices in enacting policy. With discursive practices they refer to 'visual' artefacts such as posters, signs and symbols which they regard as discursive strategies in the enactment of policy. These discursive strategies are focused on how schools

portray certain policies within the school. Not only did they focus on the discursive practices in enacting policy, but also on how contextual factors impact on the enactment of policy. Their article - *Taking context seriously: towards explaining policy enactments in the secondary school*- explores how various contextual factors influence policy enactment (Braun, Ball, Maguire & Hoskins, 2011). These studies led to the development of the policy enactment theory which is based on in-depth case studies of four British schools through interviews, observations and text. Ball's book, *Policy Enactments in Secondary Schools, How Schools do Policy*, co-authored by Meg Maguire and Annette Braun (2012) provides an account of how schools 'do' policy and how policies become 'live' in schools (Ball *et al.*, 2012:1). In this book Ball and his colleagues demonstrate how policy is enacted in ways that are dynamic and non-linear (Gunter, 2013:220). His policy enactment theory provides the tools to explore how policy is actually 'lived' in unique school contexts. This theory indicates ways in which policy is shaped within the reality of schools.

The aforementioned studies provide specific perspectives on policy work and valuable insight into the work of policy analysis and policy enactment in schools. These studies informed Ball's theory of policy enactment in schools, which forms the theoretical frame of this thesis. The policy enactment theory allows me to look at how school leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform in a working class school context. This aspect will be discussed in the following section of this chapter.

3.3 CONCEPTUALISATION OF POLICY

In order to understand how policy is enacted, it is useful to firstly focus on what is meant by the concept 'policy'. This section therefore aims to clarify what policy is, as the meaning of policy has implications for how policy is researched and interpreted. In his famous article: *What is policy? Texts, trajectories and toolboxes*, Ball (1993) conceptualises policy as text, as discourse and as effects. These are very different conceptualisations of policy and according to Ball, all are essential. Ball's conceptualisation of policy indicates that policy is three things in one.

First, with regard to 'policy as text', Ball (2006a:43) presents the view that 'policy as text' is a representation of the complex encoding (via struggles, public interpretations and meanings)

and decoding (via schools' interpretations and meanings). With encoding Ball refers to the language and the written text of the policy and with decoding he refers to how the text is read, understood and translated into actions. Encoding is thus part of the initial development of the policy text during the policy process and decoding forms part of what happens when the policy text reaches the school. Ball *et al.* (2012:50) relate this encoding and decoding of policy to the 'filtering out' and 'selective focusing' of the text in the process of explaining the policy to colleagues. This involves deciding and then announcing what must be done, what can and what cannot be done in the context in which the policy is implemented. Singh, Thomas and Harris (2013:465) refer to this encoding and decoding of the policy text as 'code elaboration'. In other words, code elaboration refers to the processes involved in exploring the meaning of the text. Added to this, is the process of *recoding*, indicating that policy is in a continuous process of being interpreted and re-interpreted (Ball *et al.*, 2012:3; Singh *et al.*, 2013:465).

This meaning making of the policy text takes place in relation to history, skills and resources (Ball *et al.*, 2012). The policy text that the school receives has a history of interpretation and re-interpretation during the formulation of policy by the state. When the policy lands at the school the reader and the school context have a history as well (Ball, 2012). When the text and the reader meet in a specific context, this interaction leads to creative ways of interpretation and translation. Policy is thus always in a state of 'becoming' as it is given meaning and translated (decoded and recoded) by different policy actors with their different skills, histories and resources within the school. This interaction between the different policy actors in the school and their contextual factors are translated into certain practices as they try to make sense of the policy text.

Secondly, in explaining 'policy as discourse', Ball points to the power embedded within policy whereby power is exercised through "a production of truth and knowledge as discourses" (Fimyar, 2014:9). Elaborating on this, Ball quotes Foucault who states that

Discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own intention. (Ball, 2006a:45).

In other words, discourse is a construction of what is regarded as the truth and it refers to the ways of 'living' that truth. Discourse structures the way we think and do things. Using

Foucault, Ball (2006a:48) explains that “we do not speak discourse, discourse speaks us”. Ball’s statement indicates that we are not in control of discourse. Rather, discourse directs our responses within the enactment of policy. Building on the explanation of discourse, Fataar (2005:26) explains that discourse simultaneously constitutes objects and conceals their invention and, in so doing, structures the possibilities for meaning making within institutional practices. Discourse points to the way strategies are followed and the practices implemented in the enactment of policy. Discourse is thus a powerful force in the school context as it is about the construction of what can be thought and said and who can speak (Fataar, 2005:26). This notion of power is familiar in school situations, as those in leadership positions are usually regarded as those with the most power. Ball (2006a:49) states that discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power. It follows then that leadership practices are productive of and constituted by discourse which contribute to the process of policy enactment (Ball *et al.*, 2012:122). These practices, arising from discourse (discursive practices) are represented by means of various artefacts such as visual art, events and texts to portray policy within the school (Ball *et al.*, 2012:122).

With “policy effects” Ball (2006a:50) suggests that policy has significant and patterned effects on schools. He distinguishes between general and specific policy effects, where general effects refer to the impact of different policies on practice and specific effects refer to the effects of a specific policy on practice. He highlights that the general effects of policy become visible when specific aspects of change and responses (practices) are related together (Ball, 2006:50). Policy can thus lead to changes in the structure and practice of schools, which will differ in different contexts. These changes have an impact on patterns of social access and opportunity. The effects of policy are the outcomes of the interaction between people, policy and their context. Ball’s conceptualisation of policy indicates that policies are not only ‘things’, but also processes and outcomes which are the effects of policy.

Using Ball’s conceptualisation of policy, this thesis aims to understand how leadership practices within a working class school context give meaning to curriculum policy. I want to understand how the leadership of the school engages with the curriculum policy within their given context to enact a curriculum policy platform through the practices of setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning in the

school. As text, I want to explore whether these leaders read the policy and whether they understand the aims of the policy, i.e. how they decode policy and how they translate it into actions. I want to understand how the language of the curriculum policy positions the policy within the school, i.e. how do leaders in working class school contexts make meaning of the policy and how do they interpret it? Furthermore, I want to explore the discursive strategies that are at play in the school, i.e. how the curriculum policy is portrayed within the school through artefacts, events and symbols. I want to explore the specific effects of the curriculum policy on the school and how these effects change the structure and practice of the school, leading to the establishment of a curriculum policy platform which provides teachers with a solid foundation of strategies and opportunities to inform their teaching in the classroom.

3.4 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION VERSUS POLICY ENACTMENT

Some ambiguity may exist about the meaning of the concepts 'policy implementation' and 'policy enactment' in this thesis. To clarify the difference between these concepts as they are used in this study, I draw on Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012:2-4) distinction between them. Drawing on Spillane *et al.* (2004), they describe policy implementation as the meagre adherence to the aims of policy, as something that is ideological, put into practice (or not) and based on personal interest or utility maximisation. On the other hand, they explain that policy enactment refers to action and the interaction between people, interests, events and chance. In other words policy implementation focuses mainly on achieving the aims of the policy document, whereas policy enactment refers to the processes involved in 'living' out the policy in the school context.

Ball *et al.* (2012:5) further claim that studies focusing on policy implementation do not properly take into account the different cultures, histories, traditions and communities of practice that co-exist in a school. In other words, policy implementation studies view policy as a linear process and it de-contextualises the policy process. In contrast, they suggest that studies should focus on *policy enactment*, which they describe as a dynamic, non-linear aspect of the policy process, specifically focusing on the different cultures, histories, traditions and communities of practice as these types of studies provide a more justified account of how policy is enacted within a school. (Ball *et al.*, 2012:5).

Ball *et al.* (2012:3) describe policy enactment thus:

creative processes of interpretation and recontextualisation-that is, the translation of texts into action and the abstractions of policy ideas into contextualized practices- and this process involves interpretations of interpretations.

Ball *et al.* (2012:3) emphasise that policy enactment involves interaction between various role players and their contextual factors, such as the schools' architecture, their histories and resources availability. This interaction between what policy asks and the school's specific context, results in creative practices in the enactment of policy. The importance of interaction is emphasised by Fataar (2007:600) when he states that school practices stem from processes arising out of networked relations. In other words the policy text is in a continuous process of interpretation and translation into actions through these interactions between people and their context.

Christie (2008:126) indicates that the enactment of policy is about the practicalities of what can be achieved within the circumstances of a particular school context. She explains that the core activities of teaching and learning are framed by curriculum policy documents, but the day-to-day practices that make up the texture of schools are hard to reach through policy mandates (Christie, 2008:123). Here she refers to emotions, meaning, culture and creativity (Christie, 2008:123). Verbs such as shaped, interpreted, translated, adjusted and fleshed out are used to describe the process of policy enactment in a school (Ball *et al.*, 2012:6; Singh *et al.*, 2013:466). Following Christie (2008:123) I argue that although policy frames the core of what to do, the context implies that there is emotion, meaning, skills, experiences, physical structures and culture involved. This is the 'messy' reality of schools, the texture that makes up schools and what 'living' the policy in a school involves. Through enactment, the policy text (the official policy document) is thus translated into various kinds of action within the specific context where it lands. The policy enactment process involves commitment, understanding, capability, resources, practical limitations, co-operation and inter-textual compatibility of various policies within the particular school (Ball *et al.*, 2012).

Enactment focuses on what is *actually* done in the process of translating the curriculum policy text into action. This translation places tremendous pressure on the creativity of the practical actions of school leaders (leadership practices) at the school to enhance the teaching and learning experience in the process of 'living out' the curriculum. In his article, *What is policy?*

Texts, trajectories and tool boxes, Ball (1993:12) explains that “a policy is both contented and changing, always in a state of ‘becoming’, of ‘was’ and ‘never was’ and ‘not quite sure’”. This statement captures the complexity of policy enactment as it indicates that policy is in a continuous process of evolving. This process of evolving includes action, negotiation, mediation and adaptations between the various role players and their contextual factors. Using Ball’s conceptualisation of policy enactment, this thesis aims to explore the dynamics of a working class context and how it impacts on the leadership practices employed to enact governmentally authorised curriculum policy in the process of establishing a curriculum policy platform.

3.5 BALL’S POLICY ENACTMENT THEORY

Stephen Ball and his co-authors, Meg Maguire and Annette Braun developed a policy enactment framework based on research done in English secondary schools. This policy enactment framework is used to guide my research process in order to determine what variables to measure in the process of the enactment of a curriculum policy platform via leadership practices. Their policy enactment theory also provides the tools to analyse these leadership practices.

In conceptualising policy enactment, Ball *et al.* (2012:43) draw on three constituent aspects of the messy reality of school life. These are: the material, the discursive and the interpretive. These three dimensions provide an account of how policy and practice are done in schools. They will be used as lenses to explore the four core leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in schools (see Chapter 2, section 2.2). These three dimensions of policy enactment will now be discussed in more detail, as well as how they are used in this study to interpret and analyse the data generated.

3.5.1 THE MATERIAL DIMENSION

The material aspect of Ball’s policy enactment theory relates to the contextual dimensions of schools such as the school building, available resources, interrelations and infrastructure. An investigation of the impact of contextual dimensions of schools resonate with research done by Thomson (2002), Christie, Butler and Potterton (2007), Fataar (2007), Christie (2008),

Fataar (2009a), Mills and Gale (2010) and Prosser, Lucas and Reid (2010). These studies point to the importance of context in the enactment of policy, particularly focusing on a working class context.

With context, Ball *et al.* (2012:19) refer to issues such as student intake, history of the school, infrastructure and leadership experiences, among others. Ball's policy enactment theory is concerned with the interplay between a school's practices and their contextual variables and not only on context as a background (Ball *et al.* 2012:20). This interplay between the leadership practices and school context is at the heart of this study as the study explores the leadership practices at play within working class schools in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform.

In their theorising about policy, Ball *et al.* (2012:21) group the dynamics of context as follows:

- Situated contexts: referring to the location of the school and the school history and intake.
- Professional cultures: referring to values, teacher commitments, experiences and policy management in schools.
- Material contexts: referring to the staff establishment, school budget, buildings, technology and infrastructure.
- External contexts: referring to the degree and quality of learning area support, pressures and expectations from broader policy context, such as school ratings and responsibilities.

The above four components are crucial in the exploration of school leadership practices for curriculum implementation in the working class school context as they highlight the role of context in the enactment of policy. These contextual factors are interconnected and differ from school to school. Christie (2008:20) points out that effective management and teaching in one context is not the same as effective management and teaching in another, underscoring the point that leadership practices differ from school to school.

Ball's four components of context serve as a vehicle to illuminate different aspects of policy enactment, particularly in a working class school context. These components include the school's location, socio-economic status, history and the background of the students (for example, language and race) (see Christie, 2008). The professional culture refers to the

various people working in a school environment. Their inherent values, dedication, professionalism, attitude, relations, administration and organisation are key to constructing a school's learning environment (Earley & Weindling, 2004; Christie *et al.*, 2007:58). Furthermore, the material resources such as the staff establishment, finances, building, facilities and infrastructure are indicative of the school's capability to implement much needed intervention, especially in a working class context which is often characterised by a lack of these resources. Moreover, the external environment, such as parents and the Department of Education (DoE) places tremendous pressure on schools to produce results in this era of performativity (Spies, 2012). These contextual factors impact heavily on the nature of the leadership practices that are employed to lead the curriculum as they encompass a wide range of factors that impact on policy.

Using the material dimension as a lens to explore leadership practices, the research investigates how the situated context, professional culture and material and external contexts impact on the four core leadership practices. I am interested in exploring how the school's location, i.e. its working class context, the professionalism of the school's teachers, the school's material context and the external context impact on the leadership practices employed. An analysis of each of these will allow me to understand the manner in which contextual factors contribute to the setting of direction, the development of people, redesigning the organisation and the management of teaching and learning.

3.5.2 THE DISCURSIVE DIMENSION

The second aspect of Ball's policy enactment theory, namely discursive practices, involve visual materials and resources that illustrate what has to be done or what is desirable conduct (Ball *et al.*, 2012:121). Discursive practices involve different activities and artefacts which represent policy and which contribute to the process of policy enactment. Examples of these discursive practices include textbooks, websites, newsletters, policy symbols, prize giving ceremonies, meetings and similar events (Ball *et al.*, 2012:122). These artefacts exercise power through a production of 'truth' and 'knowledge' as discourse (Ball, 1993:49), meaning that these activities and artefacts are used as the blueprint to portray policy. They indicate what is expected of the different policy actors within the school in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform.

Maguire *et al.* (2011:603) state that discourses are social processes, formed within and by wider events, beliefs and 'epistemes' to produce commonsense notions and normative ideas. Discourse thus guides us into desirable behaviour. Foucault describes discourses as "the sets of conditions in accordance with which a practice is exercised, in accordance with which that practice gives rise to partially or totally new statements, and in accordance with which it can be modified" (Ball *et al.*, 2012:123). This means that the situation gives rise to specific practices, which are then lived as the 'truth' in that setting, and which are adapted based on the prevailing expectations by those in power, as "discourses are both an instrument and an effect of power" (Ball, 2006). These practices, resulting from discourse, are key in the mediation of policy.

Relating to the curriculum, Maguire *et al.* (2011:600), in their article *Policy discourses in school texts*, turn the attention to certain discursive productions of the 'good' student, the 'good' teacher' and the 'good' school, pointing to the attainment and improvement of results. In this article, discursive productions of the 'good' student refer to high academic expectations. They involve celebrating achievements of students through activities such as prize giving ceremonies and displaying the top achievers (Maguire *et al.*, 2011:600). Achievement is thus celebrated and encouraged.

Discursive productions of the 'good' teacher emphasise the importance of the teacher in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform. They focus on portraying the qualities of teachers that are valued, such as commitment and professionalism of teachers (Ball, *et al.*, 2012). These qualities of the 'good' teacher are discursively portrayed throughout the school by means of posters, meetings and teacher development days that focus on the desired teacher qualities and values.

Discursive productions of the 'good' school focus on how the school selects, interprets and translates specific aspects of policy initiatives and mandates (Maguire *et al.*, 2011:603) into actions. These discursive productions depend to a large extent on the leadership team of the school as they are the first to receive policy and they are the key mediators of policy. The focus of the 'good school' is on raising the standards and raising the achievements of the

students. This is done by using discursive strategies such as the visualisation of policy by means of comparing school results, encouraging teachers to work hard and through managing these strategies (Ball *et al.*, 2012:132-133).

Ball's discursive lens enables me to analyse the types of events and activities that the school depicts as desirable in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. The discursive lens highlights what is regarded as valuable knowledge in the school, emanating from policy, and how this valuable knowledge is lived as the truth in the school, through discursive strategies.

3.5.3 THE INTERPRETIVE DIMENSION

Ball's interpretive dimension of policy enactment refers to the initial reading and making sense of policy (Ball, *et al.*, 2012:43). The focus of the interpretive dimension is on the policy text and how the policy text is made meaning of, interpreted, conveyed and re-interpreted. Here Ball distinguishes between interpretation and translation, where interpretation refers to an engagement with the languages of policy and translation refers to the languages of practice (Ball *et al.*, 2012:45). In other words, interpretation and translation refer to how the text is translated into action. Ball *et al.* (2012:45) state that interpretation is "a strategy, an institutional political process, a process of elucidation and explanation". Translation on the other hand refers to putting the policy text into action. This translation can take place through meetings, talks, plans and events. Translation is synonymous with 'active readership', re-representation, re-ordering and re-grounding through various practices (Ball *et al.*, 2012:48).

Ball (1993:12) states that "some policies are not even read first hand". In a study done of the Mathematics National Curriculum in England, it was found that 7% of the sample of Mathematics teachers never read any national curriculum documents and that they misunderstood the methods and premises of some policy documents (Ball, 1993:45). This finding points to the importance of reading the policy and how the policy is subsequently understood. Who reads the policy and how they make sense of the policy is of cardinal importance to this study. Singh *et al.* (2013:465) explain that policy enactment involves a complex decoding and recoding of the policy text, where decoding refers to the interpretation of the policy and recoding refers to the translation of the policy. Both interpretation and translation here refers to the meaning-making process of the policy document and involves

different people who take up different positions in relation to policy. Ball *et al.* (2011b:626) refer to these people as the policy *actors*. They categorise these actors and their actions in terms of policy, as follows:

Table 3.1 Policy actors

Policy actor	Policy work
Narrators	Interpretation, selection and enforcement of meetings
Entrepreneurs	Advocacy, creativity and integration
Outsiders	Entrepreneurship, partnership and monitoring
Transactors	Accounting, reporting, monitoring/supporting, facilitating
Enthusiasts	Investment, creativity, satisfaction and career
Translators	Production of texts, artefacts and events
Critics	Union representatives, monitoring of management
Receivers	Coping, defending and dependence

Table 3.1 indicates the roles that the various actors in a school play in the enactment of policy in the schools. Drawing on Ball *et al.* (2011b:626-632) I will now discuss each of these roles and how they relate to policy enactment in a school in the process of interpreting and translating the policy.

The narrator refers to the person who filters out the policy by explaining and announcing what must be done. The entrepreneur focuses more on building capacity, in other words developing people. Outsiders mainly refer to people outside of the school who have an interest in the school. Although outsiders are not part of the leadership of a school, which is the focus of this thesis, their actions influence how policy is interpreted by the school leaders. Transactors refer to those who believe that policy must be seen to be done, in other words, visualisation of the policy. Policy enthusiasts are those actors who translate the policy through their actions. Critics refer, for example, to union members who normally are not part of the school's leadership team, but who also have a great deal of influence on how policy is read and understood. They also play a critical role in how the policy is interpreted. The receivers refer mainly to junior teachers who look for guidance and direction from the school leadership team. In a school these roles can be intertwined and specific roles taken up by individuals in the leadership team at any one specific time or a combination of roles depending on the situation in which they find themselves and the position they occupy in the school's leadership team. The decoding and recoding of policy thus take place via the school's leadership

practices interwoven with their histories, experiences and skills and the resources at their disposal. The combination of all these actors and their roles constitutes policy enactment.

This thesis explores interpretation and translation at the level of the school's formal leadership team, namely the School Management Team (SMT). Ball (1993:12) refers to these lead teachers as the key mediators of policy when relating policy to context. The importance of the leadership team in the translation of policy is echoed by Singh *et al.* (2013). These leaders are positioned differently in a school as they occupy different positions with different requirements in the school's hierarchy. For example, the principal is generally regarded as the curriculum manager, while the deputy principal(s) is responsible for the coordination of curriculum activities, and heads of departments are responsible for specific subject departments. Each of these policy actors has a specific role to play in the interpretation of curriculum policy. Using Ball's interpretive lens I investigate how and through whom meaning is made of the official curriculum policy document through the different roles of the leadership team and how this informs the four core leadership practices of setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning, in the process of establishing a curriculum policy platform within the school.

3.6 CRITIQUE AGAINST BALL

This section investigates some of the criticism leveled at Ball's work and serves to provide a justified account of the use of the theorist's work in this thesis.

Mainardes and Gandin (2013), specifically focusing on Brazilian research, argue that there are certain limitations and challenges of using Ball's work in non-European countries. They indicate that one of the limitations of using Ball's work in Brazil is that Ball's texts are not widely translated into Portuguese for Brazilians to use. The language of the text therefore has implications for the use of Ball's work in non-English speaking countries as the meaning and interpretation of his concepts might get lost through translation processes.

A second limitation that Mainardes and Gandin (2013) indicate is that Ball's different research work cannot be used separately. As indicated in the discussion of Ball's genealogy in section 3.2 of this chapter, his later work stems from his initial research, therefore his work should be

collectively dealt with. Mainardes and Gandin (2013:260) and Apple (2013:209) concur that recent developments in his work, for example his policy enactment theory, should be incorporated in research based on his previous work, like the policy cycle, as it contributes in understanding Ball's line of thinking and how he developed his ideas.

Ball is also criticised for his limited use of the role of the state in policy research (Mainardes & Gandin, 2013:261). The state is regarded as being central in policy formation and therefore an increased focus on the state is considered essential in policy research. A fourth limitation presented by Mainardes and Gandin (2013) is that Ball is not true to his own conviction in his indication that theory should be used as a reflexive tool – according to them, Ball's policy cycle approach and some of his concepts have been used without this reflexivity.

Apart from indicating certain limitations of using Ball's work, Mainardes and Gandin (2013) also raise some challenges that using Ball's work presents. One of these challenges is that Ball's theory was developed in an economically developed country, which challenges using his ideas in developing countries where a different relation between society and the state exists. This sentiment is echoed by Fimyar (2014:15) who indicates that the divide between words and deeds in the educational setting of developing countries is much greater than in developed countries. This division is enhanced by differences in relations between the state and people and the needs that govern their education system. In Ball's case, his ideas are formed by processes in British schools. Making a related point, Mainardes and Gandin (2013) are also of the opinion that tools and perspectives relating to a more cosmopolitan analysis of policy is lacking, as Ball's work concentrates more on the nation-state. Lingard and Sellar (2013) concur that Ball's work should be more globalised. They argue that his book, *Education plc* (2007) is focused on research done in England, and they query the significance of his arguments in a global context. Ball's national focus has varied implications for curriculum implementation elsewhere and would involve a rethinking of the policy cycle and Ball's concepts in a global context. Furthermore they indicate that Ball's work on policy sociology is more significant in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Continental Europe, but that it has less impact in the USA where policy study is more focused on the politics of education. The prevailing educational discourse in a country therefore determines the extent to which Ball's work is relevant in other countries. I argue that the

challenge is thus that Ball's ideas and concepts should be recontextualised to fit the context in which it is utilised and that his work should be understood in the context in which it was developed.

Furthermore, Mainardes and Gandin (2013:261) indicate that Ball's work inspires non-descriptive, thorough and sophisticated analyses and not the mere elaboration of concepts taken from data collection. It follows then that research reports have to be more creative and original (Mainardes & Gandin, 2013). In other words, the research reports should build on the ideas of Ball's work and not only elaborate on his concepts.

Apple (2013:206) asks Ball to think more about a number of issues to further delve into the complexities of the relationship between education and the politics of redistribution and recognition. Focusing on this relationship, he wants to draw Ball's attention to 'how' our prevailing assumptions about 'rationality' and the logics that underpin such assumptions are inflected by unconscious visions of the 'irrational Other' (Apple, 2013:214). With this statement he implies that Ball, in his discussions on neoliberalism, should use 'opposites', the rational and the irrational, to understand individuals. This he relates to racialisation and gender and he states that these issues are not clearly visible in Ball's work. In other words, he asks Ball to be more focused on the role of race and gender, specifically in understanding neoliberalism.

Heimanns (2012) offers an alternative for researching processes for policy enactment. He criticises Ball who he says focuses too much on the discursive in policy enactment. According to Heimanns (2012:320) the material and discursive aspects are inseparable and he argues that these two aspects should be used as one entity in policy enactment research as they provide a way in which to think about policy in terms of the ongoing entanglements of knowledge, power and matter in the human body. He argues that policy enactment does not take place outside of the human body, but is the result of internal convictions, resulting from the interplay between the material and discursive. However, Heimanns does not provide a clear definition of what he regards as the material and the discursive.

Relating to the focus of this thesis, Helen Gunter (2013) brings the attention to the fact that Ball did not research school leadership at all. She indicates that Ball engages with issues about school leadership, but that he does not focus on leadership. According to her, Ball makes a contribution to school leadership by providing the tools with which to analyse leadership practices, rather than by providing a template for effective leadership practices (Gunter, 2013:218). She is of the opinion that his work is therefore largely ignored by the effectiveness and improvement school leadership field. However, she indicates that Ball allures to school leadership as he discusses issues involving school leadership, issues such as policy enactment.

Although Ball's work is criticised in many ways, his critics are also of the opinion that Ball made a significant contribution to the field of policy research. According to Apple (2013:206) Ball's work has contributed to better understand socio-political relations in education. His work is therefore valuable in exploring the process of policy enactment in schools. Gunter (2013:225) indicates that Ball has contributed to understanding and explaining what it means to practice school leadership as his work provides the tools with which to analyse leadership. I argue that Stephen Ball's work still remains appropriate as it generates space from which leadership practices can be analysed. I contend that Ball's policy enactment theory cannot be used in isolation, but that it should be used in conjunction with his previous work on policy analyses.

3.7 APPLICATION OF BALL'S POLICY ENACTMENT THEORY

Taking into account the composition of the three dimensions of Ball's policy enactment theory and the various critique leveled at his work, this section aims to provide an explanation of how I use Ball's theory in my analysis of leadership practices in enacting a curriculum policy platform in working class school contexts.

Ball's material lens provides me with the tools to explore the school's specific contextual circumstances and the interplay between people, their emotions and their physical surroundings associated with the enactment of curriculum policy, ultimately leading to the generation of the material focus of a curriculum policy platform. In their book, *Schooling in Disadvantaged Communities: Playing the Game from the back of the field*, Mills and Gale

(2010) illuminate the importance of the situated and material context in curriculum policy enactment. Referring to a disadvantaged context such as that of the working class, they (Mills & Gale 2010:39) raise the possibility of a shift from an academic to a hands-on curriculum. However, they caution that a hands-on curriculum is regarded as a deficit stance and they suggest that the curriculum should be accompanied by opportunities for students to also access areas of the curriculum that include high cognitive demand (Mills & Gale, 2010:39). In a similar vein, Fataar (2009b) indicates that the current South African curriculum makes no connection to the community context of working class students. He suggests that schools should engage with the cultural capital of the disadvantaged to make schooling more compelling for students from working class communities.

Relating the above studies to Pat Thomson's (2002) concept of the 'virtual school bag' of working class students that was discussed in Chapter 2 has direct implications for the type of curriculum policy platform that is envisaged. The situated and material aspects of context inform the leadership practice of the setting of direction in terms of the curriculum as it indicate the goals that the school sets out to attain, i.e. vocational training or academic training. Depending on what goals are set in terms of the type of curriculum, influence the nature of the development of people and consequently how the school is redesigned and how teaching and learning is managed.

Delving into the professional culture in schools, as part of Ball's three dimensions of policy enactment, Fataar and Paterson's (2002) study on dysfunctional and functional schools is informative as it provides a view on teacher morale and commitment. The article illuminates how teachers experience teaching in working class schools and how this influences their practices. They use the term 'moral minimising' to describe teachers who use their disadvantaged conditions to justify minimum participation and minimum commitment in school processes (Fataar & Paterson, 2002:32). This, they argue, leads to 'moral diffusion', shifting the focus from the individual teacher to a group of teachers in the school. They indicate that 'moral diffusion' results in three groups of teachers. These are the teachers who take monopoly of certain tasks, the teachers who disengage themselves from the school and those teachers who are regarded as the hardworking ones, who take on more tasks for themselves (Fataar & Paterson, 2002:33). The findings of their study have implications for the leadership

practices focused on in this study, as they raise issues regarding the importance of teacher development and collaboration as a way to improve teacher morale and commitment, thus focusing on the professional aspect of Ball's material dimension of policy enactment.

Exploring the impact of the expectations from the external context of schools, such as the Department of Education (DoE) and parents finds resonance in studies which are mainly focused on school improvement and school effectiveness such as the 'Schools that Work' report (Christie *et al.*, 2007). Studies like these focus on the reasons why schools perform or don't perform and they usually do not include contextual factors. These types of studies result in the labeling of schools as underperforming and performing schools, which has a direct effect on the focus of schools in terms of setting direction. Together with media reports, these external pressures have implications for a school's leadership practices. For example, are goals set in terms of the expected 60% pass rate for the final National Senior Certificate (NCS) examination; does the school only provide development in terms of improving results; and, is collaboration only focused on subject improvement and is teaching and learning managed with a focus mainly on the attainment of subject related targets? Questions like these are used to probe into Ball's external dimension of policy enactment.

The above studies illuminate specific aspects of the material dimension of working class schools as indicated by the policy enactment theory. A focus on these aspects assist in exploring how the material dimension of these types of schools position the schools in terms of the enactment of a curriculum policy platform via leadership practices. The material dimension of Ball's policy enactment theory illuminates the limitations and possibilities that school leadership encounters in a working class context and how contextual challenges shape the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. This brings to the fore a focus on how knowledge is classified and framed (see Chapter 2, section 2.6) in a school as part of establishing a curriculum policy platform, where classification and framing constitute Bernstein's (2002) pedagogic code which indicates what knowledge to teach and how to teach that knowledge.

Utilising Ball's discursive lens, this study sets out to explore how schools portray curriculum policy through discursive strategies. The discursive lens provides insight into what is regarded

as desirable behaviour in the school in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform, as the expectations of the policy position the school in a specific way to 'live' the policy. Through Ball's discursive lens, I explore what is regarded as the 'truth' in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform and how this 'truth' is lived in the school. In other words, it provides a 'visualisation' of the requirements for the implementation of curriculum policy, allowing people to 'see' what is commended in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. These discursive strategies are regarded as the 'tools' in the policy work of the school (Ball *et al.*, 2012:136). In constituting the curriculum policy platform, my thesis therefore will explore the different types of 'tools' such as posters, meetings, events and artefacts that are used to visualise the core leadership practices of a school in the process of the recontextualisation of curriculum policy. In other words, how the leadership depicts a specific discourse through their practices.

Focusing on Ball's interpretive dimension, what is important for this thesis in exploring the interpretive domain of enacting a curriculum policy platform, is: Who reads the official curriculum policy document first? How is the official curriculum policy document interpreted and translated through various practices throughout the school? Singh *et al.* (2013:465) refer to this interpretation as code elaboration and they indicate that code elaboration takes place via professional development materials, teaching guidelines and curriculum resources. In relating these aspects of the interpretive dimension to leadership practices, which are the core of this study, this lens enables me to explore how the school's leadership makes meaning of the policy text, especially in this era of performativity where schools are expected to attain results. Questions like the following, are informative in exploring the interpretive dimension: Is the policy read and goals set in terms of targets as requested by the DoE, thus informing the leadership practice on the setting of direction? Based on how meaning is made, what types of development activities does it lead to? And, how does this meaning making process lead to the redesigning of the school? Since this study investigates the way in which policy is interpreted by the leadership team of the school, the interpretive dimension has direct implications for the leadership practice of how teaching and learning is managed, as the leadership team holds the responsibility of managing their different subject departments. Furthermore, exploring the interpretive dimension of Ball's theory illuminates the way in which

certain structures and procedures, such as meetings and discussions are established in the process of translating the meaning of the policy document.

In the construction of the curriculum policy platform, Ball's interpretive dimension assists with establishing a structure that engages with the language of the curriculum policy, highlighting who is expected to read the policy and how this is translated into actions, such as meetings, discussions and the development of teaching guidelines (Singh *et al.*, 2013). This translation (code elaboration) is part of the field of recontextualisation of Bernstein's pedagogic device (see Chapter 2, section 2.6) as it assists in how the policy is transformed into communication. Implicit in translation is the recognition and realisation rules of Bernstein's (2002) pedagogic device, which involves organising the knowledge as what is important or not and working out the procedures for how this translation can be done. This involves selecting knowledge from the policy and transforming it into action. The Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) training manual (see Chapter 2, section 2.6) suggests activities such modelling, monitoring and dialogue through which this transformation of knowledge takes place. Using the interpretive dimension, *what* knowledge is selected and the activities involved in *how* this knowledge is transformed, assist in the establishment of the curriculum policy platform.

3.8 CONCLUSION

The chapter indicates that the three constituents of policy enactment (the material, discursive and interpretive) are interwoven. Policy enactment theory serves as the primary lens to analyse leadership practices for the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in working class schools. I explore how and through whom policy text is given meaning and how it is discursively conveyed through the working class school context in the process of the 'becoming' of the policy. To capture the enactment of a curriculum policy platform I use the material, the discursive and the interpretive dimensions as lenses to focus on how leadership practices activate curriculum policy enactment. This is done in relation to the working class school context and the generation and sustaining of a curriculum policy platform in these complex environments.

This chapter has explained Stephen Ball's policy enactment theory with a focus on leadership practices in enacting a curriculum policy platform. The differences between policy

implementation and policy enactment were discussed. This was followed by a discussion of Stephen Ball's genealogy indicating the development of his concepts and ideas. Following this, Ball's policy enactment theory and how it is used in this study, was discussed. This was followed by highlighting some criticism regarding the work of Ball. The chapter was concluded by a discussion of how I use Ball's theory in the exploration of leadership practices in enacting a curriculum policy platform. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology of this thesis.

CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an account of the theoretical framework of this study. The aim of this chapter is to give an explanation of how the research on analysing leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in the three working class schools took place. The main research question to be answered is: How do leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools? The focus is on how the four core leadership practices, namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning are constructed within a working class context and how they are implemented to establish a school's curriculum policy platform. Ball's policy enactment theory (2012) provides the lenses to analyse leadership practices which include the material, the discursive and the interpretive aspects through which these leadership practices are explored.

In order to ascertain the views of the School Management Team's (SMT) enactment of a curriculum policy platform in their school context, I conducted semi-structured individual interviews with principals and focus groups with the SMT of three selected working class secondary schools. Although principals are part of the SMT of a school, their interviews were done separately as a means of triangulation. The research was conducted in a systematic and methodical manner with the aim of increasing existing knowledge of this topic (Sass Harvey, 2005:30).

The study was conducted as follows: a literature review was done (discussed in Chapter two) on leadership practices, curriculum policy development and the importance of context. Stephen Ball's policy enactment theory provides the theoretical framework for this study (discussed in Chapter 3). The data are presented in Chapter 5 and the findings are analysed in Chapter 6. The concluding chapter (Chapter 7) provides a synthesis of the findings on how leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform within a working class context, via the policy enactment lenses.

This chapter provides a methodological grounding for my exploration of leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools. The objective of this study is to gain insight into how the working class context positions schools to enact a curriculum policy platform via their leadership practices. In this chapter I state the research question and sub questions followed by a discussion of the research paradigms and a location of my study within these paradigms. This is followed by a discussion on the data collection techniques and how the data were analysed. I then provide a broad overview of the sampling procedures and the schools and participants who took part in this study. This is followed by a discussion on the validity of the research. The chapter is concluded by discussing the ethical issues appropriate to this study.

4.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Punch (2005:37) indicates that the research question gives direction and coherence to the investigation. Thus, to restate, the research question I explore in this thesis is: How do leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools?

4.2.1 SUB QUESTIONS

The following sub questions are informed by the research question:

- How do the working class contextual factors position the leadership practices of schools in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform?
- What role does school management, as a key dimension of leadership practices play in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in a working class context?
- How do working class schools go about producing discourses for the enactment of a curriculum policy platform?
- How do leadership practices develop and sustain their school's curriculum policy platform?

4.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section I discuss the meta-theoretical framework of my research. This involves a meta-scientific reflection on the methodological underpinnings of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:20). It inquires about the nature of society, human conduct and the aims, nature and methods of social inquiry. In this section I motivate why I position my research within a specific theoretical paradigm.

McGregor and Murnane (2010:419) hold that research takes place from the perspective of a specific research paradigm that includes assumptions, concepts, values and practices as a way of viewing reality. According to them a paradigm includes methods, techniques and principles on how to do the research, where a paradigm underscores the actions and approaches that are applied by the researcher and it provides the basis on which knowledge is built. There are four research paradigms namely, positivism, postpositivism, critical theory and the interpretive paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:105). They (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) elaborate that the reaction to three fundamental questions provides the basic features of the different paradigms. These questions are as follows:

- *The ontological question:* What is the nature of reality and what can be known of it?
- *The epistemological question:* What is the reality of the relationship between those who know and those who will come to know and what is the nature of that which will be known (the truth or the possible truth)?
- *The methodological question:* How should those who will know work towards finding out what they believe should be known?

I now turn to a discussion on the dynamics of each of these three questions and how they relate to this research. Based on the above questions, the ontological dimension views the social world as an object of inquiry where there is a distinction between positivists (or naturalists), anti-positivists (constructivists, interpretivists and phenomenologists) and realists (Mouton, 1996:47). The positivists believe that there are enough similarities in the behaviour of all beings to justify the pursuit of a similar epistemology and methodology in all sciences, whereas the anti-positivists believe that the differences between the social world and the natural world are so fundamental that there can be no basis for using the same methods and techniques in the human sciences (Mouton, 1996:47; Babbie & Mouton, 2001:21). On the

other hand, the phenomenological/ interpretivist tradition is based on the centrality of human consciousness (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:28). This tradition aims to understand people in their natural world, i.e. how they make sense of their worlds. My research relates to the interpretivist tradition and as such I aim to understand how the SMTs of the three selected schools make sense of governmentally authorised curriculum policy within their working class school contexts. The interpretive approach implies that knowledge is constructed through describing the observation of the phenomenon and through people's intentions, values, reasons and the way they understand themselves (Henning, 2004:20-21). This approach enables me as the researcher to understand the meaning that people attach to their lives and their actions. In other words, I can understand why and how SMTs execute their specific leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform, by describing their reasons and actions. The interpretive approach assumes that reality is a social construct (Mackenzie & Knipe in Spies, 2012:96) and this approach depends on the views of those who are being researched. In this study I depend on the views of the principals and SMT members. By using the interpretive approach the participants in this study have the opportunity to voice their activities, experiences and perceptions.

Grbich (2007) further indicates the following major characteristics of social constructivist and interpretivist research: They aim to explore how people interpret and make sense of their experiences. They explore how people's contextualities and situations have an influence on their constructed meanings of reality. They observe that the researcher's own lived experiences have an influence on their interpretation of the gathered data from the research participants, and they acknowledge that the researcher's subjectivity due to their own experiences, contributes to the construction of research knowledge. These characteristics indicate the complexity of social research. Taking these characteristics into account my study finds resonance in the interpretive approach as I aim to understand the meaning that SMTs attach to their leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform within the working class school context. I explore how their working class context has an influence on how the SMT of the three selected schools enact a curriculum policy platform via their leadership practices. I acknowledge that my own experiences as a teacher and deputy principal contribute to the construction of knowledge in this research.

In explicating the epistemological dimension, Mouton (1996:29) points to social research as the pursuit of valid knowledge. In other words it means attaining the epistemic (truthful) ideal of truth. Put slightly differently, it means getting as close as possible to what is regarded as the truth or valid knowledge. In this study I explore how the SMTs of working class schools engage with the contextual factors of the school in order to enact a curriculum policy platform via their leadership practices, based on their experiences and viewpoints.

In explicating the methodological dimension, Babbie and Mouton (2001:49) indicate that it involves the application of a variety of methods and techniques in the pursuit of valid knowledge, where the selection of methods depends on the aims and objectives of the study. They (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:49) identify three methodological paradigms. These are the quantitative, the qualitative and participatory action paradigms. Broadly distinguishing, the quantitative paradigm involves the testing of hypotheses mainly through statistical analyses, whereas the qualitative paradigm involves understanding and interpreting social interaction through coding and themes (Lichtman, 2010:10-11). Participatory action paradigms on the other hand involve a close relationship between the researcher and the researched, where knowledge of persons is generated through reciprocal encounters between subject and researcher for whom research is a mutual activity (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:58). Quantitative research is usually associated with the positivist paradigm, while qualitative research is associated with the interpretive paradigm and participatory action research is associated with critical theory (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:68). As such, locating my research within the interpretive paradigm resonates with qualitative research as I aim to understand and interpret leadership practices associated with the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in the working class school context. I therefore applied the methods and techniques that could best assist me with the understanding and interpreting of the leadership practices executed in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform.

Building on the suggestions by Guba and Lincoln (1994), Mouton (1996), Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Sass Harvey (2005), I locate my study within the interpretive paradigm as I aim to explore how the leadership practices of the school SMT enact a curriculum policy platform. This exploration involves an understanding of how the leadership teams of the schools engage with the contextual factors of the school. I aim to understand how and why working

class schools employ specific leadership practices in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform. Ontologically and epistemologically I argue that reality is not an objective truth and that knowledge is constructed through the lived experiences of the participants in this study.

According to Henning (2004:17) and Lichtman (2010:15) words such as 'understand' and 'construct' are synonymous with an interpretive approach. Echoing this, Merriam (2009:5) emphasises that the purpose of interpretive research is to describe, understand and interpret. In this research I study the participants in their natural school environments and I explore how they make meaning of and interpret the official curriculum policy document via their leadership practices. I aim to capture the human experiences and to tell the story of the real experiences of the participants. In other words this research sets out to describe, to understand and to interpret the leadership practices that are employed by SMTs in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform in their working class school contexts.

The next section discusses the methodological implications of placing my study within the interpretive paradigm.

4.3.1 METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

My study is located within the qualitative realm as it concentrates on the study of social life in natural settings and it gives empirical information about the world, mostly in the form of words (Punch, 2005:56,194). Quantitative research on the other hand, uses statistical analyses, irrespective of whether reality is observed or who observes it (Sass Harvey, 2005:31). In this research I explore the leadership practices of working class school SMTs in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform. This has implications for the types of methods and techniques that I selected.

The ontological and epistemological assumptions associated with interpretive research differ from those associated with the positivist tradition. Newman and Benz (1998) describe this difference as follows:

The debate between qualitative and quantitative researchers is based upon the differences in assumptions about what reality is and whether or not it is measurable.

The debate further rests on differences of opinion about how we can best understand what we 'know', whether through objective or subjective methods.

This statement indicates that quantitative research is based on optimal objectivity, whereas qualitative research concentrates on the subjective understanding of people's experiences. In the case of this research where I follow a qualitative approach I concentrate on understanding the experiences of SMTs in their working class school context, based on their viewpoints.

There is however critique against both types of research methodologies. The critique against qualitative research is that it is subjective, unscientific and invalid, whereas the critique against quantitative research is that it fails to produce truths useful to social sciences as social sciences lack the methods of validation available to physical science, since every situation in social sciences is different (Sass Harvey, 2005:32-33). Taking this critique into consideration, I substantiate my chosen methodology of qualitative research below.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005:3) define qualitative research as:

a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible.

Following this definition, I concentrate on the leadership practices of the SMTs in working class schools, viewed through the policy enactment lenses and discuss how the activities associated with these practices are employed to enact a curriculum policy platform. I am interested in exploring how SMTs of these types of schools experience the impact of the working class context on the school and how they engage with their context in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform, via their leadership practices. Qualitative research enables me to enter the environment of the participants in pursuit of answering my research question. As a qualitative researcher I am interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed of their worlds (Merriam, 2009:13). This requires me to study human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves. In this study therefore I attempt to understand the leadership practices of the SMT in relation to their context, from their perspective and not my own (Lichtman, 2010:12). In other words, it is about their (SMT) meaning and interpretation.

According to Merriam (2009:14-16) qualitative research involves four key characteristics, namely, a focus on process, understanding and meaning, the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the process is inductive and the product is richly descriptive. These key characteristics were used to guide my research as I sought to understand how the SMT make sense of the curriculum policy and describe how they interpret the policy and respond to it within their working class school context, via their leadership practices. As I am the primary instrument of data collection and analysis this ensured an immediate processing of the data. I used the data to construct the information on leadership practices. I used words to describe how the SMTs of the selected schools experience their working class school context and how they enact a curriculum policy platform via their leadership practices.

The data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews with the selected principals and focus group interviews with the members of the SMTs of the three selected schools. This method of data collection enabled me to gather descriptions of the research context, as well as the participants' interpretations of their experiences within the research context. Following inductive thinking, the data were used to gain an understanding of how the school SMTs experienced their school context and how they engaged with the curriculum policy, via their leadership practices to construct a curriculum policy platform. As words rather than numbers characterise qualitative research, I aimed to provide "rich, thick descriptions" (Merriam, 2009:16; Lichtman, 2010:18) of the context, experiences and actions of the leadership teams of the three selected schools in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design acts as a map in order to assist me as a researcher to reach my destination. The research design refers to the "design and methodology followed in the study in order to investigate the problem as formulated" (Mouton, 2001:114). In other words, the research design is about *what* you want to find out and *how* you are going to do it (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:72). This section provides an overview of the different research methods that were used in this study in my exploration of leadership practices in a working class school context through the lens of Ball's policy enactment theory.

4.4.1 SAMPLE SELECTION

In this research purposive sampling (sampling in a deliberate way) (Punch, 2005:187) was done by selecting the principals and SMT members of three working class secondary schools. The units of analysis were selected based on my judgement about which ones will be most useful (Babbie, 2014:187). In the case of this study the focus is on the leadership practices of the SMT, therefore the SMTs of three schools were selected as the units of analysis as they are central to the purpose of this study.

The three township schools and their SMTs were selected from the Metropole East District of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). These schools were selected based on their location in a township and their categorisation as a working class school which is the contextual focus of the study. Working class schools in South Africa have their origins in racially segregated, low-cost housing areas for people of colour (Fataar, 2009:15; Mampane & Bouwer, 2011:114) and these contexts are characterised by distinct features such as poverty, child-headed households, gangsterism and drug abuse, among others (Christie, 2008).

The sample size for this study depended on the size of the SMTs of the three schools. Punch (2005:238) and Lichtman (2011:250) indicate that sample sizes in qualitative research are usually small and are guided by theoretical considerations.

I use the following pseudonyms for the three schools: School A, School B and School C. The pseudonyms that I use for the principals are as follows: For School A- Principal 1, for School B – Principal 2 and for School C – Principal 3. Principals 2 and 3 have been appointed in a temporary capacity. School C is a newly established school in the township and it has a rotating SMT as well as a rotating principal. This new school (School C) has fairly novice SMT members. All three principals are male. The two deputy principals at School A are females, the deputy principals of School B are a male and a female and at the time of this study the rotating deputy principal for School C was a male. The SMT members of Schools A and B were all well established, with most of them having occupied their positions for approximately 10 years.

4.5 DATA GATHERING

4.5.1 SOURCES

The literature refers to numerous ways of collecting data, namely structured interviews, unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews, observations, focus groups and questionnaires (Punch, 2005:168; Babbie, 2014:307). Interviews are regarded as a good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings and definitions of situations (Punch, 2005:168). In this study I opted for the semi-structured individual interviews with the three school principals and focus group discussions with the rest of the SMT members, per school, in my attempt to answer the research question. The semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions allowed me to explore the ideas and experiences of the principals and SMT members on how they perceive their working class context and how they implement their leadership practices in order to build a curriculum policy platform. The semi-structured interviews and focus groups allowed for a detailed exploration and understanding of the research question.

Two interview schedules were designed (see Annexures A and B) that contain the same questions for both principals and SMTs. I utilised the material, discursive and interpretive lenses from Ball's policy enactment theory to ascertain how the curriculum is read, interpreted and portrayed in the working class school context. These lenses were further subdivided into activities associated with the four core leadership practices applicable to this study. The organisation of the questions on the interview schedules assisted with the analysis of the data. Interview schedule A focused on the context of the three schools and Interview schedule B focused on the leadership practices that were implemented in the schools.

Since the same set of questions was used in the interviews with the principals and the SMT focus groups, this enabled me to ascertain the similarities and differences in how each school's stakeholders perceive their context, leadership practices and policy enactment. The interviews with the principals were done first to obtain a general view of the context of the school, the organisation of their leadership practices and how the school leader viewed their role in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. Following this, the focus group discussions with the rest of the SMT members were conducted. The semi-structured individual interviews and focus group discussions consisted of two phases. In Phase 1 (see

Appendix A), I asked the participants to tell the story of how they perceive their working class context. The Phase 1 interviews probed the material aspect of Ball's policy enactment theory. This allowed me to generate descriptive data about the challenges of the working class school context. In Phase 2 (see Appendix B) I probed for specific examples of actions associated with the four core leadership practices, viewed through Ball's interpretive policy enactment lens. The advantage of this order of interviews is that it gave me some detail to work with when clarifying the meaning of concepts and experiences in their context when interviewing the principals and SMT members. Furthermore, it served the purpose of verifying the principals' responses, even though searching for the truth was not the intention of this study. The order of the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions assisted with a deeper understanding of the SMT members' and principals' experiences, perceptions and expectations. Following Ball *et al.* (2012:14) the interviews explored how curriculum policy is received by the SMT and how it moves from the SMT into the classrooms.

The length of each semi-structured interview was approximately fifty minutes and the length of the focus group discussions was approximately sixty minutes. Where responses needed further clarification or elaboration, further interviewing took place. At the end of the interviews the participants had the opportunity to ask questions to diminish any uncertainties, as well as to establish how the participants experienced the interviews. This assisted in evaluating how the interviews were conducted, for the purposes of the development of the researcher and also contributed to the relationship of trust. Interviews were held at the school of the interviewee, after dismissal of classes, thereby ensuring that contact teaching time was not lost.

The literature recommends audio recording above all other methods (Rabionet, 2011:565). Audio recording was therefore used to record the data for this study. The permission of the interviewee was asked beforehand to comply with ethical standards. Rabionet (2011:565) indicates that some of the disadvantages of the use of recorders may include poor quality and malfunctioning of the recording equipment. For example, the recorder can break or the interviewee's awareness of it may make the interview difficult (Currie, 2005:103) as they may feel uncomfortable. An advantage however, was that I (the interviewer) could go back to the

precise words of the interviewee (Currie, 2005:103) as everything said was preserved for the analysis process. This ensured the accuracy of the data.

4.5.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Unstructured or semi-structured interviews are open-ended and conversational, which makes this method a qualitative approach, whereas highly structured interviews are usually questionnaire-driven, making it a quantitative approach (Sass Harvey, 2005:39). Semi-structured or unstructured interviews are the most common form of data collection in qualitative studies (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:289). The use of semi-structured interviews allows for an in-depth exploration of the unit of analysis and enables the researcher to add to the number and content of the questions if it will benefit the research (Lichtman, 2010:141). This allows the researcher to ask more questions on specific issues for clarity. The aforementioned arguments motivated my selection of semi-structured interviews as suitable for exploring how principals enact a curriculum policy platform via their leadership practices in their working class school context.

However, semi-structured interviews hold some disadvantages. Babbie and Mouton (2001:290) caution that as an individual interview is so much like a normal conversation, the researcher must keep in mind that he/she is not having a normal conversation. An interview is rather considered to be a conversation with a purpose (Sass Harvey, 2005:39; Lichtman, 2010:139). One of the disadvantages of semi-structured interviews is that the interviewee can deviate from the theme. The interviewer should therefore have the appropriate skills to sensitively handle such a situation should it arise. Sass Harvey (2005:40) depicts another disadvantage by stating that the biggest single weakness of an interview is the length of time it takes and the practical consequences of this. In this study, the participants were from three different schools within the same township, located approximately 1km from the location of the researcher. This had positive time and cost implications especially if an interview did not take place as scheduled.

'Pilot' interviews were conducted to assist with the conduct of interviews and the finalisation of the interview schedule (Merriam, 2009:267). These pilot interviews were conducted with colleagues (the SMT of my school) to assist me in refining the proposed interview questions.

The refining process included a change in the order, construction and content of questions as the pilot interviews indicated misinterpretations of the original questions and misunderstanding in terms of certain concepts used.

The interviews in this study explored the experiences and leadership practices of principals in a working class school context. The aim of the interviews was to explore how these principals employ their leadership practices to enact a curriculum policy platform within their working class context. The focus was on the specific activities associated with the four core leadership practices, viewed through the policy enactment lens of Stephen Ball. The main purpose of the interviews was thus to reveal the participants' actions relating to curriculum policy implementation. The interviews were conducted face-to-face with the three principals at their respective schools during two phases (see section 4.5.1 of this chapter).

4.5.3 FOCUS GROUPS

As a research method, focus groups were used to obtain information on how leadership practices are employed by the SMT in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform in the context of their school. The focus group sessions were held separately from the semi-structured individual interviews conducted with the school principals. Focus groups are defined as collective conversations or group interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008:375). What is critical about the focus group is that there is group interaction which may trigger thoughts and ideas among participants that do not emerge during an individual interview (Lichtman, 2010:154). The purpose of the focus groups in this study was to gather information from participants about their leadership practices in relation to their school context in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform (see Lichtman, 2010:153). Morgan (1988 in Punch, 2005:171) highlights the positive effects of focus groups by stating that: "the hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group". In this study, focus groups assisted in obtaining information that may not have been exposed in individual interviews. Using focus groups allowed me valuable insight and a better understanding of the practices employed by the SMT as the unit of analysis, since different people within the focus group session could voice their opinion. The group interaction generated valuable discussion. The focus group sessions concentrated on obtaining information on the challenges that the SMT face in their

school context and how they engage with the challenges through their leadership practices. The focus groups took the form of informal conversations.

However, focus groups hold some challenges. Some of the challenges include the researcher having to develop the skills of a moderator to control the dynamics within the group as the focus group has the possibility that one person may dominate the conversation (Mouton, 2014:214). A further disadvantage of focus groups is that it may lead to group conformity. Taking the above discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of focus groups into consideration, a series of two focus group sessions (Phase 1 and Phase 2) was held with the SMT members of the three selected schools to address the aims of this study. The focus groups took place after the individual interviews with the three principals.

In this study I followed the guidelines suggested by Lichtman (2010:155-156) when using focus groups. I used their guidelines as follows: The size of the focus group depended on the size of the SMT of the selected school. In this study there were three focus groups (from the three selected schools) with which two sessions each were held. The study involved purposive sampling, with a focus on the SMT of the schools. As the researcher I decided which questions would be included. The focus group sessions were conducted in a suitable venue at the respective schools. Although transcribing focus group interviews is a daunting task, I still embarked on this. The different SMT members were allocated numbers during the focus group sessions to assist with distinguishing between their different designations if needed.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

In this research the data were gathered from the semi-structured interviews conducted with the three principals and the focus groups conducted with the SMT members of the three schools. The formulation of the questions on the interview schedule was an indication of how the analysis would be done (see Appendices A and B). The interview questions in this study are based on the constructivist tradition which is in line with the qualitative methodology that was used. After completion of the data collection process, I transcribed and analysed the information from the interviews and focus groups. I utilised Ball *et al.*'s (2012) three dimensions of policy enactment, namely the material, the discursive and the interpretive

dimensions to assist with the analysis. Merriam (2009:110) suggests that verbatim transcription of recorded interviews provides the best database for analysis, which is what I embarked on. By personally transcribing the information from the interviews and focus groups, I was able to become intimately acquainted with the data. The transcriptions were done on the same day that the individual semi-structured interviews and focus groups took place. This assisted with analysing the data in a constructive manner.

In analysing the data, coding, categorising and identifying concepts were used (Lichtman, 2010:197). The data gathered were organised according to the three dimensions of the policy enactment theory, namely the material, the discursive and the interpretive. This was further analysed according to the four core leadership practices, namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning. This process is referred to as an open coding system. Merriam (2009:173) states that coding involves a process of analysing and interpreting the collected data by “assigning some sort of shorthand designation to various aspects of the data”, which will allow the researcher to easily retrieve specific pieces of the data. Coding thus refers to labeling the data for storage and retrieval. This was followed by organising the data into categories. The data for this research were coded and categorised according to the following:

- Context of the schools
- Material aspects that challenge the school
- Discursive strategies implemented to portray and convey the curriculum
- Interpretive aspects regarding curriculum policy in terms of the four core leadership practices

This was followed by identifying concepts to reflect the meaning attached to the data (Lichtman, 2010:200). I was particularly interested in how the working class context of each school positioned them towards their leadership practices. This process of analysis assisted with the presentation of the data.

There are a variety of techniques to display data. These techniques include matrices of information, flow charts and tabulating frequency of events (Sass Harvey, 2005:43). In this study the data were presented, analysed and interpreted as text. I aimed to provide rich, thick

descriptions of the context of the three schools as well as their leadership practices employed in their enactment of the curriculum policy in the working class school context. To ensure that meaning was not lost in the transcripts, the analysis and categorisation of themes were discussed with the participants.

4.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS, RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The quality of research may be questioned and therefore a discussion regarding the trustworthiness, reliability and validity of the research conducted is necessary. According to McGregor and Murnane (2010:422) interpretive research strives for credibility, transferability, dependability, trustworthiness and confirmability. Trustworthiness refers to honesty, richness and depth of the data generated (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). In order to adhere to trustworthiness I formulated the interview questions based on the relevant literature and theoretical framework that I employed. The interview schedule formed part of my ethical application to conduct the research and this contributed in ensuring trustworthiness. In qualitative research the concept of trustworthiness is contained in the concepts of validity and reliability. According to Merriam (2009:213) internal validity or credibility refers to how the research findings match reality. This refers to whether the findings, i.e. the researcher's interpretation of the data, are a true reflection of what was discovered (Sass Harvey, 2005:45).

In this study I ensured reliability by recording each interview (with permission) and personally transcribing them. The verbatim transcription was done directly after the interviews were conducted. The use of the audio recorder provided me with the possibility of replaying the responses to make sure that the exact responses were transcribed (Kubheka, 2000:49).

I followed the following strategies as outlined by Merriam (2009:229) to promote validity and reliability:

- Participant validation: The data and provisional interpretations were taken back to the participants to ascertain whether the interpretations were indeed a correct representation of their responses.
- Researcher's reflexivity: As the researcher holds the same occupation as the participants, an attempt was made at all times by the researcher to remain unbiased.

- Peer review: This involved having discussions with my colleagues regarding the process of study.
- Audit trail: A detailed account of the methods, procedures and decision points in carrying out the study was kept.
- Rich, thick descriptions: This involved providing enough description to contextualise the study such that readers will be able to determine the extent to which their situations match the research context and hence, whether the findings can be transferred.
- Maximum variation: Purposefully seeking variation in sample selection to allow for a greater range of application of the findings by consumers of the research.

As this research involved collecting data *from* people, and *about* people, it needed to adhere to the requirements of ethical research (Punch, 2005:276). To ensure validity and reliability, I conducted the investigation in an ethical manner (Merriam, 2009:209) by adhering to the principles involved in ethics as highlighted by Lichtman (2010:54-58) and Denzin and Lincoln (2011). In the following section I provide an explanation of the guiding ethical principles that were adhered to in this study.

4.7.1 ETHICS

4.7.1.1 Do no harm

This principle is regarded as the cornerstone of ethical conduct (Lichtman, 2010). In this study it was clarified with the participants that no harm was foreseen through their participation in this research as the research involved a discussion about their experiences as SMT members in working class school contexts. No possibility of harm, physical, emotional or professional was therefore anticipated for this research.

4.7.1.2 Privacy and Anonymity

No identifying information was used about the individuals or their schools participating in this study. The names of the interviewees and their school will remain anonymous and pseudonyms were used in this thesis. To ensure the safekeeping of the data, all data were

locked in a secure place accessible only by me, the researcher, and will be destroyed after successful completion of the thesis.

4.7.1.3 Confidentiality

The interviewees were assured that their confidentiality will at all times be protected. In fulfillment of this, all records were kept in storage in the privacy of the researchers' safe at work.

4.7.1.4 Informed Consent

The individuals participating in this research were informed about the nature, purpose and consequences of the research, as well as how and where the findings will be disseminated. Permission was requested from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and the principals and SMT members of the selected schools (refer to Appendix C for the approval letter from the WCED). Ethical clearance was applied for and received from Stellenbosch University. Participants were asked to partake in the research voluntarily. The interviews were conducted after consent was granted by the University of Stellenbosch (see Appendix D). Permission was obtained from the interviewees for the use of the audio recorder. The consent forms for the interviewees were formulated by taking into account the ethical requirements.

4.7.1.5 Rapport and friendship

During the interviews I ensured an environment that was trustworthy. The interviews were conducted at the schools of the interviewees to ensure that they were in a familiar environment. I conducted my interviews in a friendly and polite manner to ensure that the interviewees are comfortable with the interview questions and discussions.

4.7.1.6 Intrusiveness

To prevent intrusion, the interviews were conducted at the schools of the participants after the dismissal of formal classes. This was done so as to not disrupt teaching and learning. The time and location of the interview were agreed on with the interviewees.

4.7.1.7 Inappropriate behaviour

Following this principle, I did not engage in conduct of any personal nature. All participants were treated with the necessary respect.

4.7.1.8 Data interpretation

Deliberate misrepresentation is forbidden. It was clarified with the interviewees whether my interpretation was a correct representation of their responses. Ensuring that data are accurate is a cardinal principle in the qualitative study. The use of the voice recorder and transcripts of the actual interviews proved useful in the translation and analysis of the data. Permission was obtained for the use of the audio recorder.

4.7.1.9 Data ownership and rewards

In general, the researcher owns the work generated. No financial benefits were foreseen in the completion of this research. The research data generated are available for use by the public.

4.8 DELIMITATIONS

This study holds certain delimitations. I started from the assumption that the working class context positions schools to enact a curriculum policy platform in a specific way. The study focuses on three principals and three SMTs and how they implement leadership practices in the process of enacting governmentally authorised curriculum policy. The data were collected from three schools in the same education district and township locale where the same goals and missions direct them. I do not suggest that these findings are generalisable, rather I aim to build an understanding of leadership practices based on in-depth qualitative research. These understandings provide new and fresh perspectives on the question of leadership practices in working class schools. This type of understanding has positive implications for leadership practices and it adds to the literature on leadership practices.

4.9 SUMMARY

In this chapter I discussed the methodological aspects relevant to my research. The chapter highlights my motivation for adopting a qualitative paradigm in order to answer my research question. Data gathering and sampling techniques were discussed within this framework.

Furthermore, this chapter highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of the different techniques applied. The chapter is concluded with a discussion of the appropriate ethical aspects involved with this research.

In the following chapter I present the data that were obtained through my interaction with the principals and SMT members of the three schools.

CHAPTER 5. PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present the data obtained in relation to the leadership practices performed in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform, in working class schools. In this chapter I present the data on the schools' leadership practices in their enactment of governmentally authorised curriculum policy. The focus of this research is on how leadership practices receive and shape curriculum policy within the dynamics of their working class school context, and go on to lay a curriculum policy platform in terms of which teaching is able to proceed at the schools. The data are presented in terms of the material, the discursive and the interpretive dimensions of Ball's policy enactment theory (see Chapter 3, section 3.4).

The conceptual focus of this study is to understand how the leadership practices in working class schools go about enacting a curriculum policy platform from which teachers are enabled to exercise their pedagogy (see Chapter 2, section 2.6), given the challenges of the working class context in which the schools are located. Included in this, is how the leaders view and understand their school's context and how they enact a curriculum policy platform. I specifically consider how leadership practices at the three schools are instantiated via the four core leadership practices (according to Leithwood *et al.*, 2006) (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of these core practices) meant to establish a curriculum policy platform that would enable the schools' teachers to implement the curriculum in their classes. Coming to an understanding of how these leaders go about laying a curriculum policy platform through their leadership practices provides a thorough grounding for comprehending the policy enactment process.

Informed by Ball's policy enactment theory, I start the chapter by discussing the material dimension which characterises the three selected schools and how this dimension positions the schools' leadership practices to lay a platform for the implementation of the government's curriculum policy. This will give the reader an understanding of the localised dynamics of these schools. This is followed by a discussion of how the discursive aspects of curriculum policy enactment position the schools to perform their leadership practices. Here I attempt to illustrate how this discourse 'speaks us' (Ball, 2006:45), in other words, how the policy

discourse that accompanies curriculum policy into schools positions and informs curriculum leadership practices at the school. I also highlight each school's discursive responses to the incoming curriculum policy. I present the School Management Team's (SMT) understanding of the performative expectations that government has for the schools and I elaborate on how the curriculum policy is positioned and allowed to have material effect in the school via its leadership practices. Following this I present the data from the three schools on how the curriculum policy is interpreted and translated via the interpretive dimension of policy enactment. This is done by discussing the four core leadership practices, namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning, within each of the three schools. I argue in the thesis that the three dimensions of policy enactment, presented by Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012), are central to constituting the leadership practices of the schools in establishing a curriculum policy platform. My focus is not on *what* policy does, but on *how* the curriculum policy becomes part of the school, in other words, how the curriculum policy is institutionalised through leadership practices within the working class school context.

The data are presented thematically. I use Ball *et al.*'s (2012) policy enactment theory to organise the data. I start with the material dimension which is subdivided into the situated context, the material context, professional cultures and the external context. This is followed by a presentation of the discursive dimension in terms of how schools are positioned by the incoming discourse and how they respond by constructing the 'good' student and the 'good' teacher in the process of producing the 'good' school.

Lastly, I present the interpretive dimension by means of the four core leadership practices, namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning. This data provide a description of how curriculum policy is 'lived' in these schools and how it sets the tone for establishing a curriculum policy platform from which teachers are enabled to exercise their pedagogies. I argue that the activities associated with the leadership practices employed in schools, via the enactment of curriculum policy, stem from the influence of the localised context of each school. I conclude the chapter by providing a summary of the data themes.

To maintain anonymity, I refer to the three selected schools as School A, School B and School C. Although the School Management Team (SMT) is the unit of analysis in this study, I indicate the responses of individual members of the three schools' SMTs. The principals and acting principals are referred to as Principal 1, Principal 2 and Principal 3 of the respective schools and the Heads of Departments are referred to as HOD. Deputy Principals are referred to as Deputy Principal 1, 2 or 3 of Schools A, B or C respectively.

5.2 MATERIAL ASPECTS OF THE THREE SELECTED SCHOOLS

According to Maringe and Moletsane (2015:349-350), the South African education system resembles a "two nation or two economies state", where the first system refers to well-resourced schools which mainly cater for white students and the second system refers to poorly resourced schools which mainly cater for black students. Utilising Maringe and Moletsane's definition, the second system resembles the working class school context which is the focus of this study. All three schools in this study are no-fee paying schools, which is an indication of their indigent status.

The semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions conducted with the principals and SMT members of the respective schools highlight the issues related to context which were discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.5) of this study. This section describes the working class context within which the three selected schools find themselves and it explores the effects of each school's specific context on their enactment of a curriculum policy platform. This is done thematically according to the different types of context that Ball, *et al.* (2012:19) highlight, i.e the situated context, the material context, professional cultures and the external context. Although I discuss these aspects of context individually, I acknowledge that they are interconnected. Further, within each of these themes I discuss the similarities as well as the differences in how the SMTs of the different schools perceive and enact a curriculum policy platform. This is done to indicate the nuances in the different schools' contexts. This section therefore describes the 'messy reality' (Ball, *et al.*,2012) in which schools in working class contexts enact a curriculum policy platform to lay a foundation significant to their specific school context.

5.2.1 SITUATED CONTEXT

Ball *et al.* (2012:21) refer to the situated context as the history and location of the school. In this study, although each school is located within the same township a few kilometres from each other, their situated contexts vary and therefore also their positioning in respect to the leadership practices employed in their enactment of their curriculum policy platform. In other words, they experience their context differently and in a contingent and localised manner.

School A is located in the hustle and bustle of the township, surrounded by shebeens, informal settlements and spaza² shops. The noise of the township buzz is clearly audible in the school's main buildings as well as on the school grounds. This school is located next to a busy road which is a thoroughfare linking the township with the national road. The congested flow of traffic adjacent to the school results in the school's exposure to incessant noise. This secondary school was built in 1996 to accommodate the growing number of high school students in this township, especially with the influx of students from the Eastern Cape and African countries such as Zimbabwe and the Republic of Congo, due to immigrants who come for work opportunities in South Africa. The school building can accommodate approximately 960 students, but the school has had an enrolment of more than 1200 students for the past ten years.

Since its establishment the school has had three principals. The current principal was appointed in 2013, after the resignation of the second principal. The current principal was appointed due to the poor National Senior Certificate (NSC) results of the school over the past few years. Prior to 2013 the school had NSC results below 50%. The current principal was given the directive by the director of the school's district to increase the school's NSC results. Since then School A's NSC results have fluctuated: in 2013 they had an 82,6% pass rate, in 2014 the pass rate was 61,9% and in 2015 it was 50,5%.

The school has 36 teachers, all of whom are paid by the government. The school does not have any School Governing Body (SGB) appointed teachers to supplement its staffing component due to a lack of adequate finances. Of the 36 teachers, nine are SMT members, including the principal. The staff establishment of the school has remained fairly constant for

Spaza shops and shebeens are informal shops and bars, respectively. They are a cornerstone of the informal economy in the township. ²

the past ten years, with relatively few teachers entering or leaving the school, which points to the stability of the school in terms of its teacher component. The staff has a more or less equal distribution of gender, and with the exception of one teacher, all the teachers are black. Most of the students are black. The school's language of learning and teaching (LoLT) is English, although the mother tongue of the majority (80%) of the students and teachers is isiXhosa. The principal explained that the students are expected to speak in English throughout the school day to improve their command of the English language, which, in turn, is expected to provide them with a better grasp on their curricular work.

According to members of the SMT, School A is characterised by students roaming the corridors and school grounds throughout the school day. The principal attributes this to the overcrowding of classes and a lack of discipline among the students. This in turn challenges teaching and learning at the school as the teachers first need to attend to the disciplinary issues before actual teaching and learning can take place. The principal describes his view on the challenges that they face in terms of teaching and learning as follows:

I don't think our learners understand the value of being at school. Sometimes I do get the sense that some of the kids have been pushed to come to school, you know.
(Principal 1)

The principal feels that learning is not held in high esteem by all the students. He is of the opinion that many students only come to school to receive the state grant for their parents as the grant is paid out only if students are still school-going, and according to him this leads to many disciplinary problems. Members of the SMT indicated that disciplinary problems encountered include students bunking classes and not doing their homework.

The deputy principal and the principal of School A attribute the disciplinary problems to the negative influence of the community when they refer to the culture that prevails around the school.

The challenges that the school has, to be honest, is the location of the school itself. I think we are having major problems with the culture that prevails around the school; the failure of the community to take ownership of the institution. (Deputy principal 1)

I think poverty plays a major role in the area, because what the people of the community see, they see the school as a hub for them to be able to get resources out of the school, to go sell those things, you know, for them to have a plate on the table.
(Principal 1)

The above comments indicate that the specific location of the school is regarded as highly challenging and the principal states that the school is constantly burgled. The principal suspects that the burglars are community members who steal the school's resources as a means of augmenting their survival. Members of the SMT concur that poverty in the school's surrounding community contributes to the burglaries and they are of the opinion that student disciplinary problems are due to the impact of the negative community influences on the students. They believe that the students bring with them to school values and attitudes that they are exposed to in the community and which in their opinion, are not supportive of productive school learning. As an already resource deprived school, the continuous burglaries and disciplinary challenges of students have a major destructive impact on the school's enactment of a curriculum policy platform as the school needs to focus on repairs and procurement of resources on a continuous basis, thereby reducing teaching and learning time.

Relating to their location, School A's principal explained that he has continuous challenges with students who come to school late, and when he confronts these students they usually mention the following:

I stay on my own; my parents are in the Eastern Cape. I am the head of the family. I have to fend for the little ones. After school I have to go and work at the restaurant. There was no power. I have to use a primus stove. I have to take the little ones to crèche. (Principal 1)

The reasons given above indicate the challenges that students face in the township and these are the challenges that the school has to deal with on a daily basis. All of these consequently limit the time that teachers and students have available to focus on teaching and learning as the principal notes that these issues need to be addressed first before actual teaching and learning can take place.

In sum, the comments given by School A's SMT indicate that they attribute their challenges mainly to the surrounding community influences. They feel that their students' negative behaviour has implications for the school's leadership practices of setting of direction and developing the students and teachers, as the students' behaviour has an impact on the goals that are set and how the goals can be reached. This in turn impacts on the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation to enhance collaboration between teachers, parents and students to improve students' progress. Additionally the students' behaviour and the community's exploitation of the school's resources has implications for the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning as the SMT has to constantly monitor and maintain the progress of the direction they have set.

The next school in this study, School B, is located along the national road in the same township as School A. This school has a neat building and is located at the periphery of the township. School B was built in 2006 and serves approximately 1467 students from the township. This school was built due to overcrowding at School A. The school has a staff establishment of 44 teachers with one additional teacher paid by the SGB. The SMT consist of 8 members, including the principal. The staff establishment of School B has remained fairly constant for the past nine years, with relatively few teachers entering or leaving the school. The school has had one acting principal since 2013 after the dismissal of the first principal. The first principal was dismissed due to ill management and the school has not had a permanent principal since then due to disputes with the application process. The current acting principal was appointed by the district director in 2013 with the mandate to improve results as the school had a NSC performance rate of 60, 4% in 2012. The Department of Education (DoE) expected an improvement in this percentage. The acting principal explained that the school's results show a fluctuation from 2012 until 2014. In 2012 their NSC results were 60, 4%. In 2013 they had NSC results of 60%, in 2014 it was 72, 1% and in 2015 it was 81%.

The (acting) principal and SMT describe the school as a 'quiet' school and state that students and teachers seem to be actively busy in their classes during lesson periods. Compared to School A, no external noises are heard in and around the school. The students and teachers

predominantly speak isiXhosa, but English is the school's Lolt. The students are mostly from the township itself with a few students from the Eastern Cape.

Principal 2 has a positive view on their school's geographic location in the township. He views their specific location at the periphery of the township as favourable for teaching and learning during the school day as they are less entangled with the township influence and less exposed to the constant noise from the township which School A finds so distracting. However, members of the SMT indicated that, although they are located some distance from the township houses, they still feel that the negative influences from the community have a disastrous effect on student performance at the school:

First of all, it's the community that these learners are coming from. If you go to the community right now you will find that on each and every corner of the street there is a tavern. So you know, now, even learners from primary school, they now have access to the taverns. (HOD)

Whenever we have an activity here at our school, we search learners. You find some booze and it is not right. A learner, you know, poured alcohol in a school bottle. (Principal 2)

The responses indicate that these SMT members regard the local community's influences as having a negative effect on the students. They feel that easy access to taverns within the community adds to social problems such as the abuse of alcohol and the use of drugs by students, which then flows over to the school as some students come to school drunk and even bring alcohol with them to school. These challenges arising from students interacting in the community have a negative bearing on the discipline of students and consequently their approach to their school work. According to Principal 2 this substantially affects their enactment of curriculum policy in the school as valuable curriculum time is spent on addressing these issues by means of random police searches during school time and teachers spending time disciplining the students. Apart from community influences such as exposure to taverns where drugs and alcohol are easily obtained, the principal also attributes school disciplinary problems to a lack of parental involvement. He feels that many parents do not seem interested in their children's education at school as many of them do not show up for meetings where their children's progress is discussed.

School B's SMT responses indicate that although they are located some distance from the centre of the community, they still experience its negative influences through the ill-disciplined behaviour of some of their students. According to the acting principal this positions them to focus on the leadership practice of developing and supporting their students as a means to reach goals of high achievement. In addition, due to poor parental involvement that they experience, the SMT focuses on directing projects to get more parents involved with the school in order to get the parents involved with the learning of their children.

The third school in this study, School C is located along the national road, further down the road from School B, also at the periphery of the township. This school is separated from the township houses by a small berm that acts as a division between the school premises and the township. The school is entirely constructed of prefabricated classrooms. The acting principal explained that this school was established in 2013 to accommodate the ever growing number of students in the township, especially the overflow of students from School B. School C grew out of School B and started with teachers from School B who volunteered to go to the new school. The excess number of Grade 8 and 9 students from School B were accommodated at School C in 2013. School C therefore started with only Grades 8 and 9 and has added a new grade each year, offering grade 12 for the first time in 2016. The school currently (2015) has 400 students and a staff establishment of 20 teachers with an acting and rotating SMT that consists of four members. The teachers who started at school C were mainly novice teachers who came from School B.

Since its establishment, School C has had three acting principals, all of whom are permanent post level one teachers at the school. The current acting principal explained that the appointment as acting principal is done on a rotation basis for a period of six months. The appointment as acting principal is made from the existing teacher body of the school. According to the current acting principal this results in the school having different acting principals and different acting SMT members throughout the school year resulting in an 'unstable' (temporary) SMT.

A member of the SMT explained that School C's Lolt is English and that most of the students are from the surrounding township area. In other words, the students' home language is isiXhosa, although the students are required to speak English during subject lessons at school. At the time of this study (2015), the school did not have a grade 12 class group yet and the principal indicated that their main focus in the enactment of curriculum policy was their Grade 9 Annual National Assessment (ANA) and Western Cape Education Department (WCED) systemic test results. Both their systemic tests and the ANA results were below the expected 50% and therefore they aim to raise this percentage through their enactment of a curriculum policy platform.

According to an SMT member a few students roam around the school yard during the normal school day which for him is an indication of these students' negative attitude towards their school going. Related to this, some of the challenges that School C face, are described as follow:

Latecoming, absenteeism in some cases. There are those who have habitual absenteeism. (HOD)

Parents don't come for meetings. We call them from term to term and they don't pitch up. (HOD)

We had a gang war from the township across the road into the premises here. That was about two weeks ago. So they come here with all sorts of weapons, looking for certain kids. (Principal 3)

As explained by Principal 3, despite being slightly removed from the township, the school is still exposed to community related problems such as gang wars. He also added:

There are drugs here in the community and the kids get dragged into that habits. Pregnancies as well. Sometimes a learner is out of school for a period of time and that makes that they have to catch up work. (Principal 3)

The SMT noted that all disciplinary problems with the students impact significantly on their enactment of a curriculum policy platform as students and teachers have to compensate for work lost due to late-coming, absenteeism and at times early closing of the school as a safety

measure against gang violence. The issues mentioned above have a negative effect on the school's enactment of a curriculum policy platform as students constantly lose time on subject related work. This then constrains the time available to teachers to complete the necessary curricular work.

Relating School C's situated context to how it positions them towards the execution of their leadership practices in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform brings to the fore an emphasis on the leadership practice of setting direction. According to the acting principal, having a temporary SMT has implications for the way in which the school leadership goes about setting direction as the constant change in SMT members throughout the year results in different views on how to set direction for the school. This also has implications for the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning as the rotating SMT members have different skills and ideas for managing and leading the manner in which the curriculum policy is implemented. Moreover, as a new and growing school, School C's situated context positions it to focus more on the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning as a means to establish themselves in the community. In other words, as mentioned by the acting principal, the school has to prove to parents and the community that it is needed and is making a positive difference in the community.

5.2.2 MATERIAL CONTEXT

Turning to the material context, Ball *et al.* (2012:29) describe the material context as the physical aspects of a school, such as the building and infrastructure. Included in these are the human and material resources available at the schools.

Referring to infrastructural challenges, the principal of School A indicated that a few prefabricated classrooms were erected in addition to the main school building to accommodate the growing student number. He describes the limitations of the prefabricated classrooms as follows:

But as it is at the moment, we have 16 mobile classrooms, you know, which in winter are extremely cold, in summer they're very hot, you know, which makes teaching in one form or the other, teaching and learning kind of, you know, uncomfortable. Some

of the prefabricated classroom floors have collapsed (mainly due to poor workmanship and overcrowding of students) and this led to an increased number of students to be moved into the other already overcrowded classes. (Principal 1)

The principal's concerns regarding the use of prefabricated classrooms highlight an issue which relates to conditions in which teaching and learning take place at the school. The poor state of the prefabricated classrooms impacts on the SMT's enactment of a curriculum policy platform as it requires them to find alternative ways of teaching and learning as a means to compensate for the negative physical conditions.

School B also indicated that due to an increase in the number of students, the school had to add additional prefabricated classrooms to accommodate all the students. An additional challenge of the prefabricated classrooms is that they are not secure and can easily be vandalised. Referring to these infrastructural challenges, a member of the SMT and the acting principal indicated the following:

Since we also have mobile (prefabricated) classes that are added in our building, the condition of those mobile classes is not good at all, especially the ceiling. You know, the ceiling is torn apart by learners-they hide their books in there. (HOD)

Another thing that is not good about the infrastructure is the ground, the sport ground. They are also not completed. It is necessary because sometimes you know, in order to think well, you need to have a fresh body and need to exercise. (Principal 2)

The structure of the prefabricated classrooms is described as not conducive to teaching and learning due to poor workmanship and vandalism by students. This has a negative effect on the school as it provides more challenges in terms of the management of teaching and learning as not all students can be accommodated in the damaged classrooms. As evident from Principal 2's comment, the damaged prefabricated classrooms also add to the disciplinary challenges encountered with the students as some students use the broken ceilings as a place to hide their books if they do not want to work in class. In addition, Principal 2 indicated that the conditions of their sports field do not contribute to the development of their students. He regards the upgrading of the sports field as important for teaching and learning as he believes that participating in sport activities will assist students in

their academic performance. This sentiment about sport facilities is shared by an SMT member of School A. She indicated the following:

I think the designers of the curriculum knew that extra-curricular activities would have a positive effect in any school. But unfortunately it is lacking in our school. Even if somebody would donate (extra curricular equipment), the community will vandalise it- they make things difficult and the department of course doesn't care about safety in our schools. (HOD)

The response indicates that even though the school would welcome sport facilities, they may add an additional challenge in their upkeep and safety. The township environment does not provide recreational and sport facilities and the principal and SMT members regard the development of students in their totality (both academic and sport) as important for effective learning. The school therefore has to find alternative ways to develop their students.

School C, is entirely constructed of prefabricated classrooms and does not have any specialised classrooms such as science laboratories, a library or computer laboratories. Members of the SMT indicated the same challenges with the prefabricated classrooms as Schools A and B, such as poor workmanship and extreme hot and cold conditions. According to the acting principal the lack of the necessary equipment and the lack of specialised classrooms limit the type and variety of subjects that the school can offer. He explained that subjects such as Computer Applied Technology (CAT) and Consumer Studies are not part of the school's subject choices as they do not have the necessary facilities at the school. This therefore limits the student's subject choices. Further, teachers teaching Science subjects such as Physical Sciences and Life Sciences are challenged to find innovative strategies to teach these subjects as they do not have the necessary apparatus and chemicals to perform prescribed scientific experiments. As mentioned by Principal 3, the limited resources available make it difficult for students to excel in certain subject areas and this then places further pressure on the teachers. The teachers have to find alternative ways of developing students and teachers.

A further challenge for the schools is the lack of material resources such as textbooks and computers. School A's principal and SMT members indicated that the challenges they face with the school infrastructure are exacerbated by the lack of material resources:

Sometimes when the numbers are increasing there'll be a shortage of textbooks, then the department will respond later, maybe after the first term. The whole first term learners do not have textbooks. (HOD)

I think the delivery of textbooks is a major problem. As I'm sitting with you now, the top-ups that we had ordered as early as Feb [February] has not been delivered. I still have about 96 Grade 12 learners who don't have Life Orientation textbooks, so that has a major impact. (Principal 1)

You know, the only disadvantage is that learners only find the computer at school, you know. (HOD)

Members of the SMT of School A expressed their concern with the shortage of resources which impacts negatively on the productivity of teachers and students as they do not have the necessary resources to assist them in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform. The SMT feel that a shortage of textbooks impedes on their teaching and learning as teachers do not have the necessary information for their planning and the students do not have the textbooks to assist them at home. The shortage of textbooks is ascribed to ineffectiveness from the DoE who fails to deliver requested textbooks in due time, thus putting students and teachers at a disadvantage regarding the availability of content knowledge.

According to an HOD at School A, students who are enrolled for practical subjects such as CAT and Consumer Studies are affected as they are not optimally exposed to the resources needed for the specific subject, such as stoves and computers. Although School A has a computer laboratory for the use of students, most of the students do not have this facility at home and this impacts negatively on their ability to learn and complete homework tasks. This positions the school in a particular way in terms of setting direction and developing students and teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills.

School B's SMT concur with the challenges of School A regarding the availability of textbooks.

We had that big challenge of textbooks. When we order textbooks, we order them, you know, online, and the Department would, you know, get textbooks for us and it's a process you know, a very, very long process. It drains the energy of the school, because you find that when that process occurs, on the other side the school is running, it is running without textbooks. And we had that challenge, even so much you know, that the learners voiced their challenge by trying to toi-toi because there were no textbooks at the school, in fact, not enough textbooks. And the Department is taking too long you know, to bring, to deliver, those textbooks. (Principal 2)

It is very difficult for teachers. It gives them extra work. They come and make copies of the tasks they were to teach. (HOD)

From these comments, it is evident that the shortage of textbooks led to further disciplinary problems with the students, as students also tend to express their concern albeit in a disconcerting manner. As with School A, the role of the DoE in the shortage of textbooks, is highlighted. According to one of the HODs, working with fewer textbooks, impacts not only on the students, but also the teachers and the school as a whole as it adds pressure on the teachers and increases the financial expenses of the school due to a multitude of copies being made to accommodate for the shortage of textbooks. Implicit in this is the effect the shortage of textbooks has on the management of teaching and learning in School B as teachers have to find alternative ways of sourcing information and completing the prescribed curriculum.

School C's acting principal made the following comment regarding their resources:

Textbooks are a big challenge, a big challenge. We applied for, send in the sheets to the director since February last year. Nothing arrived last year. Some has started coming this year, but we are far from getting the number that we asked for. So learners are sharing textbooks which is very challenging because now all that is a burden on our photocopier, making copies every now and again. And also from the parents' side-

they are not fully cooperating as far as donating photocopy paper and that stuff.
(Principal 3)

The challenges regarding textbooks that School C experience are similar to that of Schools A and B. Principal 3 indicated that they struggle with obtaining the necessary assistance from parents and the community to contribute towards photocopies that have to be made to due to the shortage of textbooks. He believes that this is the result of them (School C) having to prove themselves as a school that is needed in their area. Consequently the shortage of textbooks increases the financial burden of the school as they have to make more and more copies from textbooks. This impacts on their leadership practice of redesigning the organisation and working collaboratively with the parents as the school needs the financial assistance from parents and the community.

Contrary to Schools A and B, School C has a serious lack of computers, as evident from the following response of an SMT member.

We don't have a computer lab. We have three laptops, one for each grade. We're supposed to have four because we had three grades last year-grade 8, 9 and 10. So there was one laptop used by all grade 8 teachers, another one grade 9, another one grade 10. (HOD)

Principal 3 explained that the lack of computers for the use of students and teachers hampers the enactment of a curriculum policy platform as teachers cannot effectively complete the implementation of the curriculum as they are unable to expose their students to the value of technology as part of their teaching and learning. He elaborated that administrative duties are also severely affected as the school only has one laptop per grade which is used by the teachers to set their question papers and to load marks onto the system. The lack of computers impact on the way in which the SMT is able to manage teaching and learning, as the school has to deliver the curriculum content within a specified time frame and they have to complete the required School Based Assessment (SBA) tasks as part of their compliance with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Making a related point, one of the HODs mentioned the following:

It really delays teachers you know. You have to wait for one another. Especially when it comes to exam times, we need to punch in marks, to come up with the spread sheets. That is challenging. Grade 9 the GET [General Education and Training] phase especially, because those marks have got to be imported into spread sheets and all. So it takes a lot of time. It's very challenging. (HOD)

The comment indicates that the shortage of computers available to teachers for their administrative duties mainly impacts on their timely completion of the curriculum as they have to capture the school's results at specified dates for DoE compliance purposes. This has negative implications for the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in their context, especially since CAPS is regarded by the school's SMT as a fully packed curriculum with little or no time to spare, thus impacting on how the SMT manage teaching and learning at their school.

The data presented thus far reveal the tangible factors that impact the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. The section which follows presents the intangible factors which also play a role in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform and which position schools in distinct ways in terms of their leadership practices in response to these factors.

5.2.3 PROFESSIONAL CULTURES

Within the professional culture, Ball *et al.* (2012:26) include intangible variables such as ethos, values and commitments. Following Ball *et al.* (2012), I am interested in how these aspects of professional culture shape the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in the three schools in this study and how the professional culture positions the schools in terms of their leadership practices. In this section on the material dimension of enacting a curriculum policy platform in schools I explore how principals and SMT members experience the professional cultures within their schools and how this professional culture positions their leadership practices.

On the question of how he views the professional culture within his school, School A's principal answered that all his teachers are qualified and are teaching in the field that they are qualified in:

I think professionalism is not only about what you deliver in the classrooms. It starts with yourself. Number 1, it starts with your dress code. People don't think that dress code is important, because people tend to politicise things and say there's no law that tells teachers how to dress. But, as a professional, you've got to be presentable.
(Principal 1)

From the response it is evident that School A's principal regards the dress code of his teachers as an important measure of professionalism as he believes that it impacts on teaching and learning. In his words: "*It's all about impartation. What children see is what children would like to be*". Here this principal expresses the importance of a dress code in assisting with teaching and learning in his school and he associates the dress code with students' aspiration towards upward mobility in their education.

The principal of School A also emphasises the importance of the commitment of teachers as part of their professionalism. To him committed teachers are dedicated in performing their duties. He acknowledges that at his school he has a gap concerning his teachers' commitment. He views some of his teachers to be committed, while others not. He ascribes this gap to a lack of a monitoring system at his school and believes that commitment will improve if teachers are monitored regularly. Contrary to the principal's view on commitment, an SMT member is of the opinion that their school has dedicated teachers as they also teach on Saturdays and Sundays, and he views this 'extra' teaching as commitment.

School B's acting principal has a positive view on the commitment and qualification of his teachers. According to this principal his teachers are all qualified and teach in their field of expertise. He indicates that for him professionalism involves quality teaching and learning which can be attained if all teachers are in their classes teaching throughout the school day. Included in this, he regards the commitment of his teachers as "very good". He made the following comment:

They are committed because we have Saturday classes, we have afternoon classes. Some are coming in the morning at 07H00 for morning classes. Even during the holidays we have classes. (Principal 2)

The comment indicates that this principal measures the level of his teachers' commitment based on the extra classes that they offer for students and he views these extra classes as contributing to quality teaching and learning.

The acting principal of School C highlights their unique situation of a rotating temporary SMT:

They are still not experienced. We don't have a permanent SMT structure. We look at the more experienced ones and incorporate them into the SMT. From time to time there is tension you see. From time to time, they are not so explicit, but you can see maybe in groups, favouring this person and not the other person, you see. Because situations like that can sometimes lead to sabotage of each other because somebody wants your position or the person wants the other person's position and then they, some kind of sickness or sabotage could happen-mainly on the administrative side.
(Principal 3)

This comment from the acting principal points to the challenges, mostly in terms of experience, related to a temporary SMT, in a school where most of the teachers were novice teachers when the school was opened. He is of the opinion that, due to inexperience, SMT members cannot manage specific situations when they occur, such as assisting teachers with managing teaching and learning if the need arises. Principal 3 also feels that continually changing the SMT leads to goalposts being changed frequently as the priorities of the different acting principals and acting SMT members may differ due to differing ways of management and a different vision and mission. He therefore feels that it is difficult to maintain the momentum of curriculum enactment as teachers and students have to adapt to different leadership and management styles within the time span of one school year. Principal 3 also feels that the temporary nature of the SMT at the school can lead to animosity or an 'unstable' SMT as people constantly fight for promotion posts.

Further challenges in leading a 'growing' school such as school C are highlighted by the principal. He commented on the professionalism of his teachers as follows:

We don't really have people who are qualified for LO [Life Orientation] and the challenge emanates from the fact that there was a circular last year which said that educators who are in this group for six months or more on a continuous basis could be

automatically converted into permanency. So we had a whole host of them here, more than eight, whom we converted at the same time. There was no way of looking at the school's needs, curriculum needs, for which subjects we need teachers. So, it was an instruction. We could not analyse and advertise accordingly. (Principal 3)

Principal 3 holds the view that due to policy mandates from the DoE, the quality and qualification of teachers for specific subjects are under dispute. According to him this affects the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in a direct manner as some teachers are not qualified to teach the subject which they are currently teaching.

The presentation of data on the professional culture of the three selected schools indicates that professional culture is multifaceted and contested. Depending on how the principal and SMT view the level of professional culture at their schools, influences their positioning towards the different leadership practices. The next section of the material dimension of policy enactment presents the data on the influence of the external pressures on the schools.

5.2.4 EXTERNAL CONTEXT

The last contextual dimension of policy enactment that I present is the dynamics of the external context. Here Ball *et al.* (2012:36) refer to the pressures and expectations due to wider local and national policy frameworks, such as school ratings and legal requirements and responsibilities. The CAPS that was introduced in 2011 include testing regimes and monitoring systems which has placed additional pressure on schools in order to adhere to the requirements. Schools have to account for their curricular work and student performance as they influence the school's reputation. This ultimately impacts on how the schools read and interpret the curriculum policy. In the South African context the DoE expectations are particularly relevant as high schools are labeled as performing or underperforming schools based on their Grade 9 Annual National Assessment (ANA) and National Senior Certificate (NSC) results. Schools are compared across divides and teachers and principals are held accountable for poor results.

The pressures of the DoE's expectation of results were mentioned by many of the interviewees from all three schools. School A's principal had the following response:

But the unfortunate part is that our department is looking for results. When? Now. And that's our major problem. It's all about results really. Results, results and meeting the target. Which is good, I do agree with the department on that, but sometimes I also feel that my teachers are being drained. It's all about pleasing the master. (Principal 1)

The above response on the attainment of results is echoed by an SMT member and the acting principal of School B. They responded as follows:

We have an improvement plan for grade 9s. Our grade 9s have extra hours. We think that it will improve the results. (HOD)

The department expects us to reach at least 68%. We are also aiming at about 75%. Last year it went well, because we got 72,3%. I am not sure whether we are ambitious, but looking at the number, the huge number of our Grade 12 group this year, would actually not make it possible for us to reach that 75%. (Principal 2)

The comments indicate the level of despair regarding results that is felt throughout the school due to pressure from the external context of the DoE. The focus of schools A and B is mainly on improving their Grade 12 results and on attaining the expected target from the DoE. Elaborating on their poor results, the principal of School A clarifies that he does not view their contextual challenges as the overriding factor for poor results, but that these challenges do have an effect on the results as the school has to address various challenges when they arise at the school, which takes away valuable teaching time.

As a growing school, which does not offer grade 12 yet, School C experiences an increased focus by the DoE on their Grade 9 ANA results. The acting principal indicated that:

Our ANA's are very bad. As a new school the learners from School B came straight here. It is those learners who are repeaters. As a result they perform badly in ANA. They are promoted to the next grade because of the PYP [Progress due to years in phase], not because they passed on their own, no. But we are doing what we can under the circumstances. (Principal 3)

The statement indicates that School C's principal is of the opinion that their poor performance in the ANA is the result of their inheritance of under-achieving students from School B which now has a negative influence on their results. The negative results are exacerbated by the Progress due to years in phase (PYP) system that was introduced by the DoE whereby students progress to the next grade as they may not repeat more than once in a school phase. This system has significant implications for the school's leadership practices as these students require additional teaching and learning support.

The principal and SMT of School A emphasised that they have had fluctuating results for the past four years. The school has reached the expected 60% for the NSC examination a few years ago, but then dropped again to 42%. The SMT describes the relation between their context and their performance in terms of results as follows:

We are told not to make context the reason for poor performance, but it is a factor that contributes to learners not performing. (HOD)

It coerces us to deviate from our core business. You know, we're dealing mostly with disciplinary issues, more than the actual thing you know, that we came here for, that is teaching and learning. We spend a lot of time with learners you know, disciplining them. (HOD)

There are learners who pass because of PYP It kills us, especially grade 12 where there's a lot of learners who are there because of the system, but they are not supposed to be there. As a result you as teachers, you have to focus mainly on them and then it's difficult to finish up your syllabus. It's really an impact on the whole school. (Principal 1)

School A's principal also highlights the effect of the PYP system and the additional support and intervention strategies that need to be implemented. It is experienced that many of these PYP students cannot cope with the demands of the curriculum in the higher grades. Subsequently this influences teaching time due to intervention strategies that have to be implemented to support these PYP students. This in turn has an effect on the school's results as described in the comment of the principal.

5.2.5 SUMMARY

The responses obtained from the principals and SMTs of the three schools in this study indicate that the overcrowding in School A led to the establishment of School B and the overcrowding in School B led to School C being opened. From the interviews it is evident that the challenges that these schools face in terms of their enactment of a curriculum policy platform, are mainly the result of what happens in the community. In other words, the social factors from the community impact heavily on the schools' enactment of a curriculum policy platform. However, not only is it social factors from the community which impact on the schools, but the responses indicate that the expectation of results from the DoE, especially in terms of the NSC examination and the ANAs, places tremendous pressure on these schools to perform in terms of student results. This pressure is intensified by policy initiatives such as PYP. As evident from the comments, the leadership practices of all three schools in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform are geared towards the attainment of results, as expected by the DoE.

The responses presented also indicate that the schools have various similar, but also distinct, challenges due to their specific contextual location and historical placement and they enact the curriculum policy platform in different ways due to their contextual position. Each of the three schools has differing ways of receiving and engaging with their contextual challenges and hence with the curriculum policy. There are subtle differences in how the schools perceive the curriculum policy and how they respond via their leadership practices. Further, the comments from the participants revealed that the contextual factors associated with these schools provide not only the background against which these school enact a curriculum policy platform, but it also constitutes the everyday life of these schools.

This section presented the 'messy' reality of the three selected schools within which a curriculum policy platform is enacted. Intersections between the policy and the different aspects of the schools' material dimension lay the cornerstone for the creation of a curriculum policy platform as these contextual aspects of the material dimension of policy enactment present the conditions within which CAPS has to be enacted. The positioning of their leadership practices towards the establishment of a curriculum policy platform is based on

how they cope with the demands of their situated, material, professional and external contexts.

The next section focuses on the discursive dimension of policy enactment.

5.3 THE DISCURSIVE DIMENSION

The previous section presented the data on the materiality within which the three schools in this study have to enact a curriculum policy platform. This section focuses on how the curriculum policy is represented through visual materials (such as textbooks, trophies and recording sheets of students) and activities (such as meetings and in-service training) within the schools. These types of visual materials are called artefacts which inform and form the “ways of being and becoming” (Ball *et al.*, 2012:122) in a school in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform. The artefacts and activities that are used to represent the requirements of curriculum policy point to the discourse that prevails in a school and which becomes part of the curriculum policy platform.

To remind, Foucault (in Maguire *et al.*, 2011:597) describes discourse as “the set of conditions in accordance with which a practice is exercised, in accordance with which that practice gives rise to partially new or new statements and in accordance with which it can be modified”. In other words, discourse refers to ways of being and becoming, entailing how we go about pursuing what we have to pursue, with what we have. In the case of enacting a curriculum policy platform in schools and in respect of the leadership practices that are the focus of this thesis, discourse refers to how the SMT pursue the requirements of the curriculum policy within the context of their schools. In other words, the artefacts and activities that they use to enact a curriculum policy platform denote the prevailing discourse.

Discourse provides the basis for people’s behaviour, their ways of thinking, doing and talking. It points to the type of behaviour that is allowable. In other words, discourse normalises behaviour and practices as a way of reaching what is expected or needed. It refers to the direction set in which people act and behave, i.e. the existing acceptance of what is normal and acceptable in the school environment (see Chapter 2 section 2.4).

Ball *et al.* (2012:122) explain that discourse is twofold, in that institutions such as schools are both productive of and constituted by discursive practices, events and texts in the process of policy enactment. In the current South African dispensation and performative regime within which schools find themselves and within which they have to enact a curriculum policy platform, schools are positioned to attain specified results to avoid being negatively labeled. Schools follow certain strategies to avoid negative labeling. Schools are thus positioned by the incoming discourse (CAPS) and they respond by means of their own discursive strategies, i.e. what they do and think about the in-coming curriculum policy. CAPS provides the framework within which the school's practices take place which then give rise to new statements and new ways of doing or viewing things in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform. These discourses (the ways of doing and thinking) then become part of the everyday life of schools. This section provides the data on how the SMTs of the three schools in this study are both productive of and constituted by sets of discursive practices, events and texts (see Maguire *et al.*, 2011:597) in the process of the enactment of a curriculum policy platform.

In this section I present the data on the discursive strategies at work in the three selected schools in terms of the requirements of CAPS and how the schools respond through their own discursive strategies. According to Ball *et al.* (2012:122) discourses construct the objects of which they speak. They (Ball *et al.*, 2012:123) elaborate that policies are discursive formations that inform the school's institutional environment. Building on this, I am particularly interested in how the schools in this study are constructed and positioned by the incoming CAPS and how the responses of the SMTs further construct the school in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform. Curriculum policy in South Africa carries within it notions of achievement such as labeling as a 'good' or 'dysfunctional' school. Maguire *et al.* (2011:603) indicate that discursive productions of the 'good' school focus on how the school selects, interprets and translates specific aspects of policy initiatives and mandates. The 'good' school in the South African education system is portrayed as the school which achieves the required results as mandated by the DoE. This discursive formation of the 'good' school implies that there is a discourse of the 'good' teacher and the 'good' student who compose the 'good' school. (see Ball *et al.*, 2012:126-134). The 'good' student is thus

depicted as the student who achieves the required results and the 'good' teacher is depicted as the teacher who has a high level of attainment in his/her subject.

I now present the data on how the schools are positioned by the incoming discourse (CAPS) and how they respond via their own discursive practices in order to produce the 'good' student and the 'good' teacher (see Ball *et al.*, 2012:126-134) in the process of producing the 'good' school.

5.3.1 INCOMING DISCOURSE OF CAPS

The curriculum policy coming into schools (CAPS) is associated with many expectations as evident from the comments during the interviews. These expectations are received and acted on by the SMTs in various ways in the process of the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. From the data gathered, I have found that all three schools in this study receive CAPS mainly in terms of results and time constraints due to a lot of subject content that has to be covered. On a question of how they perceive CAPS, the participants had the following comments:

It's all about results really. Results, results and meeting the target that's from the department. It's all about pleasing the master [referring to the head of education].
(Principal 1)

The department expects us to reach at least 68%. We are also aiming at about 90%. I'm aiming very high, because I know when you aim high, even when you fall, you will fall among the stars. (Principal 2)

Our learners perform bad in ANAs, they perform badly at the end of the year. They are promoted because of the number of years in phase, not because they passed on their own. But we aim for 50%. If not, the Department is on us. (Principal 3)

CAPS is about content and of course assessment. There are topics where you ask yourself what you can do, but the document restricts us. (HOD – School A)

The above responses point to the frustrations the SMTs experience with the results expectations of CAPS. According to DoE expectations, if the schools do not attain more than

60% pass rate in the NSC examinations or more than 50% in the ANAs they are labeled as underperforming schools. The 'good' school is therefore portrayed as a school which attains more than 60% in the NSC examinations and more than 50% in the ANAs. Due to pressure to perform at a certain level, the SMTs of all three schools highlight the manner in which their leadership practices are geared towards the attainment of results. In the words of School A's principal: "*It is about pleasing the master*". In other words, he is of the opinion that the attainment of results is not necessarily about what is best for the student. The comments indicate that all three schools focus on obtaining the expected results associated with CAPS and not on developing their students in any other capacity. The comment from the HOD points to the constraints associated with CAPS as teachers are instructed what to teach, which leaves little room for innovation.

The SMT members and principals also voiced their opinion regarding the time management associated with the implementation of CAPS:

We have extra classes to finish the curriculum. (Principal 1)

It's the time that is a problem. CAPS takes too much time. It makes it difficult for the school to run certain programmes. (Principal 2)

The CAPS document says you must do this particular task by this time. Our learners need that individual attention, but sometimes you just go through the motions to finish the CAPS document. (Principal 3)

When it comes to exam times we need to punch in marks, to come up with spread sheets [recording sheets]- that is so challenging- it takes a lot of time and we only have one laptop per grade. (School C: HOD)

The DoE has specific due dates for assessments to be completed and for recording sheets to be submitted, indicating the prescriptiveness of CAPS in the process of producing the 'good' school. If schools do not adhere to these due dates, they are branded as non-complying. School B's principal indicated that due to CAPS taking too much time it interferes with other programmes for development that they want to organise as they have to first focus on completing the necessary content. School C's principal emphasised the time issue related to CAPS. He indicated that they do not have the time to give individual attention to their students

and therefore cannot support their students efficiently due to the time constraints they experience with CAPS in light of their contextual challenges, such as having only one computer available per grade to complete their recording sheets.

At School A, one of the HODs elaborated on the time issue and the constant surveillance by subject advisers, which negatively affect their enactment of a curriculum policy platform. The interview extract below sums up her experiences:

Another challenge which impacts very negatively on our practices is short paced notices from the side of the department. I just received a correspondence from our department, which arrived yesterday. That correspondence is about June examination papers that need to be submitted on Monday. On Monday that needs to be with the CA (curriculum adviser) [subject adviser]. And then they are just going to look for compliance. Now, we are not going to look at the standard of the paper or quality of the paper. Just comply. (HOD)

The comments from the HOD point to the continuous monitoring and surveillance by subject advisers (curriculum advisers) to ensure that the requirements of CAPS are adhered to, specifically with the setting, moderation and monitoring of question papers. According to this SMT member, these ill-timed requests result in the setting of question papers which are not of a high standard, but only serve the purpose of compliance with the DoE. The quality of question papers is therefore compromised in order to adhere to the compliance regime of the DoE. In other words, the curricular content would be covered and the number of school based assessment tasks completed as expected, but quality in the learning would fall short as the HOD feels that they do not have the necessary time to cover all aspects of the curriculum with the type of depth that is required by the question paper.

School C's principal had a different opinion regarding the constant visits by subject advisers. This principal perceives the monitoring done by subject advisers as supportive, as they constantly get positive feedback and he indicated that the subject advisers assist them with the interpretation of curriculum documents. This sentiment is shared by another HOD of School B, who indicated that subject advisers support and guide them and provide training

when it is needed. They do not only see the school visits from subject advisers as monitoring from the side of the Department.

The SMT members also voiced their opinions regarding the shortage of textbooks which is a much needed artefact in the CAPS curriculum. Teachers and students are required to have a textbook that complies with the CAPS content in each subject area, but this does not happen, as evident from the comments below.

School A:

We need to have textbooks so learners can understand, but we did not receive a lot of textbooks. The whole first term learners do not have textbooks. (HOD)

The top-ups of textbooks that we ordered as early as February, has not been delivered. We have to purchase those textbooks, but as a section 20 school we are struggling. (Principal 1)

School B:

It drains the energy of the school, because the school is running without textbooks. The Department is taking too long to deliver the textbooks. It gives teachers extra work as they have to make copies of what they have to teach. (Principal 2)

School C:

Learners are sharing textbooks, so it's a burden on the school [not having sufficient textbooks]- we have to make lots of copies. It's very expensive. Teachers go to neighbouring schools to get a teacher's copy of a textbook. It slows the working time. Each teacher and learner must have a copy of a textbook. (Principal 3)

The responses signify that the expectation of textbooks, associated with CAPS, challenges the schools to deliver the content as they have shortages in textbooks. As is evident from the responses, the expectations for appropriate textbooks to teach the CAPS curriculum is not always adhered to due to delays from the DoE and also the schools' unique contextual situations. The pressure to perform is thus met by the schools' contextual dimensions.

It is evident that the DoE prescribes the direction that schools should set in terms of the goals that the schools have to achieve. Training and development sessions are mainly done by subject advisers with a focus on obtaining results. This leaves little room for schools to be innovative or deviate from the prescriptions of the department. Furthermore, the constant surveillance by District officials as a means of managing the curriculum points to the continuous monitoring that is associated with CAPS. The responses indicate that this incoming discourse specifies the tools to be used in the execution of the leadership practices in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform in the school.

In sum, this section presented the data on how the participants in this study experience the incoming discourse of CAPS which is associated with artefacts such as textbooks, recording sheets and the labeling of schools as underperforming or non-complying. The responses indicate that the incoming CAPS is also accompanied by activities such as surveillance of schools by District officials which, in turn is followed by training sessions aimed at developing teachers to comply with CAPS requirements. The responses further indicate that the SMT members of the three schools are positioned to adhere to the requirements associated with the incoming CAPS in terms of attaining specified results, completing the curriculum content as specified and adhering to mandated due dates as specified, although their contextual factors may impede this.

The next section presents the data on how the schools discursively respond to the incoming discourse of CAPS through their production of the 'good' student (the student who attains good results), and the 'good' teacher who complies with the requirements of CAPS.

5.3.2 DISCURSIVE PRODUCTIONS OF THE 'GOOD' STUDENT

The schools respond to this incoming discourse (CAPS) in particular ways. All three schools are geared towards the attainment of results, in other words, they are geared to construct the 'good' school as required by the incoming policy discourse associated with CAPS and propagated by the subject advisers. This section presents the artefacts and activities associated with how the schools discursively construct the 'good' student in pursuit of producing the 'good' school through their leadership practices.

The three schools in this study each present their own discursive strategies in producing the 'good' student. Some of the schools encourage students to become a 'good' student by means of posting visual signs such as posters and trophies around the school and engaging in activities to motivate students to work hard at their education. The following comments indicate how the schools discursively respond to the incoming CAPS and how CAPS consequently influences their positioning towards their leadership practices.

School A:

We have prize giving ceremonies for grades 8-12. We give them something when they perform well. They are awarded. (HOD)

Learners who excel – every year we entice learners with bursaries from NGOs [non-governmental organisations]. (Deputy principal 1)

School B had a similar response:

We give our learners tags, the top ten from grades 8-12. This is to motivate them and to show them that what they are doing is actually looked at. It is appreciated and they must do more. (Principal 2)

The principal of School A commented that they have a poster of a former student displayed in the corridors as a means to motivate students. This former student excelled despite adverse circumstances and the principal explained that he hopes that this poster will motivate and remind their students to also excel. School C on the other hand, indicated that they do not have any prize giving events, posters or other functions to celebrate the achievement of students as they do not have the necessary finances or the support or infrastructure needed for these types of ceremonies. They mainly focus on talks with their students, in particular with the Grade 9 students (with a focus on the ANAs), as a means of motivating the students to improve their performance. As they are a growing school, with a rotating SMT, their main focus is firstly on obtaining the much needed material resources to assist with the enactment of a curriculum policy platform, i.e. material resources such as textbooks and computers. The comments indicate that the discursive responses of the schools are greatly influenced by their contextual circumstances.

From the responses it is evident that the 'good' student is portrayed as a student who excels in his/her academic work. Awards, posters, individual talks and motivational sessions are used as discursive strategies in the production of the 'good' student. Further strategies that all three schools embark on include extra classes after school, as well as on Saturdays for School A. Some teachers at School A also start their classes at 07H00, an hour before normal school hours. In other words, the schools are extending the school hours, hoping that it will support students in their learning. The students who attend these extra classes and who receive the awards are considered the 'good' students.

These discursive strategies impact on the leadership practice of setting direction as they steer students to set goals of high achievement in order to become the 'good' student. They also impact on the development of the students as the principals and members of the SMTs view the extra classes as support and development. All three schools indicated that they mainly focus on extra classes to support the students in their learning, as they do not have other means (time, textbooks, computers or finances) to support the students. The extended school hours point to a redesigning of the organisation as this means that they have moved away from the normal school hour arrangements. Also, the schools' management of teaching and learning is affected as the teachers need to constantly monitor who attends these classes, as a way of proving their intervention and support strategies to the continuous surveillance of the DoE via the subject advisers. These strategies are intended to construct the 'good' student as an integral part of the curriculum policy platform.

In sum, this section presented the strategies at work in the three schools in order to discursively produce the 'good' student. Award ceremonies, extra classes and posters are what constitute most of these strategies. From the responses it can be derived that the 'good' student is perceived as the student who obtains rewards, attends the extra classes and complies with DoE expectations.

5.3.3 DISCURSIVE PRODUCTIONS OF THE 'GOOD' TEACHER

In pursuing the production of the 'good' school, the focus on the construction of the 'good' teacher is on certain expectations of the teacher in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. Ball *et al.* (2012:133) state that the 'good' teacher is produced out of high levels of (subject) attainment. In the case of the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in South African schools, the 'good' teacher is perceived as the teacher who produces good results for their subject in line with DoE expectations. The DoE holds the SMT members responsible and accountable if there is a drop in results while at the same time acknowledging those teachers whose students perform well by means of public award ceremonies. The production of the 'good' teacher is thus a central facet in the establishment of a curriculum policy platform.

From the interviews it is evident that the principals and SMT members strive towards adhering to DoE expectations despite challenging circumstances. In constructing the 'good' teacher, the following comments are indicative of the discursive strategies that the schools follow:

School A:

We established a special curriculum committee where subject heads are hands-on, bringing information from the various subjects. All teachers must be involved. (HOD)

Some teachers begin the day at half past 6 in the morning. They are expected to have extra classes for grade 12. (HOD)

A member of School B's SMT made the following comment:

A motivational speaker will come and motivate our teachers. (HOD)

School C indicated the following:

The CAPS document says you must do this particular task, by this time do that. We always encourage teachers to do it as fast as they can to avoid this congestion of everyone needing the laptop at the same time. (Principal 3)

The above strategies indicate the ways in which teachers are shaped to adhere to DoE and CAPS expectations. At School A teachers are expected to be part of sub committees as a means to get more teachers involved with curricular decisions. One of the HODs of School A

mentioned that teachers are expected to have extra classes for grade 12 students as a means of improving their results. Motivation is used as a strategy at School B to construct the 'good' teacher. School C's principal expects teachers to complete the curriculum in the shortest time possible in order to adhere to due dates from the DoE. Taking all the above together, the 'good' teacher is presented as a motivated person, who is part of the different committees of the school and who can complete the curriculum in a shortened time period.

The principal of School A also extends the construction of the 'good' teacher to their dress code:

I'm very strict when it comes to dress code. You don't come here wearing tekkies and a beanie as teachers. (Principal 1)

This principal is of the opinion that "students become what they see". In other words, if teachers are dressed appropriately, it may motivate students to have high expectations of themselves. School B extends their construction of the 'good' teacher by awarding teachers with trophies if their subjects perform well in the NSC examinations.

In constructing the 'good' teacher the interviewees also indicated that they have certain degrees of monitoring taking place. These are their responses:

For the June reports to be issued this year, I had to lock the gate and keep the key with me. I said: Nobody leaves the school until I get all the marks. (Principal 1)

We have a check-up tool that would look at the completion of SBA [School Based Assessment]. I have a monitoring book with which I go to classes to see if teachers are there teaching. (Principal 2)

Sometimes the teachers, they do not understand the purpose of progressive discipline. You are just putting a corrective measure in place. You need to correct somebody because you want a smooth running of the school. (Principal 2)

School C had a similar response as School B when it comes to teachers who do not comply with curricular expectations.

If it becomes a trend, I remind that person of a process called progressive discipline. I remind him of that because we've got procedures to do. (Principal 3)

The comment from School A's principal indicates that he resorts to drastic measures to ensure that teachers adhere to DoE deadlines for the submission of recording sheets. School B's focus is more on monitoring the compliance of teachers in terms of school based assessments. Principal 2 indicated that he constantly walks around the classrooms to ensure that teachers are in their classes teaching at all times. The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) was also mentioned as a monitoring tool which focuses on the curriculum. As evident from the responses on progressive discipline, the schools have a constant focus on the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning to ensure that teachers adhere to curricular requirements. If teachers do not comply with the school and DoE's requirements, they are formally disciplined through the process of progressive discipline in order to 'create' the 'good teacher'.

All three schools indicated that they have regular staff briefings, meetings, one-on-one discussions, afterschool classes, motivational sessions, continuous monitoring and subcommittees in order to develop teachers and to improve communication between staff members and to motivate staff to excel. The main focus of all three schools in pursuing these development strategies is to produce results and to adhere to due dates from the DoE.

The responses of Schools A and B indicated that they have a plethora of activities associated with producing the 'good' teacher as required by CAPS. School C did not indicate as many activities as Schools A and B, which can possibly be ascribed to their status as a fairly new school with a rotating SMT who need to focus on establishing themselves. Based on the responses, the production of the 'good' teacher is expected to assist with obtaining the relevant target as indicated by the DoE. Therefore, the 'good' teacher is portrayed as the teacher whose subject attains the highest percentage and the teacher who complies with the CAPS requirements in terms of due dates and completion of content within the prescribed time frame. The discursive strategies mentioned are aimed at constructing this 'good' teacher.

The 'good teacher' is thus portrayed as the teacher who follows the procedures set by the school, which in turn is expected to lead to improved results. The 'good' teacher is the teacher

who has extra classes for students, who dresses appropriately, who adheres to due dates and who completes the content and assessments of CAPS as expected.

The schools' discourse elements around policy coming into the school, i.e CAPS (associated with the NSC and ANA), IQMS (as a means to assess the development and performance of teachers) and the continuous surveillance by the DoE. As evident from the responses these policies govern the functioning of the SMT, as they (the SMT) are in a constant battle to produce the required results within the limitations and possibilities of their realities.

5.3.4 SUMMARY

The responses of the SMT members indicate that the schools employ various discursive strategies in response to the incoming CAPS in order to produce the 'good' student and the 'good' teacher in the process of producing the school which attains the required results. All three of the schools in this study are focused on obtaining the expected results required by the DoE. The discursive strategies that they employ include prize giving ceremonies, meetings, progressive discipline and various informal as well as formal meetings to discuss the issues at hand and in order to promote learning and teaching. Students, teachers and the school are geared towards high performance in many unplanned ways, via their leadership practices through which they interpret curriculum policy in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform.

5.4 THE INTERPRETIVE DIMENSION

The previous two sections presented the materiality of the three schools and the discourse that prevails in the schools. This section focuses on Ball *et al.*'s (2012:45) interpretive dimension which involves an engagement with the languages of the policy (interpretation) and putting the policy text into action (translation). Ball *et al.* (2012:43-45) explain that interpretation involves an initial reading and making sense of the policy (decoding), whereas translation involves activities such as meetings, talks and plans (recoding). The focus of the interpretive dimension is on the policy text and how this text is interpreted in light of the schools' material context and the discourse which 'speaks' these schools. The

implementation of curriculum policy works relative to the interpretive dynamics found in the schools. In other words, interpretation points to what the schools can or cannot do in terms of their responsibilities, possibilities and priorities and translation points to giving symbolic value to the policy (Ball *et al.*, 2012:45).

I present this section in terms of the four core leadership practices. In other words, *how* the schools' SMTs go about interpreting the curriculum policy document and how this interpretation translates into actions associated with the leadership practices within their working class school context. It thus refers to how the schools' SMTs, via their leadership practices make meaning of the curriculum policy, where interpretation involves a strategy (plan) and translation involves tactics (action) (Ball *et al.*, 2012:47). Ball *et al.* (2012:44) indicate that there is a relationship between the interpretation of policy and the policy environment. This relationship leads to the building of the leadership practices. For Ball *et al.* (2012:47) interpretation and translation involve the production of text, professional development, changing structures, the allocation of posts of responsibility and the allocation of resources. This relates directly to the four core leadership practices which are the focus of the study. To remind, the four core leadership practices are: setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning. This study focuses on interpretation and translation of the formal curriculum policy at the level of the SMT of the schools, i.e. how the SMT understands the policy and how they put this understanding into practice. This section presents the data on how the interpretation and translation via the schools' leadership practices create a curriculum policy platform within a working class school context.

As mentioned in Chapter 2 (section 2.2) leadership practices are conceptualised as the effect of actions and interactions which are shaped by the identity of the people and their capital, as well as by the context (Eacott, 2010:220). By this I refer to the way in which leadership practices take into account the context, the individual as well as their interrelations. This section presents the data on how the SMTs of the three selected schools respond to the received curriculum policy within the context of working class schools, via the four core leadership practices, with the aim of generating a sustainable curriculum policy platform. Here I refer to how they read and understand the policy and how they implement the policy via their

leadership practices. The organising question in this section is on *how* the SMTs at schools go about their leadership practices to create a curriculum policy platform for the enactment of the curriculum policy by teachers in their classrooms. The study revealed the level of pressure that exists on and in these schools to enact a curriculum policy platform in a way that is meaningful to them. It also reveals how the SMT mediates the enactment of a curriculum policy platform between their working class school contexts and the expectations of the DoE, specifically with the focus on results. The comments show that schools of a similar type respond differently to curriculum policy. They have different interpretive environments and people which enable them to respond differently and therefore the manifestation of their leadership practices also differ.

The interpretive dimension also takes into account the many and different policy actors involved with the interpretation and translation of policy (see Chapter 3 section 3.4.2) as policy interpretation involves the meaning that specific people attach to the policy (Ball *et al.*, 2011b:626). In the case of this research the data reveals that the SMT members take on different roles in the process of interpreting the curriculum policy. The findings indicate that the deputy principals are mainly regarded as the narrators who are responsible for the interpretation, selection and enforcement of the meaning of policy, with the aid of subject advisers. The HODs are regarded as the transactors and translators who are responsible for the monitoring of the curriculum and the production of texts and artefacts to support the implementation of the curriculum. The presentation of the interpretation and translation of curriculum policy via the leadership practices indicate how the SMT members go about fulfilling these roles.

5.4.1 SETTING DIRECTION

As discussed in Chapter 2 section 2.2 the leadership practice of setting direction involves the building of a shared vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, creating high-performance expectations and communicating the direction of the school. This brings the following questions to the fore: How does the leadership practice of setting direction work in a working class school to build a curriculum policy platform? The semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions used in this study indicate that all three schools placed a focus on high achievement for all students due to the academic expectations of the DoE which involves a

pass rate of more than 60% in the NSC and more than 50% in the WCED systemic tests and ANA tests. The curriculum policy expectations are thus interpreted as a request to achieve results. The emphasis on school based assessments in the CAPS document relates to these performative expectations. Apart from the pressure of the external context of the DoE, it was also mentioned by some of the interviewees that the poor socio-economic background of their students prompts them to set goals of high achievement as a means to capacitate students to escape their harsh township environment.

Members of the SMTs of all three schools unanimously agreed that they set goals of high achievement as part of their direction setting for the school. The aim for them, is to improve the school's overall pass rate in alignment with the DoE requirements regarding an improvement in their schools' results. Schools A and B mainly focus on an improved pass rate in the NSC examinations and School C's central focus is on improving their grade 9 ANA results as they do not yet have a grade 12 class. Their goals of high achievement are thus predetermined by the DoE and the schools attempt to strive for these results to avoid being negatively labeled as underperforming or dysfunctional schools.

The principals of the three schools acknowledged that they, as head of the school, are ultimately accountable for curriculum implementation and that they delegate some of the responsibilities to the deputy principals and the HODs to ensure that curriculum implementation takes place as expected by the DoE. In all three schools the HODs indicated that they are responsible for setting the goals of their different subject departments. They do this by analysing the results of previous years based on the goals set by the DoE, via the continuous surveillance by subject advisers. In terms of how the SMTs go about setting goals for achievement, the following comments were made:

We ponder the results of the previous year and current year – which will put in place the improvement strategies. We take into account the learners who passed because of PYP. (HOD- School A)

Our goal is 60%- what the WCED wants. So our focus is on pass rate as a school. (HOD- School A)

School B concurred by explaining that:

After the term performance, the HODs look at how the kids have done and what could be the necessary improvement. The SMT set the goals for the school as a whole. (HOD)

The Department wants us to at least reach 68%, but we're aiming for 75%. The deputy principals have a check-up tool to look at the completion of the SBA [school based assessment]. The tool checks when they [teachers] are going to be finished [with the SBA]. (Principal 2)

School C does not yet have a grade 12 student group, but their goals are also results driven, mainly due to expectations by the WCED, based on the WCED systemic tests and ANAs. Their focus is thus on their grade 9 group. The principal and SMT of School C made the following comments:

My vision is that the school should produce the best results. We want good candidates who compete out there in the corporate world, in government sectors, entrepreneurs, sort of also add value, in research, you see. We look at our previous achievements in the ANA and systemic tests and then we set targets. In addition, we have our curriculum advisers [subject advisers] who come from time to time to the school and they also see that the curriculum is interpreted correctly. (Principal 3)

As a school we want to produce better results in our school, as far as we can. The HODs have subject meetings and set the targets in those meetings. Then we have an improvement plan. (HOD)

From the comments it is evident that the goals of the three schools are informed by the results expectation of the DoE and that their teaching and learning are defined by the schools reaching the target as set by the DoE. The comments further indicate that the HODs are responsible for the interpretation of the curriculum policy document at school level and that their (HODs') interpretation may be subject to that of the subject advisers. Principal 2's comments also indicate the level of pressure on the schools to complete all school based assessments (SBA) within the indicated time frames of CAPS. The school's understanding of curriculum policy is thus to complete the necessary SBA within the allocated time frame with

the aim to achieve results. Utilising Ball's (2012) interpretive dimension, this translates into setting targets for the different subjects which focus on the achievement of the students.

There is a slight difference in how the three schools pursue the results expectation as part of their direction setting. School A sets their goal for their pass rate on the expected 60% that is required by the DoE; School B sets theirs even higher, but School C's focus is more on establishing themselves within the community and on long-term goals as they do not have a grade 12 group yet. As highlighted in School C's comment above they adjust their goals to focus on their grade 9 students. School C's principal added that he wants his students to focus on specific vocational positions. This vision is however subjected to their infrastructural challenges as the school can only offer limited subject choices (see section 5.2.2) which impact on the type of vocation the students can pursue. The comments indicate that the discourse of performativity drives the schools' direction setting and it becomes a major constituent of their curriculum policy platform, which is also heavily influenced by the materiality of the schools.

The comments below indicate how the materiality of the schools impact on their setting of direction in the construction of a curriculum policy platform.

According to Principal 1:

You know, we make them to clamber for the promised land and it helps us because we want them to start to forget about their current situation. You know, not to put their current situation as a stumbling block, but to see beyond that.

This is echoed by the principal of School B who suggests that context is important: "*Just to take them out of this community environment*". He elaborates that it is challenging to work with students from the township, but that the school itself cannot afford it financially to take students out of the township environment. He elaborates as follows:

I've been wishing to have a camp with my learners, where the learners will be taught and have some time to relax. You know, if you take them out of here, I can assure you, they will be fit as ever and they will be ready for anything.

School C's principal responded that,

'cause this is a new school, the youngest of them all here and so it should surprise those that are existing. So it can prove that we needed this school and we can make it still, that we needed this school and here the school is making a difference to the community.

The above comments indicate that, not only is it DoE expectations, but also the challenges that are experienced in the community, which is a driving force for the SMT to set goals of high achievement. The interviewees of Schools A and B are convinced that providing their students an educational basis that would take them out of their negative township environment will propel these students to succeed in life. However, they note that they need money to assist with relocating their students to a different environment during their grade 12 year and therefore they cannot pursue these ideals. Also, if they do succeed in providing alternative accommodation for their students, the students will again have to return to the township environment after their grade 12 year which renders this relocation ineffective for the students' future as they will again be subjected to the township's negative influences. The idea of taking students out of the township environment is thus a short-term goal. School C's principal believes that as a 'new' school it still has to prove it is needed in the community and the school needs to establish itself in such a way that it adds value. According to this principal, striving for excellent results helps in this endeavour.

According to the interviewees the goal of high achievement is communicated to the rest of the staff, as well as the parents, thereby attempting to foster the acceptance of group goals as suggested by the principles of this leadership practice. The principals indicated that they strive towards building a shared vision with parents and the community by communicating these goals, but that they fight a constant battle to get parents involved with the learning of their children. As part of their materiality, the SMTs have experienced that parental involvement is minimal in their working class context. The SMT of School A indicated that:

We make sure that the parents have the study timetable, but we don't know if they monitor the study timetable of his/her daughter and so forth. (HOD)

Unfortunately in our community the SGB members are working, so they are not actively involved in the school. Today, we have computer boxes that have got dust, so we went to one of the community members to ask for the blower to blow the dust. He

refused. Here, just in front of the school, sometimes they as the community use the school, but they don't give back to the school. They don't care of the education of their kids. (HOD)

This attempt at a shared vision was echoed by the principals of Schools B and C.

School B: We also have intervention with the parents. So we conduct those meetings here just to make them see the vision and mission and to try to help us, you know, taking the education forward. But, there's not much involvement. (Principal 2)

School C: The SMT sets the goals for the various departments. They also set the goals for the school as a whole. The SGB is also there to set the goals for the school, but they don't. (HOD)

Parents don't come for meetings. We call them from time to time, but they don't pitch up. (Principal 3)

The responses from the SMTs indicate that although they attempt to involve parents, the community and the SGB in the direction setting of the school, they do not get the required responses and support. Meetings are arranged and parents are contacted, but to no avail. The SMT are therefore solely responsible for setting direction for the school, based on DoE requirements and with no input from the other stakeholders of the school.

As evident from the interviews, the curriculum policy is narrowly interpreted by the SMT in terms of the achievement of results as a goal due to pressure from the DoE via the continuous surveillance by subject advisers. The direction that is set for the school by the SMT therefore only focuses on the attainment of results and a vision to take students out of their harsh township environment as a short-term goal. The interpretation of curriculum policy is thus constructed in relation to the incoming discourse of CAPS and the context of the school. As indicated by the SMT members, the goals and vision are translated via meetings, one-on-one discussions with students and morning staff briefings with a main focus on results. However, this translation only focuses on the teachers and students as the parents and other community members are not involved. As the goals are already predetermined by the DoE, it leaves no space for innovation and creativity of the SMT as suggested by Ball *et al.* (2012: 45). This constricted environment thus renders them powerless as they only follow

instructions. This narrow interpretation of the incoming curriculum policy points to the shaky start of the curriculum policy platform as it is enforced by the DoE with no involvement from the stakeholders of the schools and no input from the SMT.

In sum, for all three schools in this study, the comments indicate that their goals involve a narrow focus on the improvement of results, specifically focusing on the NSC, the WCED systemic tests and the ANA tests. The responses also indicate that all three schools in this study respond to the specific aspects of their community context and the DoE's expectation of results (the incoming discourse of CAPS) to achieve goals of high performance. The leadership practice of setting direction in terms of the enactment of a curriculum policy platform is thus focused on performativity as instructed by the prescriptions of the DoE. This discourse of performativity becomes central to the schools' construction of a curriculum policy platform and this becomes the basis of the following three core leadership practices.

5.4.2 DEVELOPING PEOPLE

According to Klar & Brewer (2013:772) the leadership practice of developing people, centres around providing individualised support, intellectual stimulation and the modelling of appropriate values and practice. The responses from the interviews indicate that the three schools in this study attempt to incorporate these aspects of development into their enactment of a curriculum policy platform at the school, although it does not materialise as outlined by this leadership practice. In this section I present the data on how the development activities embarked on by the school SMTs, play a part in the establishment of a curriculum policy platform within the working class school context.

The comments indicate that development is focused on increasing the teachers' subject teaching capacity to achieve the results expectations of the DoE. SMT members of School A described how they go about supporting and encouraging their teachers to take part in development to improve their subject teaching:

We also have a weekly ICT [Information and Communication Technology] programme that teachers are involved in because of the smart classroom project. We're going to have 17 of those classrooms at our school. (Principal 1)

We make sure that there is no teacher teaching a grade alone. That gives teachers a chance to interact and share. Also, one could gain from another. They learn from each other. Sometimes I'll request, due to team teaching you know, we are teaching the same grade, the same subject. Then I'll request teacher X to go and teach that particular topic. I'll also teach his class you know. That is peer teaching, supporting each other in that way. (HOD)

School B indicated that their development activities include the following:

Workshops and seminars that focus on the particular subject. For instance, there's one that is coming for two days, GIS [Geographic Information System] for Geography. They're [the WCED] focusing on the ways, the ways of teaching Geography. You see, but they [WCED] are looking at the subject. It's content of the subject. How the subject can be dealt with in order for the learners to understand very quickly. (Principal 2)

School C noted the following:

So far we only send them to workshops when there are workshops. We invite curriculum advisers [subject advisers] to assist teachers with understanding and conveying the content. They do come. (Principal 3)

Principal 1's comment points to him persuading his teachers to attend development programmes as they have the possibility of upgrading their classrooms with the smart boards. Having smart boards is expected to assist teachers with their teaching as the school currently has to cope with a lack of resources which hampers their curriculum delivery. They are thus lured into attending these workshops due to the constraints of their material context. The workshops are perceived as a way to improve the limitations of their contextual factors.

School A's comment points to the translation tactic of observation, i.e. being open to change and it also relates to the discourse of surveillance, making sure that teachers teach and how they do it. The responses of Schools B and C indicate that the main focus of the development activities is on conveying the subject content and on improving the teaching capacity of teachers. Peer teaching, seminars focusing on specific subject content and advice from subject advisers are some of the strategies that are used to assist and enforce the expected teaching capacity of teachers.

Schools A and B's comments indicate that they attempt to provide and attend different kinds of development initiatives. However, the comments of School C indicate that they do not have a lot of development activities that they initiate or take part in. This can be ascribed to their status as a new school, with a temporary rotating SMT who lacks experience. They focus mainly on support from the subject advisers and not on their own initiative, to assist them in dealing with the content of the curriculum.

The comments indicate that the workshops to improve teaching capacity are mainly provided by the DoE, via the subject advisers. The provision of these workshops points to the control that the DoE has on teaching and learning. The focus of many of the workshops provided for the teachers by the WCED, via the subject advisers, is on the content of the different subject areas. The principals indicated that they expect teachers to engage with these development activities to increase teachers' subject knowledge and to find ways in which teachers can effectively convey this knowledge, with the expectation that it will lead to an improvement in their students' results. The narrow focus here is on subject content knowledge and on conveying this content as a means to improve results. Based on the above comments and following Ball *et al.* (2012) the curriculum policy document is read and interpreted as specific subject content knowledge which has to be conveyed in a specific manner within a specified time frame. There is no indication of intellectual stimulation for teachers.

The principals and SMTs also indicated that they provide individualised moral and social support as part of their development initiatives due to the challenging nature of their context:

School A: My support to the teachers, number one, is a word of encouragement. I've always made it a point, every morning. I'm a very spiritual person. Every morning I ensure that, you know, there's a positive verse that I read for people, you know, from the Bible. I am very sensitive to the fact that people spend eight hours of their time at school. A school is like home to them, to some of them. And you have to ensure that people are working in a happy environment. I have an open door policy. People come to me at any time, you know, with their personal issues. I'm a very approachable person. (Principal 1)

School B: *If they need assistance of myself, I would give it to them. If they need manpower (sic), I would delegate some teachers to go help.* (Principal 2)

School C: *I give direction by number one, being exemplary myself. Being punctual here at school. You see, I'm a teacher. You see, sometimes I just try to find out how the teacher is doing in her class, then we share some ideas. Some teachers come to me almost in tears because of the misbehaviour and then can't control that particular class. So I give ideas to that particular teacher. I give ideas to that particular teacher and go to that class. I go to the class myself you see, just for them [the students] to understand that in fact this is a very valuable asset that they are wasting.* (Principal 3)

The responses indicate that support is mainly provided by the principals as a means to motivate teachers as they work in challenging contexts. School A's principal points to the time his teachers spend at the school (also taking into account the extra classes that they have after school). School B's comment points to not having enough human resources and school C's comment points to the assistance that teachers need in terms of unruly students. The principals also indicated that they try to model appropriate values and practices as a means of developing teachers as they cannot always provide material resources due to their material challenges. The responses reveal that due to the challenging contexts, the teachers are in constant need of emotional and moral support.

From the responses it is evident that the schools do not have a fixed program for development, but that the principals and SMT members are aware of the development that is needed within their schools, especially regarding the managing of large classes and disciplining of often unruly students which is characteristic of their working class school contexts. The principal of School A indicated that he feels that some of his teachers would benefit from classroom management support and development, but that they cannot provide for this need due to financial and time constraints. He made the following comments:

I think our teachers are lacking, you know, being the authoritative element in the classroom, you know, being in control and the final voice in the classroom situation. I think, you know, if we can develop our teachers there. For me, it can help, because as long as you're not in command of your classroom in one form or another, then there can be no learning taking place there. So for me, it is about you being there you know,

and having the final say. Not kind of a dictator, but ensure that the learning environment is disciplined. It is conducive you know, and learners have to be active learners but at the end of the day you as the facilitator of learning has to be the person with the final say.

Principal A further commented that novice teachers in particular, still need guidance in this area.

You know, there's no guidance of new teachers. You know, new teachers, they're coming fresh from university. We give you a grade 10 class, you know. You haven't been oriented how to manage a classroom, how to approach certain people, you know and certain lessons in a classroom. And we rely on the HODs to do that coercion.

The principal from School C, as a young school with mostly temporary staff which consists of novice teachers, noted the following:

They need to be developed in terms of general management, managing a department. And, also how to think as a manager as well.

The comments indicate that schools A and C experience challenges in terms of novice teachers, but that they believe they can engage with this issue through development activities. From the responses it appears that development is done on an *ad hoc* basis or provided by the DoE. On a question of how development activities connect with the school's program and why they do not embark on some of the much needed development activities as mentioned above, the following responses were obtained:

School A:

If nothing was indicated on the IQMS [Integrated Quality Management System], there won't be development for that teacher. Maybe the teacher does not want to be developed. So now we sort of miss that opportunity. Development is more of IQMS triggered and not office-based. (HOD)

School B:

So, time makes it difficult to run these programmes. It is the time that is the problem. We need to stick to CAPS time at all times. (Principal 2)

School C:

Our teachers are tired. They have to stand in queues to make copies of the textbooks. They go in the afternoons to other schools to borrow textbooks. (HOD)

The HOD of School A's comment refers to the intertextuality (Ball *et al.*, 2012) of policy when she mentions that the IQMS process influences the development aspect related to the curriculum policy. She raises the point that if development in specific aspects is not requested on the teacher's Personal Growth Plan (PGP) of the IQMS, it will not be endeavoured by the school. Development at school level is seen to be IQMS driven and not automatically incited by the SMT. On the other hand, the principal of School B's comment points to the association of CAPS with time. According to him, the content of CAPS for the different subjects takes too much time already and they need to focus on finishing the curriculum. Therefore, they do not have enough time to accommodate certain development programmes. An HOD from School C highlights their challenges of a shortage of textbooks which hinders certain development programmes. He explains that teachers do not have the time as they use most of their time after school to find textbook information to deal with the content of CAPS.

Apart from teacher development, the SMTs indicated that they focus on the development of their students as well. The development of their students focuses mainly on support activities aimed at improving the knowledge of students in order to promote achievement. The following comments indicate how the schools support their students with the aim of raising achievement in terms of results.

School A:

You know, any learner who comes from a different school, coming to join us, we put that learner through baseline assessment and then we can determine what subject this learner is able to do. (HOD)

We do coerce learners to be here for extra classes. They have to be here for Saturday classes, you know, learners have to leave here late at night. (HOD)

And also some of our educators are so kind that some of us, they do adopt these learners. You know, that these educators have bought, things have popped out, money out of their pockets. A lot, it's a lot of support that they get. (Principal)

School B:

Sometimes I normally have a one-on-one intervention with a learner. And again there's social workers around that are working, actually because we have ILST (Institutional Learning and Support Team) here at school. The learner would be referred to the school psychologist. (HOD)

We've got Saturday classes, we've got afternoon classes. Even classes during the holiday. The department of education is giving us tutors for a week. (Principal 2)

School C:

For now it is only the extra classes that we have for our learners. We are behind with some of the subjects. Then we created a timetable and we keep the learners here for an extra hour after school to catch up the work. (Principal 3)

The above comments indicate that the development of the students centres only around the provision of extra classes as a means to improve the students' content knowledge for specific subjects, to attain results. According to the SMTs of Schools A and B, the community context plays an important role in the schools' decisions on how to engage with the development of the students with the focus on the attainment of results. This includes, as indicated by School A, providing the necessary space for students to study at school after hours, as well as supporting students by taking them into the homes of teachers as many of these students do not have the support and resources to assist them in their homes. At School A, they also direct students into selecting specific subjects which they believe students will be better at, according to their applied assessment strategy. The SMTs and principals believe that if students select these subjects, their results may improve. According to an HOD of School B they use the existing support policy structure of the school, the Institutional Leadership and Support Team (ILST) to assist with the emotional development of their students as many students need emotional support due to the constraints of their material and situated contexts. School C, as a new school, is still establishing its development and support structures due to

their poor infrastructure, as indicated by the principal. Therefore they only focus on providing extra classes for their students as a means to improve results.

From the responses it is evident that the schools regard the development of both teachers and students as important in order to improve the results. However, they are limited in their ability to embark on development strategies due to time constraints, infrastructural constraints and financial constraints. The development activities for teachers are mainly provided by the DoE and the development of the students focuses mainly on providing extra classes to assist with content knowledge. There is no indication of intellectual stimulation for teachers or students. Although there is a certain degree of moral and social support, a huge emphasis is placed on the development of the teaching capacity of teachers and the subject content knowledge of the students with the aim of improving the results to adhere to DoE expectations. The discourse of surveillance by the DoE is palpable in the workshops presented by DoE officials (the subject advisers) and the extra classes provided for by departmental tutors. The development of teachers and students is thus contained in a constricted focus on subject content knowledge as a means to attain the specified results.

In sum, the responses indicate that the three schools interpret the curriculum policy document in terms of the completion of specific content and school-based assessment activities by specified due dates and that this translates into the development activities as presented above. The number and variety of development activities that the schools embark on, depend to a large extent on their contextual position in terms of the availability of resources and the experience of their teachers. The data shows that development in the schools is directed by the incoming discourse of CAPS and that the materiality of the schools holds them ransom to obey this discourse. The schools' leadership practice of developing people in pursuit of the construction of the curriculum policy platform is thus geared at moulding students and teachers to improve results by developing them within a constricted focus on content and compliance with CAPS.

5.4.3 REDESIGNING THE ORGANISATION

The third core leadership practice of redesigning the organisation involves the building of collaborative cultures, modifying organisational structures to nurture collaboration, building

productive relations with families and communities and connecting the school to the wider community (Klar & Brewer, 2013:772). In exploring this leadership practice, all three schools in this study indicated that they endeavour to build collaborative cultures as a means to improve results, albeit in differing ways and not always successful. The SMT members believe that collaboration will enhance the teaching and learning experience as this may lead to a uniform interpretation and effective implementation of the curriculum policy in pursuit of results as township schools are usually characterised by fragmented relationships. This section presents the data on how the different aspects associated with the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation contribute towards the composition of the curriculum policy platform of the three selected schools.

The schools' attempts at building collaborative cultures translate into the following activities:

We do encourage collaboration. As a result, we've picked up, especially in our Science department, that that's a major problem. Our Science department is a department that works in silos. Again, what seem to be impacting on collaboration, are human relations, issues of their own. But it's not about us, it's about the learner. You know, but sometimes, to some extent you'll find that people choose to do things individually, in little corners out there. (School A HOD)

We have a cancer that is creeping in our school you know. People have issues of their own, personal issues. You have people who are tired here. That zeal, that energy, that greediness to go and teach learners is steady, but slowly dying. (Principal 1)

The SMT members of Schools B and C had the following comments regarding collaboration:

Togetherness is one of our principles at the school. And it is highlighted in our mission and vision. Our departments sit together and plan together. They work together, you know-similar subjects that might have the same objectives. (School B HOD)

Sometimes the teachers, they do not know you. They think you are against them, when you are correcting them. So after that you will see a very bad attitude. (Principal 2)

We have our morning briefing and then state our challenges which we have as a school- in general, curriculum wise, discipline wise and all these things. (School C HOD)

The school is going now into a position for a principal. Everyone is jumping for positions like that, you see. From time to time there's tension, you see. They are not so explicit, but you can see maybe in groups, favouring this person and not the other person. Situations like that can sometime lead to sabotage of each other because somebody wants your position. (Principal 3)

According to the interviewees collaboration in these schools is promoted through the expectations of the principals and SMTs for the different subject departments to work together. Specific groups of teachers, clustered in subject departments, are responsible to sit together during meetings and plan together as a collective entity. According to the SMT members, collaboration among the subject departments is expected to raise the level of teaching and learning with the aim of improving results. However, School A's HOD indicated that collaboration does not always happen as expected as relationships between teachers may be volatile. This comment on fragmented relationships within their schools is supported by the comments of the three principals. The comments indicate that the schools struggle to get their teachers to work collaboratively. In the case of School A, the principal commented that personal issues restrict collaboration as many teachers do not have the passion to teach at the school anymore. School B's principal commented on the negative attitude that some teachers may have when they are reprimanded if they did not follow instructions correctly. School C's principal highlights their contextual challenge of a temporary rotating SMT as having a negative influence on teachers who may aim for promotion posts. This may result in teachers who sabotage each other's work, particularly with regard to the completion of administrative duties which has specific due dates. The responses indicate that although the SMTs attempt to redesign the schools through meetings and expectations of collaborative planning, it is hampered by poor human relations. These poor relationships are indicative of, and associated with, the school's materiality.

Another aspect associated with the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation is the modification of organisational structures which refers to a change in the normal managerial

arrangement of the school. This modification is seen as a way of getting teachers to work together as a team to assist teaching and learning. From the responses, it seems that School A is at the forefront of applying strategies to modify their organisational structures. The principal of School A indicated the following:

The SMT was planning, the SMT went on. It was only the HODs who know the documents. There was no buy-in from post level 1 teachers and that has been a major gap because there are people who will never be HODs or deputies or principals, but they have a lot to contribute to the school. So we just identified it and said let's bring everybody on board and let's plan as a collective. We just established a special curriculum committee now as a focus area, you know, where subject heads are very hands-on, bringing information from the various subjects and all that. So we are working on it, but we are getting there. (Principal 1)

School A's principal indicated that he established a special curriculum committee, consisting of post level 1 teachers to drive curriculum issues such as the clarification of content and assessment requirements. The establishment of this committee serves as a way to flatten the sometimes intimidating hierarchy common to schools. This improvisation to distribute responsibility among post level one teachers attempts to promote collaboration among teachers. In support of this, one of School A's HODs made the following comment:

We encourage teachers to partake and be active members of our sub committees. If it is a curriculum committee, the coordinator always encourages the post level 1 teachers to take lead, so as to be on par with curriculum matters, you know. I'm coordinating the basic school functionality subcommittee. I now know a lot of stuff I never knew. The tool that the school used was to recruit me to that committee. (HOD)

Despite having established this new committee, School A still follows the normal route of the hierarchy of responsibilities, as this curriculum committee is led by an HOD who has to report to the deputy principal responsible for curriculum matters and who, in turn, has to report to the principal.

The responses from Schools B and C indicate that they mainly follow the hierarchical structure of reporting via HODs and the deputy principals to the principal. This is done with a

focus on the monitoring of the completion of the CAPS content and assessment. School B's principal responded by saying:

We have two deputies here. The one deputy principal is looking at the FET [Further Education and Training – grades 10-12] phase and the other one is looking at the GET [General Education and Training- Grades 8-9] phase. And they have a check-up tool to check completion of the SBA [school based assessment]. (Principal 2)

School C's principal responded as follows:

We do class visits, by the HODs. We've got a curriculum plan and a monitoring plan by which each department sits together and bring their own dates as to when they are going to start with their class visits. (Principal 3)

The principals of Schools B and C indicated that they place a high focus on adhering to DoE due dates for the completion of school-based assessment tasks. They believe that they can ensure this adherence by following DoE protocol, such as the hierarchy of responsibilities, as it allows them to hold the HODs and deputy principals accountable. The constant surveillance by the DoE regarding the completion of assessments coerces them to follow protocol. In the case of School C, as a new school with a temporary rotating SMT, the members in their organisational structure change throughout the year. As the members at the different levels of the SMT change, they are prompted to strictly follow the hierarchy, also as a means of establishing themselves.

As part of their execution of the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation, the schools constantly strive to build relationships with parents and the community, although this is not always successful due to their situated contexts. The comments below indicate some of the projects that these schools have embarked on in their attempt to build relationships with parents and the community. As indicated by School A:

We make sure that the parents have the study timetable, but we don't know if they monitor the study timetable of his/her daughter and so forth. (HOD)

We tried to establish partnerships with retired specialists, you know, in our various subjects. They are helping and they are making a difference. And also affiliation to some programs you know, a program or project which is focusing on schools

turnaround in terms of improvement, you know, from dysfunctional to schools of excellence. (Deputy principal 1)

We're getting support from the university. There's a mobile laboratory that comes to the school. I think the organisations [NGOs] make our learners understand that they do have potential. I have to give credit to the church. The church is also playing a major role. The priest comes and prays for our learners. They come and talk to our learners, you know, and they instil certain values. (Principal 1)

School B:

We have a garden. We issue a letter to the parent. Some parents are volunteers that are coming during weekends to work in our garden. (Principal 2)

We ask for a person to come and motivate the teachers. (HOD)

School C:

We have managed to amass some extra literature books from an NGO. We don't have a library yet. I am convinced that the literature books are making an impact. I don't interact much in the community, but I know that some of our learners are involved with soccer clubs in the community. (Principal 3)

The principals of schools A and B indicated that they provide a range of projects to get parents involved with the different aspects of their children's learning. They do not, however, manage to get all the parents involved. According to School C's principal he does not interact in the community and this may be the reason for their limited affiliation with NGOs. The main purpose of the schools' working towards collaboration is geared at the schools trying to get the parents' and the community's support to assist them to improve their results, but this does not materialise as expected.

In sum, the responses indicate that the schools spend a lot of time and effort reaching out to parents and the community to promote collaboration, but they do not get the responses as expected. The schools' strive for collaboration is aimed at improving the results by getting parents involved with the learning of their children and NGOs involved with the sponsorship of much needed resources and to assist with the motivation of the students. It is evident that this

leadership practice depends to a great extent on relationships and the involvement of parents and the community to be able to constitute a significant part of the curriculum policy platform. The schools are handicapped by their situated context of poor parental involvement and fragmented relationships, as well as by the discourse of the top-down approach by the DoE that leaves little space for innovation and creativity to redesign the schools. The leadership practice of redesigning the organisation thus constitutes a deficit part of the curriculum policy platform.

5.4.4 MANAGING TEACHING AND LEARNING

The management of teaching and learning as a core leadership practice entails staffing the instructional programme, monitoring the progress of students, teachers and the school, providing instructional support, aligning resources and buffering staff from distractions to their work (Klar & Brewer, 2013:772). The previous three leadership practices that were presented culminate into this leadership practice of managing teaching and learning. The strategies associated with the management of teaching and learning is an attempt to ensure that the direction that is set, is adhered to, that the development of teachers and students are focused on meeting the set goals, and that the redesign of the organisation is pursued. This section presents the data on how the aspects associated with the management of teaching and learning play a role in establishing the curriculum policy platform of the three schools. According to the data, all three schools in this study manage the curriculum policy by attempts to incorporate these aspects of the management of teaching and learning into their practices.

When staffing the instructional programme Principal 1 indicated the unfortunate incident he experienced with the application of a new teacher:

I said we need to look at non-racialism. We need to look at getting people from other language groups to be part of our staff component, because it also helps our learners to express themselves in English whether they like it or not. But, there are issues with the SGB [School Governing Body]. There was this white lady and she applied for the History English post. She was so good in the interview. Then all negative issues came up by the SGB – we don't have our people teaching in other schools. There needs to be a lot of paradigm shift in terms of the mind set of our parents. They must see the

value of people in other race groups. If we are in a non-racial society, we must put it in practice.

The comment from Principal 1 indicates that the principal is not solely responsible for the appointment of teachers, but the appointment is subjected to the input from SGB members as well. This principal has a certain vision for his school in terms of staffing the instructional programme, but his vision is not shared by the SGB.

The principal of School B indicated that he does not have any challenges recruiting teachers or allocating subjects to teachers. However, at school C, the principal indicated that they had the challenge of implementing the WCED policy whereby teachers had to be appointed if they were in service of the school for more than six months. School C's principal commented as follows:

We don't really have teachers who are qualified for LO [Life Orientation] and the challenge emanates from a circular last year which said that educators who had been in the system for 6 months should be automatically converted to permanency. There was no way of looking at the school's needs. It was an instruction.

The above comment points to the dictating role of the DoE, via circulars, on staffing the instructional programme. This resulted in the school not being able to appoint teachers, with the necessary qualification, for specific subjects. Some teachers are thus teaching in a subject field for which they are not qualified. At school C, this adds pressure on how they manage teaching and learning for those specific subjects as the teacher might not have the necessary experience for that particular subject.

One of the major aspects of the management of teaching and learning that was emphasised by the schools is the monitoring and moderation process. According to the SMT members they are directed by the subject advisers in terms of what and how they should interpret the curriculum policy and this informs the actions of their management of the teaching and learning process. They responded on the constant surveillance by the subject advisers, as follows:

School A:

The report from the CA [subject adviser] tells us whether we're on the right track.
(HOD)

School B:

The HODs compare the learner books with the pace setters. (Principal 2)

School C:

It comes from the CA who will meet with the HOD. The HOD will meet with the staff at work. Then we will discuss the document [CAPS]. The CA will come back and see to it that we meet according to the standards of the CAPS document. (HOD)

The above comments point to the directive role that the subject advisers play in the execution of the schools' leadership practices. School A appointed one of the deputy principals to manage the implementation of curriculum policy with the assistance of a special curriculum committee consisting of post level 1 teachers. The HODs of School A described how they manage the implementation of the curriculum policy in their school:

We manage by checking the classwork books of the learners, whether the teacher is going according to the work schedules. In Life Orientation we develop sort of a team leader. So the team leader should guide the other educators that this is what we are doing. So we are going at the same pace. So that there's nobody behind. (HOD)

And another thing that was actually introduced by the principal is a catch-up program. You do a catch-up so that they [teachers and students] can cover the work that they missed if they were absent. If teachers were absent, they get the catch-up tool from the secretary. (HOD)

We also introduced the period registers in each and every period when the teacher was there, signed at the end of the period. That shows that the teacher was there with the learners. You can even see the learners that bunked the class. (HOD)

School B's monitoring mainly centres around the principal who makes sure that teachers are teaching at all times, that students are in class and that content and assessment is up to date. This is evident from the following comments.

We have a check-up tool that would look at the completion of the SBA. A tool that checks curriculum coverage, to indicate when they [teachers] are going to have their developmental plan in terms of improvement. (HOD)

I've got my book here-learners' late coming book from grade 12 to 8. So I normally write all the learners that are late on that day. We have two deputies here. The one deputy principal is looking at the FET phase and the other one is looking at the GET phase. They have a check-up tool that would look at the completion of the SBA- a tool that checks curriculum coverage and when they are going to have their improvement plan. (Principal 2)

School C indicated the following:

We do class visits, we have a curriculum plan and a monitoring plan by which now at a certain stage each department has to sit together and bring their own dates as to when they are going to do their class visits. Is the homework policy followed in that classroom? Make a follow-up. They must have their own departmental policy. (Principal 3)

As for my department, we have a moderation book, whereby we do moderation for the whole week. By Friday we sit down and discuss the moderation that we are going to do on Monday. Then, let's say by Wednesday we should be finished with this. We check on the tasks that were done in class. We make copies of the reports and then we discuss it. The HOD reports to the deputy curriculum who also monitors that the curriculum standard is acceptable. We also check our standards against other high schools-external moderation, having another school moderate. (HOD)

The responses indicate that CAPS implementation involves a strong emphasis on monitoring and moderation. The SMT is positioned by the incoming discourse of surveillance and they respond to this with their own surveillance. From the responses it is evident that the SMT is actively involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning, but it plays out slightly differently

in the three schools. At School A, they have established a special curriculum committee consisting of post level 1 teachers where they focus on the absence of teachers and students. School B places a high emphasis on the completion of the SBA according to the specified due dates and School C focuses more on the quality of the work done by comparing their tasks with that of other schools through the process of moderation. The monitoring of the curriculum, according to the SMT members, encompasses class visits to make sure that teachers are teaching, monitoring student workbooks to ensure that they are up to date and monitoring whether the assessment tasks have been completed. Specific tools such as a check-up tool, a catch-up programme and the monitoring of students' books are instituted by the SMT members to assist with the monitoring of the curriculum. Teachers and students are thus under constant surveillance.

Further, in employing the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning within the three schools, the alignment of resources is associated with the availability of resources to students and teachers. School A indicated their approach as follows:

We've opened our school to allow learners access even after hours for them to come and utilise resources. (Principal 1)

School B mainly focuses on the availability of prescribed textbook information to assist learning:

Teachers have to queue to make copies. They go to neighbouring schools to get a textbook. (HOD)

School C:

We had to make special arrangements to ensure that we at least accommodate the kids. Learners are sharing textbooks, which is very challenging, because now all that is a burden on our photocopier. Sometimes teachers need to make a request to take the laptops home. It's not an ideal kind of scenario, but we make do under the circumstances. (Principal 3)

For these schools the availability of textbooks and computers as resources is a major concern. They do not have a lot of resources to be aligned to the different subjects. Their

main focus is on ensuring that teachers and students have the necessary computers and prescribed textbook information to assist them in their teaching and learning. As many of these students do not have computers at home, the school opens its doors after hours to assist students in this regard. School C has an added pressure as they do not have sufficient computers to assist with the completion of their teachers' administrative duties.

In buffering staff from distractions to their work, i.e. ensuring that the teachers are able to remain focused on their work, all three principals referred to the discourse of the progressive discipline of teachers as a way of buffering them from distractions to their work. The principals view progressive discipline as a means of supporting teachers and securing the teaching and learning process at their respective schools. In other words, progressive discipline is used as a means of obtaining the expected results by disciplining teachers to act in a specific way.

School A's principal indicated the following:

You want to put them on the wellness program. You talk to them, you give them warnings. We're getting extra help to give strategic support. We do embark on progressive discipline. As much as you can be supportive to teachers, but you've got to put your foot down at times and say this is just not on. I hate doing this, but I have to, because our major client here is the learner. I have to be strong, I have to raise my voice. For the June reports to be issued this year, I had to lock the gate, keep the key with me, I say nobody leaves the school. Nobody leaves the school until I get all the marks.

School B's principal had a similar response:

Sometimes the teachers, you know, they don't understand the purpose of progressive discipline. They think that when you do progressive discipline, you are actually against him/her. You are just putting a correcting measure in place. You have to face it, even if there will be an attitude, because you want a smooth running of the school, you want quality education, quality teaching and learning.

School C's principal indicated the following:

I am patient, and also I am firm in what I'm doing. If people come and throw words at me and if I feel it becomes a trend, then I call that person and I remind that person of a term called progressive discipline. I remind him of that because we are all people and we've got procedures. This position has taught me not to bear grudges otherwise you will never move forward. Make the person understand that he is making a mistake, that it so happens that you need to apologise to acknowledge that you've made a mistake, but the next day, move forward, move forward, don't bear grudges.

The responses indicate that the principals mainly rely on progressive disciplinary measures to ensure that teachers stay focused on what they have to complete and by when. They believe that doing it in this way ensures that DoE expectations such as an improvement of results and adhering to due dates are achieved.

In sum, the responses here indicate that within the leadership practice of the management of teaching and learning the curriculum policy document is mainly read and enacted in terms of time management and complying with the expectations of the DoE in terms of results and adhering to due dates. As evident from the responses, the monitoring and moderation processes associated with the curriculum comprises of a lot of teaching time. The focus on monitoring and moderation is done to ensure that the expected results are met and that due dates are adhered to, despite being hampered by a shortage of much needed resources. The discourse which 'speaks' the schools in their management of teaching and learning is one of constant surveillance by subject advisers. This discourse is reflected by the constant monitoring and moderation done by the SMT which constitutes a major part of the curriculum platform.

5.4.5 SUMMARY

From the presentation of the findings it is evident that the schools emphasise goals of high achievement mainly due to DoE expectations. Based on this their leadership practices are geared towards the achievement of results. Through their leadership practices they interpret and translate the curriculum policy mainly as a means of achieving results. The data revealed that the schools cannot do much regarding innovation and creativity in terms of the enactment of a curriculum policy platform, due to their contextual factors, but also because the incoming

discourse of CAPS ‘speaks’ them. As a result, the curriculum policy platform that they construct rests on an unstable foundation. The presentation of the data in terms of Ball *et al.*’s (2012:43) interpretive dimension highlights the role of context and discourse in the building of the leadership practices in the process of constructing a curriculum policy platform.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The data in this chapter are organised according to different categories. In the first section of this chapter I aimed to capture the specific dynamics of the working class context which drive these schools. From the data presented it is evident that each school has their own unique context and challenges, and that their context informs their leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. In the second section of this chapter the data reveals the discursive strategies at play in the three schools in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform. The third section relates to the four core leadership practices which refer to Ball’s (2012) interpretive dimension of policy enactment. The responses reveal that the interpretation of CAPS via the leadership practices is informed strongly by policy requirements and the social impact of their context, and it translates into activities that follow the policy requirements as closely as possible. From the data presented it is derived that each of the three schools employs the four core categories of leadership practices in different ways, applicable to their specific contextual challenges, but with a unidirectional focus on the attainment of results as prescribed by the DoE. The leadership practices that each school employ thus arise from their interactions with the school context and the incoming discourse of CAPS which leads to the construction of the curriculum policy platform.

Each section in this chapter is concluded with a summary of the main findings. The next chapter provides an analysis of this data, viewed through the policy enactment lens, in response to the research question and sub questions of this study.

CHAPTER 6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to explore the four core leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools. This chapter aims to provide an analysis of the data that were presented in Chapter 5 based on the focus groups and the individual interviews with the School Management Team (SMT) members and principals of the three selected schools. This will enable me to answer my research question and sub questions. My research question is the following: How is a curriculum policy platform enacted via the four core leadership practices in a working class context? My sub questions are as follows:

- How do the working class contextual factors position the leadership practices of schools in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform?
- What role does school management, as a key dimension of leadership practices, play in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in a working class context?
- How do working class schools go about producing discourses for the enactment of a curriculum policy platform?
- How do leadership practices develop and sustain their school's curriculum policy platform for the enactment of curriculum policy?

In Chapter 5 I presented the data as obtained from the focus groups and individual interviews. This data in Chapter 5 are presented in terms of the three dimensions of Ball's policy enactment theory (Ball *et al.*, 2012). In this chapter, Chapter 6, I provide an interpretation of the data in Chapter 5. This chapter is informed by the policy enactment theory of Stephen Ball. The focus of this chapter is fundamentally on answering the research question and sub questions. The analytical focus of this chapter is on an interpretation of the four core leadership practices within a working class school context, viewed through the three lenses provided by Ball's policy enactment theory. These lenses are the material, the discursive and the interpretive. The material lens provides a useful tool to explore how the different aspects of a working class context impact on a school. The discursive lens assists in taking cognisance of the subtle ways of 'doing' and 'knowing' in a working class school. The

interpretive lens is useful to analyse how the leadership practices of the SMT are executed in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform in a working class environment. The chapter focuses on how the schools' context impacts on their enactment of a curriculum policy platform through the SMT's implementation of specific activities associated with the four core leadership practices. It thus interprets how the schools are positioned by their working class context and the discursive ways in which the curriculum policy manifests itself.

Since I am using a qualitative approach, I will use descriptions to indicate the essence of this phenomenon of the four core leadership practices in a working class context. Through my analysis and interpretation I indicate how the three working class schools are similar, but also different in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform. I discuss how each of these schools gives meaning to the official curriculum policy document, especially the way these working class schools go about providing a platform for curriculum implementation. In other words, utilising Ball *et al.* (2012), how the curriculum policy is interpreted, conveyed and translated in their context to establish such a platform. I emphasise the subtle differences in how these schools enact a curriculum policy platform due to the specifics of their contextual situation. The analytical focus of this chapter (and thus the focus of the thesis) is to show how working class schools enact a curriculum policy platform via their leadership practices.

The analysis is done thematically by working in a systematic, detailed and reflexive manner (Grbich, 2007:88). I started with the data analysis immediately after the collection of the first set of data. I coded and categorised the data by using Ball's three dimensions of policy enactment, namely the material, the discursive and the interpretive. This was followed by examining the data for common themes in the schools' contextual, discursive and interpretive domains. Triangulation was used to validate the data.

In this analysis I argue that the impact of the working class context positions schools in distinct ways and that they are constrained by the discourse which 'forms' them (Ball *et al.*, 2012:122), resulting in them applying specific activities associated with the four core leadership practices. In other words, the schools are positioned by their working class context and informed by their surrounding discourses and these play a role in the construction of a particular curriculum policy platform in these schools.

The chapter starts with analysing how the material dimension of policy enactment positions schools in their enactment of a curriculum policy platform in a working class context. I then analyse how the incoming discourse associated with the CAPS policy positions the schools in terms of their leadership practices and how the schools respond via their own discourse in the process of enacting the curriculum policy platform. Following this, I discuss how curriculum policy is interpreted by the SMT of the schools through their leadership practices employed and how this constructs the curriculum policy platform. In the analysis of the interpretive dimension, I refer to Bernstein's pedagogic device (2000) and the Advanced Training in Education (ACE) manual's suggested leadership dimensions (see Chapter 2 section 2.6), to inform and frame the construction of the schools' curriculum policy platform.

Sub question 1 is answered in the first section of the analysis of the material dimension. Sub question 3 is answered in the second section on the analysis of the discursive dimension and sub question 4 is answered in the last section of the interpretive dimension. Sub question 2, referring to the role of the SMT members, is answered within each of these three sections. The chapter is concluded with a summary of the main ideas highlighted in the analysis of the findings.

6.2 MATERIAL DIMENSION

As discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.4.1 the material dimension of Ball *et al's.* (2012), policy enactment theory focuses on the situated, the material, the professional, and the external contexts. In this section I provide an analysis of how the distinctive features associated with these different aspects of the material dimension position the schools in this study to enact a curriculum policy platform through their leadership practices. The material lens indicates that there are two main categories of context, i.e. the internal context which refers to school and community related factors and the external context, which refers to policy associated with the Department of Education (DoE). In this section I attempt to highlight the different features of a working class environment i.e. the factors associated with the internal and external dynamics of context, and how these features affect and position the SMT in terms of their leadership practices.

Ball *et al.*'s (2012) material lens provides me with the tools to analyse how different aspects of context impact on the enactment of a curriculum policy platform within a working class context. This lens allows me to zoom into these different aspects of context, and to analyse how these aspects position the leadership practices. The data presented in Chapter 5 (section 5.2) indicate that there are different dynamics of context that influence the execution of the schools' leadership practices and that even though schools appear to be similar there are nuances in how they experience and respond to their context (Braun, Ball, Maguire & Hoskins, 2011:587; Maringe, Masinire & Nkambule, 2015:368).

This section responds to sub question 1 on how the schools' leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform within their working class context. It also provides insight into the role of the SMT, as a key dimension of leadership practices in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform, thus responding to sub question 2. This section analyses the working class contextual factors which impact on these schools and which position the schools in terms of their leadership practices in their construction of a curriculum policy platform. The presentation of the findings, in Chapter 5, indicated that the three selected schools are highly constrained by the impact of social factors, mainly from their situated and external contexts. The specifics of the schools' location and the community that they serve, as well as the demands from the external context, such as the expectation of results from the DoE propel these schools into a pursuit of good examination and test results by their learners. Their leadership practices are thus geared towards the attainment of results and this is the driving force for the construction of their curriculum policy platform.

6.2.1 ANALYSIS OF THE CONTEXT

Ball's material lens (Ball *et al.*, 2012) illuminates the following internal variables in the working class contexts of the three schools: location, community influences, poverty, resources, infrastructure and the professionalism of teachers. Working with this lens also shows the interaction between these dynamics of context. These variables play a major role in how the school is positioned in terms of their leadership practices. In this section I attempt to highlight how the working class contextual dynamics impact on the students and how this in turn impact on teaching and learning in the schools, resulting in the specific positioning of the SMT's leadership practices toward the enactment of a curriculum policy platform.

In utilising Ball *et al.*'s (2012) material lens in the analysis of the internal dynamics of context, the data show that the situated context of the schools has a major influence on how they execute their leadership practices. Associated with the situated context, is the specific location of the three schools within the township. The data point to the relation between location and the challenges that the schools experience with their students' behaviour and attitude toward their school work. For example, School A which is located in the middle of the township is more subjected to township noise and negative influences associated with the shebeens which are close by. Schools B and C are exposed to a lesser extent to these township influences, but their SMT voiced their opinion that their students do not understand the value of being at school, indicating the negative attitude of the students. The SMT attributes this negative attitude to the negative township influences which their students are exposed to over weekends. It is derived that exposure and easy access to the shebeens result in student misbehaviour such as late-coming, bunking of classes, truancy and students who come to school drunk. This misbehaviour hampers teaching and learning during the day as the teachers have to attend to these disciplinary issues.

It is evident that the type of student that these working class schools work with constrain the schools in terms of the time available for teaching and learning as a lot of time is spent by the SMT on disciplining students and trying to get students to focus their attention on their learning. At Schools A and B the principals and some of the SMT members monitor the school gate in the morning to address the issue of late-coming. This time-consuming practice disables effective teaching and learning, resulting in a constricted focus of leadership practices on disciplining students. The SMT, as the accountable officers in the school, have to focus on ensuring that students are punctual for their classes. This practice takes away the instructional focus of their job description.

The specific location of School A also renders it vulnerable to burglaries from the community, mainly for items such as computers. This is attributed to the levels of poverty that is experienced in the community as the community members source things which they can sell in order to make a living in the township (see Fataar, 2015:33). Due to the burglaries this school's SMT have to contend with procuring resources on a regular basis while they are already financially constrained. Schools like Schools B and C which are located at the

periphery of the township are not subjected to the degree of burglaries which is characteristic of School A.

In exploring the dynamics of the working class location of these schools, the work of Christie (2007:89), Mills and Gale (2010) and Fataar (2015), is of particular importance. They emphasise the level of poverty that is experienced in a working class environment and how it affects the students that live under these conditions. The data collected from the three schools concur with the findings of these studies. The data highlight how poverty, social influences and family responsibilities of students, associated with life in a township, impact on the schools' leadership practices to engage with these issues and how this engagement place the schools under tremendous pressure to enact a curriculum policy platform which is focused on teaching and learning. It seems that a lot of time is also spent by the teachers on pastoral care due to the impact of hunger and deprivation (Fataar, 2015:34) which detracts from a focus on actual teaching and learning.

From the comments of Principal 1 (Chapter 5 section 5.2.1) it is derived that the students are battling to make a living in the harsh township environment due to responsibilities such as looking after younger siblings and fending for themselves. This links with the low level of parental involvement associated with life in a township (Christie *et al.*, 2007:90; Christie, 2008:177) as parents are usually uneducated or work elsewhere. This lack of parental involvement has further repercussions as it leads to students not having the necessary support structure at home to support their studies. A further consequence of the lack of parental involvement, as mentioned by the SMT members of the three schools requires from the SMT of the school to set the direction for the school without the input from parents. The SMT is thus solely responsible for setting direction. Not only does a lack of parental involvement impact on the leadership practice of setting direction, but it also has implications for the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation, as this leadership practice depends on the involvement of parents.

These multiple disadvantages of the working class situated context distract students from their school work (Maringe, Masinere & Nkambule, 2015:374) as the students have to cope with making a living in the township. This in turn impacts on the leadership practices of the

SMT as the SMT have to compete and engage with these township influences, leaving little time and space for the SMT to be innovative when executing their leadership practices (Maringe *et al.*, 2015:381) in terms of setting direction for the school and developing the teachers and students. The curriculum policy platform is thus constructed with these multiple disadvantages as a basis.

Ball's *et al.*'s (2012) lens indicate that the effects of the situated context (the location, poverty and community influences) are exacerbated by the material contexts of the schools. According to Ball *et al.* (2012:21) the material context refers to the physical and human resources available to enact a curriculum policy platform. The principals and HODs of all three schools indicated that they are severely limited by a lack of textbooks which affects the content knowledge that students and teachers are exposed to, as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) prescribes specific textbook information. The principals place the blame for the lack of textbooks directly on the DoE as they indicated that they ordered the textbooks long in advance, but that they haven't received any textbooks yet. This points to the sometimes obstructive role of the DoE in assisting schools to obtain much needed resources, as textbooks are regarded as the primary source of CAPS content information.

Not only does a lack of textbooks affect the content information available, but it also influences the time of teaching and learning as a lot of time and effort are spent by teachers and students in gathering the necessary information from surrounding schools. As CAPS is associated with time constrictions, as mentioned by Principal 3 and an SMT member of School A, the time available for the preparation of teaching and learning due to the sourcing of textbook information, is an alarming factor in the construction of the curriculum policy platform. From the comments it is evident that the role of the HODs here is to assist teachers to source this prescribed information, resulting in their leadership practises being focused on a quest for textbook information. As indicated by the SMT members, a lack of textbooks results in teachers having to make numerous copies of subject content from borrowed textbooks of neighbouring schools and this in turn places a financial burden on the school. At School C, students are even asked to share textbooks, resulting in a shortened time span for the students to become familiar with the required textbook content. The textbook debacle,

coupled with students' poor family background and a lack of a supportive structure at home, place these students at a further disadvantage in terms of their learning.

Apart from a lack of textbooks, School C, as a new school, also experiences a lack of much-needed resources such as computers, a library and scientific equipment. The lack of these resources prompts this school to only offer a limited number of subject choices. This school does not offer practical subjects such as Consumer Studies and Computer Applied Technology (CAT) as it does not have the necessary laboratories and equipment for these subjects. Even the teaching of Science subjects such as Natural Sciences and Physical Sciences are at a minimum as the school does not have the necessary chemical and scientific equipment to do practical investigations. Mills and Gale (2010:40) suggest that schools in working class contexts should expose their students to 'hands-on' as well as academic subjects. However, this suggestion is subject to the schools' availability of resources. The limited subject choices result in students being placed at a disadvantage as they cannot enter certain vocations such as engineering, information technology and hospitality due to a lack of exposure to these fields. This has a long-term effect on the community as the students are not trained into these fields and cannot bring the much needed skills back into the community. The lack of proper facilities and equipment results in leadership practices that prescribe the subjects that students are able to select based on what the school can offer with their limited practical equipment.

Schools A and B on the other hand, are more established schools with the necessary resources to offer a wider range of practical subjects such as CAT and Consumer Studies. However, a lack of stoves for Consumer Studies at School A, leaves questions as to how this subject can be effectively presented and experienced by the students. The lack of physical resources results in the school having less to offer the students in terms of exposure and experience and this impacts on the leadership practices of setting direction and developing people which is largely dependent on the availability of resources. The leadership practice of direction is thus set within a narrow focus of a limited range of subjects and the development of teachers and students is restricted to the resources that are available at the school.

Exploring the materiality of a lack of resources, school effectiveness literature such as the work done by Christie, Butler and Potterton (2007:83) argue that “resources don’t teach”, meaning that schools should focus on the capacity of the teacher to make a difference in the learning of working class children. However, I argue that the availability of resources enhances the learning experience. As these students are already deprived in terms of their location and poverty, they need to be exposed to a variety of resources as a means of support.

Building on Ball *et al.*'s (2012) lens of materiality, the focus now turns to an analysis of the infrastructure of the three schools. With infrastructure Ball *et al.*, (2012) refer to the building and grounds of the schools. Schools A and B have a properly constructed brick school building and they have additional prefabricated classrooms which serve to accommodate the growing number of students. School C on the other hand, is completely constructed of prefabricated classrooms and has no specialised classrooms such as laboratories or a library. Prefabricated classrooms are associated with extreme heat or cold conditions during summer and winter. The structure of prefabricated classrooms also lends itself to an increase in noise levels due to the poor acoustical design of the structure. This adds to the challenges of teaching and learning as the noise levels and temperatures associated with the prefabricated classrooms are disruptive to the learning and teaching process. This further challenges the management of teaching and learning.

Indicative of the infrastructure, it is significant to mention that none of the school grounds of the three schools are developed to accommodate sport or other extramural activities. This was mentioned in particular by Principal 2 as he has the vision that his students should be developed holistically to enhance and complement the teaching and learning experience. This directly impacts on the leadership practice of developing people as the township area is characterised by a lack of recreational facilities and the onus is on the schools to support students in this regard.

Utilising Ball *et al.*'s (2012) professional contextual lens provides a take on the values, commitment and qualifications of teachers (Braun *et al.*, 2011:591). These are the people involved with making policy a reality within the constraints and limitations of the working class

context. They have to engage with all the contextual dimensions mentioned thus far, in informing their leadership practices, in order to establish a viable curriculum policy platform.

School C is faced with the unique challenge that they do not have a stable and permanent SMT structure. This is due to their status as a fairly new school. At this school a rotating SMT results in different SMT members performing different roles throughout the year. This situation has resulted in relationships of distrust between teachers, as many of the teachers are in competition for the school's promotion posts. The acting principal indicated that this situation has led to sabotage by certain teachers. The professionalism of many of these teachers is thus brought in disrepute as it seems that there is a clash of values and opinion among them about the best way of managing the school. This lack of collaborative ethos and direction among the SMT members indicates the fragile relationships that their curriculum policy platform is meant to be built on.

The SMT members of the two more established schools mentioned that they do not have any challenges regarding the qualifications of their teachers. All teachers at Schools A and B are qualified and teach within their field of expertise. School C on the other hand, has challenges regarding teachers who are not teaching in their field of expertise. This situation is the result of the incoming policy from the DoE in connection with the appointment of teachers. The acting principal of School C voiced his discontentment with how the DoE prescribes the appointment of teachers at the school. He feels that the responsibility of recruiting and appointing teachers should be that of the principal as he/she knows the needs of the school. Viewed through the professional lens, it seems that the school is externally managed by the DoE in the appointment of 'suitable' teachers, but this external management does not take into account the specific needs of the school. This has major implications for the school's setting of direction and their management of teaching and learning since having inexperienced and unqualified teachers pose challenges for the teaching and learning process. These unqualified teachers are in constant need of guidance, which impacts on the HODs who are required to support these teachers via development activities and the management of teaching and learning.

Relating to the professional context, the SMT members of all three schools concurred that their teachers are committed. The commitment of teachers is measured by all the SMT members by the availability of teachers to offer extra classes, after school or on weekends. These extra classes, to assist with completing the content of CAPS and improving students' content knowledge, are seen as the panacea to remedy poor results. The pursuit of results is a driving force in these schools. According to Christie *et al.* (2007:59) commitment manifests in a sense of ownership which is a much needed entity in a community and school characterised by fragile relationships.

Only one of the principals, Principal 1, referred to the dress code of his teachers when talking about their professionalism. According to this principal, the dress code of the teachers can assist with uplifting students to aim for achievement. He believes that when teachers dress presentably, it encourages the students to set goals of high achievement.

Having focused on the interaction and building up of the contextual factors associated with the internal dynamics of a school, I now turn to an analysis of the external context associated with the materiality of Ball's policy enactment lens. Viewed through Ball *et al.*'s lens (2012) of the external context, the expectation of results is regarded as one of the major requirements of the DoE to hold the schools ransom to its performative requirements. All the interviewees indicated that their leadership practices are driven by incoming policies such as the assessment requirements of CAPS where they need to adhere to certain due dates for the completion of CAPS content and the attainment of specific results. They attempt to comply with all these requirements as they do not want to be negatively labeled as underperforming schools.

The student performance data of the three schools indicate that they are considered an underperforming school based on DoE expectations. Studies such as those of Christie (2008) and Mills and Gale (2010) emphasise the relationship between working class contexts and low achievement in schools. The poor results associated with working class schools result in a low possibility of students who enter tertiary institutions and this, in turn, results in a negative influence on the community as these students do not bring the necessary skills back into the community to aid in uplifting the community.

Schools A and B place a high focus on their National Senior Certificate (NSC) results, whereas School C focuses more on their grade 9 results as they do not have a grade 12 group yet. The data provided by the three schools in terms of their results, indicate that School A attained poor results, below the expected level, for the past few years, whereas School B's results fluctuate on an annual basis. School C's ANA results are below the expected level of 50%. The principals and SMT members attribute these poor results to the influence of their contextual dynamics, although Principal 1 indicated that this is the nature of his job's calling and that he does not blame the circumstances in which the school is situated, but that he tries to engage with the contextual factors in a meaningful way. In the words of Principal 3: "*We are doing what we can under the circumstances*". The schools are aware that their contextual challenges already position them negatively towards the attainment of the specified results, but they attempt to comply with policy regulations and expectations to avoid negative labeling. As a means of avoiding negative labeling as an underperforming school and as a way to propel students to a life beyond the township, the leadership practices of all three schools in this study are geared towards the attainment of results.

All three principals voiced their frustrations with the results expectation from the DoE. Ball (2003:216) describes this expectation of results as 'performativity' which he indicates is a form of judgement in order to control. Schools are judged by the DoE if they do not obtain the expected results and to avoid negative labeling the schools attempt to obtain these expected results as they believe that negative labeling will jeopardise their already poor relationships with parents and the community.

However this request to attain specific results is influenced by another policy from the DoE, namely the policy where students can progress due to their years in a phase (PYP). This influence of one policy on another, challenges the schools to reach the expected results. The PYP policy adds pressure on the SMT as the SMT is expected by the DoE to support the PYP students through development activities and intervention. These expectations and policy mandates point to the one-size-fits-all nature of the CAPS curriculum which enters schools, but which is then met by the unevenness and deprivations in each school's particular context. A one size-fits-all approach manifestly fails to leverage productive education at these schools.

6.2.2 SUMMARY

In sum, Ball's material lens (2012) illuminates the complexity of the contextual factors which interact with each other and which impact on a school. Utilising Ball's lens, this section highlighted how the material dimension of policy enactment positions the schools to execute their leadership practices in the process of constructing a curriculum policy platform. This section answers sub question 1 and 2 in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform.

The analysis indicates that the three schools have a shared context of community poverty and a history of underperformance, but this plays out slightly differently in the three schools in how they experience the effects of community influences on the school and how they perform relative to DoE expectations. The impact of the working class features such as their location, the lack of resources, the professionalism of their teachers and the prescriptive role of the DoE in terms of CAPS on student attainment, is significant and puts pressure on the SMT to exert their leadership practices. The data indicate the complexity of the working class context and the interaction between the situated, material, professional and external contexts that has led to a deficit build-up of the curriculum policy platform.

The findings also indicate that the external context of the DoE, through their policies and expectations contribute to the challenges that these schools experience in terms of their situated and material contexts. The aspects associated with the materiality of the three schools lay the foundation for the emergence of a particular type of curriculum policy platform within their working class environment.

6.3 THE DISCURSIVE DIMENSION

The discursive dimension of policy enactment provides insight into how schools represent the curriculum policy through artefacts, resources and activities (Ball *et al.*, 2012:121), via their leadership practices and this dimension creates an awareness of how the curriculum policy platform is constructed. Discourse involves a focus on what the school regards as important in the enactment of a curriculum policy platform and how they go about to denote this in their daily actions. MacLure (2003:174,176) indicates that discourses are thought of as practices for producing meaning, framing subjects and regulating conduct within an institution. She elaborates that discourses circumscribe who you should be, but also what should be said,

known and done. Discourse thus fabricates the individual into a subject who conforms to the discourse.

Ball *et al.* (2012:123) indicate the two-folded nature of discourse when they highlight the incoming discourse and the response by the schools to this incoming discourse. Ball *et al.*'s (2012) discursive lens allows me to analyse how various aspects of the incoming discourse of the CAPS policy affect the schools and how the schools respond, in respect of the incoming discourse, and go on to produce their own discourse through the implementation of certain artefacts and activities which becomes part of how they live the policy. The incoming discourse of CAPS points to what is allowable and it gives direction in terms of what is expected and how the teachers should act and behave. The reaction of the teachers to this incoming discourse leads to the constitution of their own discourse within the school- whether they are going to follow this incoming discourse and whether they are going to speak back into this discourse. This incoming discourse shapes the leadership practices of the SMT in the process of constructing the curriculum policy platform.

This section responds to sub question three that enquires into how the schools' leadership practices go about producing discourses for the enactment of a curriculum policy platform. In this section I focus on how the incoming discourse (CAPS) positions working class schools and how this incoming discourse crystallises into the schools' own discursive responses to construct a curriculum policy platform. Through the schools' own discourses I explore how discourse fabricates and sets up the terrain of operability of the SMT members, thus responding to sub question two on the role of SMT members. I discuss how this fabrication and operability informs the leadership practices. The discourse for leadership practices is produced and lived in a working class school in response to this incoming discourse and it informs the construction of the curriculum policy platform. In other words, here I am interested in analysing how the impact of the working class school context and its interaction with the incoming discourse, produce the schools' own discourse.

6.3.1 ANALYSIS OF THE INCOMING CAPS

In this section I analyse the nature of the incoming discourse, associated with the CAPS, and how this incoming discourse position the schools in terms of their leadership practices, resulting in the construction of a curriculum policy platform.

The data indicate that the incoming discourse of CAPS is received by all three schools as a request for performativity due to the expectations of the DoE and the emphasis in the CAPS document on the content and number of school-based assessment activities which have to be completed within a specified time frame. According to the HODs, the CAPS document provides the necessary steps and instructions for schools to follow, and this is followed-up by constant monitoring from subject advisers to ensure that the schools follow these regulations. It was mentioned by an SMT member of School A that these expectations from the DoE and the requirements of the CAPS document, restrict them as HODs as they cannot follow their own pace within the possibilities and limitations of their working class school context. This prescriptive nature of the CAPS document leaves little room for innovation as the teachers have to battle with completing the multitude of content which is characteristic of CAPS, while at the same time contending with township challenges such as late-coming and absenteeism of students, which impact on the time available for teaching and learning. The prescriptive nature of CAPS coincides with Fataar's (2015:161) description of the South African curriculum policy orientation as 'teacher-proof', 'tight' and 'constrictive'. It seems that CAPS does not take into account the plight of township schools. In these school working class school contexts, as evident from the data presentation, teachers devote a lot of time to the pastoral care of students before actual teaching and learning can take place. The expectations from the DoE in terms of the CAPS point to the 'one-size-fits-all' nature of CAPS, as what is possible in one school, is not necessarily possible in another school due to the impact of context. This links with Fataar's suggestion (2015:161) that the curriculum policy fails to productively leverage the working class context of schools to engender productive teaching practices.

Due to the DoE expectations of results, schools are labeled as underperforming schools or labeled according to non-compliance with CAPS. All schools in South Africa are requested to obtain a National Senior Certificate (NSC) pass percentage of 60% and a 50% pass rate in

the Annual National Assessment (ANA) and Western Cape Education Department (WCED) systemic tests. The responses from the interviews indicated that all three principals perceive this request as a demand from the DoE. If they do not obtain these results, they are branded as underperforming or non-complying and this may result in negative publicity and constant surveillance from the DoE.

The expectations from the DoE are constantly monitored via the subject advisers who visit the schools which underperform on a quarterly basis. The constant monitoring places pressure on the schools in terms of performativity and compliance with the CAPS requirements. The monitoring positions the schools to focus on the generation of results in their leadership practices, as these schools want to avoid negative labeling. Being negatively labeled is regarded as a burden on the schools, especially a new school like School C who is still establishing itself within the community.

MacLure (2003:7) states that the discourse and the real are always entangled. Relating to the incoming discourse of CAPS, this entangled relationship between the discourse and the real are visible in the way the DoE entices teachers with rewards (artefacts) such as certificates of acknowledgement if their subject performs well in the NSC examination. The expectant discourse is in pursuit of results and teachers seek acknowledgement (Bubb & Earley, 2009:28), and therefore they follow the incoming discourse.

The prescriptions of the CAPS document, is underscored by the artefacts associated with it. The DoE uses artefacts such as rewarding schools by labeling them positively if they attain the prescribed results. Another artefact that is used is that of textbooks. All students and teachers are expected to have the prescribed textbooks in their possession. The issue of textbooks was a major factor associated with the incoming CAPS that was mentioned by the SMT members. Reports, monitoring and recording sheets are all artefacts which the SMT members referred to as requested items by the subject advisers. These artefacts signpost the incoming CAPS.

Implicit in these expectations and prescriptions of CAPS are the notion of the 'good' student and the notion of the 'good' teacher which is expected to produce the 'good' school (Ball *et al.*, 2012:126-134) as envisaged by the DoE. Based on the SMTs' responses it is derived that

the 'good' student is portrayed as the student who has a textbook, who has all the content and who performs well in the assessment. The 'good' teacher is portrayed as the teacher who teaches the content as indicated in CAPS, who adheres to due dates and whose subject performs well in the examinations.

This incoming discourse associated with CAPS positions the schools' leadership practices as having to comply with the tight prescriptions that accompany the implementation of CAPS. All three schools in this study indicated that the pressure from the DoE, in terms of CAPS compliance is the driving force of the focus of their leadership practices. Their leadership practices are all geared towards the attainment of results to avoid negative monitoring reports and labeling as non-compliant or underperforming. Positioned by their contextual challenges, the school SMTs are thus controlled by the incoming discourse.

The next section analyses how the three schools respond to this incoming discourse by producing their own discourses.

6.3.2 ANALYSIS OF THE DISCURSIVE RESPONSES OF THE SCHOOLS

The incoming discourse of the policy brings the attention to the role of the SMT in how they receive and respond to . With the incoming discourse of policy, teachers and SMT members are regarded as receivers who have to implement the expectations and prescriptions of the policy. Ball (2003:218) indicates that the era of performativity produces new roles for teachers and SMT members as entrepreneurs and managers who have to advocate and monitor the policy to ensure that requirements are met. From the responses of the schools in this study it is evident that the HODs of the three schools perform the roles of entrepreneurs and transactors and that the principals fulfil mainly the role of transactors (see Chapter 3 section 3.4.2) due to the prescriptive nature of CAPS and the resultant expectations of the DoE.

From the data it is derived that the schools respond to the incoming CAPS by compliance through their leadership practices associated with the roles that they take on as SMT members. The SMTs are therefore not powerless, as they develop their own discursive strategies. However, the SMTs' leadership practices are shaped by the incoming discourse and the schools' discourse is an almost robotic reaction to this incoming discourse. The

devices that the schools use to comply with this incoming discourse, is their production of the 'good' student and the 'good' teacher as a way of pursuing the 'good' school which is advocated by the DoE. Their working class context positions them in a deficit way and this positioning informs their response to the incoming discourse. Their working class context does not assist them in obtaining the specified results and therefore they adhere to DoE expectations as a means of pursuing those results. Their leadership practices are informed by the incoming discourse and this lead to their construction of a curriculum policy platform in their schools.

6.3.2.1 PRODUCTION OF THE 'GOOD' STUDENT

The data indicate that there are slight differences, due to the varied impact of each of their contexts, in the discursive responses of the three schools. Schools A and B indicated that they have an award system when students attain the required results. According to Ball *et al.* (2012:126) the awarding of rewards leads to the representation of the student subject and this is an important way in which to motivate other students to do well. On the other hand, the unique contextual situation of School C hinders them in the handing out of rewards as they indicated that they do not have the necessary finances or relationships with sponsors yet. In producing the 'good' student, this school mainly focuses on one-on-one conversations with their students as a means to motivate them to obtain the expected results. The awards system that is applied at the schools is thus an extension of the DoE reward system— those who perform well, are praised and those who do not perform well are criticised.

Another aspect related to the incoming discourse of results that was revealed by the interviews, is that of extra classes. All three schools indicated that they have extra classes for their students as a means to attain these expected results. These extra classes become part of the normal functioning of the school. School C provides these extra classes after school for one hour. School C indicated that they can only accommodate these extra classes after school as they are focused on establishing their management structures. Schools A and B have these extra classes after school, as well as on Saturdays, with some teachers also presenting the classes from 07H00 during weekdays. The 'good' student is thus expected to attend these classes.

Interestingly, none of the schools indicated that they place a high emphasis on the dress code or the behaviour of students to be considered a 'good' student, as indicated by the work of Ball *et al.* (2012:126-129). School A was the only school that displayed a photograph of a former student who excelled- this was done to encourage other students to also aim for high achievement. School B and School C had no posters or photographs depicting the 'good' student. This can be attributed, in part, to their financial status and the inexperience of the SMT of School C.

The 'good' student, according to the interviews, is thus perceived as the student who is motivated, obtains 'good' results in line with DoE expectations and who attends the extra classes that are offered by the school. As per the DoE expectations, the schools' leadership practices are focused on the attainment of results and ensuring that the students have the necessary content knowledge.

6.3.2.2 PRODUCTION OF THE 'GOOD' TEACHER

In line with the schools' attempts to produce the 'good' student, they employ a range of discursive strategies to produce the 'good' teacher as a means of compliance with the DoE expectations. The schools build on the production of the 'good' teacher traits which are expected by the incoming discourse.

The artefacts associated with the incoming discourse result in the schools responding in a similar manner. School B indicated that they have an award system for their teachers - teachers receive tags if their subject performed well in the NSC examination. This is expected to motivate other teachers so they can put in the effort in order that their subject can perform well. However, the financial constraints of schools A and C do not allow space for them to also motivate and acknowledge their teachers by means of rewards. The leadership practices of both of these schools focus on one-on-one discussions with their teachers in order to motivate them to attain better results.

The constant emphasis from the DoE on the availability of textbooks prompts these schools to put in extra effort to obtain textbook information. Despite CAPS being associated with time constraints teachers are encouraged to source information from neighbouring schools.

Despite the financial status of the schools, teachers are encouraged to make a multitude of copies to combat the lack of textbooks. Extending on this quest for textbook information regarding the content of the subjects, all three schools embarked on the provision of extra classes for their students and the teachers are expected to present these extra classes as it is seen as a means of improving results. School C, despite having a lack of computers, adjusts their time and programme to ensure that teachers adhere to due dates from the DoE.

The comments from the principals on the issue of progressive discipline indicate that they view the process of progressive discipline as a tool in the production of the 'good' teacher. An analysis of the actions that are undertaken by the SMT indicate that they build on the monitoring and moderation processes of the DoE and use the process of progressive discipline to assist in this regard. They monitor and evaluate their teachers' compliance with the CAPS requirements and if teachers do not comply, they are charged with progressive disciplinary measures, which indicate the way the SMT wants policy to be "thought of, talked about and written about" (Ball, 1993:14). The leadership practice of managing teaching and learning comprises a major factor in the schools' responses on the incoming policy.

An analysis of the responses reveal that the 'good' teacher is systematically formed and framed (Ball *et al.*, 2012: 133) as the teacher who obtains the expected results in their subject, who goes to great lengths to source textbook information, who teaches extra classes and who adheres to due dates from the DoE. It is expected that the production of the 'good' student and the 'good' teacher will lead to the production of a 'good' school as envisaged by the DoE.

6.3.3 SUMMARY

In sum, the discussion indicates that the incoming discourse of CAPS is associated with a multitude of prescriptions, expectations and surveillance from the DoE. These prescriptions and surveillance prompt the schools to respond to the incoming discourse by engaging their leadership practices toward compliance to avoid negative labeling. Discourse is a key dimension in the execution of leadership practices which leads to the establishment of a curriculum policy platform. The schools produce their own discourse by complying with the

DoE prescriptions and by building on the practices associated with the incoming discourse. This is how the discourse 'speaks' them.

MacLure (2003:8) advances the argument that the 'real world with real teachers in a real school is a violently contested discursive milieu, invested with power, privilege and point of view. This notion of power is evident in the control exercised by both the incoming discourse as well as the SMTs' discursive responses. This power is exercised through a certain production of the 'truth' (Ball, 1993:14).

This section answered the second and third sub questions in the process of constructing the curriculum policy platform in a working class context as it indicated the role of SMT members in producing discourse and it discussed the ways in which discourse is produced by the schools.

The next section focuses on the analysis of the interpretive dimension in the construction of a viable curriculum policy platform.

6.4 ANALYSIS OF THE INTERPRETIVE DIMENSION IN RESPECT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CURRICULUM POLICY PLATFORM

Ball *et al.*'s (2012:43) interpretive dimension of policy enactment illuminates an understanding of how schools read, interpret and convey the policy message (see Chapter 3, section 3.4.2). This lens allows me to analyse how the three working class schools in this study interpret and translate the curriculum policy via their leadership practices, where interpretation refers to how they understand the policy and translation refers to the practices that they implement to bring this understanding to life (Ball *et al.*, 2012:45). The interpretation and translation of the policy point to how the policy is continually shaped through the implementation of leadership practices.

In this thesis I am focusing on the four core leadership practices suggested by Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins (2006:19), namely setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning to gain an understanding of how the selected working class schools interpret and translate the requirements of the official

curriculum policy in the process of constructing a viable curriculum policy platform. Leithwood *et al.* (2006) indicate that these four core leadership practices are comprehensive of the leadership practices that are executed in a school. I therefore use these four leadership practices to understand how a curriculum policy platform is generated within a working class school context. To remind, in Chapter 2 (section 2.6) I describe the curriculum policy platform as the conditions and opportunities that are created within the schools to provide teachers with a basis for implementing their pedagogy in their classrooms. The curriculum policy platform is fundamentally the outcome of the interaction between the material and discursive environments of the schools on the one hand, and the school's leadership practices to establish such a platform on the other. Policy interpretation and translation by the school's leadership actors are key to such policy interpretations and translations to establish a curriculum policy platform.

The capacity of the SMT to build the leadership practices is important. I focus on how the SMTs of the three working class schools in this study read, interpret and translate the curriculum policy through their leadership practices and how this translation results in the formation of a specific curriculum policy platform in the school. In this section I complement Ball's (2012) interpretive dimension with Bernstein's pedagogic device (Bertram, 2012) and the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) training manual (see Chapter 2, section 2.6) which is used to train South African school principals and SMT members. Bernstein's pedagogic device and the ACE training manual suggestions are used as a heuristic to explicate how the processes of interpretation and translation of the official curriculum policy, via the core leadership practices, lead to the construction of the curriculum policy platform within the working class school context. The ACE course presented to principals and SMT members as part of their training, underscores the importance of leadership practices, and it suggests activities such as monitoring, moderation and dialogue which the SMT should embark on.

To remind, Bernstein's pedagogic device provides a descriptive language to explain the rules and procedures which guide SMT members in their translation of the curriculum policy document (Singh, Thomas & Harris, 2013:467). These activities associated with translation constitute the building blocks of the curriculum policy platform. Relating Bernstein's concepts

of the pedagogic device (Fataar, 2015:161) to the enactment of a curriculum policy platform within a working class context, draws the attention to the one-size-fits-all nature of the Official Recontextualising Field (ORF) (represented by CAPS), which is regarded as a ‘teacher-proof’ curriculum. Bernstein’s concepts indicate that the pedagogic device consists of distributive, recontextualisation and evaluative rules (Bertram, 2012:28) which is concerned with power relations, the regulation of knowledge and the achievement of goals. Contained in the ORF are the codes of classification and framing which entail what knowledge should be conveyed and how this should be done. I will use Bernstein’s concepts of the pedagogic device to explain how working class schools construct their curriculum policy platform.

The previous two sections of this chapter (sections 6.2 and 6.3) analysed the ways in which the materiality of the three working class schools positions the SMT in terms of the implementation of their leadership practices and how their leadership practices are informed by the incoming discourse of CAPS, resulting in the schools’ own discursive responses. Viewed through Ball *et al.*’s (2012) interpretive policy enactment lens this section provides an analysis of how the selected schools’ materiality and discourse lead to the execution of specific actions associated with the four core leadership practices in a working class school, in the process of constructing a curriculum policy platform. This section is a response on the fourth sub question, namely how do the schools’ leadership practices generate and sustain a curriculum policy platform within their working class school context, and it also responds to sub question 2 as it provides an analysis of the role of the SMT in the execution of the leadership practices. The structures, processes and interaction between people are thus highlighted.

In the next section I start by providing an analysis of the first core leadership practice of setting direction within the school, followed by an analysis of the leadership practice of developing people, which in turn is followed by an analysis of the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation. I then analyse how these three leadership practices culminate in the fourth leadership practice, the management of teaching and learning and how the management of teaching and learning plays an overarching role in the curriculum policy platform in working class school contexts.

6.4.1 ANALYSIS OF THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICE OF THE SETTING OF DIRECTION

According to Leithwood *et al.* (2006:22, 30), the setting of direction involves a shared vision, framing goals and high performance expectations. This leadership practice is concerned with what the vision of the working class schools in this study entails, how this vision manifests itself through the establishment of goals and how the SMTs set high performance expectations for the students.

This section focuses on how the official curriculum policy, CAPS, is read and interpreted and how it is then translated into actions. In other words, it focuses on what the schools regard as important factors in the setting of direction for the schools in the process of enacting a curriculum policy platform. The focus here is on what the SMT does, how they do it and what the effect and outcomes are. Setting direction leads to an understanding of how to lead in your context and when and how to adapt the leadership practices. The leadership practice of setting direction sets the tone for the ensuing three leadership practices. An analysis of the setting of direction provides information on the driving forces of these schools, i.e. what energises these schools, and it provides them with a general sense of purpose (Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003:90).

In analysing how the schools in this study set direction, it is understood that the materiality of their situated context prompts them to set goals of high achievement for their students as a means to assist their students out of their severe deprivation within the township. This goal of high achievement is fuelled by the pressure associated with the external context of the Department of Education's (DoE) request for National Senior Certificate (NSC) results of at least 60% and Annual National Assessment (ANA) and Western Cape Education Department (WCED) systemic test results of 50% and higher. This focus on results is exacerbated by the emphasis in the CAPS document on the completion of specific prescribed School Based Assessment (SBA) at specified times. This influence of the situated and external contexts of the three working class schools has a major influence on how the SMT set direction for the schools.

This quest for results is contained in the incoming discourse of CAPS which manifests itself through continuous surveillance and the negative labeling of schools as underperforming or

non-compliant if they do not achieve the indicated results or if they do not comply with the CAPS prescriptions and expectations. Together with the working class materiality the incoming discourse informs the leadership practice of setting direction which has a focus on results and which is pursued through the schools' own discourse via specific activities associated with the setting of direction. Using Ball *et al.*'s interpretive dimension (2012:43) the curriculum policy is read by the HODs as a request to attain specified results in assessment activities and examinations. This focus on high performance is then translated by the SMT into target setting by the various subject departments through the analysis of previous results. The analysis of previous results and target setting is done through formal meetings and the completion of target indicators by the schools' different subject departments (DoE, 2014) which are headed by the HODs. All of these are done to avoid negative labeling.

Schools A and B focus on their NSC results and School C focuses on their ANA and WCED systemic test results due to their specific contextual positions in response to the expectations of results by the DoE. This expectation of results points to how these working class schools are positioned by their materiality and how they are prescribed by the incoming discourse of performativity (Ball, 2003:216). This positioning leads to the execution of specific activities in the realisation of their setting of direction. However, the data available on the results of Schools A, B and C indicate that they have not reached this high performance expectation for the past few years, despite setting targets, as expected by the DoE. Their less than optimal test and examination results are an indication of how social context affects their ability to achieve the goals. From the comments presented in Chapter 5 (section 5.5.1), it is evident that the schools' context does not allow the school to focus fundamentally on this goal and this has an impact on their curriculum policy platform. The incoming discourse prompts them to set goals of high achievement, but then they are faced with the impact of their harsh material reality. There is thus a relation between context and the achievement of goals (see Christie *et al.*, 2007:17; Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Winefield & York, 1966).

An analysis of the findings indicates that the setting of targets is not a shared vision within the three working class schools in this study, as suggested by Leithwood *et al.* (2006:34). The findings indicate that the schools do not get the involvement or buy-in of parents, the School

Governing Body (SGB) and the community or the involvement of all teachers as indicated by Schools A and C. To set goals and to do this with a focus on a shared vision has a human motivational dynamic and it includes trust as a mechanism that makes goal setting a reality (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:39). According to Thoonen, Slegers, Oort, Peetsma and Geijssel (2011:9), trust refers to a willingness to be vulnerable to another party, based on the confidence that the latter party is reliable and confident. The teachers, parents and the community should thus be motivated to engender trust among themselves as a basis for cooperative practices. The SMTs of the three schools attempt to generate this trust among teachers by arranging motivational speakers to talk to the teachers. They have to motivate staff to achieve or buy-in to the goals set by the school SMT. According to Leithwood *et al.* (2006:34), this leadership practice depends on sources of motivation and inspiration to provide people with a purpose for what they are doing.

The materiality of the schools positions them unfavourably in their quest for reaching the goals of high achievement. According to the SMTs of the three schools, they do not have the necessary material resources to support their students' learning, neither do the students have the necessary support at home to enhance their learning. This condition of material deprivations, together with the incoming discourse of performativity, results in a narrow focus on results. I view these annual goals in terms of setting direction, as short-term goals, only set as a means to avoid negative labeling for the current year, as this labeling is done annually, based on the attainment of prescribed results.

Utilising Bernstein's pedagogic device as a heuristic to describe the formation of the curriculum policy platform, it is evident that this knowledge of the attainment of results is converted (translated) by the SMT into target setting (see Chapter 2, section 2.6) through formal meetings and the completion of reports for the DoE. This involves the HODs, who regulate this conversation of target setting through meetings and talks. The role of the SMT relates to Bernstein's distributive rule where power is exerted by the DoE to regulate these conversations about goals of high achievement. This results in the recontextualisation of the policy where the SMTs respond via the discourse of target setting. The evaluative rules of Bernstein's pedagogic device are concerned with whether schools reach the set targets or not. If the schools do not reach the targets, they are labeled as underperforming. The

foundation of the curriculum policy platform is thus laid on the premise of an expectation of the production of results by their students in tests and examinations.

The data indicate that schools are held ransom by the Official Recontextualising Field (ORF), i.e. the official CAPS's expectation to produce results. The setting of targets as goals is thus not dependent on the SMTs alone, but is prescribed by the DoE. The SMTs do not have the autonomy to set their own goals for the school. The ORF relates to a one-size-fits-all curriculum as it does not take into account the deprived working class context with which it impacts. Drawing on Fataar's (2009:4) concept of a pedagogical platform, the ORF creates a 'thin' curriculum platform as the schools are compelled to comply with this performative regime.

In explicating the formation of the curriculum policy platform, Bernstein's pedagogic device (see Chapter 2, section 2.6) indicates that the CAPS is a strongly classified and strongly framed policy, in other words, CAPS instantiates a very restricted pedagogy based on a narrow and tightly scripted curriculum. Teachers are bound by the expectations of the DoE in terms of results, with teachers having no voice as they cannot control their own pacing and selection of content knowledge, which are prescribed by the CAPS curriculum. Using Bernstein's recognition and realisation rules, CAPS organises what needs to be done in terms of the recognition of rules and it guides the schools as to how it should be done. The ACE manual provides procedures for this realisation, namely monitoring, observation and dialogue, which are used by the SMTs.

Based on the above discussion of interpretation and translation, it is evident that the curriculum policy platform enacted via the leadership practice of setting direction, within these three schools, is built on an unstable foundation of material deprivation and the DoE prescriptions in terms of goals. Teachers are informed, via the incoming discourse of performativity, to teach toward reaching specific targets for their subject, but the proper conditions to support this process, such as resources and a conducive learning environment is not created (see Lingard *et al.*, 2003:145).

6.4.2 ANALYSIS OF THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICE OF DEVELOPING PEOPLE

The leadership practice of developing people entails individualised support, teacher capacitation, intellectual stimulation and the modelling of appropriate values and practice (see Chapter 5 section 5.5.2). This leadership practice is concerned with how the SMT go about developing their teachers and students in order to construct a viable curriculum policy platform. This leadership practice builds on the leadership practice of setting of direction. This means that the purpose of development sessions for teachers and students are focused on attaining the set goals.

Positioned by their external context regarding the expectation of results and the incoming discourse of development such as workshops and training sessions provided by the DoE, the schools respond by having their own workshops and training sessions. This leadership practice of developing people is expected to build commitment and resilience (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:36) as a means to attain the required results. This section focuses on what the SMTs of the three schools regard as important for the development of teachers and students, i.e. how they do it, what the outcomes are and why they have these outcomes. These parameters point to the nature of the curriculum policy platform that is developed.

The data presented in Chapter 5 (section 5.5.2) indicate that support, informal conversations, teacher capacitation and subject content knowledge are the central foci of the leadership practice of developing people. In terms of support all three principals indicated that they provide moral and social support to their students and teachers. In the case of their students, School A's principal mentioned that some of his teachers provide temporary homes for their grade 12 students, as a means to provide them with better circumstances while they complete their grade 12 year. This is expected to assist the students in reaching the required results in the NSC examination. School B and C's principals indicated that they mainly have informal talks with their students as a means of motivating them to perform well. All three schools indicated that they provide extra classes for their students in the afternoons, and after school, to assist with improving the content knowledge of a subject, as this is expected to lead to an improvement in results. The moral and social support provided is expected to raise students' level of attainment.

Not only do these schools focus on their students, but they also place a high focus on supporting their teachers. School A's principal presented himself as an approachable person and stated that he uses Bible verses during morning briefings to encourage his teachers. This principal indicated that he feels that some of his teachers have lost their passion to teach and therefore he believes that supporting them in this way may impact positively on their results. Fataar and Paterson (2002:31) relate this loss of passion to 'moral minimising', a concept they use to describe the indifference of teachers towards their job. School B and C's acting principals indicated that they have informal talks with their teachers as a means to provide moral support. Moral and social support is regarded as a much needed form of development in working class schools as these schools are characterised by a culture of severe deprivation (see Maringe & Moletsane, 2015:357). In all of these aspects of developing teachers and students the importance of informal conversations are highlighted as a means of supporting teachers to achieve the prescribed targets.

The requirements of the DoE in terms of results are read and interpreted by the HODs as a request to increase teacher capacitation. Teacher capacitation relates to the professional development of teachers as professional development refers to a reflective activity designed to improve an individual's skills, knowledge and understanding (Bubb & Earley, 2009:27). All three schools embark on this phenomenon of teacher capacitation by doing classroom observations (peer teaching) which are initiated by the DoE and instantiated by the SMT. This process of peer teaching is regarded as modelling (DoE, 2014) which is indicative of the leadership practice of developing people. The principals of the three schools indicated that they build on this practice of modelling by setting the example in terms of what teachers should do and how it should be done, for example, being punctual. The process of modelling as a means to increase teacher capacitation is expected to improve their students' results, but as the data indicate, the three schools still do not achieve the expected results. In the case of School C, this can be attributed to their professional context which is associated with the majority of their teachers being inexperienced, even the SMT members are inexperienced at their job. The focus on teacher capacitation is expected to lead to an increase in subject knowledge which, in turn, is expected to raise levels of achievement. Apart from the schools' own initiatives to improve teaching capacity, the SMT members indicated that they mainly attend workshops presented by the subject advisers. The content of these workshops focuses

on subject content knowledge and how to convey this content to the students within the time frame prescribed by CAPS. These development workshops, presented by the subject advisers, point to the control that the DoE exerts on how teachers are developed and it does not take into account the specific needs posed by the contextual challenges of the school.

Utilising Ball's interpretive dimension (Ball *et al.*, 2012) and Bernstein's pedagogic device (Bertram, 2012) to describe how the leadership practice of developing people leads to the generation of the curriculum policy platform indicate that the schools' endeavours for developing people focus on the attainment of results. Here Bernstein's distributive rule refers to the power relation of the DoE, which controls the type of development that teachers and students are subjected to, and it also points to the power relation of the SMT who implements these types of development activities within their schools. The development advocated by the DoE is recontextualised (translated) via modelling, support, informal conversations and a focus on teacher capacitation as suggested by the ACE training manual (DoE, 2014).

The ORF (the policy prescriptions from the DoE) thus controls the type of development that teachers are exposed to via the subject advisers. Using the language of the pedagogic device, it seems that development activities are strongly classified in terms of what teachers and students should be developed in and it is weakly framed as it does not provide specific time frames and defined processes for these development activities to take place. This weak framing provides schools the opportunity to initiate their own development activities as indicated by their needs. However, as indicated by the SMTs of the schools, their material resources and the time associated with CAPS do not afford them the opportunity to embark on self-initiated development activities. The DoE organises what development needs to be done and it guides the schools as to how it should be done (see Chapter 2, section 2.6).

6.4.3 ANALYSIS OF THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICE OF REDESIGNING THE ORGANISATION

This leadership practice – redesigning the organisation - entails building a collaborative culture, creating productive relations with families and communities and restructuring the organisation to facilitate work (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:31). These activities relate to the conditions of the workplace. In other words, the purpose of this leadership practice is to create conditions conducive for teaching and learning. In this section I analyse how the three

working class schools in this study go about implementing activities to redesign their school. I focus on what they do, why they do it, and what the outcomes are in the process of establishing a curriculum policy platform. In other words, the focus is on how they interpret and translate the curriculum policy in order to redesign the school as a means to enhance the teaching and learning process. This leadership practice is expected to build on the leadership practices of setting direction and developing people in order to reach the goals that were set and to allow for the effective implementation of the outcomes of development activities.

As a core leadership practice, it is assumed that the SMT members are involved with the redesigning of the school. The SMT members of all three schools in this study indicated that they attempt to build collaborative cultures among teachers and between the school and the community in order to reach their goals. Opportunities for collaboration are provided by sharing teaching strategies through peer teaching and through the expectation of the SMT that the different subject departments have to plan together and meet on a regular basis. At School A, it was found that only certain subject teams work collaboratively, and that some teachers still prefer to work on their own. School A's principal attributes this to the lack of energy and passion of some of his teachers. This lack of energy and passion are related to poor morale which is associated with their working conditions (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschof, 2009:477). The principal of School A shared his experience of having to resort to negative measures, such as locking the school gates, to get teachers to work collaboratively and as a means of adhering to the DoE requirements and due dates. A member of School B's SMT believes that their morning briefings and their subject meetings lead to the building of collaborative cultures at their school. No indication was given by the SMT members of School B that their teachers do not work collaboratively. However, the inability to work collaboratively was also experienced at School C. According to the principal of School C this inability to work collaboratively is attributed to the unstable status of the SMT which results in teachers having expectations of promotion posts and which then leads to a breakdown in relationships. The SMT members of both Schools A and C attributed the failure to achieve collaboration at their schools to the fragmented relationships between teachers. According to Fataar and Paterson (2002:7) fragmented relationships are characteristic of working class schools.

Not only does collaboration focus on the teachers within the school, but it also focuses on how the schools build productive relations with the families and communities (Klar & Brewer, 2013:772). Day (1999:73) indicates that positive relationships enhance learning. The schools attempt to build relationships in the following ways: School A constantly communicates with their parents via newsletters to get parents involved with the school, but to no avail. They also reach out to churches and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which assist in the motivation of their students. School B was very innovative in designing a vegetable garden to draw more parents to the school in the hope of getting parents involved with their children's learning, but only a few parents gave their cooperation in this regard. School C, on the other hand, only focuses on getting parents to come to parent meetings, which they do by sending letters to invite parents to attend these meetings, but only a few parents show up at these meetings. Parental involvement in all three schools is thus inadequate. According to Maringe *et al.* (2015:380), such poor parental involvement can be attributed to labour market constraints, low parental literacy levels, poor parental educational levels and negative parental perceptions of the educational role of their schools.

The building of collaborative cultures and productive relationships also depend on the issue of trust. If people do not trust one another, this will lead to a breakdown of relationships and as a result, collaboration will not be gained. According to Leithwood *et al.* (2006:39) trust is a key issue in encouraging collaboration and it seems that this element is missing in this working class school context. From the comments it can be deduced that the SMT members attempt to build trust via motivational talks, one-on-one discussions with teachers and team building sessions, but all these initiatives are not successful as the schools still have to contend with conflict that arises, mainly due to the incoming discourse of surveillance and the completion of artefacts such as report cards and evaluation reports. The findings indicate that the materiality of the schools, such as their professional context, the issue of trust and fragile relationships, hamper the building of collaborative cultures. From the findings it is derived that the SMT members of all three schools struggle to build collaborative cultures in their schools due to poor relationships, while it is evident that collaboration is a much-needed aspect of support in working class schools.

In restructuring the schools' organisational structure, School A is at the forefront of modification. This school has restructured the formal organisational hierarchy in their school by establishing curriculum sub committees. The establishment of these committees includes post level one teachers in the decision making process about curricular issues and this is expected to promote collaboration (Klar & Brewer, 2013:788). The restructuring of the formal hierarchy, by including post level one teachers, points to the trust that this principal has in his teachers. This restructuring also involves distributing leadership for selected tasks and it increases teacher involvement in decision making (see Leithwood *et al.*, 2006:40). Schools B and C however, indicated that they still follow the formal hierarchy in the execution of their duties. These two schools thus maintain the status quo. The principals of Schools B and C explained that maintaining the formal hierarchy assists them to hold SMT members accountable when they need to comply with DoE requirements. School C's principal added that their status as a temporary SMT prompts them to follow the conventional hierarchy as it assists them with assigning management tasks. According to Lingard *et al.* (2003:117), the hierarchically structured nature of schools distributes formal power and this sets limits on what can be done through dispersed leadership.

Utilising Bernstein's pedagogic device to explicate how the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation leads to the enactment of the official curriculum policy document, it was found that schools interpret the focus of the curriculum policy document as working collaboratively in order to attain results. Within the distributive rule of Bernstein's pedagogic device, it is evident that the power is vested within the DoE. Due to the contextual challenges of the three working class schools it is evident that the schools struggle to build collaborative cultures. This relates to the recontextualising rule of Bernstein where collaboration is sought after via innovative projects, a restructuring of the normal hierarchy and the production of materials and artefacts such as the ACE training manual. The evaluative side of Bernstein's pedagogic device points to the influence of the schools' circumstances which does not allow them to redesign the organisation effectively, as they are directed by the DoE. The ORF (i.e. the DoE) does not provide schools the space and opportunity to focus on this leadership practice as the DoE follows a strict hierarchy in terms of accountability measures. The ORF thus handicaps these schools as it only focuses on student performance and does not allow for innovative processes to influence commitment and to build collaborative cultures.

Using Bernstein's recognition and realisation rules in the construction of a curriculum policy platform, it is evident that the DoE directs schools narrowly on how the organisational culture of the schools should be structured. These recognition rules influence the degree of autonomy that the SMTs have to be able to implement the redesign of the organisation. The realisation rules of the pedagogic device are indicative of the discourse that is followed. This leads to an increased focus on how the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation is strongly framed and classified, as the SMT is held accountable by prescribed time frames.

6.4.4 ANALYSIS OF THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICE OF MANAGING TEACHING AND LEARNING

This leadership practice concerns the selected schools' SMTs' management of their teaching and learning support practices that are crucial for laying a curriculum policy platform. It is concerned with, among others, staffing the curriculum programme, instructional support, monitoring the curriculum and buffering staff from distractions to their work (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006: 42-43). As indicated in Chapter 2 (section 2.2) this leadership practice, the management of teaching and learning, is of cardinal importance as it refers to management practices which are needed to ensure that the teaching and learning process takes place. This leadership practice entails principles of both management and leadership (see Chapter 2, section 2.2). It thus involves bringing about change, but it also focuses on stability in order to ensure effective teaching and learning. The activities associated with the preceding three leadership practices are thus understood as culminating in this leadership practice. The manner in which the SMT management, around teaching and learning as a leadership practice takes place, also illuminates the impact of the material and the discursive on the activities that are employed.

In this section I analyse how teaching and learning is managed within the selected working class schools. I argue that the three leadership practices (discussed above) of setting direction, developing people and redesigning the organisation, inform the activities that are executed in the management of teaching and learning at these schools. In this section I provide an analysis of what the schools do to manage teaching and learning, how and why

they do it in that particular way and what the outcomes are. This leadership practice is an important component in the sustenance of the curriculum policy platform.

According to Leithwood *et al.* (2006:42) the activity of staffing the curricular programme is primarily located in recruiting and retaining teachers. In analysing the staffing of the curriculum programme in schools it is evident that Schools A and B were able to recruit qualified teachers and to retain their staff in terms of who teaches what subject. Their teachers are all qualified and teach within their respective fields. However, at School C it was understood that the SMT had no involvement with the appointment of teachers. The appointment of some of the teachers was done by the DoE (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.3). This situation, related to the external context of the DoE, challenges the SMT's management of teaching and learning, as some teachers are not qualified to teach within certain fields. School C, which was subjected to this negative intervention by the DoE in their management procedures, are pressurised as they are already faced with the challenge of a temporary SMT who are in need of experience themselves. The nature of their situated, professional and external materiality positions them unfavourably towards the power and control exerted by the DoE. Christie *et al.* (2007:60) indicate that having the freedom to select staff is crucial in creating a positive school establishment. As a new school, the situation of the interference of the DoE with School C's staffing, already positions them negatively in terms of establishing their school.

According to Christie *et al.* (2007:118), the appointment of teachers on a temporary basis has potentially destabilising effects on schools. This is particularly relevant to School C which has a temporary SMT who rotate positions twice within the year. This means that management and leadership styles of the different people on the SMT may vary throughout the year. This renders the school vulnerable to a lack of a shared vision and poor relationships as ambitious staff may be stressed by the possibility of unsuitable staff coming into the school (Christie *et al.*, 2007:118).

In a working class school context, the set of practices associated with instructional support is particularly essential to ensure a constant focus on teaching and learning. Instructional support points to how the principals and SMT members support teachers to ensure that

teaching and learning take place. For the schools in this study, the data indicate that instructional support is provided through peer teaching, workshops to improve teacher capacitation, extra classes, building collaborative cultures and a focus on the discipline and disposition of students. All of these are related to activities in the preceding three leadership practices. These activities are expected to support teachers to teach in their classrooms. Peer teaching, as part of the development of teachers to improve their capacitation, is also used as a mechanism to monitor teachers to ensure that compliance to the CAPS requirements takes place, as required by the incoming discourse. Peer teaching is thus seen as a means of developing teachers, but it is also used as a tool to monitor teachers' teaching. Workshops, as indicated by the SMT members, are provided mainly by the DoE and it is focused on improving teacher capacitation and subject knowledge. These workshops are seen as a means of support for teachers, in order to attain the required results. The extra classes that are provided by all three schools in this study point to the discourse of compliance with the time expectation of CAPS and the content knowledge to be covered. They are thus used as a means of development, but also to engage with the materiality (the many responsibilities of the students) in a township- these extra classes are thus expected to assist with completing the curriculum in the shortest time possible and to provide students with extra time to focus on their learning. The SMT thus extends the school hours as a means to support teaching and learning. A large proportion of the school day is taken up by principals and SMT members who monitor classes to ensure that teachers and students are in a class at all times. They do this as a means of supporting teaching and learning.

As part of supporting teaching and learning the principals attempt to align resources (Klar & Brewer, 2013:772) by affording teachers the opportunity to borrow textbooks from neighbouring schools after school hours. Despite being hampered by limited funds, Schools B and C indicated that their teachers are allowed to make ample amounts of copies of textbook information. As textbooks are regarded as one of the main artefacts of the CAPS curriculum, this was done as a way to ensure that teachers and students have the necessary content information in order to reach the goals of achievement. The alignment of resources in terms of the equipment needed for specific subjects is further managed by the schools by offering only those subjects for which they have sufficient equipment (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.2). This results in the schools having a limited range of subjects from which the students can choose.

By employing management and leadership strategies these schools are thus able to engage with their contextual challenges and the discourse which directs them.

The monitoring of the curriculum is regarded as a key management process and it relates to the moderation of students' work, which is part of the discourse that informs the leadership practices. Monitoring within the schools is used as a discursive strategy in response to the incoming discourse of surveillance (by the DoE). Monitoring and moderation processes are advocated by the ACE training manual (DoE, 2014) as a means to ensure that teachers are following the correct instructions from the CAPS document in their teaching. The processes of monitoring and moderation are used as a discursive strategy to produce the 'good' student and the 'good' teacher.

Monitoring is done by principals who check that teachers are in classes teaching and that students are in classes learning. School A's principal indicated that he and some of his SMT members patrol the school gates in the morning to ensure that students are punctual and go to their classes instead of roaming the school grounds. He added that he has a catch-up programme where teachers have to indicate when they were absent and how and when they will catch up with the curricular work that was missed. The same programme is used when students are absent. The principal of School B does his monitoring by physically walking around the school building to check whether teachers are in their classes teaching. He indicated that he has a monitoring book in which he records this detail. The principal of School C mentioned that he does monitoring by having conversations with teachers if he suspects that they do not follow work protocol and that he relies on his HODs to inform him. A study done by Hoadley and Galant (2015:10) underscores these management and instructional roles of the principals and HODs.

In terms of moderation, the SMT members of all three schools indicated that they are responsible for the moderation of school based assessments (SBA), i.e. ensuring that assessment activities are done timeously as prescribed by CAPS and that the work is of a good quality. The HODs explained that they complete moderation forms and write reports based on their findings, as enforced by their subject advisers. These are then conveyed to the

deputy principals responsible for curricular activities, who in turn reports to the principal. All three principals indicated that they intervene if there are any discrepancies in these reports.

The principals of the three schools elaborated that they address discrepancies through the process of progressive discipline (see Chapter 5, section 5.5.4). According to the principals progressive discipline involves holding teachers accountable to their job description through issuing verbal or written warnings, referring teachers to wellness programmes and supporting teachers who have to improve their teaching capacity. The principals indicated that their main purpose of following the progressive disciplinary route is to ensure compliance with the DoE expectations such as adhering to due dates in the completion of subject content and assessment activities, in pursuit of results. The curriculum policy is thus interpreted as prescriptions which should be adhered to in order to avoid negative labeling and this compliance is then translated via the activities associated with progressive disciplinary measures.

Leithwood *et al.* (2006:43) suggest that teachers should be buffered from distractions to their work as they need to focus on the goals that were set for the school. The progressive disciplinary measures are used by the principals as a tool to buffer staff from distractions to their work to ensure that teaching and learning take place, as required by CAPS. However, in a working class school context, associated with many disciplinary challenges, teachers are constantly distracted from their work. These contextual factors result in the three schools extending the school day by providing extra classes to ensure that teaching time is protected.

The execution of the management activities is to ensure that teaching and learning happens within the school. These activities are stimulated by the activities captured under the preceding three leadership practices and are used to coordinate teaching and learning. The execution of these activities is an indication of how the curriculum policy platform works within a working class school.

According to Ball *et al.*'s interpretive dimension (2012) the curriculum policy is read in terms of the attainment of specified results. This is then translated via the activities associated with the management of teaching and learning to ensure that results are obtained. The activities

involved in the translation of the results expectation is advocated in the discourse associated with the ACE training manual (DoE, 2014). This includes monitoring, moderation, dialogue and one-on-one conversations, as pursued by the schools.

Utilising Bernstein's pedagogic device to explicate the formation of the curriculum policy platform, I would point to the distributive rule as the power exerted by the DoE, even though the SMT are regarded as the managers within the school. In terms of recontextualisation, the ACE training manual prescripts are used as activities to translate the goals of high achievement and the evaluative rule responds to whether teachers follow these prescripts. The ORF (official policy) is associated with the attainment of prescribed results and the activities executed in the management of teaching and learning focus on attaining these results. The narrow focus of the management of teaching and learning is thus primarily, if not exclusively, on results. CAPS is a strongly framed and strongly classified curriculum (in other words CAPS is tightly scripted) and the practices associated with the management of teaching and learning, within these working class schools, comply with this framing and classification as a means to attain results.

6.4.5 SUMMARY

In sum, an analysis of the interpretive dimension indicates that all three schools are guided by the DoE, via their subject advisers to read and interpret the curriculum policy document as a request for results. This leads to the schools setting goals of high achievement as a way of complying with DoE expectations and as a means to get students out of their harsh township environment. These goals are pre-set by the DoE. Given their materiality, these schools produce a curriculum policy platform with a narrow focus on results as goals, as prescribed by the DoE. This prescription by the DoE obstructs the selected schools' creativity in laying the basis for a generative curriculum policy platform.

The leadership practice of developing people in the three selected schools focuses on developing certain aspects of teachers and students with the primary intention of improving the overall results of the school. The findings indicate that there is no indication of intellectual stimulation that accompanies development activities, as suggested by Leithwood *et al.* (2006). The focus is more on teacher capacity building in order to attain results. In other

words the status quo, which is regarded as a key feature of leadership practices, is not challenged. The development activities embarked on are mostly done to comply with the results expectation of the DoE. Teachers are thus exposed to development activities which enhance the attainment of improved student results. The expectation of results, which relates to the external context, as well as the impact of the material and situated contexts, are the driving forces for development activities in all three schools. Teachers are developed in terms of the content knowledge of the subjects which they teach, in order to convey the correct knowledge in the best possible way (teaching skills) to the students as a means to improve the results. In other words, the focus is on teacher capacitation. The development activities presented to teachers and students point to the narrow focus on the attainment of results on which the curriculum policy platform is built.

From the analysis of the leadership practice of redesigning the organisation, it is evident that the expectations and requirements of CAPS, together with DoE expectations, inhibit schools to be creative in their execution of this leadership practice. This leadership practice has a focus on the working class conditions within schools and the analysis indicates that working class schools have difficulty in changing the structure of schools and in promoting collaboration, due to contextual challenges such as the external context, which is associated with expectations from the DoE, and their situated context, which is replete with fragmented relationships. The execution of this leadership practice struggles to produce the intended effect due to the negative impact of the schools' surrounding material conditions and the narrow performative discourse (from the ORF) which inform their own discourses and practices. The consequence of this is that the interaction between the schools' material and discursive dimensions informs the SMTs' response to this leadership practice. This results in a curriculum policy platform that is comprised of distrust, fragile relationships and a bureaucratic hierarchy.

It is in the execution of the leadership practice of the management of teaching and learning that the curriculum policy platform is brought to life. The management of teaching and learning ensures that teaching and learning happens within the school. But this has to be understood in light of the preceding three leadership practices and the impact of the material context of the school and the narrow and constricting discursive environment operating at the

schools. All energy and time are spent on making sure that teachers are in a class teaching and that students are in a class, learning. The management of teaching and learning highlights the degree of control that is exercised by the DoE over these working class schools, through the incoming discourse of CAPS and how they (the schools) are positioned due to their context. Hoadley and Galant's (2015:2) research draws attention to this power and control that inheres in the structures, processes and relationships that underpin the instructional order of schools. The curriculum policy platform in these working class schools is thus significantly structured by the DoE.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented an analysis of the findings of the research (presented in Chapter 5), in terms of Ball's interpretive dimension, complemented by Bernstein's pedagogic device and the ACE manual prescripts to explicate the formation of a curriculum policy platform. The findings indicate that the curriculum policy platform of working class schools is built on an unstable foundation due to the impact of their material context, resulting in a narrow platform. The material conditions of working class schools position them to execute their leadership practices in a particular way.

The schools' leadership practices are informed by the incoming discourse of CAPS and the main aim of the SMT is to comply with the regulations of the DoE. The setting of direction involves a narrow focus on the attainment of results as prescribed by the DoE and the requirements in the CAPS document. The development of teachers and students involves a narrow and perfunctory focus on exposing teachers and students to development activities in order to attain the prescribed results. The redesigning of the organisation involves a focus on building collaborative cultures, but this has been a very tenuous exercise within the working class context of these schools. These three leadership practices culminate into the leadership practice of managing teaching and learning, where the focus is on administering the requirements associated with the curriculum policy as a means to ensure that teaching and learning take place.

Viewed through Ball *et al.*'s (2012) interpretive lens, the findings indicate that the curriculum policy is read in terms of the expectation of results and the working class schools in this study

translate this expectation through activities such as meetings, dialogue, target setting, monitoring and development sessions associated with the four core leadership practices. Bernstein's pedagogic device provides a language to describe how the activities associated with the four core leadership practices lead to the development of a curriculum policy platform. The ACE training manual directs schools by providing the expected activities related to the translation of policy requirements. The provision of these activities via the ACE training course, aimed at SMT members, point to the highly prescriptive role of the DoE in the construction of a curriculum policy platform. The analysis indicates that the build-up of the activities associated with the leadership practices, their positioning due to their working class context, and the discourse which drives these schools, lead to the construction of an unstable curriculum policy platform which is expected to inform teachers' pedagogy. I contend that the curriculum policy platform in a working class school is thus insufficient to serve the needs of the working class and it extends the inequality which is associated with the CAPS curriculum.

The next chapter summarises and concludes this thesis and also provides some recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the previous chapter (Chapter 6) I provided an analysis of the findings of this study. This chapter concludes the study by providing an overview of the different chapters, a summary of the findings and significance of this study, and some recommendations for further research. I do not propose any model for successful leadership practices in working class schools or for curriculum policy enactment. Instead this thesis provides an exigent understanding of the working class school context and the leadership practices that the School Management Team (SMT) embarked on in their endeavour to produce a viable curriculum policy platform. The practices that the SMTs embarked on are associated with the four core leadership practices of setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation and managing teaching and learning (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins, 2006) which were aimed at constructing the schools' curriculum policy platform.

The focus in this thesis was on the current curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS), regarded as a one-size-fits-all curriculum policy especially as it manifested in a working class environment. The purpose of my research was to understand the nature of working class schools and to interpret how core leadership practices are realised within the working class school context. In response to the main research question: How do leadership practices enact a curriculum policy platform in working class secondary schools, the study explored the leadership practices of the SMTs of three such schools. Related to this are the sub questions where I explored 1) how the materiality of the three schools positioned them towards their leadership practices, 2) the role of the SMT in the enactment of curriculum policy, 3) how the discourse associated with CAPS informed their leadership practices and 4) how these impacted on the interpretive dimension which informed the leadership practices and led to the formation of a specific curriculum policy platform.

I provided a detailed review of the literature in Chapter 2 by focusing on literature relevant to my research focus and I addressed various concepts related to this study. I included literature on national and international research relating to the impact of contextual factors on schools, leadership practices and curriculum development initiatives. This section highlighted how the schools' contexts and curricular reform impact on the leadership practices executed in a

school. The literature review thus set the scene for the study, helped situate it in the extant literature on the topic, and provided an understanding of the leadership practices in the context of schooling in South Africa.

Chapter 3 offered a discussion of the theoretical framework and analytical lenses of Stephen Ball's policy enactment theory (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012) which I applied in this study. I presented an explanation of Ball's material, discursive and the interpretive lenses which enabled me to explore how a school's context positioned the SMT's leadership practices, the schools' discursive constructions in respect of the implementation of CAPS, and how these impacted on their leadership practices. This theoretical framework enabled me to understand the relationship between the material, discursive and interpretive dimensions involved in the schools' development of their curriculum policy platform to support the implementation of curriculum policy.

Chapter 4 gave a comprehensive discussion of the methodological orientation and methods that I used during the research for this study. The qualitative methodology enabled me to describe the ways in which the materiality of working class schools impacted on the application of the SMT's leadership practices. Ontologically, I worked from the premise that the working class school context positions the schools at a deficit stance towards the enactment of curriculum policy. Epistemologically, I worked from the premise that knowledge is constructed through the lived experiences of those school leaders who developed and implemented leadership practices for the implementation of the curriculum policy. Semi-structured individual interviews with the three principals of the selected schools and focus group sessions with the SMTs of these three schools enabled me to conduct an in-depth exploration of their leadership practices.

I presented the data in Chapter 5 which were organised on the basis of Ball's three policy enactment lenses. The data focused on the material contexts of the three selected schools, how this context impacted on their leadership practices and how the leadership practices were informed by the incoming discourse and the subsequent production of the schools' own discursive strategies in respect of the curriculum. This was followed by a presentation of the data on how the SMTs of the three selected schools interpreted the curriculum policy

document via the four core leadership practices in order to build a curriculum policy platform in the school. The data enabled me to provide a contextualisation of the study and an understanding of how the SMTs experienced and engaged with their contextual environments as they went about enacting their leadership practices.

Chapter 6 was the data analysis chapter in response to the main research questions of the study. An analysis of the data enabled me to advance an explanation of how the SMTs experienced the dynamics of their working class context and how this subsequently impacted on their leadership practices in their endeavours to establish a viable curriculum policy platform.

Summary of the study's main analytical conclusions

This section provides a summary of the main analytical conclusions I have come to. This thesis draws on Stephen Ball's (2012) policy enactment theory to discuss how working class schools enact a curriculum policy platform, via the leadership practices of the SMT, given their unique circumstances. Focusing on the SMT's leadership practices brings together an analysis of policy which takes into account people's perceptions and experiences (see Ball, 1993:10) in the policy enactment process. In response to my main research question and sub questions, Ball's policy enactment theory provided three lenses which allowed me to analyse how the SMTs of the three selected schools established a curriculum policy platform via their leadership practices. The material lens illuminated the working class conditions of the three schools, the discursive lens highlighted the discourse which drives these schools and the interpretive lens allowed for an analysis of how the four core leadership practices, informed by the material and the discursive dimensions, led to the formation of the curriculum policy platform within the schools.

Drawing on the findings in Chapter 6 (section 6.2), I argue that an analysis of the materiality of the three schools indicated that the situated and material contexts of the three schools, as highlighted by Ball *et al.*'s (2012) policy enactment theory, are characterised by numerous limitations which impacted on the leadership practices of the SMT. The findings revealed that a severe lack of resources did not allow these schools the opportunities to pursue certain goals, such as preparing students for certain vocations such as engineering and information

technology, which are much needed by our country's economy. The lack of certain resources such as computers and scientific equipment, coupled with the performative requests from the external context, the Department of Education (DoE), resulted in the constant pressure on the SMTs to prove themselves as performing schools who comply with the necessary expectations. For the three schools in this study, the effects of the situated and material contexts were exacerbated by the professional context which was associated with unqualified teachers in some of the schools. My argument is that these material factors left the schools vulnerable to the expectations of the external context, i.e. the DoE's prescription in terms of results. The SMTs of the three schools thus exerted their leadership practices within a context deprived of resources and they had to improvise in order to adhere to the requirements of exam and test results. The material context was found to have played an active role in shaping the SMTs' leadership practices in the enactment of policy, as their context impacted on how the SMTs made meaning of the policy text (Ball, 1993:11). The material lens illuminated that working class schools have a unique materiality or context which located them at a deficit in respect of the enactment of their curriculum policy platform.

In explaining policy as discourse, Ball (1993:13) suggests that governmental policy "establishes the location and timing of the contest, its subject matter and 'the rules of the game'". With 'contest' he refers to the conflict and struggle that arise when policy enters specific contexts. According to the findings of this study, when this incoming discourse met the working class material context of the three schools, this material dimension played a big role in determining how the policy was enacted in the schools. In this study, Ball *et al.*'s (2012) discursive lens highlighted the two-folded nature of discourse, i.e. the incoming discourse of CAPS and the schools' discursive responses to the incoming discourse. Utilising the discursive lens indicated that the SMTs associated the incoming CAPS with performativity. The findings revealed that the three schools were directed and controlled by the incoming discourse (the rules of the game) as their materiality rendered them vulnerable to the incoming surveillance and testing regimes. The SMTs' initiative and creativity were constrained by this very stringent discursive direction (Ball, 1993:12). This incoming regulative discourse of CAPS exercised power as it produced a certain 'truth' (see Ball, 1993:14) about the attainment of results where schools are labeled negatively if they do not attain these results. It is my contention that this regulative discourse (performativity) of the DoE,

associated with testing regimes, is not produced in relation to context, in that it expects that all schools should function in a uniform way, irrespective of their materiality. Ball (1993:11) refers to the production of policy as the encoding of policy which is a product of compromises and struggles in the governmental process. The findings of this study indicated that the logic of the production of policy does not match the logic of the implementation field (the working class context). There is thus a gap between the production of policy and the context where the policy is enacted (Ball, 1993:13), which resulted in a particular way in which leadership practices were applied by the three working class schools in this study in order to build their curriculum policy platform.

The responses of the three schools to the incoming discourse revealed that the SMTs produced a discourse of compliance with the DoE requirements. In other words, their responses were a reflection of the incoming discourse. It was found that the vulnerability of the three schools to being labeled as underperforming or dysfunctional, due their constant poor results and their challenging context prompted these schools to adopt a response of tight compliance. The working class materiality of the three schools forced the SMTs to implement their own means of control through discursive strategies which included enticing teachers and students with awards as well as constantly monitoring teachers and students by means of checking systems within the school. These discursive strategies refer to how the incoming discourse 'speaks' the schools in this study (Ball, 1993:14). In this way the incoming discourse, as well as the schools' discursive responses, aimed to systematically form or fabricate (Ball, 1993:14) the 'good' teacher and the 'good' student as expected by the DoE. The discursive strategies applied within the three schools point to the power that the SMTs exercised within the school (Ball, 1993:14). For the three schools in this study, the discursive terrain had a direct influence on the leadership practices of the SMT which resulted in a certain logic, a logic of compliance, that was presented and which shaped the leadership practices to function in a particular way. The discourse constituent of policy, as conceptualised by Ball (1993:14), is what made the implementation of policy, via the SMTs' leadership practices, possible.

Ball *et al.*'s (2012) interpretive lens, which lies at the heart of this study, allowed for the analysis of the four core leadership practices within the three schools in terms of how SMTs

interpret and translate (Ball, 1993:11) the requirements of the official curriculum policy. Positioned by the working class context and informed by its regulated discourse, the interpretive dimension of the study illuminated how the four core leadership practices took shape within the working class school context. According to the findings, all three schools in this study interpreted the curriculum policy text as a quest for results, due to their deprived context and being directed and controlled by the DoE, through CAPS. This interpretation translated into specific activities associated with their leadership practices (see Ball, 1993:12). As a result, their leadership practice of setting direction was narrowly geared towards setting goals of high achievement in order to achieve the prescribed results. The SMTs believed that setting goals of high achievement could assist in providing students with a better life outside the township and by achieving the expected results they could avoid being negatively labeled as underperforming schools.

It was found that the leadership practice of the development of teachers and students had a uni-directional focus on how best to obtain the expected results. Development activities were mainly focused on teacher capacitation and subject content knowledge. However, the SMTs' initiative and creativity to embark on development activities were highly constrained by their deprived context. The leadership practice of the redesigning of the organisation focused on collaboration, with the sole intention of improving student results. However, due to their school functioning being characterised by fragile relationships and distrust, these schools struggled to build collaborative cultures. These three leadership practices culminated in the fourth leadership practice of managing teaching and learning which entailed administering and monitoring the work of teachers and students to ensure that these results were obtained. Due to the constant surveillance of the DoE their management of teaching and learning was thus focused on the attainment of results. The findings indicated that due to the challenging contexts of the three schools, all energy and time were spent on ensuring that teachers were in a class, teaching and students were in a class, learning. The execution of these four leadership practices led to the build-up of the curriculum policy platform. The evidence from my research strongly suggests that despite the contextual limitations and students' own aspirations and needs, the narrow focus of the leadership practices in the selected schools, were on students obtaining good results for their examinations and tests and this constitutes their curriculum policy platform.

At root, Ball's policy enactment theory allowed me to conclude that the link between the material, discursive and the interpretive dimensions informed the enactment of the leadership practices in order to construct a curriculum policy platform. Due to their deficit materiality and the regulative discourse the three schools in this study slavishly followed the prescriptions of the DoE, via their leadership practices, to avoid negative labeling as underperforming schools. The findings indicated that these working class schools were positioned by a specifically difficult contextual materiality, informed by a limiting set of discourse, which resulted in a narrow and constraining curriculum policy platform at these schools. Contrary to Ball (1993:12) who indicates that schools' responses involve creative social action and not robotic reactivity, the findings of this study revealed that the materiality of the three working class schools limited creative intervention and the SMTs therefore resorted to somewhat constricted and limiting activity to avoid negative labeling.

The subsequent curriculum policy platform was an unstable structure that was built on a shaky foundation of a lack of much needed resources. The material dimension illuminated that teachers and students cannot be optimally supported due to their deprived context. The effect of these contextual factors was exacerbated by the incoming discourse of performativity and surveillance from the DoE and the labeling of these schools as underperforming or dysfunctional if they do not achieve the prescribed results. Directed and controlled by the DoE, the official curriculum policy was narrowly interpreted as a quest for results and this was translated by the four core leadership into activities that aimed at achieving the requested results. What this study has shown, is that the leadership practices in the three working class schools enacted a curriculum policy platform that is narrow and restricted and which consequently is insufficient to serve the needs of working class teachers and students.

Significance of the study

This thesis is motivated by the view that qualitative research can provide an understanding on how the current CAPS is received and enacted in working class schools. The study provides an extensive discussion on the four core leadership practices and how they are implemented in a working class school context. The study contributes to literature on school leadership practices and has provided an understanding of how the working class conditions impact the leadership practices of schools, and how these consequently impact the construction of a

curriculum policy platform. This study further contributes to our understanding of how leadership practices are conceptualised and how curriculum policy is enacted within a working class environment. The study highlights the strong emphasis that the schools place on the achievement of results, how this impacts on their leadership practices, and consequently, how these practices impact on the establishment of a curriculum policy platform which is expected to support and guide teachers' pedagogy.

Recommendations for further research

My suggestion for further studies that build on the findings of this study would include studies that should consider how the curriculum policy platform, established in working class school contexts, affects the learning practices and outcomes for the working class child. A focus on the enacted curriculum policy platform in working class schools can provide an understanding of the enacted curriculum from the SMT's point of view (see section 6.4), however, what is missing, is how the students experience the curriculum policy platform 'on the ground' so to speak, i.e. in the classroom, as they learn, in their desire to achieve, and so forth. A combination of the enacted (by the SMT) and experienced (by the students) curriculum policy platform would provide rich data that would enable teachers to respond to the deep concerns that exist regarding why many schools in working class contexts are not able to support an improvement in the results of their students (see section 5.2.1). A further suggestion would be to compare and contrast the leadership practices of schools in different contextual settings in South Africa and not only in working class schools. This will extend the research to an understanding of leadership practices beyond the township school context and provide information on how the curriculum policy platform that is established is experienced across diverse school contexts.

The findings of this research contribute to a deeper and complex understanding of how the contextual dynamics of working class schools (see section 5.2) impact on the leadership practices at the school. An understanding of these dynamics will enable leadership practices to be directed at engaging with the complexities of these contextual issues. An analysis of the discursive dimension (see section 5.3) provides school SMTs with different ways of portraying the curriculum and enhancing their current leadership practices in the enactment of curriculum policy. In terms of the setting of direction for the school, the findings indicate that a

narrow focus on results does not necessarily lead to the achievement of the expected results (see section 5.2.1). The setting of direction should thus include other focus areas such as a different vision and mission. In terms of developing people, the findings indicate that leadership practices should build on the needs which arise from the contextual dynamics (see section 5.4.2), such as developing students for certain vocations. Collaboration and communication skills are much needed in working class schools and the research findings point to the need for innovative and creative ideas with which the school's leadership teams can build relationships with teachers, parents and the community in order to improve collaboration (see section 5.4.3). The findings for the redesigning of the organisation also indicate a move away from the bureaucratic system in schools, towards a more participatory system (see section 5.4.3). The management of teaching and learning points to the need to have a central focus on monitoring and moderation (see section 5.4.4), particularly by the leaders who are expected to lead by example (modelling). It is my contention that a change and improvement in the focus and creativity of the four core leadership practices may result in a more supportive curriculum policy platform for both the teachers and the students whom they serve.

Overall, this study has provided an understanding of the operations of leadership practices in selected working class schools in their endeavour to establish a supportive curriculum policy platform for teachers' work. It highlighted the ways in which these practices are the outcome of material contextual factors (see section 5.2), discursive positioning of policy (see section 5.3), and the specific ways in which these schools go on to interpret and implement the policy (see section 5.4). The study showed that leadership practices in this context were mostly constrained and thus influenced by narrow performative expectations (see section 5.4.1) for improved student results in tests. While there were ubiquitous and stringent attempts to comply with these expectations, the resultant leadership practices by the schools' SMTs struggled to build cohesive and productive curriculum policy support platforms, which largely failed to improve teaching and learning in the schools, nor did it lead to improved students' results (see section 5.2.1). This study was thus an exploration and discussion of the complex operations that constituted these leadership practices in working class schools, and it is to further studies that would illuminate curriculum implementation and teaching and learning improvement that I believe further research should now turn. These types of studies, I believe,

would provide a knowledge basis for improved curriculum policy implementation and teaching and learning in working class schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS: PHASE I

TITLE: AN EXPLORATION OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN ENACTING A CURRICULUM POLICY PLATFORM IN SELECTED WORKING CLASS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. Tell me the story of your school. When was the school started, first principal, etc.
2. What are your challenges? Describe the causes.
3. What is the life world of students like?
4. What is the story of change in your school?
5. What strategies have been successful for addressing these challenges?
6. What are the persisting problems and new challenges?
7. Explain your experiences since coming to this school.
8. How does the school raise levels of achievement for all?
9. What is your progress in terms of the NSC and the ANA and systemic tests?
10. What is your vision for the school?

APPENDIX B.**SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS: PHASE II**

TITLE: AN EXPLORATION OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN ENACTING A CURRICULUM POLICY PLATFORM IN SELECTED WORKING CLASS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

MATERIAL:

1. What infrastructure challenges are you faced with at your school?
2. How do you view teachers' commitment and professionalism?
3. What challenges regarding your students do you experience?
4. How do the challenges impact on your delivery of the curriculum?
5. How do you develop teachers and learners regarding curriculum policy – in terms of what aspects? / How do you support your teachers?
6. How do you work towards collaboration (between teachers; teachers-students and teachers-parents/ community)? How do you mediate the challenges?

DISCURSIVE

1. How do you physically/symbolically portray the curriculum expectations – by means of artifacts, symbols/posters?
2. What actions/practices do you employ to reach your goals?
3. What processes/ strategies do you have in place to manage the curriculum?
4. How do you manage expectations from the WCED and parents and the public?

INTERPRETIVE

1. What are your goals? Why/ How do you set these goals?
2. How do you work with the curriculum policy when it comes into the school?
2. What processes do you use to interpret the Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS)?
/ How do you make meaning of CAPS? Who reads and interprets the CAPS document?
3. How do you translate your interpretations and expectations of CAPS into actions?
4. What are your challenges regarding interpreting the curriculum policy document?
5. What do you do with the school results?/ What do you use the results for?

APPENDIX C. WCED CONSENT



Directorate: Research

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REFERENCE: 20140917-36658
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Rene Terhoven
32 Barnabas Shaw Street
Sir Lowry's Pass
7133

Dear Mrs Rene Terhoven

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: AN EXPLORATION OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN ENACTING CURRICULUM POLICY IN SELECTED WORKING CLASS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **02 February 2015 till 30 July 2015**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 17 September 2014

APPENDIX D. HUMANITIES REC LETTER



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
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Approval Notice New Application

11-Dec-2014
TERHOVEN, Rene Benita

Proposal #: DESC/Terhoven/Nov2014/23

Title: An exploration of leadership practices in enacting curriculum policy in selected working class secondary schools.

Dear Mrs Rene TERHOVEN,

Your **New Application** received on **09-Nov-2014**, was reviewed
Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

Proposal Approval Period: **11-Dec-2014 -10-Dec-2015**

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your **proposal number** (DESC/Terhoven/Nov2014/23) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 218089183.

Included Documents:

Interview schedule
Permission_Khanyolwethu
Research proposal
REC application form
Informed consent form
Permission_Nomzamo
WCED permission letter
Permission_Simanyene
DESC application

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham
REC Coordinator
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the general responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

1. Conducting the Research. You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with this research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.
2. Participant Enrollment. You may not recruit or enroll participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use. If you need to recruit more participants than was noted in your REC approval letter, you must submit an amendment requesting an increase in the number of participants.
3. Informed Consent. You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.
4. Continuing Review. The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, **it is your responsibility to submit the continuing review report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur**. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrollment, and contact the REC office immediately.
5. Amendments and Changes. If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, number of participants, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You **may not initiate** any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.
6. Adverse or Unanticipated Events. Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouch within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the REC's requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.
7. Research Record Keeping. You must keep the following research related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC
8. Provision of Counselling or emergency support. When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.
9. Final reports. When you have completed (no further participant enrollment, interactions, interventions or data analysis) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.
10. On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits. If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.