Educators' Perspectives on Collaboration in Institutional Level Support Teams (ILSTs) of schools in the Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park area

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DECLARATION

I declare that "**Educators' Perspectives on Collaboration in Institutional Level Support Teams (ILSTs) of schools in the Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park area"** is my own work; that it has not been submitted before for any examinations or degree purposes in any other university, and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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Masters Student: Rianah Marr Parker   Date

ABSRACT

South Africa has a history of inequalities due to the Apartheid system, much of this is reflected in Educational policies regarding Special Education, Specialised Education and Educational Support Services resulting in inadequate education. "Education White Paper 6", (Department of Education, 2006) is a response by the South African government to the inequalities, which constitute as barriers to learning.

The key to reducing barriers to learning at all levels of education lies in the strengthening of Education Support Services, (Department of Education, 2001). Thus Support Services Systems are established at various levels including National, Provincial, Regional, and Education Districts and at Institutional Level. At the level of Institutions, Institutional Level Support Teams are established as a school -based team, with its primary function to put in place learner and educator support services.

Institutional Level Support Teams (ILSTs) are expected to co-opt expertise from the school community, collaborate with the local community, parents and the District department of education. The Institutional Level Support Teams are expected to collaborate or form partnership to achieve their common goals and successful achievement of their objectives.

The main objective of this study was to gain insight into educator's perspectives on collaboration or forming partnership with other members of their schools' ILSTs. These perspectives related to the attitudes educators have towards collaboration in the ILST, the benefits they consider deriving from their work at the ILST, the activities they involve themselves in and the challenges they face while collaborating with other members of their schools' ILST.

The study adopted a mixed methods approach and involved teachers of four high schools in the Western Cape. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using questionnaire and interview protocol. The results of the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected for the study revealed that the educators who participated in the study expressed fairly positive attitudes towards collaborating with other stakeholders in the ILSTs. The participants felt that their participation in the schools' ILSTs was beneficial to the learners, parents and educators. All activities presented to them on the questionnaire were endorsed as those they participated in while collaborating with others in their schools' ILSTs. The participants also indicated that they experienced a number of challenges while collaborating with others in their schools ILSTs. These challenges include a lack of parental and community involvement as well as poor guidelines on the operations of ILST by the Department of Education.

The study provides recommendation as to how to improve collaboration in the ILST.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents Farouk and Denise Marr for making the sacrifices that afforded me the opportunity to further my education and being my pillars of strength throughout this experience.

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"And say: My Lord increase me in knowledge."

(Qur'an, Ta-Ha 20:114)

I acknowledge the contribution of Professor Olaniyi Bojuwoye who has not only fulfilled all the duties required of a supervisor, but also for your perseverance with me through the many challenges I faced.

To my husband Amier Parker that did not demand any of my time as he sacrificed much of his own, for your love and support. My darling sons Allie Shaakir and Mohammed Rayhaan, who so bravely waved goodbye each time I had to leave them behind.

My sister Nazli for your words of encouragement. My parent's in-law Sulaiman and Zaytoon Parker for providing all the light hearted laughter when I needed it the most.

The former principal of Wynberg High School Mr D Jones and current Principal Mr MF Salie for your support and understanding

This work is a product of my loving family and friends.
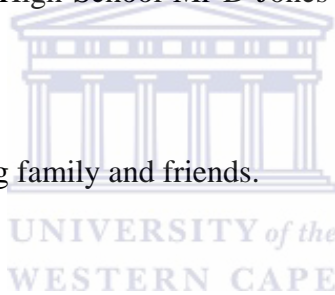
List of Acronyms

Qualification: List of Acronyms

BA   Bachelor of Arts

BED   Bachelor or Education

DBST   District Based Support Team

DIP ED   Diploma in Education

FDE   Further Diploma in Education

HONS   Honours

HDE   Higher Degree in Education

ILST   Institutional Level Support Team

PGCE   Post Graduate Certificate in Education

SGB   School Governing Body
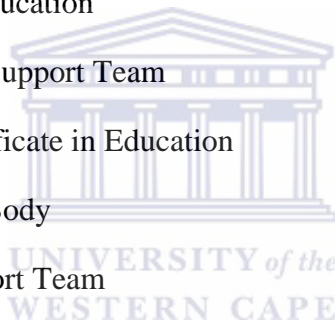
SBST   School Based Support Team

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The South African education system has a history of general inequalities due to the Apartheid system. These inequalities were reflected within government policies related to Special Education, Specialised Education and Educational Support for disadvantaged learners receiving inadequate education. In 1996, the South African government promulgated the "Education White Paper 6, Special Needs Education, building an inclusive education and training system" (Department of Education, 2001) in response to the inequalities in the country's education. The aim of the White paper 6, Special Needs Education, building an inclusive education and training system was to redress these inequalities in the South African Education system. Education White Paper 6 , Special Needs Education, building and inclusive education and training system is a landmark policy paper that cuts the ties with the past and recognises the vital contribution that all South Africans make and continue to do (Department of Education, 2001). Education White paper 6, Special Needs Education, building an inclusive education and training system outlines what an Inclusive Educational System is, and how it will be built. It provides the framework for establishing such an education and training system. It also details a funding strategy and lists the key steps to be taken in establishing an inclusive education and training system for South Africa. It directs the structural development of inclusive education (Department of Education, 2001). The central focus of this study is on certain aspects of the inclusive education and training that are related to the implementation of the Education White Paper 6, Special Needs Education, building an inclusive education and training system.

An Inclusive Education and Training System is vital for the achievement of equal educational opportunities. South Africa is still experiencing the effects of Apartheid, which segregated educational opportunities on the basis of race and did not provide equal resources for all. The decades of segregation and systematic under resourcing are apparent in the imbalance in the provision of resources between special schools that catered exclusively for white disabled learners and those that catered exclusively for black disabled learners. Inclusive Education has

replaced "Special Needs Education", which was based on remedial intervention that did not meet the needs of all learners but rather greatly segregated learners. Inclusive Education is much broader and can be seen as the core of what we as a nation want to achieve in terms of developing a transformed and integrated society (Department of Education, 2001).

According to the Department of Education (2001), the key to reducing barriers to learning within all levels of education and training lies in strengthening education support services. By education support services, these are non-educational services for improving the quality and effectiveness of educational activities (Steyn & Wolhuter, 2008). Education support services are usually aimed to improve teaching and learning or for improving the quality and effectiveness of educational activities and may include such provision of extra money, extra equipment or additional staff (Mittler, 2006; Steyn, 1997; Steyn & Wolhuter, 2008). Mashau, Steyn, van der Walt, and Wolhuter (2008) also assert that education support services may be aimed at preventing, minimizing and eradicating learning barriers and for developing conducive and supportive environments.

To make them very effective systems for support services are, therefore, established at various levels including the Education District and Institutional levels. The District-Based Support Team that compromises staff from the Provincial Department of Education head office and from provincial district and regional offices as well as from the schools. The primary function of a District-Based Support Team (DBST) is to evaluate support programmes, diagnose the effectiveness of the programmes and suggest modifications. (Department of Education, 2005). Through the support of teaching, learning and management staff, the aim is to build the capacities of schools, early childhood and adult education and training centres, colleges and higher education institutions in order to recognise and address several learning difficulties and to accommodate a wide range of learning needs (Department of Education, 2001).

At the level of institutions (schools), Institutional Level Support Teams (ILST) is to be established. An ILST is a school-based support services structure. The institutional level support team delivers its services directly within the premises of the school, or within the school campus. The primary function of an Institutional-Level Support Team is to put in place properly co-ordinated learner and educator support services (Department of Education, 2001). Where

appropriate, these teams are also expected to co-opt expertise from the community, within which the school is located, as well as collaborate with experts from the local community, school district and higher education institutions. The District Level Support Teams are to provide the full range of education support services, such as resources and professional development and training in curriculum and assessment, to institutional-level support teams (Department of Education, 2001).

As directed by the Department of Education, the Institutional Level Support Teams' main functions include that of identification and assessment of learners in needs of various forms of special intervention and resources. This is to suggest that, each school team is to identify learners needing special attention and to assess the types of intervention including provision of various care, support and resources which would be appropriate for addressing the special needs of those learners. The view is that a broad range of learning needs exists among the learner population of South Africa. When education and schools are not able to meet these needs learners may fail to learn effectively or become excluded. It is also recognized that a range of factors contribute to or are responsible for the various needs of learners, such as, physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, psycho-social disturbances, differences in intellectual ability as well as life experiences and social-economic deprivation (Department of Education, 2001).

Factors within the learning environment that is within the institution of the learners also exist, such as stereotyping in relation to poor academic performance, behavioural challenges due to underlying factor as well as an inflexible curriculum, language barriers, inappropriate communication, unsafe built environments, a lack of support services, inadequate policies and legislation, a lack of parental involvement or non-involvement, as well as a lack of trained education managers and ill-prepared educators (Department of Education, 2001). Assistance or intervention may include academic support, care, social and emotional support for learners who may be experiencing difficulties due to the dynamics within their families, care and support for learners experiencing social and economic challenges that hinder the course of their learning. The expectation is that the interventions in the forms of care, support and provision of resources should contribute to the enhancement of the learners' academic, social and psychological well-being.

In terms of its composition, an Institutional Level Support Team, ILST, comprises various stakeholders in education. These stakeholders or role-players are expected to collaborate or form partnership in order to achieve their common goal of successful achievement of education objectives by sharing of skills or expertise and decisions relevant for identification of learners' special education needs, identification of sources of resources for support as well as the securing and judicious distribution of the same to address the various needs of learners and educators for successful learning by learners. Thus according to Education White Paper 6 of 1996, each ILST is expected to be made up of the school management staff, educators, learner representatives, parents and community members (Department of Education, 2001). Members of the ILST are expected to cooperate in building very strong partnership and ownership of the school in order to ensure efficient delivery of services to needy learners. The different groups of individuals within the ILST, therefore, are to build a strong partnership between themselves and to avail themselves of their rich and collective expertise and resources for the purpose of sharing information about learners, their parents and their community as well as factors within these which may be impacting negatively on learning and to share decision making about provision of appropriate care, support and resources which would promote effective learning and lead to the achievement of educational objectives.

Teachers are, perhaps, the most important role-players in any educational enterprise. According to Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) the most important school variable contributing to success in learning are the teachers. Therefore, teachers or educators as a group or sector are most important among various other sectors (parents, NGOs or community groups and other professional groups relevant to education) which are to be represented in an Institution Level Support Team. The key focus of the current research study was to gain insight into educators' perspectives on collaboration or forming partnership with other groups of stakeholders in ensuring that the school functions well and that the learners are learning effectively and growing up well to become useful citizens of their country. It is crucial to understand teachers' perspectives on collaboration in such groups as the ILST, because traditionally teachers or educators believe that they are trained to act autonomously and without the "interference" of parents or other sectors of the community where their school is located

(Mosert, 2010). However in today's schools it is increasing more apparent that success can only be achieved by collaborating with all education stakeholders (Sherman, 2000).

Current thinking about how schools function or how educators should manage the classroom process or the teaching-learning relations is that they need to form partnership with other education stakeholders if they are to be successful. While many educators would willingly embrace this current trend and hold the believe that they need to build partnership with other sectors outside the school in order to educate children successfully, many other teachers are likely to still hold on to the traditional view of their role. Many teachers holding traditional view of teaching may still prefer that the school and homework separately (Bojuwoye, 2009). On the other hand other groups of stakeholders including parent groups who are to work with teachers may also hold the traditional view that it is the responsibility of the school to educate learners and thus exclude themselves from working with the school to ensure that children learn well and succeed (Premdev, 2007). Of course, there are many stakeholders, and parents in particular, holding differing views and believing it is their right to know what is happening in the school of their children and therefore must collaborate and form partnership with teachers in order to contribute maximally to their children's development (Bojuwoye, 2009).

Cuban (1990) notes, that the recent trend in children's education has been focused towards multi-sectoral and or inter-professional collaboration. The current state of education has given rise to a need for collective inputs from professionals, relevant to children's education, from various sectors of the society, to become aware of educational needs, work together and collaborate in providing resources which will enable schools to function effectively and children to learn well. In such a collaborating body members are to work together to identify learners with special education needs and to jointly plan and implement intervention strategies, by providing resources and support learners (Donaldson & Christiansen, 1990). This view of collaboration within education is also consistent with that of Rosenthal (1998) who asserts that a group of diverse and autonomous actors can under-take a joint initiative, address shared concerns or otherwise achieves common goals.

Understanding the dynamic characteristics of collaborating units within education is very important and include the following aspects: Firstly, for the functioning well of the collaborating unit or team, leadership is paramount in order to facilitate the articulation of a collective vision, as an important basis for agreement on joint goals and the decision making (Delany, 1994). A collaborating unit, like the Institution Level Support Team, ILST, needs members with high level of commitment and energy as well as motivation, which derives from various sources and their expertise. The aspects of team work most greatly identified are the skills of good communication, social awareness and goal orientated professional behaviour (Delany, 1994). For these characteristics to be present, a team, such as the ILST should, therefore, comprise individuals, who are key role players in education, from various professional backgrounds and various levels of experiences such as, Management, Educators, and Support Staff, Learner representatives, parents and community members who all represent and contribute towards education. These contributions inform their vision of the team as well as activities of the collaboration effort and their behaviour as a team
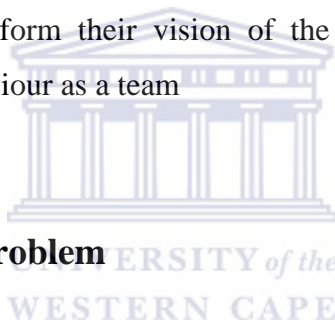
1.2 Statement of the study problem

The main concern of this study was to investigate the perspectives of educators regarding their collaboration in the Institutional-Level Support Teams of their schools. These perspectives related to the attitudes educators hold towards ILST, whether or not they view such partnership in ILST as beneficial, the roles and or activities they see themselves as playing or performing in the ILST and the challenges they experience in their collaborating with other members of the ILST.

Generally the aspects of collaboration that educators are expected to become involved in under this study's investigation were four specific areas including attitudes of educators towards collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, their opinions as to the benefits to be derived from their collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, the actual activities educators were involved in and finally the challenges they may have experienced individually and as a body while collaborating in their school ILSTs. Firstly, educators' feelings or attitudes towards collaboration in the ILSTs can be

identified as positive or negative and as indications of educators' interests in this collaboration. The study also aimed to identify whether or not the implementation of the ILST is viewed by educators as yet another instruction or imposition from the Education Department and did not really require any true dedication or motivation. The ILST has been directed to collaborate on various levels, sectoral and institutional. The Department of Education views the key to reducing barriers to learning within all education and training to lie in a strengthened support service (Department of Education, 2005). Education White Paper 6 recommends a 'three tier support system', Provincial and National Departments, District-Based Support Teams (DBST) and Institutional Level Support Teams (EWP6, 2001:28). The ILST, therefore, needs to be in direct collaboration with the DBST, which consists of Psychologists, learner support specialists, curriculum specialists, institutional development specialists that provide managerial support to schools and specialist support personnel and teachers from existing special schools. On an institutional level, the ILST needs to collaborate with members of the school/institution and community that can fulfil the functions as outlined by Education White Paper 6. Members include educators with specialised skills, those who hold managerial positions and from various institutions, it also includes parents/caregivers and local community members and support staff (Department of Education, 2005:35).Thus, there is a need to gain insight to educators' attitudes towards the collaboration on the various levels and inter-sectorally.

The second aspect focuses on the benefits that can be derived from the process of collaboration by educators. The study examined aspects such as: whether or not collaboration assists learners to obtain basic services (such as nutritional or feeding scheme, medical or health services and transport services) to meet their peculiar needs, whether or not the school ILST assist in meeting academic needs of learners (such as arranging provision of extra class activities), psychological and or emotional needs (counselling) and assisting learners in development of healthy personality and making appropriate lifestyle choices (provision of drug or substance abuse education programmes). In terms of identifying the benefits an ILST may contribute to the school/educational institution, one must examine the current curricular programmes, educational and non-educational support services the ILST currently being

implemented or offered at a school. For instance, South Africa constitution expects schools to promote the rights of all learners. It is, thus, the duty of the ILSTs to uphold such policy by ensuring that learners' rights which are not being met at their homes are provided for in the schools. Some aspects of this policy aim to redress of inequalities in education opportunities in South Africa.

The third aspect of the study is to gain insight into the actual activities that educators are involved in during the process of collaboration, whether these be in terms of participating in regular meetings, training programmes, assisting learners and also assisting educators who may face challenges in the classroom. According to the Department of Education, (2005:25) the activities which members of an institution's ILST may be involved include:

- Coordinating all learners, educators, curriculum and ILST in the institution. This includes linking this support team to other school-based management structures and processes, or even integrating them for better coordination of activities to avoid duplication;

- Collectively identifying institutional needs and, in particular, needs of learners constituting barriers to learning, needs of educator (especially instructional strategies and education resources), academic needs of learners (such as curriculum improvement, extra class, provision of education materials like textbooks, and others.

- Collectively developing strategies to address these needs and barriers to learning. This should include major focuses on educator development, parent consultation and support;

- Drawing on the resources needed, from within and outside of the institution, to address these challenges;

- Monitoring and evaluating the work of the team within an 'action-reflection' framework (Department of Education, 2005:25)

The study ascertained which of these activities educators are involved in and with a view to understanding how their involvement in these activities impact on their teaching roles in school.

The fourth and final aspect is to investigate the challenges the ILST members face while collaborating with each other in terms of time constraints, insufficient resources, but also the challenges in being productive or in receiving actual support from the various directorates as stipulated in Education White Paper 6 (2001).

Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate these four areas that were identified as crucial to the educators' perspectives on collaboration in their schools' Institutional Level Support Teams, ILSTs.

1.2.1 Research Questions

In order to explore educators' perspectives on their collaboration in their schools' ILST, the present study was guided by the following questions:

1. What are Educators' attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs?

2. What benefits do educators consider as deriving from collaboration or partnership in their schools' ILSTs?

3. What activities do educators involve themselves in while collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' Institution Level Support Teams?

4. What are the challenges they are confronted with while involved in activities or interacting with others in their schools' ILSTs?

1.3 Rationale

The rationale for the study is predominantly influenced by my own experience as an educator at a high school within the South Metropol, Cape Town. The Institutional Level Support Team is without a doubt a component that is worthwhile investigating as it envisions so many positive contributions. Information from the results of this study is intended to contribute to inform various bodies, such as the Western Cape Education Department about a means to assist the ILSTs. Information in the form of a formal report would be compiled using this study and could possibly point direction in the way educators could be positively motivated to effectively participate in the establishment of their schools' ILSTs.

At present a review of such nature amongst the current role-players within the ILST, namely Educators has not been conducted. It is encouraging that so many educators are actively involved not only in the classroom but also extra and or co- curricular activities in educating our learners. It is therefore necessary to establish the feeling and attitudes of these Educators that contribute so much personal time and effort. The benefits of the ILST are clearly evident as many of our school perform so well due to the contribution of educators.

I feel that our communities are unaware of the added commitment our educators have towards education and our learners, as well as not being informed of activities educators commit themselves to above and beyond the challenges they face within classroom. The challenges the ILSTs in the schools of the Metropol face would also be highlighted by the study. Moreover the study can also provide information as to the best way to assist parents. The bottom line is that schools are expected to collaborate with various stakeholders to function effectively. Perhaps the most important stakeholders are the parents who need to take ownership of their children's schools and participate effectively in their children's education. The apparent lack of parental and or community involvement and interest in schools or education of children needs to be reversed. A study of this nature could pave the way for possible improvement in the current distant relationships of schools, educators, parents and the community.

1.4 Brief description of Research Methodology for the study

The central theme of the study was to investigate the perspectives of educators of four selected schools in Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park areas, on their collaboration with other members of their schools' ILSTs. The research was designed to seek the educators' opinions regarding their collaboration with their schools' ILST in terms of their general attitudes to ILST; the benefits they think could be derived from ILSTs, the activities educators involve themselves in while collaborating with other stakeholders in the Institution Level Support Teams and the challenges they consider as likely to confront collaborating in the ILST.

The research paradigm which was employed is mixed methods approach adopting both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study population comprised educators in High schools of Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park areas from which a random sample of 29 educators was drawn. The main data gathering instruments were a semi-structured questionnaire and interview. This semi-structured questionnaire was used to enable participants to provide descriptions of their experiences of collaborating in the ILSTs of their schools (Myers, 2002). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the head or team leader, of the ILST at all four schools in order to understand their feelings and experiences regarding the issues pertaining to educators' collaboration in ILST.

1.5 Clarification of terms

It is vital to provide a clarification of some of the terms used within this study; this allows all readers to better understand the context and the manner that they are being used.

1.5.1 Educators

The term "Educators" as used in this study refers to all active teaching staff at the specific high schools selected for the study. Educators have also been identified as the main or key participants in the study. According to, Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education, Educators with specialized skills and knowledge in areas of learning support, life skill or counseling should make up the core members of this team (Department of Education, 2005).

1.5.2 Perspectives

Perspectives in this study refer to the view of Educators with regards to the various areas and issues referred to in the research questions. These perspectives are in terms of educators' attitudes, views, feelings, opinions regarding their participation in their schools' ILSTs, educators' opinions or views regarding what they consider as benefits to be derived from their collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, the services of their schools' ILSTs in which way they participate in and their general experiences regarding their participation in their schools' ILSTs.

1.5.3 Role players

For this study the term role-player is used to refer to the specific individuals who are to form part of the ILST as instructed by the Department of Education in White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001).

1.5.4 Partnership

Brinkerhof, (2002) describes partnership as more adequate and innovative solutions to societal problems on the basis of constructive dialogue between actors involved and an exploitation of their different resources and comparative advantages. In this case these groups or sectors of people are the key role players of the ILST who are also involved in dynamic interactions.

1.5.5 Collaboration

As according to Barbara Grey, (1989) collaboration is the possibility for actor's to explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible. The role-players in the ILST are supposed to work together using various strategies to ensure the success of the school.

5.6 School Based

As directed by the Department of Education the ILST is a school based team that operates on the school campus/ or premises to provide and deliver its assistance and services (Department of Education, 2001). The term therefore refers to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Educators and all other support staff based on the school premises.

1.5.7   Institutional Level Support team

The term ILST refers to the Institutional Level Support Team that delivers its services directly within the school premises. The primary function of an ILST is to put in place properly co-ordinated learner and educator support services (Department of Education, 2001).

1.5.8   Management

In this study Management refers to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Senior Management Team and the person that can be identified as the senior/head member of the ILST.

1.5.9   Parents

Parents of learner's have been identified by the Department of Education to be key role players of the ILST (Department of Education, 2001). Parents refer to learners' caregivers at home

1.5.9   Community

The term community refers to group of people or population in the immediate environment surrounding a particular school. The Department of Education has identified that the community and its members can play a vital role in the ILST (Department of Education, 2001).

1.5.10 Learners

This term refers to all registered children, pupils or students at the various school identified for the study. Learners' are the key recipients of the services provided by the ILST, as identified by the Department of Education (Department of Education, 2001).

1.6 Overview of remaining chapters

This thesis report is divided into five chapters. This chapter, being chapter one describes the contextual framework of the study and highlights the problem being investigated. Chapter two presents the literature review that identifies current discourse relating to the research problem. It provides a guideline for the collection of data, its process of analysis and the

interpretation thereof. Chapter three is on the methodology adopted for the study. It provides the motivation for using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and the various methods for data collection and analysis. It also identifies the ethical considerations pertaining to this study and methods to assess reliability and validity of this study. Chapter four is a presentation of the results of data analysis; it examines both qualitative and quantitative data analysis results. In chapter five the study is concluded and suggests recommendations for further research related to Educators' Perspectives on Collaboration in Institutional Level Support Teams (ILST).

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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1   Introduction

The preceding chapter presented a comprehensive description of the background to the study including the statement of the study problem, the research questions, rationale for the study and a short introduction to the research methodology employed in the study. This second chapter presents discussions on the review of related literature including conceptual and theoretical frameworks and review of previous works or studies on support or systems of support for learners in schools

2.2.   Conceptual overview

A conceptual framework, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), is about the description of or explanation about the system of concepts, assumptions, beliefs and theories that inform your research. Joseph (2005) also describes the section of the literature review referred to as conceptual framework as the presentation of the generally accepted principles or assumptions that form a frame of reference for the investigation. Thus conceptual framework constitutes that section of the review of literature that presents the descriptions of important issues, terms, concepts and or variables to be investigated. The presentations usually include the descriptions and explanations of why and how as well as the relationships between the concepts, terms and or variables. An important concept needing explanation in this study is collaboration including its aspects or dimensions of benefits, partnership, collaborating units, roles and functions in and the process of collaboration as well as challenges associated with collaboration.

2.1.1. Collaboration

Collaboration means working with other people towards a common goal (Simpson, 2010). Collaboration is a process of sharing knowledge, learning and building consensus (Simpson, 2010). Collaboration within education, specifically school communities where collaboration is the norm, tends to focus on teaching and learning partnerships that thrive. Due to

the recognition that teamwork ultimately has a great powerful potential, collaboration helps individuals accomplish their goals. All members of a collaborating unit are able to contribute to the well-being of the school viewed as a community and each person possesses skills, talents, knowledge and expertise to make the school a better place (Thomas, Korineck & McLaughin, 2001).

It is worth mentioning at this juncture that the different types of collaborative support as articulated in the concept of collaboration and various support services that are relevant include frontline support (ongoing relationships / support for professionals and their concerns). This frontline support is a pro-active approach that deals with issues before they start. In the partnership principle in which colleagues offer support not only to each other, but also to the school as an institution. This support is usually provided by critical members, that is, those members in leadership positions, such as principals, supervisors' and departmental heads.

Thomas *et al.*, (2000) have also identified certain considerations for effective collaboration. For collaboration to be successful, they have identified six essential elements. The first element is shared leadership. This is a process of including everyone, and the key participants have input and share information at all phases of planning, implementation and ongoing evaluation. The second is coherent vision. This is clear well-defined and shared views among administrators, teachers, specialists and students and their respective families. The third element is comprehensive planning that consists of careful consideration of all essential program components, roles and responsibilities. The forth element is adequate resources. This process is important as resources are the key tools to complete the job successfully. The fifth element is sustained implementation. This refers to the ability of program implementers and supporters to stay focused and committed. The sixth and last element is Continuous Evaluation and Improvement. This process consists of making well-reasoned data based decisions about continuing or modifying programs to make them more effective. In this manner, one is able to determine progress.

In the context of educational collaboration, it is assumed that one is examining the scope of inter-sectoral collaboration. The Department of Education, (2005) has adopted a holistic approach. Since it acknowledges that all problems and development as well as challenges are

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complex, it requires bringing in different perspectives on the problem and solution, and this also means engaging in with the full range of expertise available to understand and solve problems at hand. In an educational setting there is a need to involve learners, educators, caregivers, counselors and other health professionals, social workers, relevant community organizations, business and community leaders in addressing various challenges, (DoE, 2005).

2.1.2 Activities/ Roles and Functions of the ILST.

The role of a post-level one educator is focussing on classroom practice and the engagement in extra and co-curricular activities, (Raven 2005). A function involves the things a person does in performing his/her role, for example, my role as a teacher involves the following functions: instructing, nurturing, listening, encouraging, disciplining and empathising with students. Thus it is clear that in every role, a person has a different set of functions to perform. (Stark, 2007)

Since collaboration is a process of working together, this concept involves a clear set of activities (or rather functions) and roles of various members. Viewed in this perspective, all participants have a clear membership role, organizational function and activity that are ultimately their responsibility (Thomson & Perry, 2005). Therefore, they share interdependence and seek joint solutions in partnership. Thus is the case within the ILST under investigation, a body that has clear joint goals and vision, but ultimately each member has a specific role to contribute in participation as a member.

I wish to mention that the previous chapter outlined what the key functions/activities and role of the ILST are in the process of collaboration. The following are the roles and responsibilities of the core members of the ILST, which include Principals, deputy principal, educators and support staff as stipulated in the guidelines for the establishment of the ILST, (Department of Education, 2002:10-12).

The first role to discuss is that of the Co-ordinator of the ILST. This person performs the functions such as overseeing and creating situations and opportunities for members of ILST of a school to meet and allow full participation of all members in discussions on what the team is

expected to do for the school. As the coordinator also ensures that goals set by the team are met and the time frames adhered to. It is also coordinator's duty to ensure that all members understand and respect their roles. She/he should collaborate with other sectors, non-government organization, welfare departments and initiate teacher development.

The second role is that of the referring teacher. This person has the role of referring the learners that have been identified as requiring special services and support to the ILST, for additional intervention strategies that includes assistance with academic tutoring, counseling, social and economic difficulties. In turn, regular feedback is to be given by the referring teacher to the ILST regarding the progress of the learner.

The third role is that of Scribes. One member can be elected to hold the post of a scribe or different members can either rotate. The scribe keeps records and writes minutes of all meetings of the school's ILST. The records help to track progress and for future reference (Department of Education, 2002)
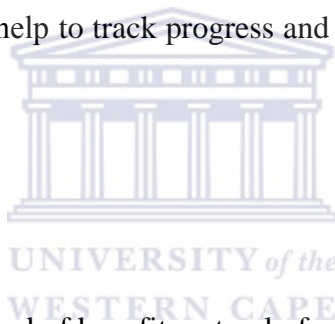
2.1.3 Benefits of collaboration

Collaboration has a great deal of benefit, not only for the group/organization, but also for individual member of the collaborating group. Within the educational context, according to Oswald (2007:148-149), collaboration is an essential feature of inclusive school communities. By forming partnership teachers, together with parents, learners, support personnel; and other community members are able to provide both technical social and emotional support. Learners' interests, needs and goals become the focus of collaborative decision making, creative problem solving as well as shared responsibility and accountability (Oswald 2007). Thus collaboration contributes greatly to motivation of teachers and learners for effective teaching and learning in schools.

2.1.4 Challenges of collaboration

Tau (2006) has identified barriers or challenges to collaboration, which include the challenge of resources, organizational issues and differing perspectives. Robinson et al (2002) identify time constrains, lack of adequate funding and human resources as crucial factors that may impact on successful collaboration. Welch (2000) highlights the manner in which the fundamental organization of the school prevents professionals from working together. School schedules as well as the physical layout of a building often lead to isolation of individuals and educators which minimizes communication and limits opportunities for professionals to interact and solve problems. Mostert (1996) acknowledges that professionals are trained to make decisions from their professional point of view, which may lead to a threat to the mutual purpose of the collaboration, thus making consensus difficult.

Already existing challenges have been identified within the context of Educational Collaboration, specifically in the aspect of educational support structures, namely the support structures of the ILST, The focus has been on the District based support team (Department of Education, 2005). However, the Department of Education (2005) has also indicated specific challenges of building teams that are to collaborate within educational support structures. . All education officials at district level need to understand the challenges involved in identifying and addressing barriers to learning, this includes being able to identify and solve problems and develop effective conflict management strategies and being able to identify who, in the structure needs to be involved in what activities and when, and recognizing the need for an integrated approach. This includes the need for an integrated approach in which special schools work together with administrative curriculum and institutional developmental support staff to provide a holistic and comprehensive support services. The District Based Support Team should develop of clear procedures for the inclusion of human and other resource within special schools into the various aspects of district support. Linking district support strategic plans to regional, district, provincial and national plans and priorities, thus ensuring that national objective is achieved. Learning to work well as a team is vital in ensuring the success at departmental level, in order to be able to provide the necessary support to the ILST.

This study aims to answer the key question of what are the challenges the ILST members may face with regards to collaboration in their schools' ILST. Research study findings regarding the nature of challenges educators could be confronted with are discussed later in this chapter of review of literature.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The following section presents two key theories that have great significance to the research topic. The first is the theory of Collaboration, I will discuss the background and development of the theory, the true context of the theory of collaboration, the relevance it has to my study and finally the limitations if the theory of collaboration. The second theory is the theory of Social Support, in which I will again discuss its background, content, relevance and the limitations of the theory.

2.2.1

Theory of Collaboration

The concept "collaboration" has been widely used in many varying contexts including education. However, very little research has been conducted to determine the true properties of collaboration or the processes of collaboration (Sampson 2010). In its literary meaning, collaboration means working together with other people towards a common outcome, (Sampson, 2010). Developing theories and definitions often refer to collaboration as a phenomenon; it is however important to remember that collaboration is a process. Viewed as a process, Di Maio (2008) defines collaboration as a process by which entities (people, organizations, and organisms) work together to accomplish a common goal.

We turn to social science research, to provide and gain further clarity on the definition of collaboration. Collaboration, according to Thomas and Perry (2006), is a multidisciplinary concept that occurs over time as organizations interact formally and informally through repetitive sequences of negotiation, development of commitments and the execution of those commitments. This view of the concept of collaboration as an interactive process appears to relate to the Process Framework of Collaboration that views collaboration as a process in which autonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and

structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together; it is a process involving shared norms and mutually beneficial interactions (Thomas, 2001).

The ILST much like stated by Sampson (2010) is working together towards a common goal. However a process exists or rather the ILST experiences a phenomena much like Di Maio (2008) examines in working with each other, involving the process of coming together in which members' attitudes are displayed, their activities, benefits they may derive as well as the challenges they may face.

Collaboration is not only multidisciplinary but also multi-dimensional, Roberts and Bradley (1991) and Gray (1989) state that collaboration has as principal elements a trans-mutational purpose (that comprises of voluntary membership), organization and interactivity collaboration (that involves a process of interdependence, dealing constructively with differences to arrive at solutions), joint ownership of decisions and collective responsibility that recognizes collaboration as an emergent process These aforementioned definitions of collaboration are relevant to the context of the present study. It is vital that we examine specifically the concept of collaboration in educational setting as a style of different interactions that enable teams of educators with diverse expertise to generate creative solutions to learners' problems. The outcome of these interactions produces solutions that are different from those any individual educator would produce independently. This viewpoint appears to concur with Walther-Thomas and colleagues (2000) that effective collaboration emerges out of concerns by individuals who are like-minded in some ways and very different in others. It also supports Kagan's (1991) definition of collaboration as an organizational structure where resources, power and authority are shared, and where people are brought together to share common goals that could not be accomplished by a single individual or organization independently.

If one examines our schools' ILSTs at present in relation to Thomas and Perry (2006), its success is based on the commitment of its members. Collaboration will not be successful if the members at each school display a lack of commitment. However being a member of the ILST is a voluntary process as instructed by the Department of Education (2005), and according to Roberts and Bradley, (1991 and Gray, (1989), collaboration is most successful when it is on a

voluntary basis, as participants feel a collective responsibility. This is further supported by Walter-Thomas and colleagues that state a successful collaborative initiative is only possible when a set of like-minded people come together.

In terms of the processes of collaboration and in particular as these relate to the workings in the ILST in schools, the Meta-Theory of collaboration (Pollard, 2012) identifies that collaboration is a behavior tendency that consists of enablers and barriers that contribute to its functioning. When referring to the processes of collaboration, Pollard (2012) refers to the complexity collaboration entails, much the ILST has to follow many steps and processes before it can achieve its goals. . The first aspect of the Meta-Theory of collaboration is Enablers of Collaborative Behavior, these ranges from a high self-esteem to the ability to observe without internal interference of personally ascribed meaning to what is being observed. The principal of emotional drivers again impact on collaboration, that is, emotional drivers that enable collaboration, for example, are love and compassion. These enables as discussed are the motivations needs to drive individuals of the ILST towards making a success of their collaboration. The second aspect of the Meta-Theory of collaboration is group behavior, the first being trust, and further more skills of inquiry, transparency in communications, sharing accepting and being able to provide feedback, such skills are also driven by emotional drivers of love and compassion. The theory conceptualizes barriers to collaboration those that stem from people's individual behavior such as high control needs, with associated behaviors' of advocacy, ultimatums, coercion, and domination. The second point relating to barriers is the concept of emotional drivers such as fear and anxiety which may act as a barrier to collaboration. Often when people in this particular case, namely educators, experience aspects of fear and anxiety may lead to certain unproductivity in collaborating with others.

If one examines the Meta-Theory, which is based on the concept of enablers and barriers that contribute to the function or nonfunctioning of collaborative venture units, then in terms of the ILST, such enablers as a high self-esteem and positive attitude greatly impact on the success or failure of the ILST. Enablers contribute to the aspect of attitudes of educators' towards collaboration with others/ members of the ILST. The enablers one can identify in the working

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together of the ILST are much like the aspect of commitment as pointed out by Thomas and Perry, (2006) or the feeling of collective responsibility as Roberts and Bradley (1991) identified. On the other hand Educators' negative attitudes and behavior will greatly impact on their willingness to collaborate. Thus the fact that participation in the ILST is voluntary ensures that many negative attitudes are not brought into the process of collaboration, process such a meetings for strategic planning, interacting with members of the department, time spent assisting learners and also liaising with parents and the broader community. ,

Thomson (2001) builds on this earlier research by systematically reviewing and analyzing a wide variety of definitions and concludes that collaboration can be placed into five dimensions with each dimension being interdependent in the sense that movement from one dimension to another does not necessarily occur sequentially. The dimensions are instead part of a larger covariance model in which variation across each dimension is influenced by variation in the others, (Bardack et al 2001.The five key dimensions are identified as follows: two are structural dimensions namely: governing and administering, the ILST is ultimately governed by the Education department, however the administrative duties are the responsibility of the ILST and its members. Two are dimension of social capital, namely: mutuality and norms, in the aspect of social capitalization a degree of mutuality is vital for individual member in order for them to work together successfully and a standard set of norms that guide these members in achieving their goals. The final dimension is one of agency; namely organizational autonomy, which is the collective power or rather authority of the ILST to act as an autonomous body in making decisions in the best interest of their schools.

This multidisciplinary view of collaboration assumes particular importance in the scope of the present study. Since it places collaboration into five dimensions, it appears that each dimension can explain or guide our understanding of the process of collaboration amongst various members of school ILST. More specifically, the two structural dimensions, namely governing and administering are important for understanding and unpacking how the process of collaboration in ILST is managed and guided by a co-ordinator and various role players. The following two mentioned are social capital dimensions, namely mutuality and norms; these are

relevant in the sense of examining what the norms and standards for of the ILST are. Furthermore, in the aspect of mutuality, one could regard the theory relevant as the success of the ILST ultimately depends on mutual agreement and participation. The final dimension of autonomy helps to understand how members of the ILST share a dual identity, that is to maintain their perspectives and in the process to be able to work under organizational authority under a collaborative identity.

Examining Walther-Thomas and colleagues (2002)'s approach to collaboration, it looks closely at school teams and their process of working together in educational collaboration, to make their schools inclusive. On a broad scale collaboration involves direct relationships and a few key points are identified regarding the characteristics of those collaborative relationships. It states that: Collaboration is not synonymous with inclusion or any specific formats, for example co-teaching, or peer consultation, that is used to facilitate the process. Thus in the ILST collaboration may take on many forms, each school will have its own system of collaboration. Friendship is not a prerequisite for effective collaboration, effective collaboration grows out of mutual trust and respect, equity, expertise and the willingness to share and value participants contributions. (Walter-Thomas, Korinek & Mclaughlin, 1999). Collaboration is a labor-intensive process, in which productive partnerships develop from time spent together exchanging ideas, opinions and information, as well as problem solving together. Participation in collaboration should be voluntary; this helps in solidifying each team member's commitment to the effort. Teams and individuals also need to identify when collaboration is appropriate and when it is not. Collaboration may not be necessary when or even desirable to address certain day-to-day professional responsibilities collaboratively (Walther-Thomas and colleagues, 2002)

In the scope of the present study, Walther-Thomas and colleagues' (2002) approach to collaboration is effective when dealing with the relationships between members of the ILST as such a relationship considers members' motivation as one important pre-requisite condition for collaboration. Also, the type of partnership created may be either productive or problem solving or may fail for various challenges within the collaborative relationship. Since Walther-Thomas

and colleagues (2002) thesis about collaboration stresses the voluntary nature of collaboration, this theory enables one to see how educators' active participation in their schools' ILST is expected to contribute to learners' development.

Rainforth and England, (1997) identify core set of values as stated are parity, shared goals, shared responsibility and attitude. The first value being parity; this means that all members of the group have equal status and are believed to have unique valuable contributions to make. The second value, shared goals; is defined as the group coming together because of a common interest, and members commit to towards a set of goals that promote that interest. The third value is shared responsibility; all members are accountable for participation, decision making and outcomes. That is all members contributing to various aspects of collaboration within the structure. The fourth and final value is attitude; more accurately characterized by openness to sharing information and skills and learning from others, also being flexible to accept new strategies and experiment with new approaches.

Each value as identified by Rainforth and England, (1997) is applicable to the present study. For example, parity is the equal status of all members of the ILST, as there are various role-players that participate in the process of collaboration; namely educators' management, support staff and community members. It is vital that all members be viewed and treated equally as this may greatly impact on members' participation in ILST activities. Also, it appears that shared goals are one of the key principles of the ILSTs and through co-operation and a set programme as well as clear objectives the ILST's are able to achieve their shared goals. Each school has the ultimate goal of achieving its maximum pass rate, however it is through the collaborative work of educators such as those that contribute to the ILST that learners receive the academic support as well social support structures they may require. In the aspect of shared responsibility, the ILST has various members that should be in equal participation and be held accountable for the progress of the ILST based on members' individual participation. Interpersonal openness, sharing information and learning new skills and techniques would further enhance the current skills and abilities of members of the ILST and enable them to contribute more effectively to the success of the ILST.

The above theoretical orientations on collaboration have been discussed in the aspect of their relevance to my study. However, we would like to examine their limitations when trying to unpack educators' perspectives of Collaboration in the ILST.

2.2.2 Limitations' of the Theory of Collaboration

The various theses of collaboration that underpin the focus of the study and are able to better explain the concept of collaboration may also have a degree of limitations. One must consider these limitations and seek to find an alternative view to assist in understanding the functioning of the ILST as perceived by Educators' that are the key role-players'.

If one is to group the theories identified and broadly explored the core content then they can be seen to hold very similar views of collaboration. The Meta- Theory which examines the concept of enablers and barriers and also behavior and attitude fails to provide a suitable reasoning or rather theory for individuals' actual behavior, the activities they occupy themselves with and the manner in which they do so. Secondly the Multidisciplinary theory focuses mainly on collaboration from an administrative viewpoint and the standards and norms, and not the actual social interaction that occurs amongst members of collaborative structure/body. Thus in general the set of theories reviewed appears to focus essentially on the collaborating units. As Thomas (2002) rightly observes no examination of the external behaviors is undertaken, but rather the focus is on motivation and its role in collaboration. Rainforth and England (1997) also observe that a more structural view of collaboration is taken by focusing on role-players and their view of status, goals and principles within collaboration. While these aspects of collaboration are important and are looked into in relation to the ILST, it is also important to look at theories that explain what drives the process of collaboration. Hence the need to review the Social Support Theory in order to gain more insight and also find further explanation for the educators' various perspectives on collaboration within the ILST.

2.2.3 Social Support Theory

The second key theory that informs the study is the Social Support Theory. In examining this theory, we gain further insight into Educators' perspectives on collaboration within the ILST and better understand collaboration as a whole.

Loebenstein (2005) suggests that support within education can be viewed as a response towards someone in need of help, mentoring and guidance with the intention to develop. In South Africa 'support' within our policy documents has presented response to the variety of needs each school learner may exhibit (Department of Education, 2001). The ILST is thus a means of support for learners, however, in providing such support it is vital that we understand the dynamics of support within the members of the ILST in collaborating with each other.

The most dominant theoretical perspective in Social Support theory draws from the theory of Stress and Coping (Lakey & Cohen, 2000). The theory of Stress and Coping states that when people experience stress, this negatively impacts on their situations. Therefore, Social Support is necessary to enhance appraisals and coping. The type of social support being provided must however match the demands of the stressor. In saying this, if one is experiencing stress, the assistance one receives must relate to the circumstances of the stress related factors and then provide sufficient support in coping with the stress. The point in this theory is that ILST as a support structure in the school has the responsibility of first identifying what stresses are being experienced by the learners in order to provide appropriate support to the learners for addressing the stresses. This study therefore is with regard to finding out how the educators located themselves within their schools' ILSTs with regard to the roles they are playing at helping to identify learners' special needs requiring support.

The Social Cognitive perspective is an alternative theory which draws from basic research in cognition and from cognitive models of psychotherapy (Lakey & Drew, 1997). The model is geared towards perceived support and mental health and is also relevant to one's physical health. The Social Cognitive perspective links ones negative evaluation of one's self, others and negative emotions (Baldwin, 1992). It further identified that negative emotion may lead to negative evaluations. However supportive social interaction makes negative thoughts and emotion less accessible and positive ones more accessible. The ILST's success is reliant on

Social Support, in terms of support amongst the collaborating members of the ILST which in turn translate to creating socially conducive school environment promoting effective teaching and learning. After all population groups of stakeholders in the school are represented in the members of the school ILST. Therefore, if one takes into consideration the Social Cognitive Perspective, (Lakey & Drew, 1997), members of the ILST that experience a lack of social support may be prone to negative feelings and this may affect the entire school system. The ILST requires various means of support, external support from the Education Department in the form of District Based Support Team, Parents and the broader community, internal support from the Principal, School Governing Body and other members within the ILST body. A lack of support may in turn result in negative evaluations from individual members and also the ILST body as a whole.

Williams (2005) states that the Theory of Social Support in neither clear nor definite. Examining the work of Hupcey (1998), she then stated his concept of social support. Social Support is a Multi-faceted concept that has been difficult to conceptualize, define and measure. Little agreement exists between theoreticians and researchers, regarding its theoretical and operational definition. Williams (2005) has compiled a composite definition and synthesis of definitions of social support. "Social Support" requires the existence of social relationships. Whether social ties are supportive depends on certain conditions such as reciprocity, accessibility and reliability and an individual's use of the social relationship. To further elaborate on social relationships with social support, Williams (2005) identifies that these relationships have the potential to provide supportive resources; these resources may be in the form of emotional, informational and sustenance. However, one of the most importance resources concerning this study, possibly intimate resources. Intimate resources include one's own skills and ability, material goods or money, tools, skills or labor and time. Williams (2005) also identifies supportive resources has including social ties, that being information accessible.

Social Support is thus a vital component to the ILST, as members are a valuable resource to each other in their collaborative relationship. In view of Williams' (2005) statement that intimate resources include individual member's skills and qualification. The ILST is a cluster of

educators comprising of multi-skilled individuals. They are also able to draw on the support of external sources such as the Education Department in the form of DBST as well as the skills of the community. Support in the form of money and or goods are accessible from the community and other sources independently. Members of the ILST sacrifice much time as they set up programs to assist learners, thus involving themselves in the process of labor, which they sacrifice using their own time after school and during interval times.

Social Support encompasses at least three distinct types of support. Perceived Support is also known as Functional Support (Will & Filer, 2001). It is the subjective judgment that family and friends would provide quality assistance. People with high perceived support are viewed to believe that they can count on others to provide assistance. The support includes- listening, offering advice and problem solving. Enacted Support reflects the actual support that is listed in perceived support. This is better understood as the individual actually physically receiving the support. Social Integration refers to the number or range of different types of social support relations, for example in this case (being the current study) members' of an organization.

Social Support is thus an important link to the ILST when examining their expectations of support. The ILST acts collaboratively as a body to provide support to learners, however, to what degree the ILST receives support is worth evaluating. An expectation of perceived support clearly exists referring to literature provided by the Education White paper 6, (2001, 2005). It is the enactment of this support that requires much investigation, to determine whether this support is established and accessible. Firstly support in terms of the Department Education and its provision of training to inform and guide members as well as resources that assist the ILST in referrals and remediation of learners. Secondly support in terms of learners, parents and the broader community in the process of collaboration.

2.2.4 Relevance of the Theory of Social Support to the study

The theory of Social Support is indeed relevant to the study of collaboration in the ILST's within the scope of this study. As it examines the manner in which a lack of Social Support may negatively impact on individuals and also groups of people.

Social Support is necessary as it responds towards someone in need of help, mentoring and guidance as identified by Loebenstein (2005). This corresponds to the support the ILST's provide to leaners, parents and the broader school community as well the support members within the ILST require and the support the ILST requires as a body.

The Social Support Theory examines the effects that stressful situations may have on one. Much like situations the ILST members may experience in dealing with learners that require support and the circumstances they face such as the lack of resources, time constraints and often a lack of communication. The lack of Social Support may also lead to negative feelings, (Lakey & Drew, 1997). Members may show a lack of commitment or fulfill their duties in an unprofessional manner, which will impact negatively on the success of the ILST's. The models of Social Support deal with weak links between perceived support, enacted support and social integration. When examining the theory of Social Support, one can make a clear link between the support the ILST is perceived to receive and the actual enacted support it does/does not receive. Support plays a key function in the collaboration of the ILST and Educators' perspectives of the collaboration.

2.2.5 Limitations of the Social Support Theory

Limitations of the Theory of Social Support The Theory of Social Support provides some key information and guidelines as to how to examine the relationships or interactions that are required to form during the process of collaboration among the various levels of organization or role-players of the ILST and those levels above them. It provides a manner of investigating or rather a way of looking at the interactions between these levels and the negative or positive impact they may have on one another. This also informs as to why it is important to investigate

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activities educators engage in and the challenges experienced while collaborating in their school's ILSTs.

Under the general rubric of social support, three types of support were identified, that being perceived, enacted and social integration. The limitation of this theory is linked to the problem of measuring social support, it will not be easy to determine or measure whether or not the various role-players are receiving support, as there are many ways or types of support they could or could not be receiving. Thus it would be difficult to measure each and every aspect, but rather conduct a broad research and try to gain insight into a few, such as administrative support or the challenges they face due to a lack of support.

2.3 Review of Previous works in Collaboration

2.3.1   Introduction

This section reviews relevant literature that pertains to effective schools. More specifically, the section presents debates about the recognition of the important roles of education stakeholders in contributing to schools' success. This is to suggest how education stakeholders collectively identify schools' and learners' needs and provide resources to address those needs at the school level. In light of this scope, the present review focuses on studies that pertain to collaboration and support services at the school level.

2.3.2. Research Studies on Collaboration and Support Services in Education

This section overviews relevant literature on Collaboration and Educational Support Services in Education. It first presents studies that have been conducted in South Africa before presenting those conducted internationally.

2.3.3.1 South African Research Studies.

Ebersohn (2000) focused on Education Support Services (ESS) at schools and the impact of poor parental involvement, which in some cases proved to be non-existent. She focused on Educational Psychologists and their expertise in collaborative problem solving, consultation and school organizational development. The methods of data analysis employed the distribution of a questionnaire and informal discussions with teachers. The main finding is that there is a lack of information available to educators regarding how to deal with learning disabilities. Educators felt ill prepared to deal with many challenges within the classroom.

The study was successful in identifying the aspect of poor parental involvement. This is a major component for the collaboration of the ILST, as ILST's are to work directly with parents and caregivers to ensure the success of learners. Secondly Educational Psychologists working for the Department of Education are to provide support to schools, specifically the ILST in providing support to learners, educators and parents. My current study will focus on the support provided to the ILST's in equipping them to provide assistance. There is a need to identify the aspects of collaboration between the Institutional Level Support Team and parent involvement in the process of collaboration. It also aims to examine the involvement of support structures such educational psychologists and the District Based Support Team to the Institutional Level Support Team.

Tau (2006) investigated the process of collaboration between the District Based Support Team, SBST, the School Governing Body and a representative of parents. The main objective of the study was to investigate how the above mentioned bodies support and assist learners who experience various barriers to learning, development and participation. The bodies are instructed to do so through a collaborative and consultative problem solving approach. One of the main components of the study was to investigate the co-ordination between various bodies and their process of communication in order to assist learners. Within the research aim, two main issues were investigated: the collaboration between the District Based Support Team, School Based Support team and parents on the School Governing Body at one school. The focus was on how these partners work together to support and assist learners' experiencing barriers to learning and

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participation. The second issue that the study aimed was to investigate the co-ordination between the bodies and their process of Communication. A selected sample consisted of District based Support Team ,School Based Support Team and School Governing Body, a Western Cape School, Education and Management Development Center, East District. The research instrument was a quantitative designed questionnaire consisting of closed and open questions. This questionnaire aimed to gain information on participants' opinions, feelings, knowledge and skills. Document analysis of archival and scholarly material relating to learning and educational support was conducted to analyze collected data. Standard and official sources, journal entries, annual reports, minutes of meetings and other recorded documents were also analyzed.

The main findings of the study were: Regarding the aspect of attitude, only 1 out of 5 teachers expressed a positive attitude towards collaboration between the District Based Support Team, SBST and parents on the School Governing Body. Others were ambivalent, their reason being due to class size, as they could express some aspect of negativity but willingness to seek information. The different types of barriers to learning experienced by SBST and District Based Support Team were Scholastic barriers in numeracy and literacy, socio-economic factors, disabilities (Mild physical disabilities, speech, hearing, hyperactivity and emotional disabilities) and systemic barriers such as a lack of resources and over-crowding. As to the benefit of Collaboration between School Based Support Team, District Based Support Team and School Governing Body, all participants agreed that the School Based Support Team work together and that there is co-operation between the School Based Support Team, District Based Support Team and School Governing Body. Furthermore, a sound co-ordination was also evident in terms of record keeping, reporting to the Senior Management Team and reporting to the School Governing Body. One other benefit was that the different characteristics of collaboration were identified to be Inter-dependence/parity, sharing resources, decision making, and problem solving and communication skills. As to challenges, all participants agreed that lack of resources, lack of time, and difficulty in the referral process and a general delay in response were serious barriers to collaboration. Another challenge was that it was also found that a general lack of parent's involvement also existed due to time constraints, organization issues, group dynamics, differing perspectives and the lack of frequent SBST meeting and school visitations.

Tau (2006) focused on collaboration between the District Based Support Team, School Based Support Team and the School Governing Body; the study did not include the ILST. However the study sought to identify many similar aspects to this study. It identified the positive aspects of collaboration such as parity, shared resources, decision making, problem solving and communication. It then also highlighted many of the challenges such as the lack of resources and lack of parental involvement. The ILST functions on the same system of collaboration, thus is beneficial to investigate the attitudes of members of the ILST, the benefits derived, the activities members engage in and also the challenges they may face.

These findings suggest the need to improve human and physical resources, the support for different teams and the adoption of positive response towards District Based Support Team. Therefore, the authors recommend the development of workshops at the Education Management and Development Center level, the department of education to assist more in professional development, the employment of more teachers, workshops educating teachers on how to identify barriers, training on referral forms, improving communication and more activities that aid in parental involvement and an increase in government vehicles.

This study is particularly relevant to the current study as its main focus is collaboration within education, namely between the District Based Support Team, School Based Support Team and School Governing Body. It is also aimed at improving the collaborative team work. It focused on educators' and how they perceived the collaboration or lack thereof, not just at the school institution but also at higher levels, such as Government based District offices. The findings provide insight as to what educators' previously felt towards the process of collaboration in terms of their attitudes; it also provides an outline as to why they express a negative attitude. This informs my study as I was to investigate attitude as a main indicator to determine educators' perceptions. The study also largely investigated and produced relevant findings as to the barriers that these bodies face in trying to collaborate, this aspect closely relates to my research on the challenges perceived by educators' in the ILST.

There is however a need to investigate the collaboration that occurs or fails to occur within the ILST and the various others bodies they are to collaborate with, such as the District Based Support Team, parents, learners and the broader community.

Mashau, Steyn, van de Walt and Wolhuter (2008), examined the impact of support services on learners' achievements. A survey examined the pedagogical functions of educators with a focus on educators' perceptions of the need for creating and improving their relationships with learners and the availability of support services to help them improve their relationships.

The study examined Support to Educators, Support to Learners and Support to teaching and activities and structures. It focused on the Policy of on Whole School Evaluation (South Africa, 2001). The Policy aims at improving the overall quality of education in South African schools and provides a framework for the provision of support services. The research objective was to investigate which Support Services, according to the perceptions of Educators' are needed in the historically disadvantaged Limpopo Province to improve learner – educator relationships. The research design employed was a self-report questionnaire that aimed to gather information regarding the perceived need and availability of the Education Support Services. The sample for the study was identified using purposeful and random sampling, 4 schools were randomly selected, including 4 principals, 4 deputy principals and 29 teachers. The researcher also conducted interviews. The main finding of the study was that the relationship between educators and learners was a variable that was considered to be of great importance in students' achievement. It was also reported that Support Services were readily available to the majority of institutions. Recommendations made by the researchers based on the findings were that it is necessary to assist schools further in supplying better equipped libraries', media services, subject advice and teacher training.

The relevance of this study is that it examined Educators' perceptions of Education Support Services and focused on whether or not support services were available to schools as instructed by policy document. The Relationship between educators and learners proved to be important to student success; this was due to the support offered by educators to learners and is a result of the Education Support Services received. Much like the goals of the ILST, the ILST is geared towards assisting learners achieve success. The ILST may be able to improve the

relationships between learners' and educators' if the support structures are readily available to the ILST. The current study will therefore investigate and provide evidence of educator perspectives, relationships and support provided to learners.

2.3.3.2 International Studies

Some studies have been conducted at the international level to address the issues of collaboration and support services and their impact to achievement. Mactague (2004) investigated learner support as a central aspect for success in education and training. Quoting Schroeder (2003, p55), his assumption was that due to the increasing number of distance education and the growing number of learner population, new models of learner services must be developed to meet the needs of specific groups of learners' in a wide variety of educational environments. This view concurs with Dewitt (2003) who argues that Support Services must be provided by the institution. This study investigated the type of support learners on and off campus do or do not receive. This support relates to admission assistance, registration records, financial aid, educational or /academic support.

The methodology of the study was a combined data collection process using both qualitative and quantitative methods, focus groups and surveys. A total of 300 surveys were distributed to a sample of 175 students, 75 staff and 50 alumni. The model of Academic Learner Support Services was drafted based on the criteria developed by the input of various committees. An implementation plan included determining learners' needs and program goals, determining a desired program and learning outcomes, identifying performance gaps analysis between current and identifying an outcomes, determining a needs resources analysis, determining the specific activities required and a means to monitor the program and its success.

The results of the study indicated a need for assessing skills early, providing an orientation program, providing full-time cluster co-ordination, providing online tutoring and mentoring program, teaching support, personal counseling and the developmental programs for learners, faculty member and staff.

The suggestions made from the research is the development model meeting the needs of learners to improve their overall research and writing skills and also develop or rather improve learners readiness for academic institutions'.

The study relates to the current study of the ILST in that it focuses on much of the activities provided in support to students. The aim of my research is thus to investigate and provide concrete descriptions of the manner in which the ILST's provide support, in terms of academic assistance, support programs focusing on counseling dealing with aspects of career objects, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and other social circumstances relating to transport and feeding schemes.

McLaughlin (2002) examined the effectiveness of learning environments, designed by educators and instructional designers. A successful learning environment is one that offers learner support. Collaborative learning is identified as a main source of improving learning environments. This originates from the social-cultural perspective of Vygotsky, under the term of scaffolding. As the worldwide web is an ever increasing means of education and part of the collaborative learning approach. McLaughlin (2002) has acknowledged educators view that learners are not all willing to execute tasks and activities that lead to successful learning. They, therefore, require support and structural learning experiences. Scaffolding directs its attention to the need for support in the learning environment and the learning process. This includes resources that the learner can access in order to actively engage in the learning process. Research indicates that we need to rethink issues of agency and the roles of peers, facilitators and teachers offering learner support and also acknowledge the opportunities that social, collaborative and communication of online learning has created.

Earlier research conducted in the 1980's, shows that face to face teaching and verbal interaction was the most common form of scaffolding. Teachers and learners were occupying the same space and engaging in the learning process in the conventional classroom, with prescribed rules, roles and expectations (McLaughlin, 2002). Recent advances in educational research show that communication technologies lead to a participatory role for students, as it initiates co-

participants in a self-regulating learning process. Mcloughlin (2002) summaries literature on effective scaffolding indicating that each form of scaffolding provides learning support. However each may differ in the degree to which it offers assistance for social engagement, peer learning and task structuring. Effective scaffolding is thus identified as a reduction in the scope for failure when setting a task that the learner needs to complete. Enabling the learner to accomplish a task that they would not have been able to complete on their own. Also moving learners into a zone of understanding and lastly encouraging and bringing them into a state of understanding (McLaughlin, 2002).

Research shows that learners need to be given more control over their learning environments as well as activities they undertake. Teachers' thus need to be able to design such learning environments. (McLaughlin, 2002). The ILST in collaboration is able to impact on classroom learning environments', in that they should provide support to educators in equipping them with the necessary skills of effective teaching. Thus the current study will inform as to what support the ILST provides to educators in improving learning environments'.

2.4 CONCLUSION

A limited body of research exists regarding the perspectives of educators on the process of collaboration in the ILST. Theories of Collaboration and Social Support are able to clarify and provide better understanding of the phenomena and structural concept of the ILST. However there is a need to investigate the ILST's functioning as a body, specifically in light of educators and how they view collaboration in terms of their general attitudes to ILST; the benefits they think could be derived from ILSTs, the activities educators involve themselves in while collaborating with other stakeholders in the Institution Level Support Teams and the challenges they consider as likely to confront collaborating in the ILST.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented a review of relevant literature to this study. The present chapter focuses on research methodology adopted for the study in order to answer the research questions so as to reach the study objectives.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), research is a process of gaining an understanding of the complexities of human experience and in some genres of research, to take action based on that understanding. A proposal for the conduct of research represents decisions the researcher has made that a theoretical framework, design and methodology will generate data appropriate for responding to the research questions and that the research will conform with ethical standards (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

The present chapter describes the research paradigm adopted, the research population and sampling techniques, the instruments used to collect data, the data collection procedures, the data analysis method and the ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Paradigms

Paradigms can be described as the fundamental models or reference we use to organize our observations and reasoning (Babbie, 1997). A paradigm provides a way of looking at a phenomenon and it provides the logical framework within which theories are created (Babbie, 1997). The most commonly cited paradigms by researchers in the education context are the qualitative and quantitative paradigms (Babbie, 1997). Consistent with this contention, researchers have generally tended to align themselves with a particular design based on either quantitative or qualitative methods (Schwandt, 2000). However, within the scope of this study, and in order to investigate the perspectives of educators regarding their collaboration in the

Institutional-Level Support Team of their schools, a mixed method design using both quantitative and qualitative methods is adopted.

3.2.1   Mixed Methods Approach

Mixed methods research recognizes the importance of traditional quantitative and qualitative research approaches as well as provides the most informative, complete, balanced, and useful research results (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, and 2007:117). Mixed methods research is an approach to knowledge (theory and practice) that attempts to consider multiple viewpoints, perspectives, positions, and standpoints; including the standpoints of qualitative and quantitative research (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007:117). The term 'triangulation of methods' is often used in place of mixed methods research (Denzil, in Johnson, et al, 2007: 114). Triangulation is the combination of different methodologies within one study. This is to suggest that the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, and concepts or language into a single study or set of related studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

3.2.1.1 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research gathers data that have been quantified or are usually presented in numbers or figures. Although most quantitative research emphasize rich experimental data derived from manipulating or influencing certain variables, the present study is not experimental; but it employed structured questionnaire to obtain quantitative data necessary to answer the research question. A research of this type is, according to Fouche and De Vos (1998) a one-group post-test design in which the group is studied only once with no pretest and no control group. In light of this observation, and keeping in mind the study objectives, the present study uses data collected from a questionnaire that focused on teachers' attitudes to their membership in their schools' Institutional Level Support Team, including their attitudes to participating in their school's ILST, the benefits they believe are derivable from their participation in their school's ILSTs, the various activities they are involved in and the challenges they experience in the process of their involvement in their ILST activities.

3.2.1.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research can be described as research that studies participant's knowledge and practice taking into account viewpoints, behaviors, opinions, feelings and practices in the field as well as the different subjective perspectives and social backgrounds related to them (Flick, 1998).

Qualitative methods take the researcher's communication with the fields and its members as an explicit part of knowledge production instead of excluding it as far as possible as an intervening variable (Flick, 1998). In conducting qualitative studies, the subjectiveness of the researcher and those being studied are part of the research process.

The qualitative aspect of this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of educators' perspectives in terms of their own unique ways of describing and providing authentic insight into their experiences (Silverman, 1993) in the process of collaboration in their school' ILST in Wynberg and Grassy Park and Pelican Park areas. The qualitative data for the study related to the participants' reported experiences on the following specific aspects which are:

- Educator-participants' attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILST;

- Benefits educator-participants consider are derivable from their collaboration with other members of their schools' ILST;

- Activities in which educator-participants are involved while collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILST;

- The challenges educator-participants consider are associated with collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILSTs.

Qualitative research questions are best addressed in a naturalistic setting using exploratory approaches (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The argument to support this is that human actions are significantly influenced by the setting in which they occur and that one should therefore study that behavior tendencies in those real life situation (Marshall &

Rossman, 2006). The qualitative research methods are employed to supplement the quantitative methods

Thus, as according to Marshall and Rossman (2006), for qualitative studies the researcher must ensure that the study is conducted in the setting where all this complexity operates over time and where data on the multiple versions of reality can be collected.

3.3 Research population and sample

Marshall and Rossman (2006) assert that unless a study is narrowly constructed, researchers cannot study all relevant circumstances, events or people intensively and in-depth. Fundamental to the design is selecting the setting, site, population or phenomenon of interest. There are also factors that impact the process of sampling and research such as the expectations of the researcher based on their familiarity with the setting and people, ethical and political dilemmas, the risk of uncovering potentially damaging knowledge and also the challenge of closeness and closure (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

The research context was the Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park areas falling under the Western Cape Education Department, Metropol South. The schools in this area were of interest to the present study because they are situated in a fairly economically challenging environment, and they provide an educational opportunity to learners throughout Cape Town as the schools are easily accessible via the bus, train and taxi routes. Learners attending these schools range from various socio-economic backgrounds and these schools are faced with the various challenges of poor discipline, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, gangsterism, violence, single-parent households, teenage pregnancy, the impact of HIV/Aids as well as a lack of resources and funding.

The study population consists of all educators from these schools. These educators were males and females, with different teaching degrees as well as years of teaching experience.

A sample is the method and process of selecting a given number of people from a population. In terms of the aspect of sampling, the study participants were selected from the

population of educators in the four high schools in Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park areas. A purposive sampling of twenty-nine educators was made from all the teachers of these four schools. Concerning participants' teaching experience, only the educators who had more than a year of teaching experience were selected to participate in the study. The table below presents information on educators who participated in the study.

Table 1: Participants' age, gender and teaching experiences

			School A	School B	School C	School D	Total
1	Age group (in years)	25-30	1	0	1	0	2
		31-50	4	2	4	5	15
		More than 50	2	2	5	3	12
		Total	**7**	**4**	**10**	**8**	**29**
2	Gender	Male	3	2	6	6	17
		Female	4	2	4	2	12
		Total	**7**	**4**	**10**	**8**	**29**
3	Qualification	HDE	2	0	2	2	6
		BA/PGCE	2	1	2	1	6
		FDE	1	1	1	2	5
		Hon./BED	1	1	3	2	7
		PTD III	1	1	2	1	5
		Total	**7**	**4**	**10**	**8**	**29**
4	N. Years of teaching experience	1-10 years	1	0	2	1	4
		More than 10 years' experience	6	4	8	7	25
		Total	**7**	**4**	**10**	**8**	**29**

Table 1 provides the demographic information of participants in the study. It indicates the four High Schools namely Schools A, B, C and D from where participants were selected. It provides an indication of educators' age in years, gender, qualification and also their number of years in teaching experience.

3.4 Research Instruments

Since the present studies used both qualitative and quantitative data, two instruments were designed to elicit participants' perspectives on their membership in their schools' ILST. These instruments are: a questionnaire and interviews.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

It is generally agreed that a well-designed and administered questionnaire can provide the researcher with relevant data necessary to address research questions. A questionnaire is a well-designed set of questions for obtaining information from respondents (Frazer, & Lawley, 2000).

In accordance with Frazer and Lawley, (2000), some steps followed when the present study questionnaire was developed and administered. The first step consisted to identify relevant information and this was done on the basis of the research objectives. Then, a draft questionnaire was prepared. This questionnaire included question contents and wordings. In order to ensure that the questionnaire drafted could help collect necessary information, it was then pre-tested with few participants who shared the same characteristics to the research participants but were not included in the study sample. Pre-testing enabled the researcher to check on the questionnaire content and formulation as well as the time needed to complete it.

Since the aim of the present study was to identify educators' perspectives on collaboration in their schools' ILST, the questionnaire objective was to gain insight into educators' experiences and perspectives on their schools' ILST.

In light of the study objectives, the study questionnaire contained statements categorized into the four focal areas of investigation that included educators' attitudes towards their collaboration in their schools' ILST, the benefits they considered derive from their participation in their schools' ILST activities, the activities educators considered they were involved in, and the challenges they faced as members of their schools' ILST.

The questionnaire comprised of six sections. The first section related to a general introduction indicating the general purpose of the study as well as of the questionnaire. This section also included information regarding ethical considerations. This section related to participants' demographic information such as their gender, age, academic qualification and their number years of experience as an educator. The second section included questions relating to educators' attitudes towards collaboration in their school ILST. It included questions such as, "I am a member of the ILST and I am happy about it". The response

options to the statements in this section of the questionnaire were in two-point Likert-type scale of "agree" or "disagree". The third section aimed to identify the benefits educators considered as derivable from their involvement in their schools' ILST. An example of a statement contained in this section is, "The ILST assists in improving learners' general behavior by offering workshops on violence, drug and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS educations and other school problems". The response options to this section were in two-point Likert-type scale of "agree" or "disagree". The fourth section related to the activities that are associated with the ILST. An example of a statement contained in this section is "Organizing academic support for learners' (extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers', providing extra learning materials, etc.)". The response options were "yes" or "no". The last section aimed to identify the main challenges that ILST's members at the various schools face as a body and as individuals. The section contained suggestions as to the type of challenges the teachers are likely to experience such as, "Poor guidelines or none at all as to the role and responsibilities of the ILST by the Department of Education". The response options were in four-point Likert-type scale of "always", "sometimes", "seldom" and "never". After each section, namely section A- E was followed by a personal response option, educators' could then freely indicate any further comments or concerns regarding the various sections or any other issues. The entire questionnaire is found in Appendix VI.

3.4.2 The Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire.

The validity of the research instrument is the extent to which inferences and uses made on the basis of data produced by the instrument are reasonable and appropriate (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). On the other hand, the reliability of the research instrument refers to the consistency of the measurement, that is, the extent to which the data generated by an instrument may be replicated by another research using the same instrument in other environments (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

The research questionnaire was tested through a pilot study with four educators who shared the same characteristics with the study participants, but who were not included in the main study.

The main objective of piloting was to ensure that the questionnaire was valid and reliable. Thus, the aim of piloting the questionnaire was to ensure that the questionnaire could generate sufficient information necessary for answering the research questions. More specifically, the pretest aimed to establish if the questionnaire requested information relating to all the four aspects or dimensions of educator perspectives including their attitudes to collaboration in their schools' ILST, the benefits they believe are derived from their membership in their school's ILST, the activities they are involved in while collaborating and the challenges they experience during their membership in their school ILST.

- **Questionnaire validity**

In order to validate the questionnaire, three types of validity were used: face validity, content validity, and construct validity. Questionnaire face validity was established during the piloting process through a careful revision of the questionnaire form and content to ensure that the questionnaire included only statements that measured the construct to be measured. In order to ensure that the questionnaire was accurately revised, I showed the questionnaire to my supervisor who in turn revised it by looking at the phrasing of individual statements in order to ensure that it was face valid.

The questionnaire content validity was established during the piloting process through a careful inspection of the questionnaire statements to ensure that the suggested statements elicited most information necessary to understand the research concept and answer the research questions.

Finally, the questionnaire construct validity was established during the piloting stage when I ensured that all the questionnaire statements aimed to elicit information that targeted the construct of educator collaboration and that no questionnaire statement was unrelated to this target construct.

- **Questionnaires reliability**

In order to ensure that the data collected from the questionnaire were reliable, the participants were given instructions so as to ensure that they had understood how to respond to the

questionnaire because failure to correctly fill out the questionnaire could result in data that could not be credible.

Among the three kinds of reliability indices reported in the literature, the Cronbach coefficient of reliability was used to establish internal consistency of the four sections of the questionnaire as well as the internal consistency of the individual statements within each questionnaire section. The choice of the internal consistency reliability was motivated by the assumption that, in order to confirm that the participants' responses to the questionnaire were reliable, there needed to be a certain consistency in their responses on individual items.

Since the reliability index obtained from Cronbach coefficient was 0.82, it was evident to conclude that the questionnaire was reliable.

3.4.3 The Interview

A basic interview is a typical method when gathering information within the qualitative approach. Thus, an interview was conducted with the co-ordinator/directing member of each school's ILST. As according to Babbie and Mouton, (2001), a qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry. It is a conversation in which the interviewer establishes direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics. According to Parker (2005) an interview allows for a versatile or rather flexible way of collecting data and can be used for all age groups, thus making the interview a very advantageous aspect of the research design.

For the purpose of this study, I used a set of basic questions that guided conversation and allowed me to maintain my focus. The four interviews were set up at times convenient for the participants. Participants were briefed about the exact nature of the study and also assured about their anonymity and the confidentiality of all information that may arise regarding the topic but not necessarily relating to the focus question. Participants signed an information and consent to interview sheet and a copy was handed to each participant. The interview was recorded using an audio-tape recorder and it was later transcribed for data analysis.

The interview firstly established demographic details of the participants relevant to the study. This related to gender, age, qualification, and number of years teaching experience, it also aimed to identify any additional co-curricular activities that the member may be involved in, such as involvement in other committees or bodies at the school. The questions that guided the interviews followed the structure of the four main research questions:

5. What are Educators' attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs?

6. What benefits do educators consider as deriving from partnership in the ILSTs?

7. What activities do educators involve themselves in while collaborating with other stakeholders in the Institution Level Support Teams?

8. What are the challenges they are confronted with while involved in activities or interacting with others in their schools' ILSTs?

The questions related directly to the functioning of the ILST. Firstly it focused on members' competency, and knowledge of their roles as members of the ILST. Secondly their attitudes towards the process of collaboration and or how they feel or view this partnership. Thirdly it aimed to identify the activities that members are currently involved in and lastly the challenges they are currently experiencing from the viewpoint of the head member. Participants were also granted the opportunity to ask any further questions or to express any other viewpoints regarding the subject matter. The interview guide is found in Appendix IV

3.4.4 Validity and reliability of the Interview

The validity of the interviews was established by following the same procedures used for validating the questionnaire. The interview guide was tested through a pilot study with one educator from one of the selected four schools of investigation. The main objective of piloting the interview was to ensure that it could elicit information necessary for answering the study questions.

- Interview validity

In order to validate the interview guide, the interview guide face validity was established during the piloting process through a careful revision of its form and content to ensure that it included only questions that could generate information relating to the research construct of educator collaboration in their ILST. In this perspective, the interview guide was accurately revised by my supervisor who ensured that the questions included were relevant and they targeted the research concept. The interview guide content validity was established during the piloting process through a careful inspection of the questions so as to ensure that the questions could generate all necessary information needed to answer the research questions.

- **Interview reliability**

Since the study used interviews to supplement the questionnaire, the validity of the interview was achieved through trustworthiness; a term often used in place of 'validity' in the qualitative researcher's lexicon. Creswell, (2008) argues that trustworthiness relates directly to the concerns of credibility, applicability, dependability, conformity and reflexivity.

Credibility

Concerning the qualitative aspect of this study, the truth value aspect was measured by credibility. The credibility is established when participants agree with the constructions and interpretations of the researcher, or when the researcher describes the reality of the participants who informed the research in ways that resonate with them (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the research data can be generalized. To ensure this, the researcher carefully described the population detail. Detail descriptions of the demographic profile of the sample population involved in the study as well as the context of the study are provided in this report.

Dependability

In qualitative research, dependability involves accommodating changes in the environment studied and in research design itself (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). This is to suggest that the findings of this study must go beyond the picture of the study. This is to further suggest that if the study was conducted again with the same participants in the same context, there should be similar results.

Conformity

Conformity is similar to objectivity. It suggests that the data can be confirmed by someone other than the researcher. Therefore, the findings should reflect the participants and inquiry itself and not a "fabrication" from the "biases and prejudices" of the researcher (Creswell, 2008).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is one of the qualities that must be observed in the trustworthiness of qualitative data. Creswell, (2008) views reflexivity as self-awareness and agency within that self-awareness. It permits the researcher to recognize the effect of preceding experiences and knowledge. In this study, since the researcher is an educator, she had the opportunity to understand how her or own experiences and understandings of the educators' collaboration in their ILST affect the research process. Therefore, the researcher remained self-critical for determining the impact of her previous experiences and knowledge on the study.

3.5 Procedure for data collection

The data for the study were obtained through the questionnaire and the interviews conducted with participants. All principals had to sign a document granting their permission for the study to be conducted at their school. Furthermore, educators who volunteered to complete questionnaire or be interviewed had to sign consent forms to indicate their voluntary participation.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006) researchers should include clear plans for recording data in a systematic manner that is appropriate for the setting, the participants and that will facilitate analysis. In addition to this, the researcher should plan a system that eases the retrieval for analysis. Therefore, in the scope of this study, all interviews followed the same procedure as were recorded to ensure that no data was lost. Besides, the interview transcription was done in a way to ensure that the information transcribed was the actual information contained in the tape.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

▪ Quantitative data analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively. Considering the descriptive nature of this study, the quantitative analyses were strictly limited to the use of descriptive measures which were presented in frequency tables and/or cross-tabulations. More specifically, I converted the participants' responses into numerical data so as to interpret the data collected from the questionnaire. This conversion was done through a computation of participants' choices and this was presented in frequency tables. Since the analysis was done by associating some variables (gender, years of teaching experience), cross-tabulations were used to report results.

▪ Qualitative analysis

The data collected from the interviews were analysed qualitatively. The first step was a process of multiple readings of the data. In the stage, the participants' responses were read as many times as possible so as to get a clear understanding of what might be the relevant aspects relating to the investigated issue.

The second step in qualitative analysis was data coding. Data coding is "a systematic way in which to condense extensive data sets into smaller analyzable units through the creation of categories and concepts derived from the data" (Sharon, 2004, p. 137). Data coding is important as it facilitates the organization, retrieval, and interpretation of data and leads to conclusions on

the basis of that interpretation (Sharon, 2004). In the scope of this study, the coding of the data involved the process of organizing and sorting the participants' responses to the interview questions. The codes used served as a way to label, compile and organize the information. They also enabled to summarize and synthesize the information provided by the participants. In this perspective, in order to answer the research questions, the codes were developed in relation to the four study perspectives included in the interview. Therefore, four main codes were assigned to the data targeting the four perspectives (participants' attitudes to collaboration, participants' benefits derived from their collaboration in ILST, participants' views on ILST activities, and the challenges participants encounter during collaboration).

After these the codes were given to the main themes, the third phase consisted in the identification of themes. This is the core of qualitative data analysis since themes are just abstract and often fuzzy constructs that can be identified before, during, and after data collection. In the scope of this study, the review of the relevant literature, the study theoretical orientation, and the four research objectives helped to identify the different themes.

The last stage consisted in clustering themes into categories. In this stage, all data targeting individual suggested item were grouped in one category. After I had grouped the data into categories, the next step was to group data within each category in different patterns. The likelihood of responses guided me in designing and labelling the patterns.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001) state that ethical issues are present in any kind of research. Ethics pertains to doing well and avoiding harm; harm can be prevented or reduced through the application of appropriate ethical principles. The protection of human subjects or participants in any research study is imperative.

The nature of ethical problems in qualitative research studies is subtle and different compared to ethical problems in quantitative research. Qualitative researchers focus on exploring, examining and describing people in their natural environments, and embedded in

this are the concepts of relationships and power between researchers and participants. Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001)

When the key concepts of ethics in qualitative research are followed while conducting the process of data collection this will lead to a balanced relationship and encourage disclosure, trust and awareness of potential ethical issues (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001)

Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001) identify three well established ethical principles, specifically autonomy, beneficence and justice. Autonomy is honored by voluntary participation and informed consent, this allows participants to exercise their rights to accept or refuse participation in a study. A second ethical principle is beneficence, doing well and preventing harm, such as overseeing the potential consequences of revealing participants identities is a moral obligation. The principle of justice refers to equal share and fairness, thus avoiding exploitation and abuse of participants.

In order to conduct the study, it was necessary to gain access to the organizations and participants identified for the process of data collection. Thus terms of access were negotiated with Western Cape Education department (WCED). I was granted permission and then personally negotiated the terms of research with the schools. During the study the following aspects were regarded, firstly that participation was voluntary; the second aspect assured participants that they would not be harmed. Thirdly that all participants had the freedom to remain anonymous if they so wished, as well the confidentiality of the research data. Participants were also informed of their right to feedback regarding the findings and recommendations of the study.

All the above mentioned principles were applied to my study, all the procedures were followed regarding gaining access and permission to conduct research and collect data.

3.8 Summary

This chapter provided a detailed description of the research design for the study. It explained the reasons for using both quantitative and qualitative research methods for collecting data for the study. The methods of data analysis were described as well as the establishment of reliability and validity of research instruments as well as the trustworthiness of the interview data collected. In the next chapter, study results are presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1   Introduction to the chapter

The main aim of this study was to investigate educators' perspectives regarding their participation in their schools' Institutional-Level Support Teams (ILST). These perspectives are related to the educators' attitudes towards their collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, their views on the benefits they could derive from collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, the different activities in which they were involved in their schools' ILSTs and the challenges they experienced while collaborating in their schools' ILSTs. Four main research questions were addressed in the study and these questions are:

1. What are Educators' attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs?

2. What benefits do educators consider as derivable from their collaboration in their schools' ILSTs?

3. What activities do educators involve themselves in while collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILSTs?

4. What are the challenges they were confronted with while involved in activities or interacting with others in their schools' ILSTs?

This chapter provides the answers to each of these four questions by the use of information from the results of the analyses of data obtained from the two research instruments: the questionnaire and interview protocol.

4.2   Demographic information

The study questionnaire was administered to twenty-nine educators who were made up of seventeen (17: 58.6%) males and twelve (12: 41.4%)) females. Four of the educator-participants had less than ten years of teaching experience, while the remaining twenty-five participants all

had more than ten years of teaching experience. Table 2 below displays information regarding the participants.

Table 2: Demographic information on the participants

Variables			N	%
1	Gender	Male	17	58.6
		Female	12	41.4
		Total	**29**	**100.0**
2	Number of years of teaching experience	Between 0 and 10 years	4	13.8
		More than ten years	25	86.2
		Total	**29**	**100.0**

4.3 Participants' attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs

To find out the participants' attitudes to collaboration in their schools' ILST, the study questionnaire was designed with statements of suggested attitudes which participants were to respond to in terms of whether they agree or disagree with each of the statements. Table 3 presents information indicating the frequencies of participants expressing their agreement to the statements of attitudes presented to them on the questionnaire.

Table 3: Participants' responses to questionnaire statements indicating their attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs

N/S	Statements of attitudes of teachers towards their schools' ILSTs	Gender	Response Options					
			Agree		Disagree		Total	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I am not happy with my membership on my school's ILST because I am not paid for the extra time I spend on meetings and activities of the ILST	Male	6	35.3	11	64.7	17	100.0
		Female	7	58.8	5	41.7	12	100.0
		Total	13	44.8	16	55.2	29	100.0
2	I am happy with my membership on my school's ILST because that affords me opportunity to form partnership with parents and by so doing I can work with parents to address my learners' needs.	Male	15	88.2	2	11.8	17	100.0
		Female	10	83.3	2	16.7	12	100.0
		Total	25	86.2	4	13.8	29	100.0
3	I don't like my membership on my school's ILST, because this structure does not make any contribution to school management, educators and learners	Male	6	35.3	11	64.7	17	100.0
		Female	6	50.0	6	50.0	12	100.0
		Total	12	41.4	17	58.6	29	100.0
4	I see my being a member of my school's ILST as an extra burden because it makes me overloaded	Male	3	17.6	14	82.4	17	100.0
		Female	6	50.0	6	50.0	12	100.0
		Total	9	31.0	20	69.0	29	100.0
5	I think that making teachers form partnership with parents for support to improve teaching and learning in school makes teachers less productive	Male	11	64.7	6	35.3	17	100.0
		Female	8	66.7	4	33.3	12	100.0
		Total	19	65.5	10	34.5	29	100.0
6	I don't have a problem working with parents because I believe that teachers and parents should collaborate and work together in order to help learners learn better and succeed in life	Male	14	82.4	3	17.6	17	100.0
		Female	10	83.3	2	16.7	12	100.0
		Total	24	82.8	5	17.2	29	100.0
7	I feel members of the ILST should be properly trained for the role	Male	17	100.0	0	0.0	17	100.0
		Female	10	83.3	2	16.7	12	100.0
		Total	27	93.1	2	6.9	29	100.0
8	I feel that there should be regular reviews of my school's ILST objectives and activities to ensure effectiveness	Male	15	88.2	2	11.8	17	100.0
		Female	11	91.7	1	8.3	12	100.0
		Total	26	89.7	3	10.3	29	100.0

From the descriptive statistics displayed in Table 3, participants agreed with all the suggested statements of attitudes to collaborating in their schools' ILSTs, although the strengths of their agreements differ from one statement to another and from those of male and female participants.

As presented in descending order, the statement of attitude that most participants (93.1%) agreed with is that which states that members of the school's ILST should be properly trained for their role;

A large number of the participants (89.7%) also felt that there should be regular reviews of their schools' ILST's objectives and activities in order to ensure effectiveness.

The Majority of the participants (86.7%) also felt happy with their membership on their school's ILST because this membership afforded them the opportunity to collaborate and work with parents to address their many learners' needs.

Many participants (82.8%) expressed the feelings that they do not have any problem working with parents because, they believe that teachers and parents should collaborate and work together in order to help learners learn better and succeed in life.

Many participants (65.5%) did not agree to the suggested statement of attitude that making teachers form partnership with parents for support to improve teaching and learning in school makes teachers less productive.

About three in every five of the participants (or 58.6%) disagreed that they don't like their memberships on their schools' ILSTs because it does not make any positive contribution to the school;

A little more than half of the participants (55.2%) disagreed with the suggestion that they were unhappy with their membership on their schools' ILSTs because they were not paid for the extra time spent for meetings and other activities of the ILSTs.

The analysis of qualitative data from the interviews of respondents provided additional information on educators' attitudes to collaboration with other members in their schools' ILST.

Although a large proportion of the participants when completing the questionnaire did not endorsed the suggestion that they were not happy with their participation on their schools' ILSTs, however when interviewed some participants indicated that they were unhappy because they were not being paid for the extra time they spent while participating in the different ILSTs' meetings and activities. Excerpts from interview transcriptions to indicate how two participants described this aspect of the educators' attitudes to their participation in their schools' ILSTs are as follow:

Respondent 1*: Teachers rarely participate in the different ILST's meetings that are held in our school. Many usually complain that ILST activities are nothing than an extra-burden for which they are not paid; therefore, they feel not motivated to be really involved in those activities.*

Respondent 2: *Some of my colleagues usually complain that whenever they participate in different activities organized at school, they feel stressed because they cannot easily catch up with normal duties. They fail to respect deadlines for marking and some of them come to teach unprepared. Some of them complain that they feel pressurized by the principal to meet deadlines and they find ILST meetings and activities additional work load.*

Another respondent explained educators' unhappiness with participation in their schools' ILSTs because membership was not voluntary and that educators felt being forced to join even though they did not give their consent. A participant expressed his feelings as contained in the following excerpt from interview transcription:

Some teachers usually ask me why they are not allowed to give their consent on whether or not they must be members of their school ILSTs. One of them even addressed me harshly, 'I don't need to attend so many and lengthy meetings. Am I paid for that? After all, no one asked me my consent to be member of ILST. It takes me much time for nothing. (Respondent 1)

However not all educators interviewed expressed negative feelings to their participation in their schools' ILSTs. For instance some participants interviewed believed that educators should support their schools' ILSTs and should not expect to be paid for doing that. Excerpts from interview transcript in this regard are as follows:

We don't need to expect a payment for our membership; this is a structure that must be supported. I am happy of being part of this structure and I always make sure that my involvement in its different activities is appreciated by my colleagues. (Respondent 2)

We cannot view our participation in different meetings and activities of ILST as a burden. Why is it a burden? It is just part of our duties. To state that it is a burden means that we are forced to do this. This is not the case; we know that when each teacher is employed, she has to know that her full involvement in different ILST meetings and activities are part of the activities she has to accomplish (Respondent).

Another participant described the need for educators to be members of their schools' ILSTs because it strengthens partnership between teachers and parents or between homes and schools for the benefits of the learners. Participants who expressed positive attitude towards their membership also believed that their schools' ILSTs offer a space for teachers to work together with parents in order to address learners' various needs. Excerpt from interview transcript regarding how a participant expressed her opinion is as follows:

ILST offers a stage to both parents and school staff to talk to each other; to address the different challenges learners face and to find ways to respond to those challenges. Permanent dialogue between parents and staff is necessary because this dialogue helps both parts to know the child better and to see how we can design intervention strategies both at school and at home. So, it is highly important for educators to be members of ILST and actively participate to ILST meetings and activities" (Respondent 1)

Another participant expressed her support for participation in her school's ILST stating that it has been beneficial to the learners and that she has found an improvement in some of her learners' academic performances

I really like this partnership. Some of my learners who had problems have really now improved since I was regularly talking with their parents during different meetings. This could not have been possible if I was not actively participating in these meetings. (Respondent 4)

Further indication of the participants' generally positive attitudes to their participation in their schools' ILSTs was revealed through the analysis of data contained in the interview transcripts revealing that participation in their schools' ILSTs contribute to good quality relationships between teachers and parents. Participants did not consider such collaboration as being marred by contradictions and problems which could arise because of the differences in opinions and views of the parents and the teachers. The results from interview transcriptions revealed that some educators were of the view that their membership on their schools' ILSTs was a good thing because it afforded the opportunity to form partnership with parents and by so doing they could work with parents to address learners' needs. These participants agreed that they did not have any problem working with parents because they believed that teachers and parents should collaborate and work together in order to help learners learn better and succeed in life. This view was also expressed by a respondent who had this to say:

Both teachers and parents need to collaborate and work together if we want to help learners learn better and succeed in life. We don't need to see each other as enemies. We have the same interest; that is, the child' success. I know there are some educators who may choose not to co-operate in the process of collaboration with parents; believing that they know more than what parents know. This is not true; we must cooperate and work together for the child's benefit.

In terms of gender differences, with regard to educators' attitudes to their participation in their schools' ILSTs,   the results of data analysis generally did not reveal too much gender disparities. For instance, eighty-eight per cent (88.2%) of male participants as opposed to 83.3% of female participants indicated that educators were happy with their membership on their schools' ILSTs because this membership afforded them the opportunity to form partnership with parents and this helped them to address their learners' needs.

There seems to be fairly relative agreement among the male and female educators on the statement of attitude that educators generally do not have problem working with parents because

they believed that there must be some collaboration between teachers and parents for the benefit of learners.

There also seems to be agreement among the two genders of the participants in terms of the statement on the questionnaire stating that making teachers form partnership with parents for support to improve teaching and learning in school makes teachers less productive as about equal number of male (64.7%) and female (66.7%) did not agree with this statement.

Gender differences in educators' attitudes to their collaboration in their schools' ILSTs were evident regarding the statement on the questionnaire that educators did not see membership of their schools' ILSTs as extra burden or that they were being overloaded. Whereas 82.4% male participants agreed to this statement only 50.0% female participants agreed indicating that female participants were more of the view that ILSTs are extra burden to teachers.

Gender differences were also evident in the participants' responses to the statement that educators do not like their membership on their schools' ILSTs because the structure does not make any contribution to school management, educators and learners. There were more male participants (64.7%) as compared with female participants (50.0%) who did not agree with this statement on the questionnaire.
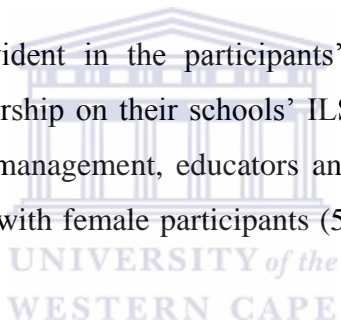
Table 4: Participants' attitude to their schools' ILSTs on the basis of their teaching experiences

N/S	Statements of attitudes of teachers to their schools' ILST	Years of teaching Experience	Response Options					
			Agree		Disagree		Total	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I am not happy with my membership on my school's ILST because I am not paid for the extra time I spend on meetings and activities of the ILST	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
		More than ten years (>10)	10	40.0	15	60.0	25	100.0
		Total	13	44.8	16	55.2	29	100.0
2	I am happy with my membership on my school's ILST because that affords me opportunity to form partnership with parents and by so doing I can work with parents to address my learners' needs	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
		More than ten years (> 10)	22	88.0	3	12.0	25	100.0
		Total	25	86.2	4	13.8	29	100.0
3	I don't like my membership on my school's ILST, because this structure does not make any contribution to school, management, educators and learners	Less than ten years [0-10]	2	50.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
		More than ten years (> 10)	10	40.0	15	60.0	25	100.0
		Total	12	41.4	17	58.6	29	100.0
4	I see my being a member of my school's ILST is an extra burden because it makes me overloaded	Less than ten years [0-10]	1	25.0	3	75.0	4	100.0
		More than ten years (> 10)	8	32.0	17	68.0	25	100.0
		Total	9	31.0	20	69.0	29	100.0
5	I think that making teachers form partnership with parents in the school's ILST makes teachers less productive	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
		More than ten years (> 10)	16	64.0	9	36.0	25	100.0
		Total	19	65.5	10	34.5	29	100.0
6	I don't have a problem working with parents because I believe that teachers and parents should collaborate and work together in order to help learners learn better and succeed in life	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
		Less than ten years [(> 10)	21	84.0	4	16.0	25	100.0
		Total	24	82.8	5	17.2	29	100.0
7	I feel members of the ILST should be properly trained for the role	Less than ten years [0-10]	2	50.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
		More than ten years (> 10)	25	100.0	0	0.0	25	100.0
		Total	27	93.1	2	6.9	29	100.0
8	I feel that there should be regular reviews of my school's ILST objectives and activities to ensure effectiveness	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
		More than ten years (> 10)	23	92.0	2	8.0	25	100.0
		Total	26	89.7	3	10.3	29	100.0

Differences in participants' attitudes to their membership on their schools' ILSTs on the basis of their teaching experiences also produced interesting results. According to the information displayed in Table 4, whereas only half of the participants (50 %) with less than 10 years of teaching experience (or less experienced participants) agreed that members of the ILST should be properly trained for the role, all the participants (100.0%) with more than 10 years teaching experience (or more experienced participants) agreed that members of the school's ILST should be properly trained.

While most participants (92.0%) with more than 10 years teaching experience agreed that there should be regular reviews of their schools' ILSTs objectives and activities to ensure effectiveness, only 75.0 per cent of participants with less than 10 years of teaching experience agreed with this attitude statement.

There seems to be some disagreement between less experienced and more experienced participants regarding statement on the questionnaire suggesting that educators are happy with their memberships on their schools' ILSTs because this affords them the opportunity to form partnership with parents which helps educators to address learners' needs. More experienced participants (88.0%) with more than ten years of teaching as compared with less experienced participants (75%) with less than ten years of teaching agreed to this statement. Differences in participants' responses also exist regarding the statement on the questionnaire suggesting that educators do not have any problem working with parents because they believe that there must be some collaboration between teachers and parents for the benefit of learners. About 84.0% experienced participants with more than ten years of teaching experiences as against 75.0% less experienced participants with less than ten years teaching experiences agreed to this statement.

Regarding the statement on the questionnaire suggesting that making teachers form partnership with parents in the school ILST makes teachers less productive there seems to be a disagreement between the responses of less experienced and more experienced participants to the statement. Participants with less than 10 years teaching experience (75.0 %) as compared with participants with more than 10 years of teaching experience (64.0%) did not agree to this suggestion. regarding their attitudes to their schools' ILSTs on the suggestion that educators think that

making teachers form partnership with parents for support to improve teaching and learning in school makes teachers less productive.

4.3 Benefits educators' considered as derivable from their partnership in their schools' ILSTs

The second research question is about the benefits educators' considered as derivable from collaboration in their schools' ILSTs. To ascertain participants' opinions regarding the benefits educators' could derive from membership in their schools' ILST, a section of the questionnaire presented a number of suggestions which participants were to respond to. Table 5 presents information on the participants' responses to the statements on the questionnaire indicating their opinions as to what they considered as benefits deriving from participating in their schools' ILST.

Table 5: Participants' opinions on the benefits of their school ILSTs by their gender

S/N	Statements of benefits of the ILST (Or Suggested Benefits of Collaborating in ILST)	Gender	Response Options					
			Agree		Disagree		Total	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	ILST contributes to improving the relationships between school staff, and makes school environment conducive for teaching and learning	Male	15	88.2	2	11.8	17	100.0
		Female	11	92.0	1	8.0	12	100.0
		Total	26	89.6	3	10.4	29	100.0
2	ILST contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources, e.g. learning materials, motivation of educators, and improving learners' academic performance	Male	15	88.2	2	11.8	17	100.0
		Female	11	92.0	1	8.0	12	100.0
		Total	26	89.6	3	10.4	29	100.0
3	ILST provides for learners' physical needs and their fundamental rights , by setting up feeding schemes, providing counseling and assisting with transport and medical services	Male	13	76.5	4	23.5	17	100.0
		Female	10	83.3	2	16.7	12	100.0
		Total	23	79.3	6	20.7	29	100.0
4	The ILST assists in school management/governance	Male	12	70.6	5	29.4	17	100.0
		Female	9	75.0	3	25.0	12	100.0
		Total	21	72.4	8	27.6	29	100.0
5	The ILST assists in improving learners' general behaviors by offering work-shops on violence, drugs and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and other school problems	Male	10	58.8	7	41.2	17	100.0
		Female	10	83.3	2	16.7	12	100.0
		Total	20	69.0	9	31.0	29	100.0
6	The ILST assists in empowering parents by work shopping then in parent education and on how to provide support for the children	Male	11	64.7	6	35.3	17	100.0
		Female	9	75.0	3	25.0	12	100.0
		Total	20	69.0	9	31.0	29	100.0

From the descriptive statistics displayed in Table 5 participants agreed with all the suggested statements of benefits educators could derive from their participation in their schools' ILSTs although the strengths of their agreements differed from those of male and female participants. Most participants (89.6%) agreed with the statement that ILSTs contributes to improving the relationships between school staff, and makes school environment conducive for teaching and learning. According to the rank order of importance placed on the benefits of ILSTs, presented on the questionnaire, the second most important benefit participants endorsed was that the ILSTs contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources (for example, the provision of learning materials, the motivation of educator's, and improving learners' academic performance).

Other benefits in descending order of importance are:

- That ILST contributes to learners' physical needs, meeting fundamental rights and well-being by setting up feeding schemes, by providing counseling and by assisting with transport and medical services (79.3%);
- That the ILST assists in effective school management/governance (72.4%);
- That the ILST assists in improving learners' general behaviours by offering work-shops on violence, drugs and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and education on other school problems (69.0%);
- That the ILST empowers parents to be involved in their children's education in terms of completion of homework assignments and other activities related to learners' academic performance (69.0%).

In terms of gender differences, the information regarding the participants' responses to the statements of ILST's benefits on the questionnaire is displayed in Table 5. Thus the data presented in this table suggest that there seems to be rather slight differences in the proportion of female (92.0%) and male (88.2%) participants who agreed that their school ILST contributes to improving the relationships between schools staff, and makes school environment conducive for teaching and learning.

The interviews conducted with selected participants provided additional information as to the benefits educators considered could be derived from their participation in their schools' ILST.

One main benefit revealed in the interview transcripts is that ILST contributes to the improvement of relationships between school staff and this makes the school environment conducive for teaching and learning. The following extracts taken from interview transcripts describe participants' views as follow:

Respondent 1:

My school ILST is beneficial because it assists educators in making academic decisions that relate to learners. It also, assists learners in managing their shortfalls and also it assists learners to build their self-esteem. The ILST also assists school management by making sure all learners have an opportunity to progress to the next grade.

Respondent 2:

The ILST is beneficial in assisting educators to establish a better understanding between themselves and learners; it also assists learners who need support with counselling and sometimes it assists management in communication with parents, as well as interactions with learners.

Respondent 3:

ILST assists grade 8 and 9 educators to identify learners who may experience difficulty in any way, and to ensure that the learner is ready for the FET phase. It also assists learners with coping strategies; this results in that management is faced with less academic and social issues in the FET phase.

Educators also indicated that their active participation contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources, learning materials, motivation educators, and improving learners' academic performance. The following excerpt from interview transcript of one respondent corroborates this view by stating that:

From its primary objective, we know that an ILST that has effectively contributed to the school would have established support in various aspects of that school, such as providing curriculum support, focusing on improving communication at all levels, or again establish support services for learners, educators and parents. From this perspective, I feel satisfied that our school's ILST

has done something. Some classroom materials such as desks, windows, boards have been provided thus far.

The third most important benefit that participants indicated that could derive from their participation in their schools' ILSTs is that ILST contributes to learners' physical needs and well-being by setting up feeding schemes, providing counseling and assisting with transport. The following two excerpts from interview transcriptions of two respondents in this regard are: .

Respondent 1:

There are some efforts that are made to provide students from poor background with a meal per day, and to assist them with transportation. But the effort must contribute because there are many challenges to this assistance.

Respondent 2:

It (ILST) has really relieved much of the difficulty and stress that some learners may experience when battling for a meal per day and also having difficulty in getting to school. This must have partly improved learners' academic performance as these learners are taught in safe and equipped environments and receive support for their physical needs.

Participants also felt that their membership in their schools' ILSTs relates to ILST assistance in improving learners' general behaviours through offering workshops on violence, drugs and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and other school problems. One respondent stated that:

In any environment social issues cannot be separated, such as in a schools, the issues that learners' deal with on a personal level either at school or at their homes flow into the school and influence what happens within the class room in terms of learners' academic performance and their interaction with their educators and peers. If learners are trained to deal with these issues they will have a healthy mindset as well as lifestyle; this will contribute to their performance academically but also their overall development as young adults entering further study and the world of work. I am happy that our learners in their majority now understand the danger of violent behavior and drugs abuse.

In terms of gender differences regarding the opinions of participants on the benefits which could be derived from educators' participation in their schools' ILSTs, the information displayed in Table 4 indicates differences between male and female participants regarding a number of suggested benefits on the questionnaire. There is very slight differences of opinions between males (88.0%) and females 92.0%) regarding the contribution of ILST to improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources, learning materials, motivation educators, and improving learners' academic performance..

There appears to be many more females (83.3%) than males (76.5%) who agreed with the suggestion that ILST contributes to learners' physical needs and well-being by setting up feeding schemes, by providing counseling and by assisting with transport.

There are more females (75.0%) than males (70.6%) who agreed with the statement indicating that the ILST contributes to school management/governance in a positive manner.

There are more females (83.3%) than males (58.8%) who agreed with the suggested benefit that the ILST assists in improving learners' general behaviour by offering workshops on violence, drugs and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and other school problems;

Finally, there are more females (75.0%) than males (64.7%) who agreed with the suggestion that the ILST assists in empowering parents to assist in their children's education in terms completion of homework assignment and other activities related to learners' academic performance.

ILST benefits and teaching experiences of participants

The experienced (more than ten years teaching experiences) and inexperienced (less than ten years teaching experiences) teachers were compared in terms of their responses as to what they considered as the benefits of collaboration in their schools' ILSTs. Table 6 below presents the descriptive statistics in terms of participants' responses on the basis of teaching experiences.

Table 6: Participants' view on the benefits of their schools' ILSTs by their teaching experiences

N	Suggested Benefits of Collaborating in ILST	Years of teaching Experiene	Response Options					
			Agree		Disagree		Total	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	ILST contributes to improving the relationships between school staff, and makes school environment conducive for teaching and learning	Less than ten years [0-10]	4	100.0	0	0.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (>10	22	88.0	3	12.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**26**	**89.6**	**3**	**10.4**	**29**	**100.0**
2	ILST contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources, e.g. learning materials, motivation of educators, and improving learners' academic performance	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (> 10	23	92.0	2	8.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**26**	**89.6**	**3**	**10.4**	**29**	**100.0**
3	ILST contributes to learners' physical needs and well-being, by setting up feeding schemes, providing counseling and assisting with transport	Less than ten years [[0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (> 10	20	80.0	5	20.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**23**	**79.3**	**6**	**20.7**	**29**	**100.0**
4	The ILST assists in school management/governance	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (> 10	18	72.0	7	28.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**21**	**72.4**	**8**	**27.6**	**29**	**100.0**
5	ILST assists in improving learners' general behaviors by offering work-shops on violence, drugs and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and other school problems	Less than ten years [0-10]	4	100.0	0	0.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (> 10	16	64.0	9	36.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**20**	**69.0**	**9**	**31.0**	**29**	**100.0**
6	ILST assists in empowering parents to assist in their children's education in terms of the completion of homework, assignment and other activities related to learners' academic performance	Less than ten years [0-10]	4	100.0	0	0.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (> 10	16	64.0	9	36.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**20**	**69.0**	**9**	**31.0**	**29**	**100.0**

According to the information presented in Table 6 above the following benefits of ILSTs , in descending order of importance, were endorsed by the more experienced teacher- participants of this study.

- That the ILST contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources, for example, learning materials, motivation of educators, and improving learners' academic performance (92.0%);
- That the ILST contributes to improving the relationships between school staff, and makes school environment conducive for teaching and learning (88.0%);
- That the ILST contributes to learners' physical needs and well-being, by setting up feeding schemes, providing counseling and assisting with transport (80.0%);
- That the ILST assists in school management/governance (72.0%);
- That the ILST assists in improving learners' general behaviour's by offering work-shops on violence, drugs and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and other school problems (64.0%); and,
- That the ILST assists in empowering parents to assist in their children's education in terms of the completion of homework, assignment and other activities related to learners' academic performance (64.0%).

However, the less experienced teacher participants endorsed the following benefits of ILST, in descending order of importance

- That the ILST contributes to improving the relationships between school staff, and makes school environment conducive for teaching and learning (100.0%);
- That the ILST assists in improving learners' general behaviors' by offering work-shops on violence, drugs and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and other school problems (100.0%);
- That the ILST assists in empowering parents to assist in their children's education in terms of the completion of homework, assignment and other activities related to learners' academic performance (100.0%);

- That the ILST contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources, e.g. learning materials, motivation of educators, and improving learners' academic performance (75.0%);

- That the ILST contributes to learners' physical needs and well-being, by setting up feeding schemes, providing counseling and assisting with transport (75.0%); and,

- That the ILST assists in school management/governance (75.0%).

4.4 Activities in which educators' participate while collaborating with other members of their schools' Institutional Level Support Teams', ILSTs.

The third research question is related to the activities educators are involved in while collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILSTs. As previously identified , among the different ILST activities, five were investigated in this study: (1) Identifying learners with special education needs or learners needing care and support; (2) Organizing workshop for substance abuse, HIV/AIDS education; (3) Organizing academic support activities for learners (extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers, providing extra learning materials); (4) Assisting school governing body in school governance; and finally (5) Arranging for parents to be involved in school activities and facilitating school-community relationship. These activities were presented to the participants on the questionnaire for them to indicate their degree of agreement with participating in these activities. Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics of the responses of the participants to this section of the questionnaire on the basis of the participants' genders

Table 7: Participants' responses indicating activities of their schools' ILSTs in which they were involved

S/N	Activities of the ILST	Gender	Response Options					
			Yes		No		Total	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Identifying learners with special education needs or learners needing care and support	Male	15	88.2	2	11.8	**17**	**100.0**
		Female	8	66.7	4	33.3	**12**	**100.0**
		Total	**23**	**79.3**	**6**	**20.7**	**29**	**100.0**
2	Organizing workshop on substance abuse and HIV/AIDS education	Male	8	47.5	9	52.5	**17**	**100.0**
		Female	9	75.0	3	25.0	**12**	**100.0**
		Total	**17**	**58.6**	**12**	**41.4**	**29**	**100.0**
3	Organizing academic support for learners (extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers, providing extra learning materials)	Male	10	58.8	7	41.2	**17**	**100.0**
		Female	9	75.0	3	25.0	**12**	**100.0**
		Total	**19**	**65.5**	**10**	**34.5**	**29**	**100.0**
4	Assisting school governing body in school governance	Male	10	58.8	7	41.2	**17**	**100.0**
		Female	8	66.7	4	33.3	**12**	**100.0**
		Total	**18**	**62.1**	**11**	**37.9**	**29**	**100.0**
5	Arranging for parents to be involved in school activities and facilitating school-community relationships	Male	9	52.5	8	47.5	**17**	**100.0**
		Female	6	50.0	6	50.0	**12**	**100.0**
		Total	**15**	**51.7**	**14**	**48.3**	**29**	**100.0**

Table 7 above present's information indicating participants' endorsement of the ILST activities presented to them on the questionnaire. From the descriptive statistics displayed in this table, participants endorsed all the five ILST activities presented to them on the questionnaire as

activities they were involved in while collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs. The results indicate that 79.9% of educator-participants were engaged in ILSTs' activities related to identification of learners with special educational needs or learners who may need care and support. A little over two-third (or 65.3%) of educator participants reported being engaged organizing academic support to learners needing extra tutoring, extra learning materials or those needing their parents to be consulted at the school. About two-third (or 62.1%) of participants endorsed assisting in school governance therefore, being involved in decision making. Educator participants of this study also endorsed assisting in arranging for parents to be involved in school activities and facilitating school-community relationship, although this is considered to be their least important activities in their schools' ILSTs.

According to the information displayed in Table 7 above, gender differences in participants' responses are evident especially in the order of importance of the ILST activities they endorsed. Thus in descending order of importance the following activities were endorsed by the female participants;
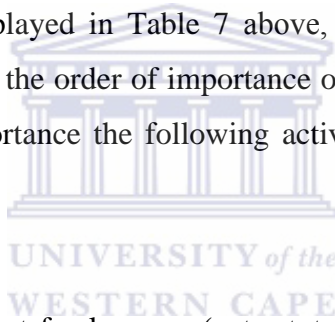
- Organizing academic support for learners (extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers, providing extra learning materials) (75.0%);
- Organizing workshop on substance abuse and HIV/AIDS education (75.0%)
- Identifying learners with special education needs or learners needing care and support (66.7%)
- Assisting school governing body in school governance (66.7%);
- Arranging for parents to be involved in school activities and facilitating school-community relationship (50.0%).

On the other hand, male participants of this study endorsed the following activities, in descending order of importance,

- Identifying learners with special education needs or learners needing care and support (88.2%),

- Organizing academic support for learners (extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers, providing extra learning materials) (58.8%);
- Assisting school governing body in school governance (58.8%);
- Arranging for parents to be involved in school activities and facilitating school-community relationship (52.5); and,
- Workshop for substance abuse, HIV/AIDS education (47.5%).

The results showed that the female and male participants were not in agreement as to the importance of the ILST activities. While the male participants placed the highest priority of importance on identifying learners with special education needs or learners needing care and support, the female participants placed the highest priority of importance on the ILST activities of organizing workshops on substance abuse and HIV/AIDS education. Both male and female participants ranked very highly (1st and 2nd respectively) the set of ILST activities described as organizing academic support for learners (extra tuition, consultation with parents and teachers, providing extra learning materials) However the set of ILST activities described as organizing workshop on substance abuse and HIV/AIDS education, which was endorsed as the second most important ILST activities by female participants, was ranked as the least important of all the ILST activities by the male participants.

Educators' Teaching experiences and the ILST activities they endorsed.

Table 8: Participants' responses regarding the activities they are involved in their school ILST in terms of their teaching experience

S/N	Statements indicating activities of the ILST	Years of teaching experience	Response Options					
			Yes		No		Total	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Identifying learners with special education needs or learners needing care and support	Less than ten years [0-10]	3	75.0	1	25.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (>10)	20	80.0	5	20.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**23**	**79.3**	**6**	**20.7**	**29**	**100.0**
2	Workshop for substance abuse, HIV/AIDS education	Less than ten years [0-10]	2	50.0	2	50.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (>10)	15	60.0	10	40.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**17**	**58.6**	**12**	**41.4**	**29**	**100.0**
3	Organizing academic support for learners (extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers, providing extra learning materials)	Less than ten years [0-10]	2	50.0	2	50.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (>10)	17	68.0	8	32.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**19**	**65.5**	**10**	**34.5**	**29**	**100.0**
4	Assisting school governing body in school governance	Less than ten years [0-10]	2	50.0	2	50.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (>10)	16	64.0	9	36.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**18**	**62.1**	**11**	**37.9**	**29**	**100.0**
5	Arranging for parents to be involved in school activities and facilitating school-community relationship	Less than ten years [0-10]	2	50.0	2	50.0	**4**	**100.0**
		More than ten years (>10)	13	52.0	12	48.0	**25**	**100.0**
		Total	**15**	**51.7**	**14**	**48.3**	**29**	**100.0**

From the information displayed in Table 8 above there appears to be slight agreement between participants with more than 10 years of teaching experience (80.0%) and those with less than 10 years of teaching experience (75.0%) regarding their endorsement of the ILST's activities described as helping to identify learners with special education needs or learners who need care and support as the most important set of ILST activities. However, regarding ILST activities of helping to organize academic support activities for learners such as extra tuition, extra learning materials and consultation with parents and teachers, participants with more than ten years of teaching experienced (68.0%) as compared with participants with less than ten years of teaching experiences (50.0%) endorsed this set of activities.

There were more participants with more than 10 years teaching experience (64.0%) as compared with those with less than 10 years teaching experience (50.0%) who endorsed the ILST set of activities described as assisting the school governing body in school governance;

There were more participants (68.6%) with over ten years of teaching experience as compared with participants (41.4%) with less than 10 years of teaching experience who reported being involved in their schools' ILSTs activity of organizing workshop on substance abuse and HIV/AIDS education;

There appears to be slight agreement between more experienced participants (52.0) and less experienced participants (50%) with regard to ILST set of activities for facilitating school-community relationships.

The results of analysis of qualitative data collected by interviews from the participants on the activities of ILST revealed that participants acknowledged their involvement in their schools' ILSTs activities by assisting the school to improve academic performance of learners and by providing emotional support services to learners (counselling, feeding scheme, referral network and parental involvement). Also participants interviewed reported their involvement in running workshop on education and personal-social information related to education or information on substance abuse, violence and lifestyle choices. Excerpts from interview transcripts regarding these are as follow:

The ILST I'm involved ……………..provides academic and emotional support, counseling, referral and parental involvement (Respondent 2)

ILST provides academic programs; counseling related to drug and alcohol abuse, violence and domestic issues (Respondent 3).

ILST offers individual support to learners in terms of academic support and counseling (Respondent 4).

Catering for educational support, emotional support, disciplinary issues as well as anger and aggression management (Respondent 2)

4.5 Challenges educators faced while collaborating in their schools' ILST

A section on the questionnaire presented respondents with a list of suggested challenges which they were likely to have experienced while they collaborated with others in their schools' ILSTs. Table 8 presents the responses of the participants to this section of the questionnaire. In this table, the response options are presented in four-point Likert type scale. Therefore, a value was assigned to each of the options. More specifically, these values were assigned as follows:

Always = 4;

Sometimes = 3;

Seldom = 2;

Never = 1.

The score to each item by each respondent was computed. The total and mean scores on each item by each population group of participants were also computed.

Table 9: Challenges participants experienced while collaborating with others in their schools' ILSTs according to their gender

S/N	Statements indicating challenges of the ILST	Gender	Response options								Total		
			Always 4		Sometimes 3		Seldom 2		Never 1				
			N	Total	N	Total	N	Total	N	Total	N	Total Scores	Mean Score
1	Poor guidelines or none at all as to the role and responsibilities of the ILST by the Department of Education	Male	2	8	9	27	4	8	2	2	17	45	2.7
		Female	2	8	7	21	3	6	0	0	12	35	2.9
		Total	**4**	**16**	**16**	**48**	**7**	**14**	**2**	**2**	**29**		
2	The school's ILST not receiving support from parents and community	Male	5	20	7	21	3	6	2	2	17	49	2.9
		Female	4	16	4	12	2	4	2	2	12	34	2.8
		Total	**9**	**36**	**11**	**33**	**5**	**8**	**4**	**4**			
3	Immediate school community not providing resources to the school	Male	4	16	8	24	3	6	2	2	17	48	2.8
		Female	3	12	5	15	3	6	1	1	12	34	2.8
		Total	**7**	**28**	**13**	**39**	**6**	**12**	**3**	**3**			
4	Teachers having difficulty working with parent members	Male	5	20	10	30	1	2	1	1	17	53	3.1
		Female	2	8	6	18	2	4	2	2	12	32	2.7
		Total	**7**	**28**	**16**	**48**	**3**	**6**	**3**	**3**			
5	Parent members' poor participation in the ILST	Male	7	28	6	18	1	2	3	3	17	51	3
		Female	6	24	5	15	1	2	0	0	12	41	3.4
		Total	**13**	**52**	**11**	**33**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**3**			

Table 9 presents information indicating the challenges participants indicated they experienced while collaborating with others in their schools' ILSTs. The descriptive statistics presented in the table in terms of gender indicate that male participants experienced all the five suggested challenges as all the mean response scores by the male population group on each item on the questionnaire are above the mid-point of 2. For the male participants the descending order by which they experienced the challenges presented to them on the questionnaire are as follows:

- Having difficulty working with parent members (mean response score = 3.1);
- Poor participation of Parent members (mean response score = 3);
- Not receiving support from the community, (mean response score = 2.9),
- Immediate community not providing resources, (mean response score = 2.8); and
- Poor guidelines from the department of education, (mean response score = 2.7)

For the male participants, therefore, the challenge experienced the most or what constituted the greatest challenge to their participation in their schools' ILSTs is the difficulty they have with working with parents members of the ILSTs while not given guidelines or poor guidelines regarding their role in the ILST was what constituted the least challenge to them.

The female participants of this study also indicate that they experienced all the five challenges presented to them although unlike their male counterparts the extents to which they experienced these challenges were not as intense. Parent members' poor participation in their schools' ILST is the challenge female members experienced the most while the others tended to be experienced seldom as indicated by the mean response scores. More specifically, the extents with which the female members experienced these challenges, in descending order of intensity, are as follows:

- Parent members' poor participation (mean response score = 3.4),
- Poor guidelines or none at all from the Department of Education (mean response score =2.9),
- The school ILST not receiving support from parents and the community (mean response score= 2. 8)
- Immediate school community not providing resources to the school (mean response score = 2.8) and

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- Teachers having difficulty working with parent members of the school ILSTs (mean response score = 2.7)

Table 10: Challenges participants experienced while collaborating with others in their schools' ILSTs according to their years of teaching experience.

S/N	Statements indicating Challenges of the ILST	Years of teaching experience	Response options								Total		
			Always 4		Sometimes 3		Seldom 2		Never 1				
			N	Total	N	Total	N	Total	N	Total		Total score	Mean Score
1	Poor guidelines or none at all as to the role and responsibilities of the ILST by the Department of Education	[0-10]	0	0	2	6	1	2	1	1	4	9	2.2
		<10	4	16	14	42	6	12	1	1	25	71	2.8
		Total	**4**	**16**	**16**	**48**	**7**	**14**	**2**	**2**			
2	The school's ILST not receiving support from parents and community	[0-10]	2	8	1	3	1	2	0	0	4	13	3.2
		<10	7	28	10	30	4	8	4	4	25	70	2.8
		Total	**9**	**36**	**11**	**33**	**5**	**10**	**4**	**4**			
3	Immediate school community not providing resources to the school	[0-10]	1	4	1	3	1	2	1	1	4	10	2.5
		<10	6	24	12	36	5	10	2	2	25	72	2.9
		Total	**7**	**28**	**13**	**39**	**6**	**12**	**3**	**3**			
4	Teachers having difficulty working with parent members	[0-10]	1	4	3	9	0	0	0	0	4	13	3.2
		<10	6	24	13	39	3	6	3	3	25	72	2.9
		Total	**7**	**28**	**16**	**48**	**3**	**6**	**3**	**3**			
5	Parent members' poor participation in the ILST	[0-10]	2	8	1	3	1	2	0	0	4	13	3.2
		<10	11	44	10	30	1	2	3	3	25	25	3.2
		Total	**13**	**52**	**11**	**33**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**3**			

In terms of challenges experienced by the participants on the basis of their teaching experiences, Table 10 presents information indicating the challenges participants experienced. The descriptive statistics presented in Table 10 indicate that participants with less than 10 years of teaching experiences experienced all the five suggested challenges although in varying degrees with all the mean scores falling above or equal to the mid-point.

Participants with less than ten years teaching experiences seem to have experienced the challenges with higher intensities more than participants with more than ten years of teaching experiences, particularly with regard to:

Parent members' poor participation (3.2), having difficulty working with parent members (3.2), and school ILST not receiving support from parents and community. The least challenge experienced by the less experienced teachers was with poor guidelines or none at all on the roles and responsibilities of the ILST. Experienced participants seem to have agreed with their less experienced counterparts regarding the extent of the intensity with which they experienced the challenge of parent's members' poor participation in the ILST. Otherwise all the other challenges presented on the questionnaire appeared to have been experienced rather seldom by the experienced teacher participants.

Results of analysis of qualitative data collected by interview on the challenges respondents faced while collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs revealed two major challenges that stood out more for the participants and these are the poor participation of parent members in the ILST activities and not receiving support from parents and community members for the activities of the ILSTs. The following excerpts were taken from the interview transcripts to support these results.

Respondent 1: Parental support and interest is vital in assisting educators and schools. Parents' support such as their attendance in school meetings, collection of reports, participation in budget and issues relating to the code of conduct of learners is really needed. Without such support schools find it challenging to assist learners as often these issues need to be addressed at home and at school. Schools are also battling with poor and outdated resources as it is challenging for department to provide for all at the same time, if the community assisted schools

then they would receive these resources much sooner as simply relying on the department is not enough as our education system faces challenges which are deep rooted in our countries political history. Not all resources have to be of monetary value, but can also be in the form of assistance with administration, sports involvement, mentoring programs to name a few. Really, we need to work hard to convince parents and community's to full involvement in school's activities. We need to convince them that we need their support for the benefit of their children.

Respondent 2: *The ILST receives no support from district level, although I had tried a number of times to refer cases. It does however receive support from NGO's and community organisations. The ILST does not receive any support from parents either.*

Respondent 3:

Our school does not receive any support although we have tried to obtain some support from the department of education; we have also received minimal support form NGO's and the community and there is a lack of parental support. Anyway there is a problem of support that is not enough compared to the school needs.

Respondent 4:

In most cases, the difficulty does not lie in the difficulty in working with parents, but rather their lack of responsibility and availability which they display as parents. It creates many issues when trying to discipline learners or assist them with problems they may face at home.

4.6 Summary of results

The results of data analysis revealed that participants generally had positive attitudes to participating in their schools' ILSTs. They particularly felt that their schools' ILSTs afforded them opportunity to form partnership with parents to address learners' problems, they believed that teachers and parents should collaborate and work together in order to help learners to learn better and succeed in life and that making educators form partnership with parents improved teaching and learning in schools.

The participants of the study generally agreed that their participation in their schools' ILST is beneficial in many ways. They felt that being members of their schools' ILSTs had improved the relationship between the school staff and this had made the school environment to be more conducive to teaching and learning. They also believed that their schools' ILSTs also contributed to improved quality of teaching and learning by providing teaching and learning resources to schools. ILSTs were also considered beneficial to learners by providing services to meet the learners' basic needs (services such as feeding schemes, counselling and transport).

In terms of the activities in which the participants were involved in while participating in their schools' ILSTs the participants of this study indicated that they were involved in all the five categories of activities of the ILST presented to them on the questionnaire and interviews. Two of these activities particularly stood out for the participants as the ones they were most involved in and these are the identification of learners with special education needs and in need of support and organization of academic support services for learners (in terms of extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers on learners' behalf).

Educator participants reported experiencing challenges while collaborating with all other stakeholders as presented to them in the questionnaire. Three of these challenges are most prominent from the results and these are; difficulty in working with parents, poor guidelines or none at all from the Department of Education and poor participation of parent members. Two lesser challenges revealed in the study are; ILSTs not receiving support from parents and community and the immediate school community not providing resources to the school. Each of the above mentioned challenges impact on the goals and objectives of ILST members.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis that provided answers to each research question regarding educators' attitudes towards their collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, educators' views on the benefits they could derive from collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, the different activities in which educators were involved in their schools'

ILSTs and the challenges educators experienced while collaborating in their schools' ILSTs. The next chapter, (chapter 5) presents the summary of the findings and discussion of the findings and suggested recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction to the chapter

The main aim of this study was to investigate educators' perspectives regarding their collaboration in their schools' Institutional-Level Support Teams (ILST). These perspectives are in terms of their attitudes towards the ILST, the benefits the educators considered could be derived from their collaboration in their schools' ILSTs, the activities they were involved in while collaborating in their schools' ILSTs and the challenges they experienced. Four main research questions were addressed and these are:

1. What are Educators' attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs?

2. What benefits do educators consider as deriving from partnership in the ILSTs?

3. What activities do educators involve themselves in while collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILSTs?

4. What are the challenges they experienced while collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILSTs?

In the previous chapter, the results of the analysis of data collected by questionnaire and interviews were presented. This chapter discusses the results of the study. However, the summary of the findings is first presented.

5.2 Summary of findings

The results of the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected for the study revealed that the participants of this study (educators who were members of their schools' ILSTs) expressed favourable attitudes towards collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILSTs. . The participants endorsed most of the suggestions presented to them on the questionnaire and in the

interviews regarding the benefits which could be derived from collaboration in their schools' ILSTs and the activities to be involved in while collaborating in their schools' ILSTs. Specific findings of the study are as follows:

5.2.1 Educators' attitudes to collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs

Educators expressed relatively fairly positive attitudes towards collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs. The educators felt that their schools' ILSTs afforded them the opportunity to form partnership with parents to address learners' problems, they believed that teachers and parents should collaborate and work together in order to help learners to learn better and succeed in life and that making educators form partnership with parents improved teaching and learning in schools. However, educator-participants of this study were generally not happy with not being paid for the extra time they spent at meetings and other activities of their schools' ILSTs. They also felt that they were not properly trained for their roles in the ILSTs and they would prefer that the objectives and activities of their schools' ILSTs should be reviewed regularly.

Both the male and the female educators who participated in this study were not very different in their attitudes towards collaborating in their schools' ILSTs. However, differences were observed between less experienced and more experienced educators with major differences being with regard to their feelings on not being remunerated for their membership in ILSTs. Less experienced educators expressed their disapproval of this while the more experienced educators appeared not to have felt bad about it.

5.2.2 Benefits educators' considered as derivable from partnership in their schools' ILSTs

Educator-participants of the study generally agreed that their participation in their schools' ILST is beneficial in many ways. The educators felt that being members of their schools' ILSTs had improved the relationship between the school staff and this had made the school environment to be more conducive to teaching and learning. They also believed that their schools' ILSTs also contributed to improved quality of teaching and learning by providing teaching and learning resources to schools. ILSTs were also considered beneficial to learners by providing services to meet the learners' basic needs (services such as feeding schemes,

counselling, medical and transport).   It was reported that even in schools where ILSTs were not fully functional the general opinions of the educators were that learners, educators, management and parents benefited from the schools' ILSTs activities.

5.2.3 Activities involved in while collaborating with other members of the ILSTs.

The educator-participants of this study endorsed all the five categories of activities of the ILST presented to them on the questionnaire and interviews to indicate that they were engaged in all these activities while collaborating with other members of their schools' ILSTs. Two of the activities which the participants felt they were more involved in than others are the identification of learners with special education needs and in need of support and organization of academic support for learners (in terms of extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers on learners' behalf). More male educators seemed to be involved in the identification of learners with special education needs while more females were involved in the organization of academic support to learners.
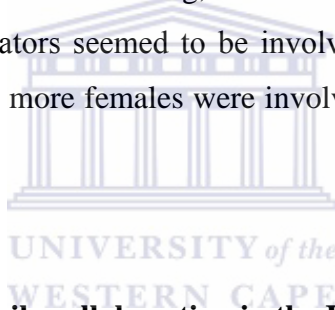
5.2.4 Challenges educators face while collaborating in the ILST at their schools.

The results of the study revealed that most educators experienced challenges with regard to (1) poor participation by parents, (2) lack of support from the parents and the community, (3) poor guidelines or none at all, on the operation of ILSTs or the roles of members from the Education Department and (4) difficulty with working with parents.

5.3 Discussion of the findings

The study investigated educators' attitudes to their participation in their schools' ILSTs. This attitude is about the way the educators look and see or how they think, feel and their general behaviours towards their participation in their schools' ILSTs. Finding out about educators' attitudes to their participation in their schools' ILSTs is important because employees' attitudes

are the key to effective organizations (Ki & Hon (2012). Dakurah, Goddard and Osuteye (2005) state that the attitudes people hold towards an organization influence their behavior towards that organization especially in terms of the people's commitment to the organization, their participation in the activities of the organization and their satisfaction with the organization. The results of this study revealed that the educators who participated in the study held positive attitudes towards their participation in their schools' ILSTs. This is an indication that the educators were generally satisfied with their participation in their schools' ILSTs. Their expression of positive attitudes to their participation in their schools' ILSTs could also be interpreted to mean that the educators endorsed the goals of their schools' ILSTs and that they were committed and identified with or actively supporting the activities of their schools' ILSTs.

Whereas this study results revealed that majority (89.9%) of the educators who participated expressed positive attitudes to their schools' ILSTs, a previous study by Tau (2006) only found one in every five (20%) educators expressed a positive attitude to collaboration in their schools' ILSTs. Tau's explanation for the educators' negative attitudes was that the educators had heavy teaching load and could not be bothered by extra load of participating in their schools' ILSTs. The educators in this current study probably did not have very heavy teaching loads or could have been driven to participate in their schools' ILSTs because of the benefits derived from the ILSTs.

The study investigated the benefits educators considered derivable from their participation in their schools' ILSTs. The results of the study suggest that educator-participants general agreed that their participation in their schools' ILST is beneficial. Therefore, educators' positive attitudes to the benefits of their ILSTs are a good thing as this can enhance learners' achievement. This reflects the main aim of collaboration in education setting as Simpson, (2010) argues that collaboration by stakeholders is a process of shared knowledge, learning and consensus, thus the working in partnership with other members of the ILST can lead to a lot of benefits.   By their engagement in their schools' ILSTs, educators are offered space and or opportunity to address different problems learners encounter and to discuss the possible solutions to the different problems. This point appears to be consistent with Gardiner and Robinson's

(2010) conclusion that the ILST is beneficial as it is able to address multiple problems and suggest different solutions as a result of collaboration

The study results indicate that educators reported experiencing sharing views about workload, teaching tips and access to resources that benefit their teaching. This way educators are also able to achieve a greater job satisfaction as they are able to share objectives or shared values and are encouraged or motivated by one another. The study results also revealed aspects of the ILST services that contributed to the conducive learning environment and motivation for both learners and educators which include programs such as feeding schemes, counseling and transport provided especially to learners. Such finding, as Loebenstein (2008) argues, indicates the importance of social support services as these respond more positively to someone in need of help, mentoring and guidance. McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2002) state that implementing policies and initiatives which serve the socio-economic needs of school community members build capacities and motivate the members towards improved quality of performance. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) also assert that implementing practices (like feeding scheme, transport) that are socio-economically responsive are ways of building on the social capital of learners in schools. Therefore by attending to the basic needs of the learners, the ILSTs are directly or indirectly increasing the overall performance of learners within the classrooms. This also impact positively on educators as it directly affects their classroom environments. Educators benefit from collaboration in their schools' ILSTs as this helps to build the school into an effective social organization promoting positive interpersonal relationship dynamics, and team building among school community members as strategies for increasing members' enthusiasms and optimism, reducing frustration and transmitting a sense of mission thereby directly or indirectly supporting and sustaining performances of teachers and learners (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004).

The study investigated the specific activities in which educators were involved as members of their schools' ILSTs. . In a landmark study of members' attitude toward cooperatives Korzan (1952) asserted that membership of an organization is not a one-way street but rather as members expect their organization to do certain things for them the members also need to do their parts.

Thus as educator-members of their schools' ILSTs benefit from the structure, they also need to be active in the structure.

The study results indicate that educator-members of the ILSTs who were involved in this study reported being involved in the activities of their schools' ILSTs such as identifying learners with special educational needs and in need of support as well as organizing academic support for learners in the form of extra tutoring and support for parents and teachers on learner's behalf. These activities of the educator-members of their schools' ILSTs are much in line with what William's (2005) describes as supportive services that are required in schools from which resources are provided to support the emotional, psychological, informational, educational and social needs of learners and educators alike. The study results reveal that much of educators' time and labor was also dedicated to workshops for substance abuse and HIV/AIDS education. This finding suggests that educators are making efforts to address issues within learners' personal spheres by involving in activities that make them work together with other stakeholders effectively as a team towards a common objective.

The study also reveals that educators are involved in activities relating to school governance and the strengthening of the relationship between parents and the school community thus facilitating a school-community relationship. By collaborating with other education stakeholders and forming partnership in their schools' ILSTs, educators are able to share expertise and strategize methods of problem solving. As Oswald (2007) argues, by forming partnership, teachers, parents, learners, support personnel and other community members are able to provide both technical and emotional support to each other. The Department of Education (2005) encourages collaboration as strategy for implementing a more holistic approach to dealing with the complexity of problems by bringing in different perspectives of problems and solutions.

The results of this study indicated the challenges educators experienced while collaborating with other stakeholders in their schools' ILSTs. The challenges faced could possibly impact on many of the activities endorsed by the educators. The result suggest that a general lack of interest or poor participation of parents and the broader community hinder the work of the ILSTs and in turn impact negatively on the learners and the educators. Tau (2006) also found a general lack of parental participation in school programmes and this impact negatively on hone-school

collaboration which should work positively for the success of the learners, the school, the community and the country.

The study results also indicate that educators reported experiencing being provided with poor guidelines or none at all on their roles and the operation of their schools' ILSTs from the Department of Education This finding is consistent with the assertion by Lakey and Drew, (1997) that a lack of support or adequate guidelines may lead to negative responses or feelings from members of the ILSTs. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) assert that when direction is set in an organization it helps people to make sense of their organizational tasks and to identify with the organizational context of the tasks. Further explanations for direction-setting in organizations are based on human motivation theory (Ford 1992) which states that clear and compelling organizational directions contribute to members' work-related motivation and that people are motivated by goals found to be clear, personally compelling, challenging and achievable.

5.4 Recommendations

The implementation of the Institutional Level Support Team, ILST in schools has proved to be a success in many ways as this study findings revealed. However, this study findings also acknowledge that members of the ILST especially educators are experiencing some challenges which do not make for effectiveness of the ILST. This section, therefore, makes recommendations on the bases of the implications of the study findings.

The first aspect relates to the attitudes educators have expressed towards collaboration within the ILST. Educators expressed a lack of training as hindering their collaboration as well as the need for regular review of the goals and objectives of the ILST. A number of educators then expressed their dissatisfaction relating to not receiving remuneration for their work as members of the ILST. Furthermore , members of the Institutional-Level Support Teams expressed that their being members of the ILST is challenging due to the added workload and existing time constraints at their schools. Additionally the lack of guidelines or the feeling of not being

properly equipped for their role lead to a lack of self-confidence in performing or fulfilling their roles.

Based on these findings it is recommended that:

- The Education Department should provide more adequate training for educators in mainstream schools as to the roles and responsibilities of members of the ILST.
- The Education Department should devise and implement a strategy whereby members are afforded the opportunity and guidance to be able to regularly review the goals and or objectives as well as the activities of the ILST.
- A system or either recognition or remuneration may be implemented and awarded to members that properly fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a member of the ILST.
- The Department of Education has to further support members of the ILST in managing their workloads and setting realistic goals and time frames as educators are working within the constraints of a challenging education system.

Educators' perspectives on collaboration within the ILST in terms of the benefits derived by their work have indicated that the ILST is beneficial to schools. Educators have expressed that ILSTs are established, even though minimally in some institutions but have proved to be beneficial. However, the Education Department has stated that the ILST is to provide support to the entire school population. Based on these findings it is recommended that:

- The Department of Education needs to implement a system of regular review of schools' ILSTs by Provincial Departments.
- District Based Support Teams need to establish themselves more effectively at school in order to ensure that ILSTs are properly functioning in schools and are catering for the needs of all learners.

The study results have indicated that ILSTs that are currently being implemented and functioning as a collaborative team are providing various benefits to members of the school community, namely; improving the relationship between school staff and creating environments that are more conducive to education. Furthermore, ILSTs are improving the quality of teaching and learning at schools by providing various resources such as learning materials and creating effective teaching environments and catering for the physical needs and well-being of learners by

implementing feeding schemes, transportation and sourcing counseling for learners. Based on these findings it is recommended that:

- District Departments should regularly pay visitations to schools to evaluate and ensure that schools are establishing their ILSTs.
- District Departments should provide clear guidelines to ILSTs as to manner in which they may obtain such benefits.

The third aspect investigated relates to the activities that members of the ILST endorsed at their schools. The study results have revealed that educators are indeed assisting learners in two key areas: the identification of learners that require special educational support and are need of support and the organization of academic support in terms of tutoring and collaboration with parents and educators. However educators responded poorly to activities relating to assisting learners with information or education on substance abuse prevention, assisting school governance and also arranging for parents to become more involved. Based on these findings, it is therefore recommended that:

- Educators' need more training in the aspects of provision of education on substance abuse in order to better equip themselves in assisting learners deal with these types of challenges both personally and within their communities.
- Educators need to become more equipped and properly trained for roles within school governance.
- ILSTs have to become more active in encouraging parents to become involved in school activities and remedial programs.
- The Department of Education has to provide more support and training to better equip educators for their duties required of them at schools as members of the ILST.

The findings of this study indicate the ILST faces many challenges within their school perimeter and within the broader community. Many challenges presented themselves during this study in terms of poor participation of parent members, ILSTs not receiving support from communities, poor guideline or none at all from the Department of education both provincially and from the various districts, a difficulty in working with parents and not enough support from the community. Based on these findings it is recommended that:

- Strategies are employed that encourage parents to avail themselves.
- Implementation of workshops by the Department of Education and schools to train and equip parents and the community with the necessary skills of collaboration.
- The Department of Education should host more effective and frequent workshops to efficiently train educators for their roles and responsibilities as members of the ILST.
- District Based Support Teams should guide educators in the process of referrals to the Department and in making contact with off campus services available.
- Educators should receive training equipping them to become facilitators in designing and implementing workshops on substance abuse, violence and HIV/AIDS within their school communities.
- The Department of Education should allocate a budget to schools for their ILSTs to assist with some of the challenges they may face regarding resources and implementation of feeding schemes and transportation systems as well as counseling programs.
- Principals should evaluate the skills that educators currently have and use their strengths of qualifications in Honors and Master's Degrees in Psychology, Educational Psychology and Life Orientation with a view to exploiting them for the benefit of the learners.

5.5 Limitations of the study

A number of limitations impacted on this study. Very little research and literature is available other than policy documents that provide guidelines for the implementation of the ILSTs at schools. The study only included four schools and focused specifically on High Schools. Therefore it is recommended for future research that such study should be expanded to cover more schools and involve more stakeholders who are members of the ILSTs. The second recommendation emanating from the limitation of this study is with regard to building up of literature and or body of knowledge on support services for improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools and for ensuring learner success and school success. In this regard therefore, is the recommendation for more research study not only on Institutional Level Support

Teams but also on the District Level Support Teams and any other support teams and support structures in order to make our schools more effective.

5.6 Final Conclusions

The study indicated educators' perspectives on collaboration in the ILSTs of High schools in the Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park Areas. Results revealed that educators have a positive attitude towards collaboration in the ILSTs and they are working effectively. The ILSTs examined in this study are yielding many benefits as a result of collaboration with educators, learners, parents and the community. Many of the activities which members of the ILSTs endorsed at their schools are in accordance with the Department of Education. Many challenges are encountered by the ILSTs at the various schools; however they all experience the same or similar challenges.

This final chapter provided an overall discussion of the findings and concluded the results of the study. One can only but hope that the recommendations listed will be noted and assists the Department of Education as well as schools to improve collaboration between members of the ILST leading to school-home collaboration in the interest of the learners and for their success. It may also strengthen the link between schools and the district departments of education (District Based Support Teams). Parents and community members could once again become part of the school-community partnership and assist in identifying and alleviating the difficulties that we face within our schools.

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University of the Western Cape

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Private Bag X 17

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7535

2012

To the Principal of...

....

....

....

RE: Application to conduct Research.

This letter serves as a formal application to conduct research at your school.

As a Masters Student at the University of the Western Cape I have identified an area of concern and thus selected it for my research Thesis. This being my topic:

Educators' Perspectives on Collaboration in Institutional Level Support Teams (ILSTs) of schools in the Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park area

.... has been selected for the process of research with the Head of the ILST and members such as support staff and educators' that constitute the ILST. The study will focus of various aspects such as, Educators' attitudes towards the ILST, the benefits educators' consider deriving from the ILST, the activities educators involve themselves in and lastly the challenges educators' experience in conducting their activities as members of the ILST.

It is my intention to conduct one interview per school with the Head Member of the ILST, being the Principal, the Deputy or a member of staff, thus one interview will be conducted. A questionnaire will then be handed to the remaining members of the ILST, that being educators'.

The identities as well personal viewpoints of participants will remain confidential and be treated with respect. Educators' may choose to participate on a voluntary basis.

If participants so wish to know the results of the study and all other relevant information, they will be able to gain full access upon communication thereof. The aim of my study to gain insight into the ILST and assess a means by which the body may be more clearly understood and assisted in future.

The study will be conducted under the supervision of Professor O. Bojuwoye at the Faculty of Education of The University of the Western Cape.

Hoping you will consider my application.

Mrs R.L Marr Parker

Student: 2427139 at the University of the Western Cape

54621089: Western Cape Education Department

Contact: 021 797 00 17: Wynberg High School

        078 191 64 54

Prof O. Bojuwoye
Contact: 021 9593887

University of the Western Cape

Faculty of Education

Private Bag X 17

Bellville

7535

2012

The Western Cape Education Department.

Private Bag x 1194

Cape Town

8001

RE: Application to conduct Research.

This letter serves as a formal application to conduct research at four High Schools in the Wynberg, Grassy Park and Plumstead area during the first term of 2011.

As a Masters student at the University of the Western Cape, I have identified and area within Education that is of great concern. This being my topic:

Educators' Perspectives on Collaboration in Institutional Level Support Teams (ILSTs) of schools in the Wynberg, Grassy Park and Pelican Park area

Schools will be approached and permission firstly be requested before continuing with any form of research. The study will focus on various aspects such as, Educators attitudes towards the ILST, the benefits educators consider deriving from the ILST, the activities educators involve themselves in and lastly the challenges educators experience in conducting their activities as members of the ILST.

It is my intention to conduct one interview per school with the Head Member of the ILST, being the Principal, the Deputy or a member of staff, thus four interviews will be conducted. A questionnaire will then be handed to the remaining members of the ILST, that being educators.

The identities as well personal viewpoints of participants will remain confidential and be treated with respect. Educators may choose to participate on a voluntary basis.

If participants so wish to know the results of the study and all other relevant information, they will be able to gain full access upon communication thereof. The aim of my study to gain insight into the ILST and assess a means by which the body may be more clearly understood and assisted in future.

The study will be conducted under the supervision of Professor O. Bojuwoye at the Faculty of Education of The University of the Western Cape.

Hoping you would consider my application.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs R.L Marr Parker

Student no: 2427139 at the University of the Western Cape

Persal no: 54621089: Western Cape Education Department

Contact: 078 191 64 54

Prof O. Bojuwoye
Contact: 021 9593887

APPENDIX III

WESTERN CAPE
Education Department
Provincial Government of the Western Cape

REFERENCE: 20110215-0053
 ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Rianah-Leigh Marr Parker
9 Cambrai Road
Strandfontein Village
7708

Dear Mrs Rianah-Leigh Marr Parker

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES ON COLLOBORATION IN INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL SUPPORT TEAMS (ILST): A STUDY OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE WYNBERG AND PLUMSTEAD AREA, CAPE TOWN

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 **19 February 2012 till 30 September 2012**
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: Audrey T Wyngaard
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 21 September 2011

<u>INFORMATION SHEET</u>

Rianah-Leigh Marr Parker

Educator: Wynberg High School

Contact: (Work) 021 797 0017

: (Cell) 078 191 6454

The University of the Western Cape

Topic:

Educators' Perspectives on Collaboration in Institutional Level Support Teams (ILST): A study of selected schools in the Wynberg and Plumstead area, Cape Town.

The focus of my research thesis is to investigate Educators' perspectives/view on the process of collaboration within the Institutional Level Support Team (ILST) at school. It will investigate educator's attitudes towards the ILST, the benefits educators consider themselves deriving from the ILST, also what activities educators have been involving themselves in or feel they should be conducting within the ILST and lastly the challenges they face as a member of the ILST.

The main concern is the building of partnerships/relationships between members of the ILS and educators perspectives thereof, as educators are the key role-players within education. All research conducted will be in full compliance with the Ethical standards of research. Participation is voluntary and the confidentiality of information will be respected. Precaution will be taken to ensure no harm come to participants of this study. Participants will have full access to the research and findings if they so wish.

Please complete the consent form below, to indicate that you have given your full consent to participate in the study.

I am aware of:

1.   The topic and nature of the research

2.   The conditions of participation

Signed:... Date:...

A Copy of this document may be handed to the participant.

Interview Questions: To be managed by the researcher only.

Instructions and Information:

1. If you do not feel comfortable in answering a specific question, you may choose not to do so.

2. If you are not clear on a particular question you may choose to seek further explanation from the researcher.

Part A: Demographic Information.

1. Gender: Male..........................   Female..................................

2. Age:..................................

3. Qualification:...

4. Number of years of teaching experience. :..

5. Subjects taught:..
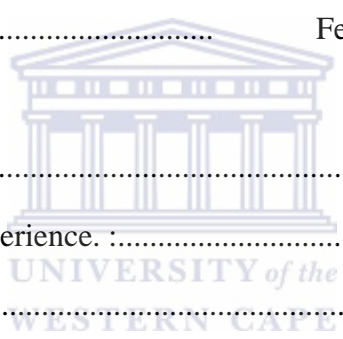
Part B: Interview Questions.

1. Who are the current members of the ILST at your school (Management, educator's ECT)? The reason for asking is for me to establish if you are aware of the structural formation of the ILST.

2. Can you express your opinion about your institution's ILST in terms of the objectives that have been identified at your specific school?

3. What do you view the benefits/positive contributions of the ILST to be towards:

(a) Educators:

(b) Learners:

(c) School Management:

4. List the various activities of your institution's ILST.

5. How long and how often does your institution's ILST meet?

6. What needs of learner does your institution's ILST cater for?

7. What forms of support do you receive/provide for addressing the needs of learners?

8. Indicate the sources of support for addressing learners' needs received by your institution's LIST.

    (a) From the District Level:

    (b) From NGO's and other community organisations:

    (c) From parents:

    (d) From the school:

9. How would you assess the working relationship between members of your institution's ILST?
10. What are the challenges faced by your schools ILST?

APPENDIX V

Educators' Perspectives on Collaboration in Institutional Level Support Teams (ILST) Questionnaire

1.   Dear Colleague

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on how educators' perceive their schools' ILST. This information includes their overall views on their working relationship as members of the ILST, the objectives, activities, benefits and challenges of their schools' ILST. As according to White Paper 6, all schools are to establish and make use of the assistance of such teams to improve the quality of teaching and learning at schools. It is also part of the interest of this study to gain educators' perspectives on collaboration among School Management, Educators, Learners, Parents and Community Members who are expected to be members and contribute to the activities and success of the team. The study hopes to use the information gained to improve the effectiveness of ILST.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw at any stage of the study. The information you give will be kept confidential and it is for research purpose only**.** If, as a participant you do not feel comfortable answering any particular question, you may choose not to do so. If you are not clear on a particular question, you may choose to seek further explanation from the researcher. Every effort will be made to ensure that no harm comes to you by completing this questionnaire.

2.   Part A. Participants' Demographic Information.

1. Name: ....(Optional)

2. Gender: Male..........................   Female.................................

3. Age: ....

5. Qualification: ....

6. Number of years of teaching experience: ....

3.

Part B - Educators' attitudes to collaborating in their schools' ILST

Indicate with a tick the following attitudes towards the ILST at your school.

	Suggested statements of attitudes	Response Options	
		Agree	Disagree
1	I am a member of my school's ILST and I am happy about it.		
2	I think it is helpful to have such a body/structure in a school.		
3	The ILST does not make any positive contribution to the school, management, educators and learners.		
4	Being a member of the ILST is an extra burden as it adds to one's workload.		
5	Making teachers form partnership with parents for support to improve teaching and learning in school makes teachers less productive.		
6	I don't have a problem working with parents, after all teachers and parents should collaborate and work together in order to help learners learn better and succeed in life.		
7	There is no extra pay for being a member of ILST and therefore it is a thankless job.		
8	I feel members of the ILST should be properly trained for their role.		
9	There should be regular reviews of objectives and activities of a school's ILST to ensure effectiveness		

Do you have any further comments regarding Educators' attitudes towards the ILST?

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4. **- Part C- The Benefits of the ILST.**

Indicate by a tick the following benefits derived from the ILST.

	Statements on Suggested Benefits of the ILST	Response Options	
		Agree	Disagree
1	The ILST contributes to improving the relationship between the school staff, and makes school environment conducive for teaching and learning.		
2	The ILST contributes to the improving the quality of teaching and learning in terms of provision of resources, learning materials, motivating educators, and improving learners' academic performance.		
3	The ILST contributes to learners' physical needs and well-being, by setting up feeding schemes, providing counselling and assisting with transport.		
4	The ILST assists school management/governance.		
5	The ILST assists in improving learners' general behaviour by offering workshops on violence, drug and alcohol abuses, HIV/AIDS education and other school problems.		
6	The ILST assists in empowering parents by helping parents to assist in their children's education in terms completion of homework assignment and other activities related to learners' academic performance.		

Do you have any further comments regarding contributions of your school's ILST?

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5.   -Part D: The following section relates to the activities associated with the ILST.

Indicate with a tick the following activities which your school's ILST is involved in, or
What are some of the activities/ duties that you are involved in as a member of the ILST?

S/N	Statements indicating activities of the ILST	Response Options	
		Yes	No
1	Identifying learners with special education needs or learners needing care and support.		
2	Workshops for substance abuse, HIV/AIDS education.		
3	Organizing academic support for learners (extra tutoring, consultation with parents and teachers, providing extra learning materials, etc.		
4	Assisting school governing body in school governance.		
5	Arranging for parents to be involved in school activities and facilitating school-community relationship.		

Do you have any further comments regarding the activities of your school's ILST?

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6.   -Part E: The following section relates to the challenges the ILST may face.

Indicate by a tick in the space provided the challenges you consider as confronting the ILST in your school

S/N	Statements indicating challenges to ILST	always	sometimes	seldom	never
1	Poor guidelines or none at all as to the role and responsibilities of the ILST by the Department of Education.				
2	The school's ILST not receiving support from parents and community.				
3	Immediate school community not providing resources to the school.				
4	Teachers having difficulty working with parent members.				
5	Parent members' poor participation in the ILST.				

Do you have any further comments the challenges your schools ILST may face?

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Thank you for your participation.

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