

**TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE OF A PRIMARY SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL IN SUPPORTING THEIR WELL-BEING: LEARNING
FROM A SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL IN CHALLENGING
CONDITIONS**

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DECLARATION

I declare this thesis on *Teacher perceptions of the role of a primary school principal in supporting their well-being: Learning from a South African public school in challenging conditions*, is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation into teacher perceptions of the role of a primary school principal in supporting their well-being: learning from a South African public school in challenging conditions. As a grounded theory study using a classical grounded theory approach it proposes a substantiated theory based on the synthesis of findings from a single case study of a school.

This grounded theory proposes that teacher well-being is a dynamic, fluctuating and holistic state of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING¹ in a teacher's personal and professional life, as a result of being part of a school community and broader system, and the SUPPORT² it provides to enhance the physical, social and cultural environment and working conditions of teachers. In order of significance of responses, teacher well-being is related to:

- Caring and Supportive Relationships (LOVING)
- A State of Being (BEING)
- Environmental and Working Conditions (HAVING)
- Meaning (MEANING)

LOVING and BEING influence the ability of teachers to access a level of HAVING and MEANING.

Key factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions are personal, professional, organisational and systemic. Teachers identify organisational and systemic factors as having a greater negative influence on their well-being than personal and inter-personal factors. In this working class school greater job demands and limited job resources negatively influence teacher well-being.

The key role of the principal (as defined by the teachers and reported in this study) in supporting the well-being of teachers requires a focus on personal, professional, organisational and systemic strategies to enhance support. These include a wide range of skills, attributes and abilities which include a democratic and contingent leadership style; a respectful, trustworthy and courageous personal

¹ As defined in chapter five.

² As defined and reported on in chapter seven.

character; the ability to provide teachers with both personal and professional support; a focus on curricular leadership and strategies that enable teachers to address a range of barriers to learning; building a caring and supportive collegial culture; promoting professional learning communities; paying attention to the functioning of school level structures; addressing discipline and safety; drawing in additional funding and support at a school community and systems level; and having the moral courage and leadership to address issues at both a personal and systemic level. Leadership to support teacher well-being requires a focus by the principal and school management team on both structural and cultural dimensions of support at the school level and in addition requires the school leadership to address structural inequalities at the systemic level.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will make an important contribution to understanding the role of leadership in supporting the well-being of teachers. They illuminate the challenges teachers in primary schools in challenging conditions face and provide suggestions to enable enhanced systems of teacher support at a school and systems level. These findings identify a number of personal and systems level indicators of well-being that can be used to evaluate and monitor school level teacher well-being and the bio-psycho-social elements of school health promotion. They provide a conceptual model of school well-being from the perspective of teachers. The study concludes with a number of recommendations to strengthen policy, practice, training and further research.

KEY WORDS: Teacher; Well-Being; Leadership; Mental Health; Health Promoting Schools.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome
BSSP	Basic Social Psychological Process
BSSP	Basic Social Structural Process
CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
CGT	Classical Grounded Theory
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
DoE	Department of Education (also known as the Department of Basic Education)
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
EFA	Education For All
ELRC	Education Labor Relations Council
ELSEN	Education for Learners with Special Education Needs
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FET	Further Education and Training
FP	Foundation Phase (grades 1 till 3)
GET	General Education and Training
Gr. R	Grade R (reception year, or year prior to Grade 1)
GT	Grounded Theory
HG / SG	Higher Grade / Standard Grade
HPS	Health Promoting School
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
HO	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Computer Technology
ILST	Institutional Level Support Team (known as a TST or Teacher Support Team)
INSET	In-Service Education for Teachers
IP	Intermediate Phase (grades 4 till 6)
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
JDR	Job Demands Resources
LER	Learner-Educator Ratio
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PDP	Professional Development Points
PEAP	Provincial Employee Assistance Programme

PED	Provincial Education Department
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SOC	Sense of Coherence
SA	South Africa
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teacher Union
SASA	South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996
SF	Senior Phase (grades 7 till 10)
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	Senior Management Team (Principals, Deputies and Heads of Departments)
SNE	Special needs education
TWB	Teacher Well-Being
WC	Western Cape
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

CHAPTER 1

Background, Rationale and Aims

1.1 Introduction

I begin the chapter with my personal rationale for undertaking this study. This is followed by a contextual background and motivation for a focus on teacher well-being and the role of the school principal. This chapter aims to locate the focus of this study within the research field and to provide a description of some of the day-to-day realities experienced by teachers in South African public³ primary schools. It also creates a backdrop against which to understand the description of the history and context of my case study school. The chapter concludes with a description of my research aims and objectives, and an overview of the thesis structure.

1.2 Personal Rationale

My interest in teacher well-being developed along with my personal and professional journey as a teacher, and in recent years as a trainer of teachers and school leaders. I did my initial teacher training at the University of Cape Town and began my professional life as a teacher in a high school in Namibia⁴. For the past twenty years I have worked in school development in South African schools, with a focus on both teachers and school leaders. My current work involves developing schools as health promoting schools, promoting school development and supporting the well-being of teachers.

My career has focused on teacher and leadership development and working in the field of educational change. It has involved me in coming to understand some of the forces and pressures faced by teachers in public schools that serve working class communities, within the context of dramatic social and political change. Through this work and through my own struggles as a teacher, I have come to appreciate and understand more deeply the working life and pressures teachers face in Southern African schools. I have witnessed some of the challenges teachers have to confront in implementing educational reforms within a context of limited resources and support.

³ The term public school refers to a State funded institution also known as an ordinary public or State school.

⁴ Namibia was known as South West Africa up to the end of March 1990, when the country gained independence from South African occupation. I taught and worked in Namibia from 1986 to mid-1993.

I have also been fascinated by the way in which teachers grapple with the multiple demands of their family and professional lives, as they strive to develop both personally and professionally.

I have seen the role school principals can play in creating environments in which learners and teachers grow and flourish. In my own experience as a novice teacher in a small school that served a working class community, my principal was the key person I needed to draw on for support to enable my well-being.

My interest in the area of teacher well-being has grown out of working in and reflecting on my experiences in these school contexts, as well as through my involvement in a project focused on teacher well-being⁵. In poorly functioning schools and in the schools where I viewed great improvements, I felt that the key that seemed to hold the potential for school improvement and transformation, was the role played by the broader school leadership and the principal in acknowledging teachers and in supporting them to work together to address the educational challenges they confronted.

My initial hunch was that there was a relationship between how the principal exercised leadership, and the well-being of teachers and the school as a whole. I felt that the sense of identity and empowerment teachers had, and their willingness and motivation to tackle the daily challenges that faced them, was related to the way in which the principal exercised power and leadership. The notion of leadership in these instances were related to the principal's role in allocating resources, making decisions, building the identity and culture of the school, supporting collegial relationships and in accessing external support.

The seeds of my research study were born from the need to explore this relationship in greater depth. I wanted to understand what the term 'well-being' meant to teachers, and how teachers perceived the principal as supporting their well-being. Furthermore I wanted to understand if principals who worked in schools that service a predominantly working class community, had to play a greater role in supporting the bio-psycho-social and educational needs of teachers to enable their well-being. Here I was making the assumption that a principal in a middle-class

⁵ The Teacher Well-Being Project is collaboration between the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the Teacher In-Service Project (TIP). Between 2010 and 2012 I was employed as the project manager.

school may have greater access to privately funded support services for teachers and learners, and thus the nature of their support role to teachers would be different.

I assumed that teachers in working class public schools would have to address the needs of a greater number of learners with bio-psycho-social and educational needs compared with teachers in middle-class schools. My experience of working in schools showed that working class schools have less financial ability to buy in additional support for learners, in order to take some of the responsibility off the shoulders of teachers. Parents/guardians in these schools also have fewer resources to access additional learning or other forms of support for their children. I therefore also assumed that teachers in these schools would have a greater need for direct support from the principal to address the additional bio-psycho-social and educational support needs of learners, as well as a level of individual support to enable them to cope with the range of educational and support related demands of their jobs.

In this section I have sketched the development of my own interest in researching the well-being of teachers. Below I provide my rationale and motivation for researching this aspect by highlighting the need for greater levels of teacher support within the South African educational context and drawing on related local and international literature in this field. In the final section of this chapter I highlight my research aims and objectives.

1.3 Contextual Background and Rationale

This section provides a contextual background to my study by locating it within the broader reality of the current South African education system. It begins by providing some general statistics and trends related to South African schools and the daily realities of teachers. Key changes within the South African educational context over the last fifteen years are described, as well as their influence on teacher well-being. It highlights the need to strengthen the well-being of teachers, identifies a number of current policy and support initiatives and contextualizes the need for further research in this area.

In order to provide a background to my case study school, this section concludes by briefly describing the general roles and responsibilities of teachers and school principals, as well as differences within rural and urban primary schools.

In section 1.4 an overview of my reading of relevant literature is given in order to contextualise my study, highlight some of the broad trends and justify the need for my research focus and methodology.⁶

1.3.1 General statistics and trends related to the South African schooling context and the day-to-day realities of teachers. According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE), there were 25 851 ordinary public schools in South Africa in 2011, comprising:

- 14 339 primary schools, with 5 980 939 learners and 187 065 educators;
- 6 407 secondary schools, with 3 966 838 learners and 146 434 educators; and
- 5 105 combined and intermediate schools, with 2 340 217 learners and 87 109 educators. (DBE, 2013, p. 3).

Data obtained from the survey conducted by the DBE on the tenth school day in 2012 (DBE, 2013), shows there were a total of 425 167 teachers supporting the educational needs of 12 428 069 learners in 25 826 ordinary public and independent schools. In the Western Cape Province in 2012 there were 1 038 019 learners being taught by 36 389 teachers in 1643 ordinary public schools.

In 2011, the national average pupil to teacher ratio⁷ in ordinary public schools in the country was 29.2:1. This ranged from 27.4:1 in the Free State Province to 30.9:1 in the Northern Cape Province, (DBE, 2013, p. 6). These statistics did not however provide a breakdown of the average learner to educator (LER) per grade. The LER ratio in 2012 for ordinary public schools was 32.3 (DBE, 2012). The highest national proportion of learners was in the foundation phase (32%). This was followed by 22.9% of learners in the intermediate phase and 24.0% in the senior phase (DBE, 2012, pp. 1-4).

Structural inequalities within schools and between provinces continue to influence levels of resource provisioning in schools. Graeme Hosken, in a recent South African newspaper article, “Education system a ‘national disgrace’” (2012, p. 5), highlights the relationship between poor provincial pass rates and infrastructure and equipment in South African schools. In this article, the Western Cape and Gauteng provinces are identified as having the highest pass rates in final matric

⁶ Within the tradition of a Classic Grounded Theory (CGT) approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 2009, 2012); my engagement with the literature was done after my initial data collection and analysis, and the development of a grounded theory, and not as a basis for hypothesis testing or the formulation of a theoretical framework, as in more traditional research studies.

⁷ The DBE refers to this as the learner to educator ration or (LER).

examinations and a greater level of infrastructural support and resources, whilst the other provinces show poorer results and levels of infrastructural support and resourcing. This article gives an indication of some of the contextual stressors South African teachers have to contend with working in different provinces and different types of schools. Teachers may teach in public or privately funded schools in any of the nine provinces in South Africa. Most teachers teach in either urban or rural public primary schools.

According to recent research (Arends, 2008; Diko, 2009a & 2009b; Erasmus & Mda, 2008; Phurutse & Arends, 2009) current levels of teacher supply are able to meet the demands of the educational system, however there is concern about retaining teachers in the teaching profession once they have been qualified. The section below highlights some of the factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers in South African public schools.

1.3.2 Key changes within the South African educational context over the last fifteen years and their influence on teacher well-being. A rapid period of educational reform at a school and systems level began just after the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994. Changes in government and national policy began the process of transition from an apartheid state to a new non-racial democracy.

As a consequence teachers have had to cope with numbers of policy and curricular changes. Many of the new policies have promoted increased levels of teacher support and the provision of resources. Schools and teachers have been required to keep pace with these changes and to ensure policy implementation. The amount and pace of change have impacted negatively on the general well-being of teachers, who have experienced what is commonly termed as innovation overload or “innovation shock” (Paterson & Fataar, 2007, p. 6).

The table below adapted from (Chisholm, 2004) gives a summary of some of the key policy changes and waves of educational reform in South Africa since 1994.

Table 1.1: Summary of Key Policy Changes and Waves of Educational Reform

Phases in Educational Policy Reform	Education Policy Change
<p>1994-2004 National Policy reform and a shift towards school based management</p>	<p>South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) -School based Management and Governance. (DoE, 1996). Curriculum 2005 (DoE, 1997) -Outcomes based curriculum. Abolition of corporal punishment. Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education, Building and Inclusive Education and Training System. (DoE, 2001c). -Inclusion of learners with barriers to learning in mainstream schools and the support for special needs education. Revised National Curriculum Statement (DoE, 2000c, 2001a, 2001b). Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000a): -Defining the educational, community and pastoral roles of teachers.</p>
<p>2004-2015 Testing and Quality Management</p>	<p>National policy on whole school evaluation (DoE, 2001d). -Systemic testing introduced at a grade 3 and 6 level. Review of the Implementation of National Curriculum Statement 2009: teachers expecting a range of curricular reforms to follow. (DoE, 2009). Curriculum and Assessment Policy (DBE, 2011). Integrated School Health Policy (DoH, 2011) Conceptual Framework for Care and Support of Teaching and Learning (DBE & MIET, 2011).</p>

In addition to a number of educational policy changes, teachers and schools have also experienced changes at a structural level. The 18 previously racially divided education departments were amalgamated into one National Department of Education. Nine new provincial departments of education were created. In addition to this context of system wide restructuring and reform, teachers have experienced teacher rationalization and redeployment.

Waves of curricular reform since 1994 have been accompanied by the retraining of teachers. The most recent revision to curriculum policy has been through the introduction of the new Curriculum and Assessment policy also known by its acronym CAPS (DBE, 2011). While this recent curriculum policy change has sought to reduce the administrative and assessment load on teachers, its implementation require teachers to spend time during school holidays in retraining programmes (DoE, 2009, p. 8).

All teachers and schools are under increased pressure to show improvements in key performance areas and to meet annual performance targets through Annual

National Assessment tests (ANA), as well as through national level systemic testing in certain grades. In South African schools the need to raise standards in mathematics, science and languages has become a priority. Research has shown that at an international level South African learners perform poorly in relation to those in other countries (Clark, 2013; Long & Zimmerman, 2009; Taylor, Muller & Vinjevold, 2003). Improving learner, teacher and school performance has become a focus of the DBE's action plans for 2014 (DBE, 2010).

Most schools have faced the challenge of accessing appropriate and effective support from their district based support teams in assisting them to manage change and implement policy. The research report of the Task Team (for the review of the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (2009) shows that support to most schools by district officials has generally been limited and teachers have had to rely on colleagues and the leadership in their schools for guidance (DoE, 2009).

Although all teachers have had to cope with change since 1994, teachers in poorly resourced schools have had to contend with additional challenges that have influenced their ability to cope.

1.3.3 Factors placing increased stress on teachers in working class primary schools. This section highlights a number of the day-to-day challenges faced by teachers in working class public primary schools. These include, high learner educator ratios; the limited ability of schools to buy in additional support or teaching staff; high levels of pastoral care and learning support needs; limited parental/guardian involvement; and the influence of poverty, disease and crime (Chisholm, 2004).

High learner and educator ratios increase teacher job demands. LERs in excess of 32 pupils, particularly in the case for those teachers teaching the Foundation Phase (FP) or Intermediate Phase (IP), negatively influence teacher well-being levels (Collett, Chisulo, & Buchler, 2013). In this context the educative as well as administrative, pastoral and learning support roles for teachers remain high. This is despite changes to the curriculum assessment expectations which were reduced with the introduction of CAPS, (DBE, 2011).

The LERs remain high in many rural and urban working class primary schools due to a number of related factors, namely: policy in relation to public funding of schools; compulsory basic education until grade 10; poor and uneven

access to schools in rural areas; the impact of poverty and unemployment on schools and schooling; poor payment of school fees and the lack of availability of schools and classrooms in urban areas as a result of rural to urban migration.

The poor funding base of schools limits access to additional staff posts. Most poor public schools are not able to hire additional contract teachers through governing body posts in order to reduce their LER. These schools are referred to as quintile 1 to 3 schools or “no fee paying schools”⁸. These schools do not charge a user fee, nor are they able to generate much additional funding from the broader school community. As a result their ability to pay for privately funded support providers to assist the needs of learners and teachers is limited.

Increased educative and pastoral care roles place additional pressure on teachers. On a daily basis, classroom teachers carry an increased responsibility in dealing with both the educational and health related concerns of their school communities and have multiple roles to fulfill (Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson & Pillay, 2000, Theron, 2007 & 2009). The research by Harley et al., (2000) showed that resourcing levels at schools influenced the roles and responsibilities allocated to teachers and how pastoral care responsibilities were able to be addressed by specialist counselors and not teachers.

Poor levels of parental/guardian involvement in the education of children due to a range of economic, social and personal circumstances places an increased responsibility on teachers to address both learning and pastoral care needs (Collett et al., 2013; Johnson, 2005; Schulze & Steyn, 2007).

High levels of poverty, unemployment and illness in many school communities add to the daily stressors placed on teachers and schools. In an article published in the Sunday Independent in October 2012, a well-known South African educationalist Graham Bloch, writing about the central role of teachers in the struggle for quality education in South Africa, contends that:

⁸ All public schools in South Africa receive a state subsidy in accordance with the estimated poverty quintile of the parents or guardians who support children at the school. The quintile range is from quintile 1 schools representing school at which the parents are not charged school fees, “no fee paying schools” to quintile 5 schools in which the parent/guardian population is regarded as having a middle income level. A quintile 1 school would get a greater level of State subsidy to cover maintenance and development costs than a quintile 5 school. In a quintile 5 school the SGB can set the school fees in consultation with the parent community. A quintile 5 school would receive less of a subsidy per child from the State coffers. (WCED, 1999).

Being a teacher is one of the most difficult professions. You have to be a policeman, social worker, career and public relations agent, even before you teach subject knowledge. All this with vast inequalities. Rural roads are poor, the health of kids in class is mostly compromised. Classrooms may be mud structures, staffrooms barely exist. There are few libraries or laboratories, yet pupils must be prepared to be scientists and engineers. Sports-fields and cultural activities barely exist (Bloch, 2012).

The preliminary findings from a qualitative study of four primary schools in the Teacher Well-Being project in the Western Cape (Collett et al., 2013), show that in school contexts such as in rural and urban public schools (situated in communities where levels of unemployment and poverty are high), access to external support services for both teachers and learners is low or inadequate. Research findings showed that well-being of teachers in these four primary schools was negatively affected by poor parental support and high levels of poverty, poor and inadequate physical infrastructure, vandalism and poor safety, increased pressures on teachers to take on the responsibility for improved learner performance, as well as their biological, psychological and social well-being. These daily pressures were found to increase the potential for teacher demotivation, burnout and the poor retention of teachers in the profession.

The influence of the HIV and AIDS pandemic on teachers and schools has had a great influence on both the personal level of well-being of teachers, as well as the additional support they have been required to provide to learners and their families (Giese, Meintjes, & Proudlock, 2002). An HSRC study by Peltzer, Shisana, Udjo, Wilson, and Rehle, (2005, p. 112) indicated that 12.7% of South African teachers were HIV positive. This was higher than the national average of 11.0% and the highest prevalence rates were found in the 24-34 year age group.

A number of research studies undertaken in the area of HIV and AIDS and teacher support (Coombe, 2002 & 2004; Peltzer et al., 2005; Theron, 2007 & 2009;) highlight the pressures teachers are under in undertaking the responsibility of both their educational and pastoral and community role, in contexts where support is limited.

Based on the findings from her own studies on the impact of HIV and AIDS in South African schools, Theron (2009) recommends the following broad areas of teacher support needing strengthening: “health education/health promotion, social sector support, teaching and learning support, support for educator wellness,

legislation and policies, and care and support for HIV–infected/affected learners” (ibid, p. 237).

1.3.4 Current initiatives related to increasing capacity for teacher well-being within the system. Teachers and schools are identified in the media and in policies supporting health and education as key agents in ensuring social and economic transformation in South Africa. One can argue that supporting and maintaining the mental and emotional well-being of teachers is fundamental to supporting the improved quality of education and the achievement of the global commitment to the Education for All objectives by 2015 (UNESCO & EI-EFAIDS 2007). However based on my review of the literature the mental health of teachers and in particular teachers working in environments of high risk has had little attention.

The report of the Task Team (DoE, 2009) for the Review of the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement, presented to the Minister of Education in South Africa Ms. Angela Motshekga, in September 2009 (DoE), notes “an overwhelming sense of the overall commitment of teachers across the country to try and improve learner performance” (DoE, Task Team 2009, p. 6), but at the same time points out the limited preparation and support teachers have at a systemic level to deal with the challenges they face.

Currently very little support to address the well-being of teachers is provided by most educational districts or school communities other than access to on-line counseling (Collett et al., 2013; Collett, Sonn, Hofmeester & Somnath, 2012). Similarly a study on resiliency in schools in the Western Cape revealed that there was “very little support available to teachers to cope with the demands of their jobs and the demands of learners” (Johnson 2005, p. iv). Job satisfaction is identified as a major challenge in attracting and retaining quality educators (ELRC 2005a; Paterson & Arends, 2009; Phurutse & Arends; 2009; Xaba, 2003). These findings show a gap in the relationship between well intentioned policy and the experience of teachers when seeking support and reinforce findings by Theron (2009) that show that “recommended support has not translated into practice” (ibid, p. 237).

Current policy support for Teacher Well-being. The Departments of Health and Education have endorsed the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) School Global Health Initiative’s (1995) commitment towards schools as a key

setting for the promotion of health. This commitment is reflected in the preface to the current Integrated School Health Policy (DoH, 2011). Since 1999 the Departments of Health and Education have worked together to support the implementation of school health promotion programmes such immunization, school feeding schemes, primary health care education and improvement in hygiene and sanitation.

Current policy in the form of White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education (DoE, 2001c) and the Draft Framework on Health and Wellness (DoE, 2006) as well as the Integrated School Health Policy (DoH, 2011) promote the idea of schools as health promoting centers.

Although one could argue that many policy directives in South Africa either directly or indirectly support educator well-being, the implementation of policy has been poor and a focus on the well-being needs of teachers limited. Within the implementation of a Health Promoting Schools agenda in South Africa, there has been a strong focus on learner support. However the focus on teacher well-being has been very limited. The challenge still remains one of ensuring that schools function as caring and supportive environments to enable the well-being of the whole school community.

Since 2011 the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has shown its commitment to endorse the conceptual framework on the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) (DBE & MIET, 2011), and to promote its implementation at a national level. This initiative together with the DBE's commitment to supporting the implementation of the Integrated School Health Policy (DoH, 2011) holds the promise of promoting and supporting the well-being of both the learners and teachers in the schools.

Support for Teacher Well-Being by Teacher Unions. Teacher unions such as the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the National Association of Professional Teachers of South Africa (NAPTOSA) have played a role in raising awareness in their membership of key policies and policy implementation, as well as lobbying for further research, training and policy development in the areas of teacher support and conditions of service. SADTU has played a key role in raising member awareness of the importance of teacher well-

being as well as through resolutions tabled at its May 2012 policy conference (SADTU, 2008; SADTU, 2012).

Currently teacher union members play an active role on all key provincial and national decision making structures related to the DBE and the Department of Labour where policies to improve service conditions for teachers are developed.

Support for Teacher Well-Being at the School Level. The formal leadership of the school is mandated by the South African Schools Act (DoE, 1996) to support the development of the staff, learners and school as a whole. Accordingly the School Governing Body (SGB) and School Management Team (SMT) are required to support the implementation of policy and to ensure the effective functioning of the school. Effective school management includes attention to all aspects of the school as an organisation, namely the school's vision and identity; strategy, structures and procedures, technical support, human resources, school culture as well as aspects of leadership, management and governance and building the relationship with the external environment (Davidoff & Lazarus, 1996).

The SMT should ensure policy implementation and the effective functioning of the Institutional Level Support Team (ILST) or Teacher Support Team (TST). The functioning of these sub-committees and structures in ensuring the effective implementation of policies related to learner and teacher support remains a challenge in most schools and at a systemic level.

Within the context of the impact of HIV and AIDS on schools, Theron (2009, p. 238) recommends that all stakeholders need to “vigilantly negotiate for and encourage access to supportive resources at all levels of educators’ ecosystems.”

This section has highlighted some of the challenges faced in the implementation of policy to support the well-being of teachers. A number of aspects related to the changing education policy context teachers have experienced over the last fifteen years have been described. The section below describes the general duties of teachers and school leaders as set out in key policy documents. The contextual information in this section serves as a lens through which to understand and interpret the findings of this study.

1.3.5 General roles and responsibilities of teachers and school principals. All teachers in South African public schools have their job descriptions defined by resolutions agreed to between teacher unions, professional bodies and the

State. These professional responsibilities are specified in a number of national policies that guide and regulate the service conditions and code of ethics of the teaching profession, namely the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, (DoE, 1996); the Employment of Educator Act, No. 76 of 1998 (DoE, 2003), and the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000).

Accordingly an educator in a public school in a post level 1 job has the following key roles and responsibilities. “To engage in class teaching, including the academic, administrative, educational and disciplinary aspects and to organise extra and co-curricular activities so as to ensure that the education of learners is promoted in a proper manner” (ELRC, 1998, p. 11). Core duties and responsibilities of the job are specified as teaching, extra and co-curricular responsibilities, administrative, interaction with stake-holders, and communication. Under each of these areas of duty there are a number of specified responsibilities.

A beginner teacher will be expected to be at work for a minimum of a 7 hour day, with a working day consisting of formal contact hours starting between 7:30 and 8:00 am and ending at 15:00. After 15h00 this teacher should be involved in a number of activities related to meetings with colleagues, parents or learners; preparation and administrative activities, professional development and extra or co-curricular activities. On average a post level one teacher can be expected to work for at least seven hours per day and 35 hours per week.

In 2013 a full-time post level one teacher with between 0 and 5 years of experience with a three year teacher qualification can expect to earn between R61, 978 and R215,507 per annum. The median is R133,756 which 50% of teachers earn. (Retrieved 11, June 2013,

from:http://www.payscale.com/research/ZA/Job=primary_school_teacher/salary).

Generally all teachers in South African public schools are expected to participate both in the development and education of learners and in the development of the school, as well as the broader community which it serves. Under the Institutional Quality Management System (IQMS) (DoE, 2001d) within which schools are rated annually, both staff and management have to take the responsibility of ensuring standards are maintained within the nine key performance areas, namely: Basic Functionality, Leadership and Management, Governance, Teaching and Learning and Educators’ Development, Curriculum, Learner achievement, Safety,

Security and Discipline, Infra-structure and Parent and Community Relationships (DoE, 2001d).

School principal duties. According to the South African Schools Act, 1996, the principal is the head teacher or school manager who is placed in a position of authority in relation to the school community and has the mandated power to execute leadership (DoE, SASA, 1996). The principal is accountable to the staff, the SGB and to the education department.

The school principal is responsible for the following aspects in order to support teachers and the general functioning of schools (ELRC, 1998, pp. 4-5):

General Duties:

Professional management of the school.

- Give proper instructions and guidelines for timetabling, admission and placement of learners.
- Keep school records and accounts.
- Keep a record of all important school events.
- Make regular inspection of the school to ensure that resources and equipment are used properly and that discipline is maintained.
- Ensure that staff are notified of Departmental circulars.
- Handle all correspondence.

Personnel:

- Provide professional leadership.
- Guide, supervise and offer professional advice.
- Ensure that workloads are equitably distributed.
- Be responsible for staff development and training both school-based, school focused and externally directed, and to assist educators, particularly new educators and inexperienced educators, in developing and achieving educational objectives.
- Participate in appraisal processes.
- Ensure that all evaluation/forms of assessment conducted in the school are properly and efficiently organized (ELRC, 1998, pp. 4-5).

The realities in different school contexts, as well as the organisational culture of schools play a role in determining the extent of the individual roles and responsibilities allocated to school principals and teachers.

1.3.6 Similarities and differences in urban and rural primary school contexts. Both urban and rural public primary schools teachers may face similar contexts in terms of the curriculum they teach, their daily routine and changes in learner attendance due to migrant or seasonal labour demands. However urban and rural schools may also differ in relation a number of factors, such as the type of school, its size and location, the learner and parent/guardian population it serves and the broader community and a support system the school is located in. The structural inequalities between schools have an influence on the environmental conditions teachers work in. These factors all play a role in promoting or constraining the well-being of teachers.

Similarities in Rural and Urban Primary Schools. A South African public primary schools typically offers classes from Grade one to Grade seven. In some but not all primary schools a grade R or “readiness” year has been introduced to support learners to strengthen their foundations for learning.

There are a range of types and sizes of primary schools, each with its own specific opportunities and challenges for teachers. Primary schools differ from high schools to the extent that teachers specifically in the lower grades of primary schools (Foundation Phase) will teach all or most subjects to a single class. From Grades 4 till 7 most teachers in primary schools will do a level of subject specific teaching in a number of classes.

In primary schools teachers tend to have a closer collegial culture and pastoral care role than in high schools, due to the size of schools and the dependency needs of learners. Generally the number of learners in the lower years of primary schools is larger with numbers dropping in the senior phase (DBE, 2013). The majority of teachers in primary schools are women.

Compulsory testing of Grades 3 and 6 through national systemic testing as well as Annual National Assessment (ANA) of learners has had an impact on performance targets teachers are required to meet. In many primary schools teachers who teach these grades experience increased levels of stress as the curricular focus is

on teaching toward testing in order to support learners to perform better in their tests (Collett et al., 2013).

Urban Public Primary Schools. Teaching in urban primary schools exposes teachers to a number of contexts depending on the location of schools within cities or towns. Public school contexts range from schools that could be referred to as “ex model C” type establishments that have historically served more affluent white middle-class communities, to typical “township schools” serving black working-class communities.

In more affluent schools teachers can generally rely on a higher level of stability and resource provision from the parent/guardian community to supplement the curricular and resource base of these schools.

In urban schools learner populations move between schools due to a number of factors related to stability in home circumstances and changes made in the schools learners attend. Factors that place additional stress on schools in urban areas are the competition for learner placement between schools, and the movement of learners from previously disadvantaged or under resourced schools, to schools in more affluent areas.

A growing trend among parents in urban areas has been to place learners in primary schools offering English as the medium of instruction. As a result teachers are required to support the learning needs of learners with a variety of home languages and cultural backgrounds (both local and international), as well as levels of competence in English, depending on the area the school is located in. In urban areas the effects of poverty and violence directly impact on the school and the lives of teachers. In the Western Cape the influence of gang activity both within and outside of schools has resulted in the establishment of the Safe Schools Programme.

Urban schools may have greater access to a range of resources and support services than their rural counterparts. Thus teachers at urban schools can more easily draw on additional support from organisations and services outside of the school. They may also be in a better position to access contact with the school parent community, as well as have greater access to public transport and communication systems.

Rural Public Primary Schools. Rural public primary schools although exhibiting many of the characteristic of urban primary schools differ in that they

often have multi-grade classes, are smaller in size and have more limited access to external support services. They predominantly serve the local surrounding farming community and rural villages. Both teachers and learners face challenges with limitations in public transport and communication services. The learners population at these school tends to be less mobile that in some urban schools.

This section has provided a general description of some of the factors within the South African educational context and in the nature of primary schools that may influence teacher well-being. It serves as general context within which to understand some of the day-to-day experiences that shape the lives of teachers in the urban public primary school I have selected for my study. A detailed description of this school is provided in chapter four.

In the next section I engage with literature related to the area of teacher well-being in order to highlight some of the trends at a local and international level that influence the ability of teachers to cope with the demands of their jobs.

1.4 A Review of the Literature Related to Teacher Well-Being

The well-being of teachers is increasingly recognized as a key component of school development in the school effectiveness and school improvement literature (Dalin, 1994 & 1998; Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves and Fink, 2003). The link between health promotion in schools and school development is strongly emphasized by the World Health Organisation (1986), where the educational achievement levels of learners are related to their potential for economic productivity and improved quality of life. However Konu and Rimpelä (2002, p. 85) contend that, in practice, well-being in schools, “has not gained a central role in development programmes but is mainly seen as a subject separate from the comprehensive goal of schooling”. Within the South African context one could argue that this has indeed been the case.

Over the last fifteen years there has been an increase in the number of international (Baggaley, Sulwe, Chilala, & Mashambe, 1999; Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu, 2007; Gold & Roth, 1993; Grant & Campbell, 2007; Intercamhs, 2009; Kyriacou, 1985 & 1987; Milfont, Denny, Amerataung, Robinson & Merry, 2008; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012) and South African research studies, (Grant, Jasson, Lawrence, 2010; Hall, Altman, Nkululeko, Peltzer, & Zuma, 2005; Jackson, 2002; Jackson, Rothman & Van der Vijer, 2005; Montgomery, Mostert, & Jackson, 2005; Rothman, 2001 & 2003; Schulze & Steyn, 2007) related to a focus on

teacher stress, motivation, resilience and well-being. These studies show that the jobs of public service workers such as teachers, are characterized by high job demands and low levels of job control and support, within environments where job resources are often limited.

A reading of the literature shows that a number of studies have been undertaken in order to understand the dimensions related to the concept teacher well-being. These studies range along a mental health continuum from a focus on teacher stress and burnout to factors which promote resilience, motivation and well-being.

In studies related to the area of stress and burnout, Rothman (2003) points out that traditionally studies within the health and social sciences were characterised by a “pathogenic paradigm, i.e. an orientation toward the abnormal” (ibid, p. 16). In the last ten to fifteen years, with the influence of a positive psychology paradigm (Antonovsky, 1987 & 1996; Seligman, 2002; Strümpfer, 1990) and a preventative focus towards health (WHO, 1997 & 1999), there has been a trend away from a focus only a deficit model of health, to a focus also on those factors promoting health and well-being.

Many of the studies related to teacher well-being have sought to obtain or test empirical measures related to aspects of teacher stress and well-being Borg, Riding, & Falzon, 1991; Fernandes & de Rocha, 2009; Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Rothman, 2001; Schulze & Steyn; 2007), as well as developing and refining models of teacher well-being (Adams, 2001; Borg, Riding, 1991; Boyle, Borg, Falzon, & Baglioni, 1995; Jackson et al., 2005; Montgomery et al., 2005). In contrast to studies that have sought to obtain a measure of levels of teacher stress and motivation, or which have focused on factors which increase teacher burn-out, a growing body of research has begun to focus on understanding the factors which support the resilience of teachers and school leaders (Howard & Johnson 2004; Intercamhs, 2009; MacGilchrist, Meyers, & Reed, 2004; Steyn & Van Wyk, 1999; Sumsion, 2002 & 2004).

Fewer studies have focused on qualitative research related to understanding those factors which support and constrain teacher well-being from the perspective of teachers (Baggaley et al., 1999; Patterson, Collins, & Abbott, 2002; Paulse, 2005; Littleford, 2007; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012; Schultze & Steyn, 2007; Spratt, Schucksmith, Watson, & Phillip, 2006a & 2006b; Steyn & Van Wyk, 1999).

Studies related to a focus on the role of school leaders and leadership in schools and their influence on teacher well-being are very limited. I came across

eight South African studies (Collett, 2013; Dehaloo, 2011; Grant, Jasson, Lawrence, 2010; Marneweck, Bialobrzeska, Mhlang, & Mphisa, 2009; Schultze & Steyn, 2007; Singh, Manser, & Maestry, 2007; Steyn & Van Wyk, 1999; Tsvara, 2013) and eight relevant international studies, (Day et al., 2007; Littleford, 2007, Nguni, 2005; Patterson, 2001; Patterson et al., 2002; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012⁹; Spratt et al., 2006a & 2006b). Based on their research experience in the area of teacher stress in South African schools, Schulze & Steyn contend that “The role that senior management teams in schools can play in reducing stress among staff members cannot be overemphasised and has been overlooked as a research topic.” (2007, p. 705).

1.4.1 The importance of teacher well-being. Both the local and international studies I reviewed acknowledge that the job of being a teacher is a highly stressful occupation (Boyle, Borg, Falzon, & Baglioni, 1995; Chan, 2002; Dinham & Scott, 1996; Fernandes & de Rocha, 2009; Gold. & Roth, 1993; Holmes, 2005; Jackson, 2002; Kyriacou, 1987; Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985; Milfont, Denny, Amerataung, Robinson, & Merry, 2008; Montgomery et al., 2005; Patterson et al., 2002; Pienaar & van Wyk, 2006 Palmer, 1998; Salter Jones, 2012; Schultze & Steyn, 2007). In her book on teacher well-being, Elizabeth Holmes (2005) contends that “Teacher stress is a major problem. It damages lives, ends careers and affects teaching standards” (2005, Foreword).

These studies show a relationship between occupational stress and deteriorating physical and mental health of teachers. As an example, a comparative study by Astapov, Jehele, Maslov and Pronina (2001) of teachers in Russian and German schools, showed that both internal and external factors were identified as causing teacher stress, and the researchers found a relationship between nervous and mental tension and various chronic ailments. Studies on South African teachers (Jackson, 2002; Jackson et al., 2005; Montgomery et al., 2006; Schulze & Steyn, 2007; Tsvara, 2013; Van Zyl & Pietersen, 1999) and international studies (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu, 2007; Fernandes & de Rocha, 2009; Friedman, 1991; Galton & McBeath, 2008; Gibbs, 2007; Gold & Roth, 1993; Holmes, 2005; Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985; Milfont et al., 2008; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012; Spratt et al., 2006a; Theron, 2007 & 2009; Wang & Zhang, 2011) had the most significant

⁹ The research paper by Ellie Salter Jones in 2012 reports on the research done for her Ph.D. in 2010.

acknowledgment that the mental health and well-being of teachers is in need of greater attention and they recommend that strategies and policies be put in place to support this.

A number of studies (Littleford, 2007; Roffey, 2012; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012; Theron, 2007 & 2009) also recommend a focus on the well-being of teachers, in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and learning support in schools. Holmes (2005) argues that although the link between teacher well-being and learner success is obvious, “looking after teachers’ well-being should be honourable enough as a goal without needing to use improvements in pupil performance as an excuse for its priority” (ibid: Introduction). Hargreaves (1998) highlights the emotional practice of teaching and what this demands of teachers.

In the South African context a study on schools that work by Christie, Butler and Potterton (2007) found that an in-school factor that effect on learner achievement was good teachers. A study by Briner and Dewberry (2007) in the United Kingdom entitle shows a relationship between how teachers feel about their work and the performance of pupils. They contend that “if we want to improve school performance, we need to start paying attention to teacher well-being.” (2007, p. 4).

Supporting the well-being of teachers and retaining them in the teaching profession has been noted as a matter of concern in South Africa (Crouch & Lewin, 2002; Diko, 2009a; Hall, Altman, Nkomo, Peltzer, & Zuma, 2005; Peltzer et al., 2005; Phurutse & Arends, 2009) and internationally (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Day et al., 2007; Galton & McBeath, 2008; Gold & Roth, 1993). Within the South African and Southern African context numerous studies have also noted the increased levels of personal and professional stress teachers face in dealing with the impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic (Baggaley et al., 1999; Hall et al., 2005; Peltzer et al., 2005; Theron, 2007 & 2009; UNESCO & EI-AIDS, 2007).

1.4.2 A brief review of factors affecting teacher well-being.

International and local research studies identify a range of stressors within teaching and the associated contextual conditions teachers teach in. These include high job demands, socio-economic factors; lack of social support, limited job resources; changing nature of the job; complex social interactions, innovation overload; poor school climate and conditions; inadequate leadership; limited access to support services and the difficulties teacher have in balancing their work and home lives

(Day et al.; 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Dehaloo, 2011; Jackson et al., 2005; Littleford, 2007; Montgomery et al., 2005; Pozo-Muñoz; Salvador-Ferrer; Alonso-Morillejo, & Martos-Mendez, 2008; Russell, Aldetmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012; Spratt et al., 2006a & 2006b; Tsvara, 2013; Wang & Zhang, 2011).

A South African study on stressors in the professional lives of secondary school teachers, found that the lack of involvement of parents, poor learner motivation and negative attitudes, poor discipline as well as numerous changes within the educational context have a negative influence on teacher stress levels (Schulze & Steyn, 2007).

While contextual factors or objective variables may influence teacher well-being levels, a number of subjective and professional variables such as the type of teacher, gender, personality, number of years in the teaching profession or health may also affect well-being levels (Day et al., 2007; Guglielmi & Tatrow; 1998). In their study on a sample of South African teachers Schulze and Steyn (2007), found a lack of professional confidence, as well as age and gender influenced stress levels. They found that women teachers and teachers with between six and fifteen years of teaching experience were the most vulnerable. Similarly the study by Day et al., (2007) found that the life phase of teachers influenced their well-being and ability to cope with personal and situational demands.

A number of studies (Baggaley et al., 1999; Fernandes and de Rocha, 2009; Schultze & Steyn, 2007; Wang & Zhang, 2011) highlight the importance of the influence of gender on well-being. They found that women teachers had greater levels of stress in relation to balancing work and home related demands and in relation to their pastoral care role in schools. Fernandes and de Rocha make the point that:

Another factor that must be considered is that the higher number of women in the teaching profession could have a negative effect on these workers, owing to the extended workday that includes both professional and domestic activities. This situation usually provokes an emotional division between the working demands and the family needs, causing increased feelings of guilt in these professionals and leading to a higher predisposition to the onset of diseases, which contributes to greater psychological demand at work. (2009, p. 18).

Subjective factors such as family life, personality, values, gender, health and social support may influence the well-being levels of teachers. These factors interact with school and contextual environmental factors in affecting teacher well-being.

Research in Brazilian schools shows that the most stressful aspects of a teacher's work are psychologically demanding tasks which include:

repetitive work, intense concentration on a same task for an extended period, excessive work load, hectic work pace, unfinished tasks, insufficient time to complete tasks, lack of interest on the part of work colleagues, exposure to hostility, conflicts with work colleagues and with students' families, in addition to the absence of a democratic process in the school environment. (Fernandes & de Rocha, 2009, p.18).

According to Gold and Roth, the teaching profession is characterized by three increasingly negative conditions, namely “the prevalence and influence of stress, the declining morale of teachers, and the number of teachers leaving or intending leaving the profession” (1993, p. 2). Wherever teachers may be located in the world, the nature of their jobs has undergone a number of changes within the last twenty years (Day et al., 2007; Fernandes & de Rocha, 2009; Gold & Roth, 1993) which have resulted in greater teacher role expectations.

Some of the general trends that have influenced these change have been macro forces of globalization; advances in technology; the intensification of teacher workload; compulsory schooling policies; increases in the number of children attending schools; performance management; a focus on teacher professional development and training; outcomes based curricular; increased levels of public involvement and parent participation in schooling as well as a greater role of teachers in addressing a range of learner support needs. While some of these changes have dramatically improved conditions in schools and in the lives of teachers, greater demands have also been placed on teachers to increase their workload and attain increasingly competitive performance standards.

A recent research study by Day et al., (2007) in English schools acknowledges that work in schools in social and economically disadvantaged contexts is exacting and they note that, “It is this group of teachers, working in especially challenging circumstances, that may be said to be at greater risk of, sooner or later, losing their motivation and commitment to their work”, and who they concede “must be of concern in terms of the focus upon raising the quality of teaching and learning and achievement and the broader school improvement agenda”

(p.154). In the Southern African context these findings are echoed in the research by Baggaley et al., (1999) and Theron (2009) in contexts with high poverty and HIV and AIDS levels.

The findings of an international survey of principals concerning emotional and mental well-being in schools (Intercamhs 2009) found that stress, anxiety and depression among staff are major emotional, mental health and well-being related issues. This study found that principals of schools serving lower income families reported poorer emotional and mental health and well-being among learners and staff across a range of issues. Research in American schools by Gold and Roth (1993) shows that accumulated stress can lead to some of the most committed and dedicated teachers resigning.

In the Brazilian context, Fernandes and de Rocha (2009) argue that due to the macro forces of globalization and the influence of capitalist practices, the occupation of teachers is changing. Structural changes they contend have influenced changes in the demands on teachers. They contend that:

This new worldwide demand has led to negative consequences, such as precarious working conditions, intensified professional activities, and increased exposure to health risk factors, which, in turn, has resulted in social exclusion and a progressive decline in health conditions. Teachers have been increasingly presented with significant occupational health problems. They have been assigned an increasing number of activities, which exceed those traditionally allocated to this profession (Fernandes & de Rocha, 2009, p. 16).

Fernandes and de Rocha (2009) provide the following characterization of the teaching profession in Brazilian public schools:

The teaching profession is characterized by overcrowded classrooms, the presence of unhealthy factors and the structural inadequacy of the institutions. When added to the increased workload, these deficiencies may cause discomfort and dysfunction. They stem from the lack of rest breaks, a situation that contributes to high absenteeism and job abandonment. The work environment and psychosocial factors have been considered largely responsible for the health problems observed in teachers (p.16).

Research studies on teaching conditions in South African public schools (Hall et al., 2008; Jackson et al., 2005, Marneweck et al., 2009; Montgomery et al., 2005; Phurutse & Arends, 2009; Schulze & Steyn, 2007; Theron, 2007; Tsvara, 2013) show similar school characteristics. However in the South African context the influence of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and structural inequalities between schools

due to the historical legacy of apartheid exacerbate both the stressors teachers deal with, as well as highlight the inequalities between schools serving either working class or middle-class communities.

Theron's research points out the impact of the multiple roles teachers play in these contexts, she contends that "many educators do more than teach their affected learners: they nurture, counsel, aid, support and feed them" (2009, p. 232). She goes on to note that many educators are tired and distressed by the multiple roles they are required to play (2009).

HIV and AIDS impacts greatly on teacher well-being and the general functionality of schools, as well as the provision of quality education. A national South African study by Peltzer et al., (2005) estimated that approximately 4,000 teachers a year are lost to the disease and that 10,000 teachers were in need of immediate antiretroviral treatment or else they would develop full-blown AIDS. Within the literature on mental health and mental health promotion, the importance of providing support at a personal, school and systems level is identified as necessary to build protective factors and enhance resilience and well-being of teachers in HIV and AIDS affected context such as South Africa (Johnson, 2005; Theron, 2009).

1.4.3 Strengthening support for teacher well-being. Dave Pinchuck, a South African educational psychologist, advocates the need for a system located at school and district level to support teachers emotionally. He points to the role of social and environmental factors in deepening teacher stress and dampening morale, and notes with concern that teachers are becoming, "less effective as teachers, less in control, less confident, and less skilled with handling learner and behaviour difficulties in the classroom" (Pinchuck, 2007, p. 2).

According to the research literature reviewed (Day et al., 2007; Evans 2001; Friedman, 1991; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Jackson, 2002; Schulze & Steyn, 2007; Webb, Vulliamy, Sarja, Hämäläinen, & Poikonen, 2007) school climate and culture have a big influence on the job satisfaction of teachers and the school administrator or principal is identified as a key figure in developing a positive school climate. The key role of the school management team (SMT) in providing both professional and personal support has also been identified in a number of studies (Christie, 1998 & 2001; Marneweck et al., 2009; Salter Jones 2012; Schulze & Steyn, 2007; Spratt et al., 2006a; Theron, 2007, Tsvara; 2013) as important to help teachers cope with the

stressors they face. Adams (2001) recommends that school leader can help alleviate the influence of a number of external stressors on teachers, as well as provide them with opportunities for individual support and monitoring of their personal levels of well-being.

Adams (2001) in her proposal of causal model of vocational teacher stress, found that internal conditions had a greater influence than external conditions in determining the well-being of teaches. While Day et al., (2007) in their VITAE research study of factors supporting teacher resilience in English schools found that the interaction between the personal, professional and situated dimensions of teachers lives influences levels of teacher resilience. Similarly a study by Tsvara (2013) on schools in South Africa identified personal, professional and organisational dimensions related to teacher job satisfaction.

A review of the literature shows that both internal and external or systems level conditions have been shown to influence the well-being levels of teachers. It is also evident that levels of teacher well-being fluctuate over time in relation to changing conditions in teachers' personal lives, as well as in relation to the school and broader policy and contextual environments teachers are situated in.

A common feature in all the international and local research I read was the acknowledgement of the stressful nature of teaching and the need to increase systems of teacher support. These studies also point to the key role of the leadership in schools in assisting teachers to cope.

1.5 The Value and Contribution of This Study

Whereas in the international and South African literature reviewed for this study I came across a number of studies focusing on teacher well-being, I found only a few qualitative studies that specifically focused on researching the concept of teacher well-being from the perspective of teachers (Day et al., 2007; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Littleford, 2007; Nguni, 2005; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones 2012; Tsvara, 2013). Within the South African context the study by Tsvara examines the relationship between the role of school leaders and job satisfaction. The Tanzanian study by Nguni (2005) examines the effects of transformational leadership on teacher job satisfaction, organisational commitment and organisational citizenship. The American study by Littleford (2007) was the only grounded theory study I found that related specifically to the role of the principal in promoting teacher motivation.

A review of the bodies of literature in the fields of educational leadership, health promoting schools and school development, indicates that the area of teacher well-being is an under-researched field. Within these bodies of literature, research exploring the role of the school leader in enhancing teacher well-being is very limited.

This study although limited in scope to a single case study school, is unique in that it proposes a grounded theory based on teacher perceptions on how they understand the term teacher well-being. In addition it proposes how the school principal could enhance the well-being of teachers in a primary school situated in challenging conditions. Ngcobo and Tickly (2010) in a review of literature on effective school leadership note that “there is a shortage of evidence about what constitutes effective leadership particularly in the most disadvantaged and difficult delivery contexts” (p. 203).

This study thus makes a contribution to the limited body of research in the area of teacher well-being, health promoting schools and school leadership by firstly proposing a grounded theory based on how teachers in a South African urban primary school understand the term teacher well-being and how they experience the principal as supporting their well-being. Secondly this research hopes to inform the leadership practices in public schools and add to the body of knowledge related to health promotion in schools and organizations. Thirdly the findings aim to inform the training and development programmes of school leaders and teachers. Fourthly it aims to add to the growing number of qualitative studies using a grounded theory research approach. In my final chapter I reflect in more depth on the contribution which this study makes.

1.6 Specification of Concepts

A number of key concepts related to well-being and leadership will be used in this study. In the literature these concepts are defined in different ways. I provide the following working definitions of these concepts.

1.6.1 Well-being. In the literature teacher mental health is often framed in deficit terms with a focus on teacher stress, burnout and lack of motivation. I have chosen to orient my study within a positive psychology paradigm (Seligman, 2002) that places an emphasis on working from an assets or strengths base, in order to understand and promote well-being. The following definition of well-being by Bird

and Saltmann (2011) will be used as an initial guide to inform my thinking about well-being. However one of the aims of this study is to find out how teachers understand this concept and then to engage with what the literature says in order to develop a grounded theory about what well-being means from the perspective of teachers.

It is an holistic concept which embraces the emotional, physical, spiritual, social and cognitive dimensions to development and emerges when a range of feelings are combined and balanced. Well-being is dynamic and changeable, enacted differently in varying cultures and is about feeling and functioning well. In broad terms, wellbeing is the state of being flowing from the dynamic integration of a broad range of personal, social and experiential factors. It is the result of beliefs, manifested in values, given expression in skills, and shared through relationships. It is both an outcome and an input into the pedagogical components of the teaching and learning environment (Bird & Saltmann, 2011, p. 145).

Seligman cited in Day et al., (2007, p. 110) adds a further dimension to a definition of well-being. Here two states of long-term well-being are identified, namely:

(i) a feeling of gratification that arises when one is engaged in pursuing one's strengths, and the resultant feeling of "flow", and (ii) a sense of meaning that derives from pursuing goals in the service of something of wider significance than oneself.

Holmes (2005, p.7) acknowledges that the scope of well-being is "wide and deep, and may vary depending on the perspective from which you are exploring the issue". In relation to understanding the working life of teachers she divides well-being into the sub-categories of physical, emotional, mental and intellectual and spiritual well-being.

1.6.2 Resilience. Resilience is an aspect of well-being. Patterson et al., (2002, p.3) define resilience as, "using energy productively to achieve school goals in the face of adverse conditions". The definition of resilience by Bonanno (2004, cited in Mancini & Bonanno, 2006) provides a more detailed description of resilience:

The ability of adults in otherwise normal circumstances who are exposed to an isolated and potentially highly disruptive event such as a death of a close relation or a violent or life-threatening situation to maintain relatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and physical functioning

...the capacity for generative experiences and positive emotions. (2006, p. 972).

Both these definitions of resilience highlight the ability of the individual to have the capacity to rebound after a traumatic event. In this thesis I will use the definition by Mancini and Bonanno as it provides a holistic definition of this concept.

1.6.3 Leadership. In this study leadership is defined as that function taken by the formal leadership of the school, namely the school principal and the SMT, in enabling teachers to fulfill their role as educators. The principal and the SMT are considered as having the mandated responsibility to take leadership in the school. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) contend that the construct of leadership in the social sciences is arbitrary and subjective and that there is no correct definition. Drawing on the work of a number of experts in the field they proposed the following definition of leadership drawing on the work of Yukl (1994, cited in Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 6): leadership is “the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or group] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization” (Yukl, 1994, p. 3). Leithwood et al., (1999) highlight six models of leadership in exercising influence over others, namely; managerial; moral; instructional; transformational; contingent and participative leadership.

1.6.4 Principal. In the literature a number of terms refer to the leader in a school, namely; head teacher, school manager, school leader and principal. I use the word principal to refer to the person in the position of overall leadership within a school as it is a familiar term used within the South African educational context.

1.7 Research Aims and Questions

This research study is an investigation into the role of the school principal in supporting teacher well-being in a working class urban primary school using a grounded theory research design. It is framed within the broader body of resiliency research which focuses on “the strengths or assets that exist within individuals, communities, schools and families” (Rink & Tricker, 2005, p. 40). In chapter two my research aims are addressed in detail.

1.8 Overview of the Thesis

My thesis comprises nine chapters. It begins with this introductory chapter which sets out the rationale and aims of the study. This is followed by chapter two that describes the theoretical paradigm informing my study and research design using a grounded theory methodology. Chapter three describes the processes of data collection and analysis used. Chapter four provides a description of the case study school.

Chapters five, six and seven present the analysis and discussion of my findings and the development of an emerging grounded theory in relation to the aspects under study. Chapter five focuses on teacher perceptions of the concept of well-being. Chapter six highlights key factors teachers identify as supporting and constraining their well-being. Chapter seven presents teacher perceptions of how the principal supports their well-being. Within the tradition of grounded theory studies, the literature on international and regional studies in the area of well-being and school leadership are integrated into these chapters, in order to triangulate the development of a substantive grounded theory. Each of these chapters concludes with the presentation of an emerging grounded theory.

Chapter eight presents an integrated and substantiated grounded theory on the role of the school principal in supporting the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions. This theory is then discussed in relation to the literature on educational leadership and teacher well-being and in relation to three selected models of teacher well-being.

Chapter nine concludes this thesis with a review of the findings of this study and its contribution to the field, as well as a number of recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

Methodological Framework

It is good medicine, we think, for researchers to make their preferences clear. To know how a researcher construes the shape of the social world and aims to give us a credible account of it is to know our conversational partner (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 4).

2.1 Introduction and Overview

In this chapter I describe my research design and the methodological and theoretical frameworks that inform it. I begin by setting out my research aims and design. I then make explicit the basic belief systems that inform and guide my understanding of my social world, and thus influenced my research approach, design and methodology. This is followed by an overview of the development of grounded theory and the steps within a classical grounded theory approach. I then highlight a number of criticisms of grounded theory and show how I address them in my study. The chapter concludes with my motivation for using this research design. In chapter 3 the steps and stages I use to collect and analyse my data using a grounded theory methodology are elaborated upon.

2.2 Research Design and Aims

In order to answer my research questions a qualitative research design using a grounded theory approach was used. Grounded theory offered me a research approach that enabled me to, “understand people’s experiences in as rigorous and detailed a way as possible” (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 278). It also best suited my research purpose of generating theory from an in-depth exploration of the social world of teachers. I did not wish to test out an already existing hypothesis but wanted to see if I could find out or discover something new about an area in which relatively few studies have been conducted (Glaser, 2009). This offered me the opportunity of developing a theory about teacher perceptions of how a school principal supports their well-being in a school in challenging conditions. Babbie and Mouton (2009, p. 499) provide this description of a grounded theory approach to doing research, “we literally build a theory from the ground up, brick by brick so to speak. Our bricks in

this case are the concepts that we ground as we proceed through the analysis process”.

This approach fitted well with my need to do research that held out the possibility of making a contribution towards improving systems of teacher support. This quote by Merriam and Simpson (2000) describes the benefits of grounded theory:

Grounded theory is used to investigate problems of why and how in a systematic way, one that is ‘grounded’ in the data itself rather than being deduced logically or hypothetically. It is particularly well suited for fields of practice, as it can be used to give the practitioner a conceptual tool with which to guide practice (p. 113).

Within a grounded theory research design, I chose to gather data from a single case study site¹⁰. My research strategy at the case study level resembles the research approach of ethnographic researchers. My study fits the features of “*naturalistic research*” described by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 6) as requiring the researcher to:-

- Have intensive contact with the field.
- Gain a “holistic” understanding of the context under study.
- Capture data on perceptions of local actors “from the inside”, through a process of empathetic understanding.
- Isolate themes and expressions that can be reviewed with informants.
- Explicate ways people come to understand, account for day-to-day situations.
- Make interpretation on the grounds of internal consistency.
- Be the main “measurement device” in the study.
- Conduct analysis with words.

2.2.1 My research aims and key questions. My research aim was to understand and explore how primary school teachers working in a school in challenging conditions¹¹ experienced the role of their principal in supporting their well-being. In order to achieve this aim, my specific research questions were:-

1. How do teachers understand the concept ‘teacher well-being’?

¹⁰ In chapter three I elaborate on the strengths and limitations of using a single case study method.

¹¹ In this study I define “challenging conditions” as the additional challenges teachers in working class and under-resourced schools have to face, as a result of the socio-economic and environmental context the school is situated in and the socio-economic, health and educational levels of the learner and parent/guardian population the school serves.

2. What factors do teachers identify as supporting their well-being in a school in challenging conditions?
3. What factors do teachers identify as constraining their well-being in a school in challenging conditions?
4. How do teachers experience the principal as supporting their well-being?

I sought to gather data related to these four key research questions, in order to develop a “grounded theory”.

2.2.2 Conceptual framework guiding my research. After an initial period of data gathering and analysis in my research site, I developed a general conceptual framework showing key aspects I wanted to study and their interrelationships. According to Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 20), a conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied, or “the current version of the researcher’s map of the territory being investigated”.

This conceptual framework (See figure 2.1 below) acted as a general level of scaffolding to initially specify the boundaries of my study, while providing me with a level of flexibility. It helped to generally clarify “who and what will and will not be studied” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18). It helped me to make initial connections between some of the key aspects I identified as being important to explore in order to develop a grounded theory. It also served as a general framework to inform the questions I ask in my initial interview guide.

This framework underwent a number of revisions as I chose to limit and contain my research. This is a common feature of research which requires constant revision and critical reflection throughout the research process (Glaser, 2009 & 2012; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), where the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in the development of the qualitative research process is emphasised.

One of the major changes I made mid-way through my research study was to decide not to include the perceptions of the principal on how he supported the well-being of teachers. Due to the limited the scope of my study and the range of areas I needed to explore related to the concerns of teachers, I chose to primarily focus my study on teacher perceptions of how the school principal needed to support their well-being. However in order to assist me in understanding the school context and history,

the interviews with the principal were invaluable. I also drew on what I had learnt from the five interviews with the principal, to probe and explore more deeply the answers teachers gave in their interviews with me. Figure 2.1 below gives a schematic representation of the conceptual framework that I used.

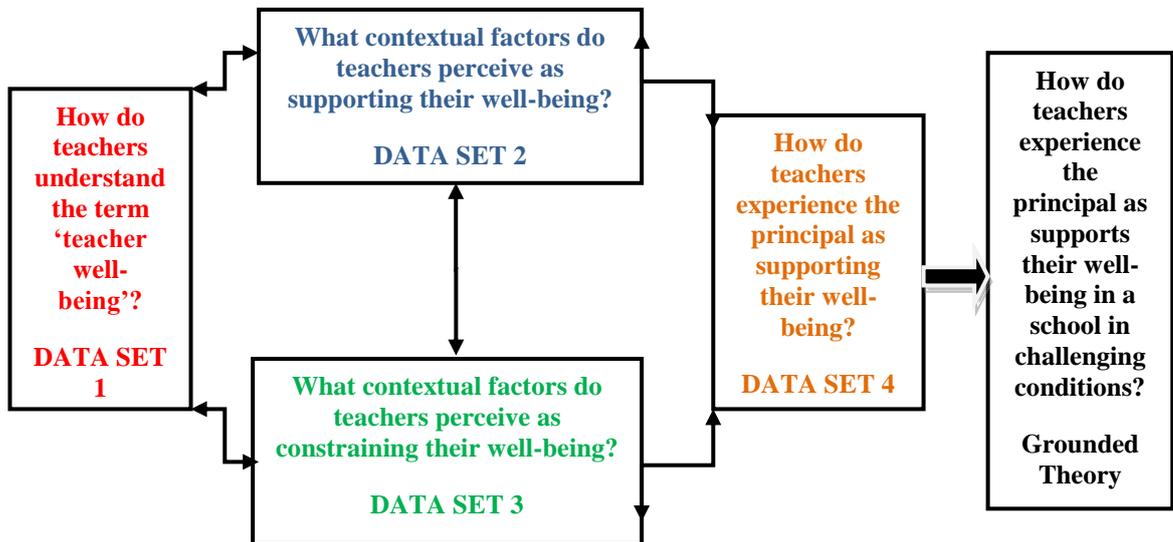


Figure 2.1: *Schematic Representation of the Conceptual Framework of this Study showing Key Questions and Linkages*

Having this conceptual framework assisted me in holding in mind the various levels at which I was collecting and analysing the data and the linkages or relationships between these data sets. My own experiences of organisational development work in schools, influenced the type of questions I asked, as well as the initial linkages I made between these data sets. This fits with a grounded theory approach, where the researcher’s prior experience and reading helps to build a level of theoretical sensitivity (Glaser, 2009; Glaser & Strauss, 1967;). The data sets corresponded to broad categories of analysis uses in grounded theory which focus on conditions (Data Set 1), causes (Data Set 2 & 3) and consequences (Data Set 4). In the section below I highlight the way in which my own experience and world view influenced my research design and analysis, and how I position myself within the research process.

2.3 Research Paradigms Informing this Study

In this section I describe and discuss the research paradigms that shaped and informed my study. Here I highlight a number of precautions I have taken to limit my bias as a researcher and ensure the trustworthiness of these findings. In chapter three I elaborate on the ethical considerations that informed this research. Mouton (1996, p. 47) contends that “On the whole, social scientists hold very implicit beliefs about the social world and most of them see no point in making such beliefs explicit.”

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000) a research paradigm contain four key concepts, namely: ontology - the nature of reality; epistemology - the nature of knowledge; methodology - the theoretical framework; and axiology the ethical considerations. The figure below is adapted from Kelly (2008, p. 37). It gives an overview of the interrelationship between the key ontological, epistemological and methodological frameworks that have guided and influenced my research. Each of these aspects is elaborated on.

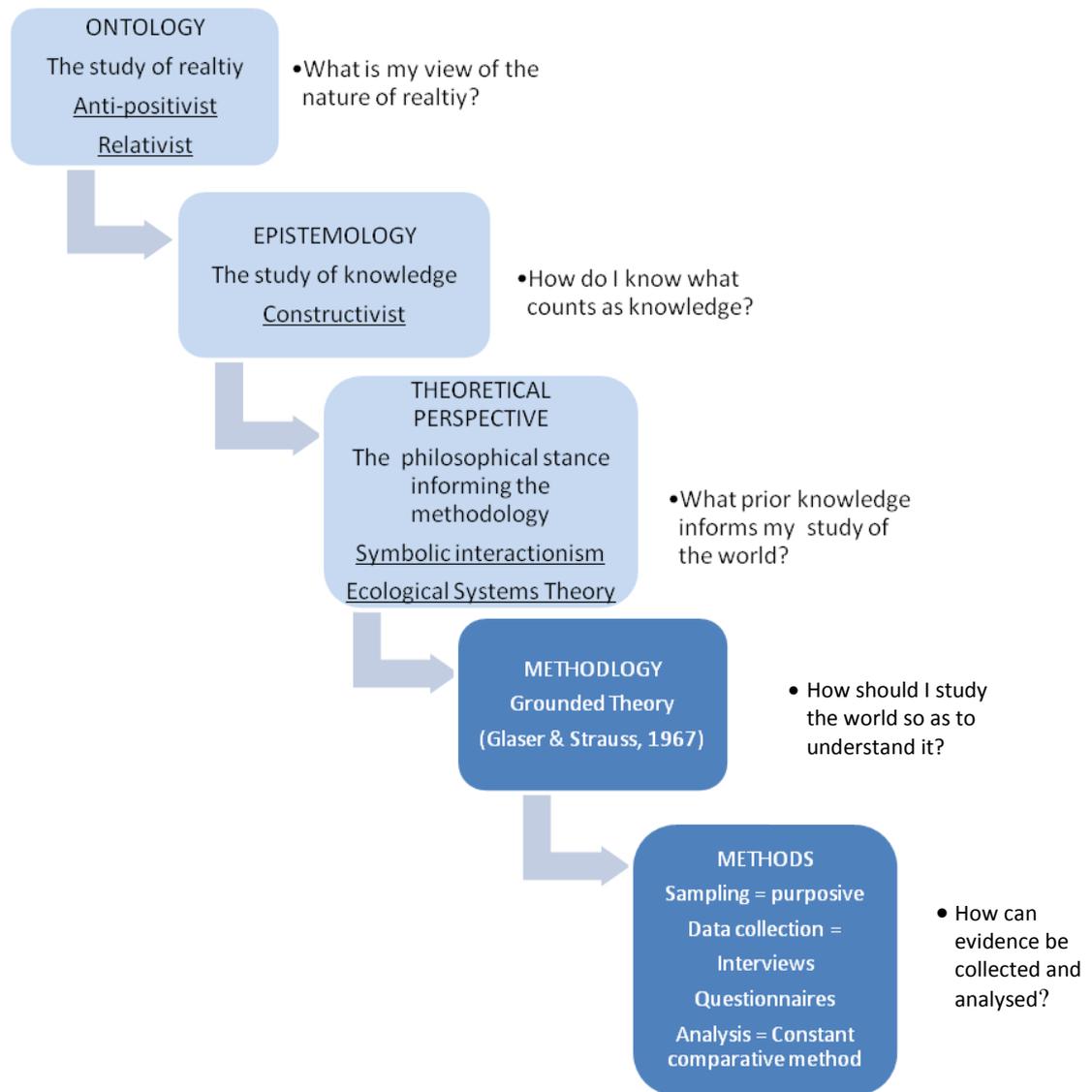


Figure: 2.2: Interdependent Aspects of the Research Paradigm Informing this Study.

The interrelationships between the key ontological, epistemological and methodological frameworks that have guided and influenced my research are elaborated on below. This will be followed by an in-depth elaboration of grounded theory. My methods of data collection and analysis will be described in chapter three.

2.3.1 My ontological orientation. Ontology is defined by Fowler & Fowler, (1964, p. 846), in the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, as “the department of metaphysics concerned with the essence of things or being in the abstract”. Mouton (1996, p. 46) defines the term ontology as the study of “being” or “reality”. He uses the term “social ontologies” when referring to “conceptions of the ontology of social reality” (Mouton, 1996, p. 46). Based on my reading of texts

related to research paradigms and methodologies (Babbie & Mouton, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Mouton, 1996; Somekh & Lewin, 2006), in essence there are three key ontological perspectives of social reality. Firstly, one that believes that the social world can be studied or viewed in the same way as the natural world this is known as an objectivist or positivist ontology. Secondly, a position that the natural and social worlds cannot be comparable or studied in the same way, as the reality in the social world is built up from the meanings, actions and perceptions of social actors (Babbie & Mouton, 2009). This metatheory was developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by Alfred Schutz and others and is known as phenomenology (Babbie & Mouton, 2009). This position is an anti-positivist or constructivist world view.

Thirdly, there is the position known as critical metatheory. This was developed initially by Karl Marx and developed by other social theorists (ibid, 2009). It holds a position that integrates both the objectivist and phenomenological positions on social reality. According to Babbie and Mouton this “integrates the positivist emphasis on control with the hermeneutic insistence on communication and adds the critical interest in emancipation” (2009, p. 44).

The ontological perspective that informs my view of the social world is an anti-positivist and relativist one. An anti-positivist ontological perspective of the social world is described by Mouton (1996, p. 47) in the following way, “The anti-positivists believe that the differences between the social world and the natural world are so fundamental that there can be no basis for using the same methods and techniques in the human sciences”. Relativism is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, as a “Doctrine that knowledge is of relations only” (Fowler & Fowler, 1964, p. 1047). In accordance with a relativist perspective, I hold the world view that there are multiple realities that shape and inform the way in which people view the world and interact in the world. I do not perceive reality as fixed or pre-determined.

My ontological position holds implications for what I understand to count as real knowledge in the world, and thus shapes my view of the social world, the design of my research study and my analysis of findings in the social world.

2.3.2 My epistemological orientation. Epistemology is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as the “Theory of the method or grounds of knowledge” (ibid, 1964, p. 408) or “the study of the nature and origins of knowledge” (Babbie &

Mouton 2009, p. 642). According to Miles and Huberman 1994 it is important for the researcher to make explicit what their epistemological stance is.

As a social science researcher with an anti-positivist and relativist perspective of reality, my view of knowledge (or the epistemological orientation I take) fits most closely within a constructivist¹² view.

A constructivist view of human knowledge differs markedly to an objectivist epistemology. An objectivist stance would contend that meaningful reality exists independently from the knower. For example the world exists even if no person is aware of its existence (Babbie & Mouton 2009), such as a stone having inherent meaning in and of itself. According to Babbie and Mouton (2009), a constructivist view rejects this view of human knowledge, asserting that meaning is constructed through the conscious engagement of individuals with their world. Using the analogy of a stone, where a stone could represent a burial place or grinding tool, depending on the meaning associated with it in specific social context.

I position myself and this research study within a constructivist view of what knowledge is. As such I acknowledge that as a researcher my own meaning making and the meaning making of participants in the research process, is an integral part of the research process. This study is thus not premised on the assumption that there is some objective truth to be discovered. Rather the notion of objectivity within a constructivist paradigm is premised on inter-subjective meaning making and engagement between the researcher and the research participants.

Andrews points out (2012, p. 39) that the terms “constructivism and social constructionism tend to be used interchangeably and subsumed under the generic term ‘constructivism’ particularly by Charmaz (2000, 2006)”. In his article on social constructionism and grounded theory, (Andrews, 2012) argues that social constructionism unlike constructivism has a social rather than individual focus in the way individuals make meaning of their world.

Within a constructivist epistemological paradigm I align myself most closely with an interpretivist research paradigm. According to Babbie and Mouton the aim of the social scientist and social research is “interpreting (hence “interpretivism”) or understanding human behavior, rather than explaining or predicting it” (2009, p. 643). Human beings are understood as making sense and meaning of their worlds, or

¹² Also known as constructionist.

socially constructing their worlds. “People are continuously constructing, developing, and changing the everyday (common-sense) interpretations of their world(s)” (Babbie & Mouton 2009, p. 28). The origins of the interpretive approach are found through the ideas of the “*Verstehen*” (ibid, 2009, p.30) approach proposed by Max Weber. Here the social researcher works towards understanding the actions and attitudes of social actors within their contexts.

I take the position that people’s intentions and reasons, as well as their actions need to be observed in order to understand their social world. Theories about the human world such as the experience of teachers in schools are thus understood as being “congruent with the common-sense concepts and interpretations of the social actors themselves” (ibid, p. 33). The “dis-analogy between social and phenomena” (ibid, p. 28) is emphasized. This is in contrast to a positivist perspective, which would support the idea “that the social sciences should emulate the methodology or logic of the natural sciences” (ibid, p. 21) and thus “exclude all non-observational data” (Babbie & Mouton, 2009, p. 33). A positivist or post-positivist perspective is based on a view of reality that sees reality as fixed and existing independently of the knower, and “knowledge” is viewed as being able to be verified in the absence of the knower.

Within an interpretivist paradigm my understanding of ‘knowledge’ is based both on the subjective meaning making of participants and myself as the researcher in the research process. I would agree with the assertion by Babbie and Mouton, that, “the aim of social science is primarily directed towards understanding: understanding of individuals in terms of the meaning which people ascribe to the social practices in that society” (ibid, p. 33).

My subjective understanding of the world and that of the research participants in my study, is viewed as an integral part of the research process. I hold the position that knowledge comes from exploring how people see and understand themselves, and how they make meaning in their lives. I recognise that in the research process I am affected by what I see and hear in the field, and that I have my own views and biases. However I also acknowledge that my meaning making is also influenced by the socially shared rules, and institutional norms of everyday life that make up an “objective” shared reality.

My view of how individuals construct meaning within social settings holds most resonance with a social constructionist position as elaborated on by Andrews

(2012). This position holds both a realist and relativist stance on how meaning is made in the social world. According to Andrews (2012, p. 44) “Social constructionism that views society as existing both as objective and subjective reality is fully compatible with classical grounded theory, unlike constructionist grounded theory which takes a relativist position. Relativism is not compatible with classical grounded theory.”

In my development of a grounded theory did not wish to develop a theory that provided a causal explanation, but a theory that sought to explain or understand the social phenomena. Mouton (1996) contends that the development of explanatory theories in the social sciences has a logic of their own which is distinct from explanatory theories in the natural sciences. According to him distinctive features of explanatory theories:

- explain by constructing causal models and stories of phenomena;
- such stories are plausible to the extent that they identify the real causal processes and mechanisms that produce certain states of affairs or events”;
- they do not necessarily have to take the form of universal or deterministic laws;
- theories vary in scope from fairly ‘local’ explanations to more general ‘cross-national’ explanatory models;
- prediction is not an essential criterion of theories in the social sciences (1996, p. 199).

In my development of a substantive grounded theory I was conscious that I needed to be aware of my own role and self-understandings in the analysis of findings and the development of a grounded theory. I also recognized that I was integrally a part of the research process which aims to present a valid and trustworthy theoretical proposition. The orientation I took was in line with what Andrews elaborated on (2012) a social constructionist approach to Grounded Theory.

Through my use of the constant comparative method within a classical grounded theory (CGT) approach I argue that I built in a number of levels of reflexivity and triangulation of my findings, in order to substantiate and ground my theory. This was done by the sharing my findings with participants throughout the process as I engage with the iterative processes of theory testing and theoretical sampling, as well as through the comparison of my emerging theory with related findings in the literature. I would argue this built in a level of logical consistency and adequacy of the grounded theory I propose.

2.3.3 Theoretical perspectives informing this study. Within traditional interpretivist research approaches a number of theoretical perspectives can inform the research. Symbolic interactionism is noted in the literature as influencing and shaping the grounded theory methodology (Babbie & Mouton, 2009). Research within a classical grounded theory approach does not pre-select a theoretical framework but allows theory to emerge through engagement with the data (Glaser, 2005; 2012; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In the early stages the researcher intentionally attempts to hold or bracket pre-existing theories which may shape data analysis and interpretation until a grounded theory is developed (Glaser, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Glaser and Strauss (1967) acknowledge that the researcher is shaped by his/her pre-existing experience and engagement with a range of theories. Engagement with the literature comes at a later stage in the research process. Grounded theory is thus not atheoretical.

Only after I had developed an emerging theory and was able to engage with other theories that held resonance with my own, was I able to identify what theoretical frameworks were most relevant to my study. Elliott had a similar experience in her grounded theory research study (Elliott & Higgins, 2012, p.7). She found that “it was only after the grounded theory had been developed it became known that Habermas’s theory was most relevant to her discussion”. I agree with Elliott and Higgins (2012) that, researchers can only know what theories are relevant when their grounded theory has been developed. I briefly describe the influence of symbolic interactionism and ecological systems theory on my study.

Symbolic Interactionism. Symbolic Interactionism is a social-psychological theory developed by George Herbert Mead at the University of Chicago in the 1920’s and subsequently developed by other scholars like Herbert Blumer (Babbie & Mouton, 2009, p. 31). The basic tenets of this theory as developed by Mead hold that, “the individual is born into an already formed society and thus she or he emerges from, and is defined, in terms of an ongoing flux of social activity” (ibid, 2009, p. 31). According to Babbie and Mouton (2009), Blumer developed this theory further in the sixties, and he argues that “the emphasis on meaning and its influence on social behaviour are key features of symbolic interactionism” (ibid, 2009, p. 31). He proposed three aspects to understanding this process, namely: “People act towards things on the basis of the meaning things have for

them...Meaning arises out of social interactions...Meaning is handled in and modified through an interpretive process. Meaning is not permanently fixed or unchanging” (Babbie & Mouton, 2009, p. 31).

The grounded theory approach developed by Glaser and Strauss has its roots in symbolic interactionism. The basic tenets of symbolic interactionism are congruent with my own views of a relativist ontological and constructivist epistemological views. They also fit within an interpretivist research paradigm.

Systems Theory. Systems theory, also referred to as an ecological systems approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1976; Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2011), was the broad conceptual lens that informed my study. It provided a broad framework that helped to make the connections between the social world of teachers and the complexity of the contexts of a school and its community.

At the onset of my study I acknowledge that due to my familiarity with an ecological systems theory approach in my professional work, this did have an influence on shaping the way I viewed the complexity of interactions within a school setting. It influenced my initial research questions and hunches and at a later stage the development of my conceptual framework. However I felt that this was a broad and flexible framework so as not to constrain my data collection and the emergence of my theory. I would argue that it assisted in my own levels of theoretical sensitivity in the development of a grounded theory.

2.3.4 Methodological implications for this study. According to Mouton, “the relationship between the methodological and epistemological dimensions can be expressed as a means-end relationship. The epistemological ideal of “validity” specifies the goal of all research; the methodological ideal of “objectivity” specifies how to attain this goal” (1996, p. 112).

According to Babbie and Mouton (2009, p. 33) a qualitative approach has traditionally been associated with an interpretivist tradition. They contend that:

understanding of the meanings and self-descriptions of the individual requires a methodology which emphasizes the following: unstructured observation and open interviewing; idiographic descriptions; qualitative data analysis (e.g. grounded theory), and objectivity understood as the inter-subjective attitude of the insider (ibid, p. 33).

2.4 Grounded Theory

In order to locate my own research approach, this section gives a background to the development of grounded theory. It describes what grounded theory is, the different approaches to grounded theory and a number of its strengths and weaknesses. In conclusion I motivate my choice for using a classic grounded theory approach.

2.4.1 The development of grounded theory. A grounded theory approach to studying social phenomena was pioneered by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss (1967) in the sixties. This approach to research has undergone a number of developments which have resulted in different approaches. Three main approaches to grounded theory are identified in the literature. They are a classic grounded theory (CGT) also referred to as Glaserian grounded theory (Glaser, 1978; 1992; 1998; 2009; 2012); the approach developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1997) and constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000; 2006; 2008). Classic grounded theory was pioneered by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and developed further by Glaser and other scholars (Glaser & Holton, 2004; Holton, 2009 & 2012). Their scholarly engagement in journals such as the *Grounded Theory Review* give testimony to this. All of these approaches have their roots in the original approach developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

Both Glaser and Strauss were researchers based in American Universities. In the 60's Barney Glaser worked at Columbia University and Anselm Strauss worked at the University of Chicago with its rich tradition of pioneering ethnographic and qualitative research. Both researchers found congruence in the view within their research contexts that there was too much emphasis placed on the verification of existing theory rather than on developing new theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). They collaborated on a number of joint research projects which lead to the development and refinement of the grounded theory approach in social studies.

During the 1990's the research partnership between Glaser and Strauss fell apart with the publication in 1990 of a book by Strauss and Corbin called the "*Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*". Glaser set out his criticism in his own publication in 1992 of the "Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis: Emergence vs Forcing". Glaser argued that Strauss and Corbin's approach (1992), "advocated the imposition of a priori analytic frames" (Glaser cited in

Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 26) and not “the pursuit of a grounded analytic orientation through the careful development of concepts from the data” (2009, p. 27).

Glaser’s (1992) criticism of this publication was that Strauss and Corbin had moved away from some of the original concepts of doing Grounded Theory and what they were proposing could no longer be considered to be Grounded Theory. Briefly Glaser’s (1992) key criticisms levels at Strauss and Corbin’s approach are that: They add complexity to the methodology; the approach is too prescriptive and “forced” with a focus on validation of criteria; their emphasis is on linking properties and categories to the data, rather than letting the theoretical codes and categories emerge; that they have moved away from inductive research and the emergence of theory, to a focus on a desire to test theory; they have made changes to some of the methods and terminology of grounded theory without giving adequate explanation and acknowledgement to both Glaser and Strauss’ (1967) contribution to the development of grounded theory. Glaser (1992) also asserted that another weakness was the poor articulation of the relationship between Strauss and Corbin’s version of grounded theory methodology and its relationship to symbolic interactionism.

Currently the debates within grounded theory methodology continue between those researchers adopting a more Glaserian or classic grounded theory (CGT) approach, and those finding resonance with the methodology advocated by Strauss and Corbin, or a hybrid of the two. The primary differences between these two approaches have been identified as relating to methodological and not epistemological or ontological issues (Heath & Cowley, 2004, cited in Andrews, Higgins, Andrews, & Lalore, 2012).

A constructivist approach to grounded theory as advocated by Bryant and Charmaz (2007) and Charmaz (2000, 2006, 2008) poses challenges to researchers in relation to their ontological and epistemological stance, and the way in which this then influences the process of collection, data analysis and theory building. According to Charmaz, (2002) “Constructivism assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge from the viewer and viewed, and aims towards interpretive understandings of subjects’ meanings” (ibid, p. 510). Key debates and difference between the different approaches to doing grounded theory have been documented in a number of studies (e.g. Annells, 1997, Charmaz; 2000; 2006; 2008; Cooney, 2010; Glaser, 1992, 1998; 2002; 2009; 2012; Glaser & Holton, 2004; Walker & Myrick, 2006).

In the section below a description of grounded theory is provided. I then raise a number of criticisms of grounded theory and provide a motivation for my approach.

2.4.2 Defining Grounded Theory. This orientation to social research places emphasis on the creation of theory from the research process, in other words it “seeks to create theory from research and data analysis.” (Gibson & Brown 2009, p. 27). According the founder of this research approach “Grounded theory is discovery of theory from data” (Glaser & Strauss 1967, p. 1). This is in contrast to more traditional forms of research that seek to test out theory or have a theory prior to the research process. According to Gibson and Brown (2009, p. 26) it proposes a shift from the “testing” or verification of theory to the creation or generation of theory. Accordingly “theory should result from an engagement in research, rather than being imposed on it” (2009, p. 27).

According to Ryan and Bernard (2003) it is defined in the following away, “Grounded theory is an iterative process by which the analyst becomes more and more “grounded” in the data and develops increasingly richer concepts and models of how the phenomenon being studied really works” (p. 279). Silverman (2001, p. 71) says that theory develops from a “grounded substantive theory” to a “grounded formal theory” as categories are saturated and related to other contexts. The goal of grounded theory is to develop a theory from the systematic analysis of data.

Gibson and Brown (2009, p. 26) advise that researchers use the term with caution when making claims about their research. They acknowledge that it is an ambiguous term “which can refer to something extremely specific and to nothing much in particular, depending on how it is being used” (Gibson & Brown 2009, p. 3).

This inductive qualitative approach to research involves a number of steps and stages in the systematic analysis of data and the development of a theory grounded in the data. Although a combination of both inductive and deductive approaches is used in the research is it primarily an inductive approach, as the researcher is constantly guided by having to return to the data (Glaser 2009 & 2012; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In summary the key methodological process in the grounded theory approach is the use of the constant comparative method. This method contains four overlapping stages (Glaser & Strauss 1967). The four stages are:-

- Comparing incidents applicable to each category;

- Integrating categories and properties;
- Delimiting the theory;
- Writing the theory.

Based on Strauss and Corbin's (1990) procedures for dealing with data, Gibson and Brown (2009) recommend three overlapping steps in the constant comparative method, namely:

1. Creating categories, properties and theoretical relations
2. Solidifying the theory
3. Writing (p. 29).

In essence there is a lot of similarity in the basic principles and steps described in the constant comparative method described above and the three steps described by Gibson and Brown (2009). The stages in the constant comparative method are elaborated upon in chapter three. The iterative steps in the constant comparative method with overlapping processes of data collection, analysis and theorizing form the building blocks of theory development. According to Glaser (2012, p. 28), grounded theory differs from qualitative data analysis in that "the product will be transcending abstraction, NOT accurate description" and this abstraction, "frees the researcher from the data worry and data doubts, and puts the focus on concepts that fit and are relevant".

Grounded theory methodology can be used to develop both substantive and formal theory. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), substantive theory is developed from research conducted in one specific area or contextual situation and can be used as a basis upon which to build formal theories, while formal theory development is more conceptual.

In my research I sought to generate a grounded theory on how teachers in a school in challenging conditions experienced a principal as supporting their well-being. Holding on to the basic principles of a grounded theory approach and applying the steps of the constant comparative method provided me with a level of scaffolding to traverse the complex web between data analysis and theory building.

2.4.3 Criticism of grounded theory. A number of criticisms, both positive and negative have been leveled at the use of grounded theory research designs. In the section below I highlight these and show how I have tried to address them in my study. I begin by looking at the strengths of using a grounded theory approach.

2.4.3.1 Strengths of grounded theory. Grounded theory has a number of strengths to offer. It enables the development of theory; data is not tied to accuracy concerns as in Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) (Glaser, 2012); it is a tried and tested research method; and it offers an innovative and exciting qualitative research methodology. This is also a developing research methodology (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 2009 & 2012; Holton, 2009; Pergert, 2009).

The development of theory. The purpose of GT is to develop a theory. GT offers researchers the opportunity of developing a new and innovative theory in areas where limited research has occurred. It also offers the prospect of shedding new light on areas which have been researched in depth (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser 2009 & 2012).

Frees the research from accuracy problems. According to Glaser (2012, p. 28), in a GT approach data is discovered for the purposes of conceptualizing a theory and is not tied to accuracy concerns as in Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA). Thus the researcher, depending on their approach to GT, is freed up from accuracy concerns. According to Glaser (2012):

The product, a GT, will be an abstraction from time, place and people that frees the researcher from the tyranny of normal distortion of humans trying to get an accurate description to solve the worrisome accuracy problem...and puts the focus on concepts that fit and are relevant (2012, p. 28).

Glaser criticises Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory approach (2012, p. 32) as being tied to the concerns of qualitative data analysis and accuracy concerns. However he asserts that GT should not have these concerns as the focus is on conceptualisation of the data.

A tried and tested research method. One of the strengths of a grounded theory approach is that it "demonstrates clearly the ways in which theoretical orientations, such as concepts, hypotheses, relations and so on, can emerge or develop through research" (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 30). There is a rich tradition of grounded theory studies that a researcher can draw on for support and guidance (Charmaz, 2006 & 2008; Glaser, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 2000).

An innovative and exciting qualitative research methodology. Grounded Theory is an innovative and exciting research methodology for novice researchers

who favour a more inductive approach to research. Glaser (2009) contends that a grounded theory approach is best done in the hands of novice researchers as they are more open to allowing a new and fresh perspective to emerge when analyzing the data. He makes this comment:

The novice with openness is truly in a favorable state to emergently conceptualize what is exactly going on undistorted with little wishful, professional interest forcing. He/she need only adhere to the rigor and tedium of the constant comparative method of generating categories and their properties (Glaser, 2009, p. 18).

A developing research methodology. Journals like The Grounded Theory Review and the number of publications related to GT, give testimony to this research approach as a vibrant and developing area of qualitative research. Contemporary debates around different GT approaches indicate the growing interest in this research approach and the development and refinement of this research design. The novice researcher is able draw upon these resources and a level of scholarship from this research tradition, to inform and guide his/her own research process. As a novice GT researcher my survival kit in charting this research journey was comprised of the scaffolding provided by the basic processes of analytic induction using the constant comparative method; learning from the experiences of contemporary researchers through my reading of articles in the Grounded Theory Journal; the on-line support of my supervisor and the courage I took from Glaser's (2009) faith in the abilities of novice researchers to do grounded theory research.

Although GT has a number of strengths it has also received a fair degree of negative criticism.

2.4.3.2 Weaknesses of grounded theory. The grounded theory methodology has been criticized as having a number of weaknesses. Key criticisms I highlight and discuss briefly are: the ontological and epistemological tenets are not clarified; insufficient acknowledgement of implicit theories that guide work; theory development is weak; poor on theory testing and grounded theory as only an approach to data analysis. Under each heading I raise some of the debates and briefly describe how I addressed these criticisms in my study.

Ontological and epistemological tenets are not clarified. In a number of grounded theory studies the researchers do not make their ontological and

epistemological tenets clear. Glaser (1992) himself criticizes Strauss and Corbin (1990) for not articulating the relationship between their version of grounded theory methodology and symbolic interactionism. Charmaz (2002 & 2006) has criticised Glaser and Strauss (1967) for the poor positioning and articulation of the theoretical paradigms informing grounded theory studies. Charmaz (2006) argues that both Glaser and Strauss:

display positivistic tendencies within their work, evident in what she characterizes as naïve epistemology in which the social world is regarded as being readily available for “discovery” by researchers. She suggests this position does not fit easily with interpretivist views of the constructed and contested nature of the social world (Charmaz 2006 cited in Gibson and Brown 2009, p. 27).

Insufficient acknowledgement of implicit theories that guide work. One of the strongest negative criticisms leveled at a grounded theory approach is the extent to which the researchers’ own experience and theoretical knowledge already influences their analysis and assumptions in both the early and later stages of research (Charmaz, 2002 & 2006). Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1990) recommend that the researcher avoids using literature at the start of research as this may influence, inhibit or constrain the discovery of what is in the field. These theorists acknowledge however that it is important to draw on literature in later phases of the research to test out emergent theory. Gibson and Brown (2009, p.30) contend that it is “particularly difficult to align this process with contemporary social research practices, where research is usually only permitted where researchers can show how their work fits with broader theoretical frameworks”. In a similar vein (Silverman, 2001, p. 71) contends that grounded theory has been criticized for its failure to acknowledge implicit theories that guide work at an early stage.

At the initial stages of my study I grappled with the tension of trying to remain true to a grounded theory approach and that the requirement of getting my research study approved would require at least a basic level of reviewing of the relevant literature. Although Glaser and Strauss (1997) recommend that from a grounded theory approach, researchers avoid using literature to generate theoretical or conceptual ideas in the initial stages of research, I found that this initial review of the literature helped to give me a broader orientation and sensitivity to issues related to the fields of psychology and mental health promotion with which I had not been familiar. As I did a general review of the literature I was consciously aware of how

other research and ideas could and do shape my understanding of teacher well-being. However I was also aware of the need to “hold” or “bracket these ideas and try to keep an “open mind” in the early stages of my analysis.

At a practical level the review of the literature was a necessary requirement for obtaining research approval. It assisted me initially in locating my study within a broader body of research, as well as obtaining research approval from the Faculty of Education’s Higher Degrees Committee and ethical clearance from the University of the Western Cape. My experience confirms some of the criticisms by Gibson and Brown (2009:30) leveled at this aspect of a grounded theory approach.

Theory development is weak. Siedman (1998) contends that although the notion of grounded theory offers qualitative researchers a welcome rationale for their inductive approach to research, it also serves to inflate the term theory to the point that it has lost some of its usefulness. Silverman (2001, p. 71) in a similar vein holds the view that that, “At best, grounded theory offers an approximation of the creative activity of theory building found in good observational work”. He suggests that one way to save grounded theory from being, “a trite and mistaken technique is to treat it as a way of building theories from a particular model of social reality” (Silverman 2001, p. 72).

Parker (2005) argues that grounded theory does not really enable the discovery of theory from data. He contends that “every theory should be grounded, but the way it is set out is neither grounded, nor theory” (Parker 2005, p. 56) and argues further that:

they claim that theory is really only ‘context-specific’ – confined to the data – shows the hollowness of its attempt to throw light on what is going on. It adds nothing to our understanding because it has forbidden the researchers to step back and think about what they see (p. 57).

Glaser (2009) argues that if the researcher remains true to processes of generating theory, the use of the constant comparative method of analysis and theorizing, then grounded theory cannot be criticized as being weak on theory generation. He contends:

The researcher has to stay engaged with the data totally and let the abstract patterns emerge through the constant comparisons, as they surely do. Disengaging from the data leads to conjecture which is counter GT; it undermines grounded. Good grounded theory has never ended up naive, concrete and simplistic (Glaser, 2009, p. 10).

I would agree with Glaser's (2009) view about the necessary link between remaining true to the steps in the constant comparative method and the development of a good grounded theory. In my own study I was conscious of the need to show the steps in the development of theorizing from my data in as systematic a way as possible. I agree with Siedman (1998) that a grounded theory approach did provide me with inductive approach to research. However I disagree with his cautionary stance in relation to the strength of this approach in developing theory. I would argue the methodological steps I took in this study did build a level of rigor in the development of theory. However I also concede that the substantive theory developed in this research, although abstracted from its context, may not be transferable to another context and I would not claim it carries any of the weight of theories that have been tried and tested within multiple contexts.

I do agree with Silverman (2001) about the need for locating one's grounded theory approach within a model of social reality. I have thus taken steps to position myself within the research process, and have highlighted how my world view may have shaped my analysis and the theoretical claims I make. I have tried to address some of the concerns critics like Parker (2005) may have about the lack of levels of critical reflexivity in the development of grounded theory by acknowledging my ontological and epistemological stance and through building in levels of triangulation of my analysis through engagement with the literature and process of theoretical sampling.

Poor on theory testing. Grounded theory is criticized by David Silverman (2001, p. 71) as being more "...clear about the generation of theories than about their test". I would agree with the position adopted by Gibson and Brown (2009), who argue that in a grounded theory approach the verification of theory is generated through the research process, and that verification is an important component of grounded theory. The verification of theory in my study did occur throughout the research process and there were numerous instances of participant involvement in cross-checking data analysis as well as verifying the development of theory development during the selective coding process. The triangulation of the substantive theory against the literature in this area provided another level of theory testing.

Grounded theory as an approach to data analysis. According to Bryman and Burgess (1994), a critique of grounded theory is that it is often used as a label for

any qualitative approach that seeks to inductively generate theory from the data, without necessarily showing the systematic process in the constant comparative method developed by Glaser and Strauss. They contend that there are very few examples of genuine cases of grounded theory and very often grounded theory is used more loosely as a term to “denote an approach to data analysis in which theory has emerged from the data. Rarely is there a genuine interweaving of data collection and theorizing of the kind advocated by Glaser and Strauss” (Bryman & Burgess, 1994, p. 6).

In my own review of a number of grounded theory theses, I have seen instances where this criticism is valid. In order to address this issue in my own study, I have attempted to provide as detailed an account as possible of my research design as a grounded theory study. I have also demonstrated the various iterative steps I took in the research process using the constant comparative method. Where necessary I have provided examples of the processes of analysis and memoing that occurred. I have tried to remain true to the principles and stages of a grounded theory approach as developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and expanded by Glaser in classic grounded theory.

2.5 Motivation for Using a Grounded Theory Research Design

A grounded theory research design suited my purpose of studying an area in which limited investigation had been done. It offered me the opportunity to do qualitative research that sought to develop a new theory which could be applied to improving practice. It thus best suited my research aims which were to develop a theory about how the well-being of teachers who worked in a school in challenging conditions was supported by the principal.

2.5.1 Motivating my grounded theory approach. A classic grounded theory approach developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and developed further by Glaser (2002; 2005; 2009; 2012) primarily informed my research approach, although I borrowed some techniques from Strauss and Corbin (1990) and locate myself epistemologically within a constructivist paradigm. I describe how I deal with the tensions these choices create in my research process in this section. The basic principles and steps that informed my grounded theory approach are elaborated on in the next chapter.

In a similar vein to the experience of other researchers using a GT methodology (Pergert, 2009; Roderick, 2009), I initially found it very confusing to get to grips with and I was not sure if I was doing it correctly. A further challenge was to find the GT approach that best suited my research needs, as well as my personal cognitive and ontological orientation.

A classic grounded theory approach to data gathering and analysis fitted well with my cognitive orientation towards learning in a tactile and experiential way. I have a personal preference for working inductively and liked the flexibility and responsiveness the approach offered. This made the research process exciting and held out the possibility of finding something new. It also suited my own ability to accept fairly high levels of uncertainty and chaos in the research process. I did not want to work from a pre-determined research question or theoretical framework, but rather from an orientation which allowed the key concerns to emerge from the field and theory to emerge from the data. As such the techniques in a CGT approach best suited my research orientation. I also found the processes of data collection and analysis using the CGT more flexible and user friendly.

I would argue that I still remained true to a CGT approach, although I used the technique of diagramming advocated by Strauss and Corbin (1990). I found this useful in assisting me to develop conceptual maps showing the linkages between categories in the data and in assisting my process of theorising. In the stage of selective coding of data, I found the coding process advocated by Strauss and Corbin too restrictive. However I did use a data analysis matrix to provide some structure in organising my data and analytical process. It helped to allay my anxiety about analysing data accurately and thoroughly while still providing a level of flexibility in the connections I was making between categories in the data and the development of theory. Here I acknowledge my own background in qualitative data analysis as influencing my need for accuracy, however I do not feel that an accuracy concern limited the development of my conceptualization of the data. Rather as a novice researcher it gave me a level of security in knowing I had attempted to thoroughly engage with my data. Glaser (2012, p. 28) highlights the difference between “worrisome accuracy abiding concern” of qualitative data analysis and GT where “data is discovered for conceptualization”. Glaser (2012, p. 28) contends that the final product is abstracted from the case and therefore frees the researcher from getting bogged down in the data and accuracy concerns.

Where I differ from Glaser (2002; 2009; 2012) is that I locate my own approach to doing grounded theory primarily within a constructivist world view and more specifically a social constructions stance. Locating myself within an interpretive research paradigm and claiming that I have followed a classic grounded theory approach, raises a number of tensions for me. My ontological and epistemological position finds congruence with the notion of constructivist grounded theory as proposed by Charmaz (2006 and cited in Glaser 2002), namely:

Constructivist grounded theory celebrates first-hand knowledge of empirical worlds, takes a middle ground between postmodernism and positivism, and offers accessible methods for taking qualitative research into the 21st century. Constructivism assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects' meanings (Charmaz in Glaser, 2002, p.7).

This holds coherence with my ontological position which is primarily relativist one. Here I hold the position that the social world and the physical world cannot be understood and examined in the same ways. The meaning of actions in the social world I understand as being related to the multiple influences and perceptions of actors within a specific context. However as elaborated on earlier within a constructivist approach I hold a social constructionist position that acknowledge a level of both realism and relativism in making meaning of the social world (Andrews, 2012).

In my own study I was conscious of the need to check and cross-check my analysis of the data with participants. In this way I felt more certain that I had recorded the meaning of respondents as accurately as possibly. However in the conceptualization of patterns in the data and in the development of substantive theory I acknowledge my own role in making the linkages between codes and categories and constructs in order to enable the latent patterns to emerge. Although I was able to link my theoretical propositions back to the data, and I also tested my theoretical propositions with participants. I still contend that we were joint participants in the meaning making process in the initial stages of data collection, analysis and the development of the emergent theory. I also acknowledged level of “objective” or shared social meaning within the process of data analysis and interpretation.

My ontological and epistemological position finds congruence with the notion of constructivist grounded theory, however at a methodological level my approach most strongly adheres to classic grounded theory. This poses a dilemma for

me as Glaser (2002) rejects strongly the notion of a constructivist grounded theory, and has recently criticised it as a being “misnomer” and of trying to remodel GT (2012, p. 28). In an article “Constructivist Grounded Theory?” Glaser contends that if grounded theory is done correctly it is free of constructivism (Glaser, 2002) as the respondents “tells the researcher how to view it correctly” (Glaser 2002, p. 8), thus the interpretation of the respondent is key. He contends that the approach of grounded theory should rather allow the researcher to “discover latent patterns in multiple participants’ words...and the focus of grounded theory is then to conceptualize these patterns, and not to ascertain the accuracy of the stories” (Glaser 2002, p. 2). The respondent thus tells the researcher how to view meaning correctly (Glaser, 2002). My own position on the “objectivity” of interpretation of the data would be through inter-subjectivity and the acknowledgement of the “objectivity” of shared social rules, norms and institutional patterns, which I would contend is amply tested through following the steps in the constant comparative methods advocated by grounded theory.

In my research approach to grounded theory I found compatibility between my relativist ontology and social constructivist epistemology and the methodology of classic grounded theory. Holding this position does highlight a number of tensions that currently form the basis of methodological debates within a range of approaches to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000 & 2008; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2009 & 2012). The scope of this thesis does not permit me to engage in this debate fully, although I have been able to flag some of the tensions it raises. As a novice GT researcher I take courage from Glaser’s (2009) faith in the abilities of novice researchers to do grounded theory research and to learn through practice.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I described my research aims and design. I made explicit the ontological, epistemological and theoretical paradigms that influence my research approach, design and methodology. I then described the development of grounded theory, and the steps within a grounded theory approach. A number of difficulties of using this research approach were highlighted, and I described how I addressed them in this study. The chapter concluded with my motivation for using this research design and a classical grounded theory approach. In Chapter three I give a more

detail description of the steps I took in the collection and analysis of my data, as well as the ethical considerations that guided this process.

CHAPTER THREE

Data Collection and Analysis

The novice may start his GT research with little skill, but experience increases it quickly. He/she may compulsively collect too much data and wonder what to do with it. He/she may be scared and impatient at first to get beyond the data. But as the constant comparative process continues, abstractions emerge from the data. The GT skill increases and with it confidence (Glaser, 2009, p. 11).

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe in more detail the steps and stages I took in the collection and analysis of my data and the development of grounded theory. I set out the data gathering process, methods and techniques used in grounded theory. A description of the steps and stages I used in the analysis of my data using the constant comparative method is then given. I conclude by reviewing the analysis of my data in terms of its trustworthiness and reliability, and highlighting a number of ethical considerations and precautions that guided this study.

3.2 The Process of Conducting Grounded Theory

A grounded theory approach as developed by Glaser and Strauss (1997) has a number of carefully set out processes, concepts and principles which inform the analysis and building of theory. As described in chapter two the constant comparative method with its overlapping stages form the basic steps for the generation of theory from data. Gibson and Brown describe the basic principles and processes within the grounded theory methodology as follows:

Concepts and hypotheses should be generated through the analysis of data. Theory development should involve the use of coding, memo writing, theoretical sampling, triangulation and the constant comparative method. These processes and procedures should be used to develop categories, properties and theoretical relations. Hypotheses should then be informed through both theoretical induction and deduction. Theory work should continue until data saturation has been achieved (2009, p. 27).

The figure adapted from Kelly (2008, p. 46) below provides a schematic representation of the four key stages in the constant comparative method of analysis used in a grounded theory approach.

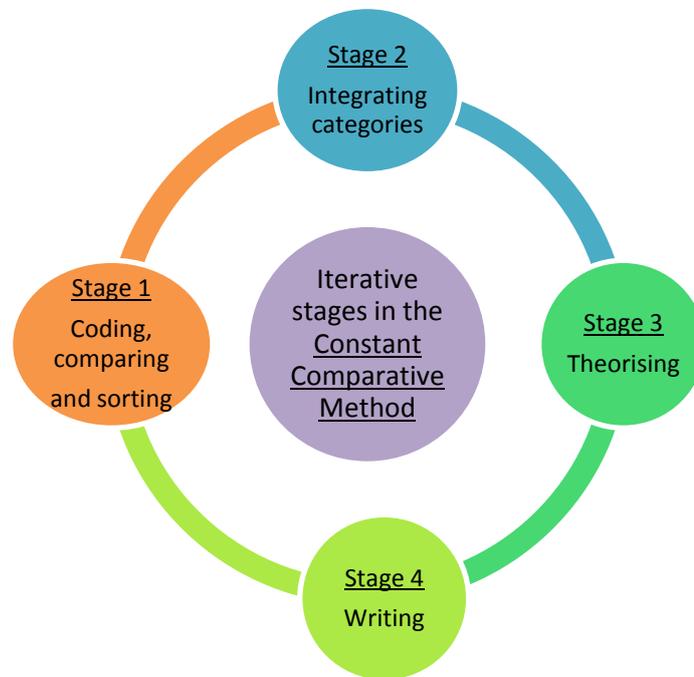


Figure 3.1: *Four Key Stages in the Constant Comparative Method of Analysis used in a Grounded Theory Approach*

3.2.1 Stages in the constant comparative method. The four key stages and processes in the constant comparative method are described in more detail below. In the next section I explain how I engaged with these stages and processes in my own study.

3.2.1.1 Stage 1: Coding, comparing and sorting. This involves the steps of generating codes or categories from the data. It corresponds with the first step described by Gibson and Brown (2009, p. 29) as “creating categories, properties and theoretical relations.” This step involves the substantive coding of data which according to Glaser and Strauss (1967) has into two stages, open coding and selective coding. It begins with initial or “open coding” (Glaser, 1992, Glaser & Strauss, 1967) that sorts out and synthesizes the data. Here codes will be compared with other instances where they appear. According to Babbie and Mouton (2009),

during this stage of coding data will be reviewed by examining words, phrases, lines or paragraphs to identify emerging patterns. Here comparisons will be done between similarities and differences in data and how the data best fits a code. Codes will be reviewed to identify their properties or characteristics and codes may be grouped into categories or sub-categories (Glaser, 1992). This level of coding builds up categories from the data. According to Bryman and Burgess (2000) codes create the link between data and its conceptualization. Codes may relate directly to actual words or ideas participants have used to describe a situation, these are called “in vivo” codes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to this category as the basic social process (BSP). This category may be linked to many other sub-categories and may help one to understand the actions of participants in the study. Glaser (1978) identified two types of basic social processes, namely a basic social psychological process (BSPP) and a basic social structural process (BSSP). A core category may not necessarily be a BSP. At this stage in the coding process the researcher tries to find a core or key category which relates to sub-categories.

3.2.1.2 Stage 2: Integrating categories. Selective coding forms the second part of the analysis process. Here the analytical process is more abstract as conceptual names are given to categories and codes are grouped under and reviewed within these categories. Categories are also integrated and related to a core category.

Here categories are reviewed and grouped into main categories or themes and sub-categories. This is followed by a process of selective coding where categories are integrated and refined with the intention of developing a more abstract theoretical scheme that provides an explanation for how the categories are related to each other. In the process the researcher verifies the links between the core category and sub-categories. According to Babbie and Mouton (2009, p. 501 citing Strauss & Corbin 1990, p. 133) the steps in this process include doing the following: “The key here is to find the main storyline...identify the story of your object of study...show all the properties and dimensions related to your core category...identify patterns and ground your theory against the data.”

During this stage the core category or BSP is still searched for and reviewed. A BSP is a core category that reflects the basic behavior patterns that research participants show over a period of time (Glaser 1978). This category will highlight or explain the main concern or problem identified by research participants. This

category will also provide the basis for the generation of theory as it integrates the other categories into what Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 146) refer to as an “explanatory whole”. Glaser (1992) identifies the core category as having the following characteristics, namely:

It should be able to subsume other categories.

It occurs frequently in the data as a recurring theme.

It takes more time to saturate than other categories.

It must have the ability to explain behavior throughout the analytical process.

It must be able to provide an ongoing explanation of participant behavior.

It can be used to explain behavior outside of the substantive area of research.

It must easily account for variations in the relationships between the core and other categories.

It should be part of the problem itself.

It may also be classified as a basic social process, which describes fundamental behavior patterns. (summarised from Glaser, 1992, pp. 95-96).

3.1.2.3 Stage 3: Theorising. Gibson and Brown (2006, p. 28) refer to this step as solidifying theory. They describe the process of theory development using a grounded theory approach beginning with hypothesizing the relationships between categories and their properties through analytical induction (pursuing hunches and intuitions) and deduction (then formulating those intuitions in formal relational terms as a hypothesis) (ibid, 2006). Further research is done until each of the categories is “saturated” (Bryman & Burgess, 1994, p. 4). The use of memos throughout the data collection and analysis process is crucial for theory development. This includes testing relationships between codes and exploring hypotheses which are again tested in the field.

This stage of “solidifying the theory” involves “the “firming up” of theory and its constitutive components (categories, properties and hypotheses)” (Gibson & Brown 2009, p. 29). The processes of theoretical coding, theoretical sampling and category saturation are part of this stage.

Theoretical coding involves the linking of categories in the data to the core category or basic social process. This is done through the development of diagrams and models that represent the relationships between categories. During this stage the descriptive links between the categories in the data are changed into theoretical links (Glaser 1978). According to Glaser (1992) it is at this stage that theoretical codes

become the conceptual connectors linking the categories to the core category. Glaser (1978) refers to a number of coding families that data can be analysed by as the “Six Cs”. These coding families are the process family, the degree family, the dimension family, the strategic family and the models family. He recommends that novice researchers use the Six Cs family as most studies fit a causal, consequence and conditional model (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 74). Here they recommend that the researcher asks the following questions of each category:

- Is this category a condition of some other category?
- Is it a cause, context or a contingency of another category?
- Does this category co-vary with other categories?
- Is this category a strategy?

Through the process of theorizing about relationships between categories a number of relationships may need to be tested out through exploring an aspect in more depth. For example gaps in the theory development may require further data to be collected to test out relationships between categories. Here further data from specific participants, data collection sources or the literature will illuminate the examination of relationship between categories or a theoretical construct. This is referred to as the process of theoretical sampling which takes place until this area of enquiry is saturated as it reveals no further linkage or new insights. According to Glaser (1978) theoretical sampling is a step in which additional data or literature is consulted in order to test out or develop a theoretical aspect.

Theory or category saturation occurs when theoretical sampling has been done and no new information, patterns or linkages have been added to the categories in the study as a result of a process of further enquiry. At this point the data is seen to have reached saturation point (Glaser, 1978). Pergert (2009) drawing on the experience of doing her Ph.D. using a grounded theory approach makes the following point about the process of data saturation:

Saturation is always a subjective judgment and the decision to stop theoretical sampling, using the methodological guidelines, is always influenced by the scope of the research project, particularly in terms of time and resources. This judgment is a real challenge and the outcome could always be different; further theoretical sampling can usually be motivated (Pergert, 2009, p. 68).

3.2.1.4 Stage 4: Writing. The writing stage begins with the writing of both theoretical and methodological memos and diagramming, and proceeds to theoretical

sorting of memos and then the writing of initial drafts. “Theoretical memoing is crucial to the development of grounded theory” (Glaser, 2002). According to Glaser (1978) if a researcher neglects this analytical and reflective step they are not doing grounded theory. According to Gibson and Brown (2009, p. 29) this stage of writing involves the collation of memos and data exemplars to write up a theory which is a “presentation of ideas rather than an exploration of them”. Memoing is the documentation of the ideas, thoughts and hunches of the researcher in relation to his/her key research questions. According to Babbie and Mouton (2009) they are the building blocks of theory development, as they give a representation of the researcher’s thoughts and reflections throughout the research process. According to Glaser (1992) they provide a record of the theory development and the research process and are used to write up the final substantive theory. Memos have four basic goals, namely:

- Theoretically developing ideas by raising the analysis of data to a theoretical level.
- Freely develop ideas as they emerge without constraints of length or audience.
- Develop a memo fund of ideas for further reflection and writing
- Provide sortable information to support the writing and analysis process (Glaser, 1978).

Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 197) identify three types of memos: code notes, theoretical notes and operational notes. Code notes reflect ideas related to the conceptualization process and theoretical notes show the inductive and deductive thinking related to categories their properties and relationships. Operational notes focus on methodological issues to refine or address (ibid, p. 1990).

Theoretical sorting of memos is a preparatory process in the writing up of theory. It involves the collation of ideas, diagrams and short notes and memos taken from the start of the research process. These memos are categorized and reviewed, in order to write up an emerging theory. The process of theoretical sorting and memoing helps to integrate the data and provide an emerging picture of the area under study.

The use of the constant comparative method continues throughout the research process as data is sorted and coded and categories are compared with each other and linked to key categories in the development of theory.

As mentioned in chapter two within the principles of a grounded theory approach researchers choose different approaches. A classic grounded theory approach generally conforms to the steps and stages originally outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967). This approach has been developed further and elaborated upon by Glaser (1992) and other contemporary researchers, however it still adheres strongly to the basic principles of grounded theory originally developed by Glaser and Strauss.

Alternatively there is the approach to GT developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990) which while using the principals of a grounded theory approach also uses coding procedures, such as axial coding, that are more technical. Using their approach the research question may be set by the researcher before data collection begins. A theoretical framework or review of the literature may inform data collection thus pre-conceived theoretical frameworks and more structured processes of data collection may be used. A constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2000 & 2008) could also be adopted which places greater emphasis on procedures of accuracy in data collection and analysis and asserts an interpretivist stance in data analysis.

There is also an eclectic approach in which the researcher selects aspects from these approaches that meet the needs of the research study. As described in chapter two I primarily used a classic grounded theory approach.

3.3 Definition of Terms Used

In my research use the following terms related to grounded theory:-

Coding – “Specification of categories within data through the process of initial coding and axial coding” (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 29).

Code - is used to define a category of data. Empirical codes are generated through the examination of the data. (ibid, 2009, p. 137)

Code Family - Refers to “a group of codes that bear some “family resemblance” in a way defined by the researcher” (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 138).

Constant comparative method - “Involves comparing findings or observations with other instances in which those findings might be applicable” (Strauss & Corbin, cited in Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 29).

Category saturation – when theoretical sampling adds no further information (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Hypotheses – “A conceptual relationship between two or more aspects of a given analytic framework” (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 140).

Invivo Code – Codes given by using the actual words/descriptions participants give, also called substantive codes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Open Coding – coding of raw data into categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Property – “this is a feature of a code that varies along a sliding scale” (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 137).

Selective Coding – more analytical and abstract form of coding that gives conceptual names to categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Theoretical codes – conceptual connectors linking categories (Glaser, 1992).

Theoretical sampling - Choosing new sources of data or sites of data collection from individuals, situations or the literature that may test out or advance the development of the emergent theory (Glaser, 1992).

Triangulation methods - Using different methods to investigate the same idea or concept from different viewpoints (Babbie & Mouton, 2009)

Writing memos - keeping notes on the process of data collection, analysis and theorizing (Babbie & Mouton, 2009; Glaser, 2012).

3.4 Argument for a Single-Case Study Methodology

I used a single case study of a school as it best suited my research aims. Babbie and Mouton (2009, p. 280) point out that “it is only within the past two decades that case study research has become “scientifically respectable”. The use of case study research in the social sciences has been well documented and recognized as a valuable method for contributing to educational and social research (Patton, 1990; Stake, 1995a & 1995b; Yin, 1993 & 1994). However single case study research has been criticized severely by some academics. Babbie and Mouton (2009, p. 280) cite the example of Campbell and Stanley (1966) criticizing single case studies as having very little scientific value due to “the near impossibility of ascribing causation in a single case, where no pre-test is available and few variables are measured at post-test”. I address a number of these criticisms in Section 3.4.4. by looking both at the strengths and weaknesses of case study research.

3.4.1 Definition of a case study. Babbie & Mouton (2009, p. 281) drawing on the views of Handle (1991); Runyan (1982) and Yin (1994) describe the case study as, “an intensive investigation of a unit within its context” where, “Thickly described case studies take multiple perspectives into account and attempt

to understand the influences of multilevel social systems on the subjects' perspectives and behaviours". A broad range of case studies can be undertaken. A unit of study within a case study can be an individual person, a group, organisation, a community or multiple individual units (Babbie & Mouton, 2009). Cases are defined as the actual concrete instances of the unit of analysis. "Whereas the unit of analysis indicates a kind or a type of entity, the 'cases' are the actual individuals or groups or towns studied" (Mouton, 1996, p. 92).

3.4.2 Describing my case study. My own study involved the investigation of a single case study of a public primary school. Using a grounded theory research design, my intention was to propose a theory which seeks to explain the cause-effect relationships within a particular context. My type of case study fits into Yin's (1993) definition of an explanatory case study, although I was not concerned with presenting data on cause-effect relationships and identifying linkages between causes and effects.

The figure below represents a summary the multiple cases I have focused on with my case study of a school. Namely the case of a school, the case of teachers and the case a principal. The units of analysis I will be focusing on within my study of this case are described in the section below (3.2).

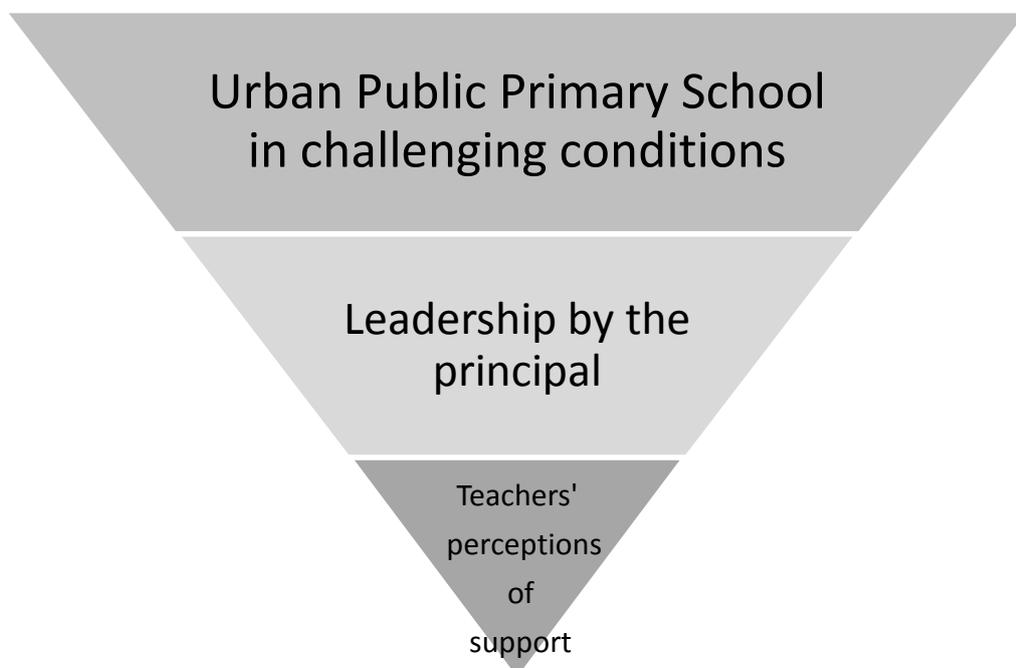


Figure 3.2: *Summary of the Multiple Cases within my Case Study Schools*

3.4.3 Defining my case. For the purposes of developing a grounded theory about how teachers perceive a principal as supporting their well-being in a school in challenging conditions, I purposely selected a case study school which was reputed to have good leadership by the principal and a level of teacher support. The school needed to be a primary school located in an urban area, serving a predominantly working class community.

Each of the four data sets as described in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2, are the units of analysis I focused on within my study of this school “case”. Due to the nature of my study which was to develop a grounded theory, I did not intend to study either individual teachers or groups of teachers as multiple cases within the broader case of the school. I also chose not to specifically look at “the case” of gender or racial composition of teachers and how this related to teacher perceptions of their well-being. Although this is an important aspect to research, it did not fit within the general aims of my research. Rather these issues were explored more generally through a focus on conditions, causes and consequences that supported or constrained the well-being of teachers.

I now address a number of positive and negative criticisms of doing case study research.

3.4.4 Strengths of case study research. Case study research offers the researcher a number of strengths (Babbie & Mouton, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Yin, 1993). These include the potential for thick description, a holistic and realistic perspective and a basis for formulating hypotheses for future research. Below I reflect on these aspects in relation to my own research.

Doing an in-depth case study provided me with the ability to gather a detailed level of data. In the development of a grounded theory I could probe and understand the interrelationships between issues people raised; provide a thick level of description of the context and participants perspectives and engage in theoretical sampling of issues to substantiate the claims I was making. This enabled me to present a holistic and realistic perspective on daily challenges teachers faced.

Providing this level of detailed description enables other readers to engage with the similarities and differences within their own context and thus supports the level of transferability of these findings to other contexts. Engaging with a single school for an extended period of time helped me to illuminate aspects of the daily

lives of teachers. Selecting a single case school enabled me to explore a number of complex interrelated aspects of schools life in more depth. This facilitated a deeper level of theoretical sampling to test out hunches or hypotheses as they occurred. This would not have been possible if I had decided to do a multi-case study. I would argue that although I had a single case study school there were multiple cases within this single case (see Figure 3.2 above).

The multiple iterative steps in the constant comparative methods of the grounded theory approach ensured an authentic and realistic account of the experience of teachers. Using a case study fitted my grounded theory research design. This case study research also highlighted possible areas for future exploration and research.

3.4.5 Limitations of case study research. A number of negative criticisms have been raised against case study research (Babbie & Mouton, 2009; Guba and Lincoln, 1991; Yin, 1993). These include a limited basis for scientific generalization, a lack of rigor and clarity, research bias; vague analytic procedures, and poorly conceptualized theoretical frameworks. Many of these criticisms have also been leveled at qualitative research in general. In the section below on the truthfulness of my research, I address a number of these criticisms in more detail.

3.5 Trustworthiness and Validity

Bearing in mind the critiques against grounded theory (highlighted in chapter 2) and case study research. I will now address a number of them by showing how I address the issue of rigor in my research. I agree with Miles and Huberman that: “We need to keep working at sensible cannons for qualitative data analysis, in the sense of shared ground rules for drawing conclusions and verifying their sturdiness” (1994, p. 2). Silverman argues that social science is scientific, “to the extent that it uses appropriate methods and is rigorous, critical and objective in its handling of data” (2001, p. 224).

Scholars (Babbie & Mouton, 2009; Glaser, 2009; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994) have proposed a number of criteria to build a level of rigour into interpretive research, namely: participant feedback, triangulation, including participants’ responses, and making one’s research position

clear. In this section I address the issue of rigour through the concepts of trustworthiness and validity.

3.5.1 Trustworthiness. According to Babbie and Mouton (2009, p. 310) “objectivity” is also understood within qualitative research as being synonymous with “trustworthiness”. A key principle for good qualitative research identified by Guba and Lincoln (1985) is its trustworthiness. According to Babbie & Mouton (2009, p. 276) the basic issue of trustworthiness is captured in this question: “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including him or herself) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to or worth taking account of?” Within the context of qualitative research Gibson and Brown (2009, p. 59) explain that “In contrast to validity, trustworthiness focuses on the context of data collection and the methods of the generation of the data rather than on its inherent “truthfulness”.

In order to address the notion of trustworthiness of my research process and report, I have constructed a table that identifies the criteria that operationalize the notion of “trustworthiness”, based on the work of Guba and Lincoln (1985) and explained and expanded upon by Babbie & Mouton (2009, pp. 277-278). According to Babbie and Mouton (2009) “trustworthiness” incorporates the concepts of, “credibility”, “transferability”, “dependability” and “confirmability” (ibid, p. 310). I used these criteria and their processes as indicators of rigor in my study. I briefly describe how I addressed them in my case study research using a grounded theory research design. Here I show the procedures recommended under each of these aspects in order to build both the methodological and theoretical rigor of my study. In the right hand column I indicate the steps I took.

Table 3.1: *Criteria that Operationalise the Notion of “trustworthiness” and How it is Addressed in my Study (Summarised from Guba & Lincoln (1985) in Babbie & Mouton, (2009).*

Criteria Operationalising Trustworthiness	Procedures	Measures Adopted in My Research
Credibility – “Compatibility between the constructed realities that exist in the minds of the respondents and those attributed to them” (Babbie & Mouton, 2009, p. 277)	Prolonged engagement Persistent observation Triangulation Referential adequacy Peer debriefing and review Member checks	Stayed in field to check for data saturation. Use of constant comparative method: Multiple methods of data collection and analysis. Theoretical sampling. Peer debriefing with Ph.D. group and external mentor. Member checks of data and interpretation

Criteria Operationalising Trustworthiness	Procedures	Measures Adopted in My Research
Transferability – “Extent to which the findings can be applied in other contexts.” (ibid, p. 277)	Thick description. Purposive sampling.	throughout. Detailed description and reporting of data. Purposive sampling of case study. Theoretical sampling to ground theory in the data.
Dependability - “Evidence to show that if the findings were repeated with the same or similar respondents in the same or similar context, they would be similar” (ibid, p. 278)	Extent to which study relates to confirmability criteria.	Provide evidence of the process of data collection and analysis giving an audit trail of the analytical process.
Confirmability – Extent to which the findings are the product of the focus of the inquiry and not researcher bias” (ibid, p. 278)	Confirmability audit trail. Raw data. Data reduction and analysis products. Data reconstruction and hypothesis products. Material relating to intentions and dispositions. Instrument development information.	Examples of how the raw data was analysed. Participant quotes to substantiate claims. Data analysis summaries at various stages in the analysis process showing how grounded theory was developing. Steps in the constant comparative mode shown. Theoretical memos. Methodological memos. Code notes. Field-notes. Examples of interview schedules and questionnaires.

In chapter two I clearly state my own theoretical position and how it shaped both by my research design and questions as well as process of data analysis and meaning making. Dealing with my own bias was an aspect of the research process I was always conscious of.

Through the use of the constant comparative method I built in a number of steps at a data collection, analysis and theorizing level to check the authenticity of the data and triangulate my findings and substantiate the theoretical propositions I was developing. I tried to ensure that the multiple views and realities of participants were “truthfully” represented at each phase in my research process. I built in numerous steps to cross-check and analyse the data with participants and my peers. In my research report I including direct quotations of participants to ensure their voices and understandings were clearly reflected. Glaser (2012, p. 28) cautions against the researcher getting trapped in accuracy issues as he asserts the intention of grounded theory is to conceptualise the data. The systematic use of the stages in the constant comparative method built a level of rigor in the final development of a substantive grounded theory. Here processes of theoretical sampling between data sets, such as

the interviews and questionnaire responses and in relation to the literature enabled a level of rigour to be brought to the processes of internal validation of the data.

Based on a review of my own research process and report using the criteria of “trustworthiness” above, I would argue that I built in a number of techniques and steps to support the trustworthiness and authenticity of my study. Babbie and Mouton make the point that: “A qualitative study cannot be transferable unless it is credible, and it cannot be deemed credible unless it is dependable” (2009, p. 277). I will now address the issue of the transferability of this study.

3.5.2 Validity. While validity “refers to the extent to which a specific measurement provides data that relates to commonly accepted meanings of a particular concept.” (ibid, p. 125), reliability “refers to the likelihood that a given measurement procedure will yield the same description of a given phenomenon if that measurement is repeated” (Babbie & Mouton, 2009, p. 25). Within grounded theory research Glaser (2009) argues that if the researcher remains true to the steps within the constant comparative method which stresses a focus on returning to the data and iterative processes of reflection and analysis, their findings will be trustworthy and reliable. Glaser and Strauss (1967) also state that the purpose of grounded theory is to develop a theory identifying the major concerns of participants and not to validate findings.

3.5.2.1 Internal validity. I hold the position that the findings of this case study research have a strong level of internal validity because of the various processes of participant validation and triangulation used in the constant comparative method. I sought to systematically show the relationship between my analysis of the data and my theorising about it. I have reported on how I included participant engagement and peer group review in cross-checking my initial open coding of data as well as the linkages I was drawing during the selective coding process. Being rigorous in the methods helped to ensure a level of internal validity of this study.

In the final stages of theory building I engaged with the findings of this study in relation to other studies which had been conducted in the field, thus making tentative links to a broader level of validity.

3.5.2.2 External validity. Yin (1993) argues that cases are context-related units and not sampling units. Thus the findings of a single case study cannot be used for external validity where findings of a single case can be generalized to represent

the “case” for all schools. However the value of case study research for analytic generalisability is well documented (Patton, 1990; Siedman, 1998; Yin, 1993). Guba and Lincoln (1989) recommend using the term transferability for external validity.

I would argue that the potential for analytical generalization is strengthened through the use of a grounded theory research design. Here the strong emphasis on the constant comparative method helped to build a level of credibility of the theoretical propositions made. While I am not suggesting that the findings from this single case study using a grounded theory approach can be generalized to all schools, I would argue that the potential for the transferability of these finding to other contexts is strengthened by emerging theory having been tested against the literature and other research finding in this field in South Africa and abroad, as well as through the detailed description of the context of the case study.

A grounded theory helps to highlight broader patterns and connections which may well resonate with those experienced in other contexts, however the transferability of this theory would depend upon the active engagement by other actors. With regard to the issue of whether or not this theory helps to explain experiences of teachers in other contexts I would argue that the transferability of these findings to other contexts will be shaped by the level of resonance between my own ontological and epistemological values and beliefs and my findings, and the world views of other people who engage with this research report.

3.6 Overlapping Phases in My Research Journey

My research journey over a four year period was characterized by four broad overlapping phases. A preparatory phase, an intensive fieldwork phase, an intensive data analysis phase and an intensive writing, analysis and editing phase. The diagram below gives an overview of these three interrelated phases. The first column shows the time frame of the three and a half year period. The second column shows the key research processes of data collection, analysis and writing. The third column shows the iterative or overlapping phases of data collection, analysis and synthesis using a constant comparative method in a grounded theory approach. Each of these phases is described in more detail below where I elaborate on how I applied the process of classic grounded theory.

Time Line	Research Phases	Key Research Processes	Overlapping Cycles
2010	Preparatory Phase	Draft conceptual framework Pre-selection criteria. Pre-selection of research site. Development of semi-structured interview schedule and questionnaire.	
2011	Intensive Fieldwork Focus	Sampling of research sites Final selection of research site Non-participant observation Hypothesizing Data collection Interviews Data analysis Data collection Testing hypotheses Data collection Methodological Memoing Member checks Theoretical Memoing Data analysis Data review Theoretical sampling Data saturation Member checks Theoretical Memoing	
2012	Intensive Data Analysis Focus	Data analysis Member checks Review data analysis in relation to the literature Theoretical memoing Emerging theory Theorising “grounding theory” Engaging with the literature Substantiating theory	
2013	Intensive Writing, analysis and Editing	Writing up substantive theory related to each data set. Theoretical memoing. Integrating data sets and developing a substantive theory. Writing, rewriting and editing.	

Figure 3.3: The Overlapping Phases and Research Processes in this Study

3.7 Preparatory Phase

This phase focused on the selection of my case study school. It involved a pre-selection phase, the development of a conceptual framework for my research and the development and testing of my semi-structured interview schedules.

3.7.1 Selection of my case study school. For the purposes of answering my research questions using a grounded theory approach, I purposely chose a case of

a school in challenging conditions¹³. I was looking for a school that was recognized as having a good level of leadership and was regarded by district officials and principals of other schools, as being a well-functioning school. Here I made the assumption that a “good” principal would provide a level of support for the well-being needs of teachers. I needed the case study school to be a public primary school as this was the type of school that most learners in South Africa attend.

One could argue that most schools have challenges posed by the community and country contexts they are situated in. I wanted to study an urban primary school because of the specific challenges posed to schools and teachers in this context. However I also wanted to select a school that was situated in an urban context where a number of complex educational and social issues related to being located in a working-class context were evident. Thus I was looking for a school that was faced with having to deal with “challenging conditions”.

Drawing on my experience of development work in schools, I was aware of the increased responsibility for learner support that rested on the shoulders of teachers in working class schools in both rural and urban areas. Knowing that teachers had an increased role in addressing the educational, biological, psychological and social support needs of learners, I was keen to investigate how this related to their well-being and their needs for support.

The selection of the case study school took a number of months and required a number of steps in a purposive sampling process. I applied a checklist of sampling questions recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994) in the development of the pre-selection criteria for the school case and in the final selection of the case study school. In summary they were:

1. Is the sample relevant to your conceptual frame and research questions?
2. Will the phenomena you are interested in appear?
3. Does your plan enhance the generalisability of your findings, either through conceptual power or representativeness?
4. Can believable descriptions and explanations be produced, ones that are true to real life?
5. Is the sampling plan feasible, in terms of time, money, access to people, and your own work style?
6. Is the sampling plan ethical, in terms of issues such as informed consent, potential benefits and risks, and the relationship with informants? (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 34).

¹³ In chapter 1 I briefly elaborated upon what the term “challenging conditions” meant. This is further explained in chapter 4 where I give a detailed description of the challenges teachers in this school face.

I developed a pre-selection criteria list (see below) to ensure the research site and participants would be appropriate for the purposes of my research study. In addition to these criteria the school had to be accessible for my research study and thus needed to be located in Cape Town. Table 3.2 shows the criteria in my pre-selection list:

Table 3.2: Criteria for the Selection of Case Study School.

Criteria for Selection of Case Study School	
1.	Principal is identified by the district staff as a good leader.
2.	School is identified as a “good “or “well-functioning” by district and/or other principals.
3.	School literacy and numeracy results G3 and G6 are above average in the area in 2009/2010.
4.	School quintile is between 1 and 4. ¹⁴
5.	School is situated in a working class urban area.
6.	School is a public primary school.
7.	Principal is willing to participate in the study.
8.	Principal acknowledges that s/he has a role in promoting/supporting the well-being of teachers.
9.	Staff identifies the principal as being supportive.
10.	Staff is willing to participate in the study.
11.	Principal identifies the school as having a challenging context.
12.	School is accessible for data collection purposes.
13.	Principal and staff are willing to have the researcher collect data over a six month period in the first and second terms of the year.
14.	Principal and staff are willing to have the research done by a non-participant observer in meetings.
15.	Principal and staff accept the ethical guidelines of the study.
16.	Principal has been in the position for at least 3 years.
17.	The WCED gives permission for this study to be conducted in this school.

3.7.2 Selection of the research site and obtaining research permission. I identified three potential schools where the research study could take place through using my knowledge of schools in the area by obtaining recommendations from school principals I knew, consulting with private individuals

¹⁴ The Norms and Standards for the funding of public primary and secondary schools makes provision for schools to receive a subsidy from the State based on their categorisations in term of a poverty quintile. Section 36 of the South African Schools Act (1996) and paragraphs 49 to 51 of the Norms and Standards place a duty on the governing body of a school to “take reasonable measures” (Western Cape Education Department Circular 0084/99) raise additional funding to supplement the schools income from the State.)

working in educational support services and staff in the District Support Team, and in consultation with members of one teachers' union SADTU.

In the pre-selection interviews I informed each principal about my research and reviewed the suitability of the school as a research site. Here I used my pre-selection criteria list as a guide. Although two of the schools met all of my criteria, one of these schools subsequently withdrew from the selection process, due to the number of external interventions taking place at this school. I then selected the remaining school that met most of the desired criteria although the school had been categorized as a middle income school. This dilemma was resolved in discussion with the principal over the aspect of user fees. The principal felt the school could be considered a "less advantaged" school serving a predominantly working class community. The fees of R930 per year in comparison with other quintile 5 schools in the area of R22 000 per year, served to place the school in a similar category to many working class schools in the area.

In the final selection meeting with the principal and staff, research permission was obtained. The process involved me presenting my research proposal, answering questions, providing copies of an information sheet setting out my research aims and objectives, as well as research ethics. The research ethics were explained and discussed with the staff in detail (Refer to heading 3.13 for a description of the research ethics used in this study). These documents were left with staff members to read and sign. My research in the school began after I had collected all signed copies of the consent forms.

The handing out of an information sheet and consent form for the research which highlighted research, assisted in building a foundation of mutual respect and trust. In the first meeting with teachers I attempted to establish a bridge of trust though focusing on aspects of common identity, such as my role as a teacher and a person who empathized with the need for teacher support. I was also conscious of highlighting a link to the politically progressive work that I had been doing professionally which I hoped would place me in a different camp to white people who had conservative political agendas. Teachers in this staff meeting spoke spontaneously about the need for a study of this nature. This assisted me in feeling confident that this case school would provide appropriate data for the research study.

3.7.3 Refinement of my conceptual framework. During this phase of my research I developed an initial broad conceptual framework¹⁵ for this study. This helped to identify general areas I felt would be important to gather data in and to assist in delimiting the scope of the study. The conceptual framework underwent a number of shifts and changes during my research journey (See Chapter 2).

3.7.4 Development and piloting of data gathering instruments. I developed a semi-structured interview guide and piloted it with two teachers and one principal at one primary school, and one teacher and two deputy principals at another primary school. In consultation with my supervisor, a number of changes were made to this interview guide. Changes included reducing the number of guiding questions and changing the complexity of the wording I was using. (See Appendix: C).

3.8 Intensive Fieldwork Phase

My intensive fieldwork phase included establishing a relationship with my case study school, data gathering, data analysis, cross-checking data, participant feedback, hypothesis testing and memo writing. I describe each of these aspects below.

3.8.1 Establishing a relationship with my case study school. Establishing a relationship of trust with the research participants was of fundamental importance in my being able to collect qualitative data for this study. Through the acceptance of this research study by this principal I was able to gain access to the staff and the broader school community. Engaging staff in a discussion about my research focus helped to establish a foundation for an interviewing relationship.

In establishing my relationship with the teachers I was conscious of issues of race, gender, religious orientation and class and their influence on the research relationship. Siedman (1998) highlights the need for an awareness of the power dynamics at play in interviewing relationships. He suggests that the interviewer be “acutely aware of his or her own experience with them as well as sensitive to the way these issues may be affecting participants” (Siedman, 1998, p. 80).

The social context within which I was doing research was a black, working class school. All of the teachers were black and of a middle class socio-economic

¹⁵ See the conceptual framework presented in chapter 2. This framework underwent a number of revisions in the initial conceptualisation of the research and as the research process developed.

status. The majority of teachers in the school were women over the age of 35 years. Points of congruence I had with the research participants were my status as a woman in her early fifties and a middle class status. I had also been a teacher and had a long history of working in the education system. My ability to speak both English and Afrikaans also provided a point of congruence and assisted with building a level of trust and ease in the research process.

I was aware that being a white woman, within the context of a country recently out of the grip of apartheid, meant that “racial” and cultural differences could be factors that might create tension in an interviewing relationship. I was mindful of the need to build trust and openness between myself and participants. I also assumed that participants would answer only what they felt comfortable in answering. The voluntary nature of the research also provided the space of participants not to be interviewed if they felt uncomfortable with me. During interviews I was aware of the influence of my effect on the way in which the participants made meaning of their experience. Siedman cautions that:

although the interviewer can strive to have the meaning being made in the interview as much a function of the participants’ reconstruction and reflection as possible, the interviewer must nevertheless recognize that the meaning is, to some degree, a function of the participant’s interaction with the interviewer. Only by recognizing that interaction and affirming its possibilities can interviewers use their skills...to minimize the distortion that can occur because of their role in the interview. (1998, p. 16).

I felt I was able to build a bridge of trust and credibility through my engagement with staff. At all times I was aware of being respectful and courteous to participants and fitting in with their needs. My work in research and organization development work in schools over the last 25 years helped me to ask probing questions and empathise with the teachers and the challenges they faced. My work experience and knowledge of the context as well as my class versatility helped me to build my level of credibility and trust with the staff.

3.8.2 Data gathering. The numerous times I visited the school and interviewed staff or gave feedback to staff at different points in the data collection and analysis process, mirrored the stages of the constant comparative process in action.

Data gathering in the fieldwork phase involved individual semi-structured in-depth interviews of approximately one hour in length, conducted by the researcher with 19 teachers. In addition I had two semi-structured and three open ended interviews with the principal of between one and two hours in duration over a six month period starting in February 2011. A semi-structured interview guide was used for the interviews with teachers and principal (See Appendix: D for the interview guide with the principal). Toward the mid-point in my data collection I developed a questionnaire for all teachers that assisted me with a level of theoretical sampling¹⁶ about the specific role the principal played in supporting their well-being. I piloted this questionnaire with a small group of teachers at one primary school and made changes to this instrument before I used it at my case study school (See Appendix: E). Theoretical sampling also included documentary analysis of the most recent school improvement plan. Its content was analysed in order to provide a further level of theoretical sampling to identify how provision was made to support the well-being of teachers in the school planning documents. Throughout the process I took detailed theoretical and observational memos of various phenomena I observed in the school.

3.8.2.1 *Semi-structured interviews.* Two categories of interviews were conducted: interviews with teachers and interviews with the principal. David Silverman (2001) emphasises the importance of recognising the problematic analytic status of interview data which he contends is “never simply raw but are both situated and textual” (2001, p. 288). He cautions against “simple-minded triangulation of data” and recommends that researchers do justice to the “embedded, situated nature of accounts” (p. 288).

Interviews with teachers. The semi-structured, in-depth interviews described above with the teachers were used to gain an understanding of how they perceived and experienced the principal in supporting their well-being. Seidman (1998) makes the case that in some research situations the in-depth interview is the most appropriate methodology to use to elicit responses. For this study I used a purposeful but flexible structure and framework within which to elicit responses from participants, which is in keeping with methods of interviewing within qualitative

¹⁶ Theoretical sampling refers to the process of gathering additional data from individuals, situations or the literature in order to substantiate or advance theory development. Here only data that will support theory development related to the specific leadership roles the principal played was sought.

research and more specifically a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The initial questions focused on obtaining demographic data on the teacher and in finding out how long they had been teaching at the school and in the profession. This was followed by an open question asking teachers what they understood the term teacher well-being to mean. Teachers were then asked about what supported them to cope with the demands of their job, and what made this difficult. This was followed by questions related to the specific way in which the principal supported the teacher to cope.

As described above, I was conscious of the need to build an open and trusting relationship with participants, in order to create the most conducive climate for accessing meaningful data. Creating the right climate included establishing a relationship with teachers as well as being considerate of the needs of teachers. Allowing the teachers a choice in the most suitable time for conducting the interviews and providing them with a free choice on whether or not to participate in the study helped build trust and respect. Giving a one hour time-frame to each interview was appropriate in this context due to the pressure on the time of teachers as well as constraints on my part as in terms of having to gather a large amount of qualitative data within a restricted time frame (due to school terms, teacher workload and availability and my own availability).

I took a number of measures to try to minimize my influence and ensure that the data captured was authentic. During the interview process I attempted to listen on the three levels described by Siedman (1998). Firstly: what the participant is saying (outer voice); secondly to the “inner voice” by eliciting the meaning of words or phrases and thirdly, active listening, by being alert to key areas but speaking less (Siedman, 1998, p. 64). Active listening was assisted through taking short notes of key issues and recording the interviews. Siedman (1998) encourages an interviewing style that helps the participant focus and the interviewer then listens or explores aspects carefully and is conscious of listening more and talking less. Siedman (1998) stresses that the purpose of the in-depth interview is to ask participants to reconstruct and explore their meanings.

I also used the three level interview structure recommended by Siedman (1998) to mitigate tensions in cross-racial interviewing. Although I only interviewed each teacher once, I made sure I met with teachers initially to explain the purpose of the research and to obtain their consent. I then did individual interviews. On visits to

the school I would also have more informal conversations to cross-check some of the assumptions I was making. These more informal meetings assisted with deeper levels of theoretical sampling of the data.

I transcribed all the interviews myself and returned them to the teachers to cross-check. I also met with each teacher individually to return interview transcripts for them to cross-check. A fourth brief meeting with teachers took place when I collected the cross-checked transcripts. Siedman (1998) contends that by returning to participants three times, “an interviewer has the opportunity to demonstrate respect, thoughtfulness and interest in the individual, all of which can work towards ameliorating skepticism” (p. 84). I would agree that having multiple levels of contact with teachers did help to build a level of trust and create opportunities for teachers to share additional data with me. One teacher only agreed to be interviewed after I had shared some of my initial findings with the staff.

Interviews with the principal. Interviews with the principal were spaced at the start, middle and end of the data gathering time frame. This structuring of interviews allowed me to both gather data as well as do theoretical sampling in order to test out connections I was making in the data. According to Siedman (1998, p. 15) the spacing of interviews reduces the impact of possibly idiosyncratic interviews and also allows for an opportunity to establish a substantial relationship with participants over time. Within a grounded theory approach it is essential that this flexibility of contact to participants is there over an extended period of time in order to allow the research to both go back to the data to check for gaps and connections as well as to enable theoretical sampling. I recorded all interviews with a digital recorder as well as wrote handwritten notes or typed them on a small laptop computer.

3.8.2.2 Cross-checking data. I transcribed all interviews, and returned them to participants personally. This I felt helped to build a level of trust as it tested out my ability to keep information confidential and to demonstrate to teachers that I took seriously the notion of them being able to add and change these transcripts. In my field notes I note my thoughts about this process in helping teachers to feel open to participate in this research:

When CJ (code) had read her transcript she came to me and asked if she could change a number of things she said because she was sure that what she said could be traced back to her, I said this was fine and she should

just delete those areas she was uncertain of” (Collett: Fieldwork Journal-Methodological Memo 18th of March 2011).

Enabling participants to check and change their interview transcripts helped to deepen the level of data accessed and to ensure the authenticity of the data collected. Siedman argues for the interviewing relationship to strive for an “I-Thou” relationship where the interviewer “...keeps enough distance to allow the participant to fashion his or her responses as independently as possible” (1998, p. 80). The process of participants cross checking data by reading through the transcripts provided another level of distance and time between me as the researcher and the answers of the participants. The act of reading and responding to a transcript, I felt, would allow a level of deepened reflection and control by participants in the data gathering process.

Throughout the research process I was conscious of the need to ask for consent to both feedback data, check data and gather new data. Siedman (1998) notes the need to check for protection from harm to participants throughout the process of the research study. Throughout the research process I obtained the consent of the principal to share information from interview transcripts and my analysis of the data pertaining to him. I acknowledge that the identity of the school principal could not be hidden through a code and that the confidentiality of the information he shared with me could not be guaranteed at the school level. Before the meeting with the teachers I went through the data that I would present with the principal in order to check that he felt he would not be harmed as a result of this discussion.

On two occasions in the initial fieldwork phase data was shared with participants. This created the potential for this research to feed into thinking and plans by staff to identify areas for improved action. Including this step in the research process enabled a level of applied research, although the study had not been initially conceptualized in this way.

3.8.2.3 Strengths of the data collection methods. In the table below I draw from the work of Siedman (1998), Miles and Huberman (1994), Silverman (2001), Babbie and Mouton (2009) and Glaser (2009) to review the strengths and limitations of my data collection methods. The table below gives a summary of the data collection methods I used and research precautions I took to build the “truthfulness” of my data.

Table 3.3: Summary of Strengths in Data Collection and Research Precautions Taken.

Research Method	Strengths	Research Precautions
Fieldwork: Memos Non-Participant observation	Rich source of data Allows researcher to follow up on (theoretical sampling). Enabled a rich understanding and description of the context.	Triangulation with other data sets. Key informant cross-checking.
Interviews Semi-structured	Semi-structured interviews allowed for comparisons to be made between participants' answers while allowing a level of flexibility to the answers participants gave. In-depth information and allowed issues to be probed. Allowed a level of "openness" for participants to respond freely. Provide a source of data that can be probed more deeply.	Aware of the effect of my role as influencing responses. 3 steps of listening: Siedman (1998). 3 steps of contact with participants to build trust. Interview feedback cross-checked with participants and through feedback sessions. Provided data sets that could be triangulated with other data sets. Rich source of information for theoretical sampling.
Questionnaires Both open and closed questions. A focus on both qualitative and quantitative data.	General coverage of a broader range of issues. Generate a level of qualitative data that can be triangulated with quantitative data from interviews showing the number of times this aspect was mentioned.	Cross-checked data against interview data. Further opportunity for theoretical sampling. Provided opportunities for both open and closed responses. Transcribing interviews myself and having them cross-checked by participants supported a level of reliability of the data.
Respondent feedback	Cross-checking of findings and initial interpretations. Supported a level of engagement with the data analysis from a participant perspective. Included input of participants who did not wish to be interviewed. Built a level of trust with participants and created opportunities for interviews to be done with participants who did not initially want to participate in the research.	Ensured data to be cross-checked and further data to be captured. Successive processes of participant feedback supported participant validation of the analysis of the data at various stages in the research process. Key informants were selected to cross-check and give and give feedback on my analysis of data and my description of the school's historical context.
Documentary	Provide a source of material beyond	Further source for theoretical

Research Method	Strengths	Research Precautions
analysis	participant views and memories	sampling. Cross-checked against teacher responses in interviews and my fieldwork observations.

3.8.2.4 Limitations and tensions in the data gathering process. Although my data collection processes had strengths and I attempted to ensure the authenticity and truthfulness of the data collected, I was aware of a number of limitations and tensions in each of these methods. In the table below I highlight some of the limitations of my data gathering process and the precautions I took to address them. .

Table 3.4: Summary of Limitations of my Data Collection Methods and Precautions Taken

Research Method	Limitations	Research Precautions
Fieldwork: Field notes Theoretical memos Methodological memos Code notes	Confined to a small group. Localised impressions. Limited ability to generalise on the basis of a single case study.	Cross-checked data with other sources. Recorded memos throughout my research study. Recorded observations as soon as possible after an event. Aware of the limitations of a single case study and did not make generalised claims from findings.
Interviews: Semi-structured individual interviews	Impact of the researcher on the setting and results. Anecdotal bias and values of the researcher. “Truth” status of respondents’ accounts is questionable. “What people say to answer interview questions does not have a stable relationship to how they behave in naturally occurring situations”. Silverman (2001, p. 232) Labour intensive.	Conscious of the effect of my role as influencing participant responses and made notes when I became aware of this. Followed a process of constant critical self-reflection. Built a relationship of trust and openness in the interview process. 3 levels of contact (Siedman 1998). Individual interview, ensuring confidentiality. Personally transcribing interviews. Participants to check and transcriptions. 3 levels of listening (Siedman 1998). Regularly summarized responses.

Research Method	Limitations	Research Precautions
		<p>Recorded all interviews.</p> <p>Probed respondent answers.</p> <p>Guard researcher anecdotal bias, by cross-checking against other data sets.</p> <p>Participant feedback appropriate to a grounded theory approach.</p> <p>Interviews triangulated with other data sets.</p>
Questionnaire	<p>Limited return rate.</p> <p>Not all questions answered.</p> <p>Limited in-depth responses from participants.</p>	<p>Administered the questionnaire in a staff workshop. All questionnaires were returned.</p> <p>Did not use (1) questionnaire where limited responses were given.</p> <p>Made space for both open-ended and closed responses.</p> <p>This formed an additional level of data collection to allow theoretical sampling.</p>
Respondent feedback	<p>Time consuming.</p> <p>Not all interpretations by participants were agreed with.</p>	<p>Arranged three shorter feedback sessions.</p> <p>Data checking and analysis by participants.</p> <p>Member checks.</p> <p>Authenticity of data and interpretations.</p> <p>Use of the constant comparative method.</p>
Documentary analysis	<p>Partial sources that exist.</p>	<p>Cross-checked against teacher responses in interviews and my fieldwork observations and memos.</p> <p>Triangulation with different data sets to cross-check data and do theoretical sampling.</p>

3.9 Data Analysis Strategy and Process

Within a grounded theory approach Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (2009 & 2012) identify coding and the constant comparative method of cross-checking and theorizing as the main processes used in data analysis. In this section I describe the stages and the processes involved in the coding and categorization of the data and in developing or grounding my theoretical proposition. I begin this section by giving an overview of steps I organized the analysis of my data into, as well as the overlapping stages of analysis within the stages of the constant comparative model.

3.9.1 Organising my Data Analysis. I began by using my conceptual framework to form a mental and practical scaffolding structure to organise the analysis of my data across my four key data sets (See the conceptual framework in Chapter 2.)

Each data set was individually subjected to the four stages in the constant comparative method in order to develop an emerging theory related to the initial process of selective coding and theorizing. This is reflected in Chapters 5 to 7. Finally all four data sets with their emerging theories which could be linked back to core categories with sub-categories were amalgamated. Here a process of substantive coding of categories and sub-categories took place across all four data sets. In Chapter 8 my substantive theory is presented and discussed in relation to the literature. The image of a whirlwind or an ever widening spiral best captures an image of the overlapping stages and levels of analysis and theorizing in my research journey. This culminated with an image of settled ground containing evidence of a cyclone after the storm has subsided.

The figure below, although one dimensional, represents an overview of my qualitative data analysis process showing the three broad steps of analysis that each data set underwent as I followed the steps in a grounded theory methodology. Within each of these steps, overlapping phases of the constant comparative method of analysis were used. I have added the specific details of the processes that occurred in each stage during my research.

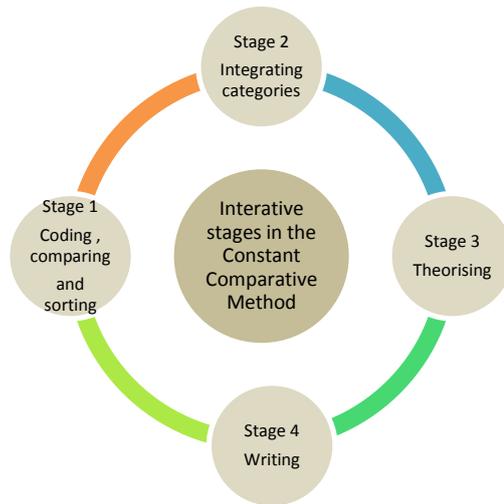
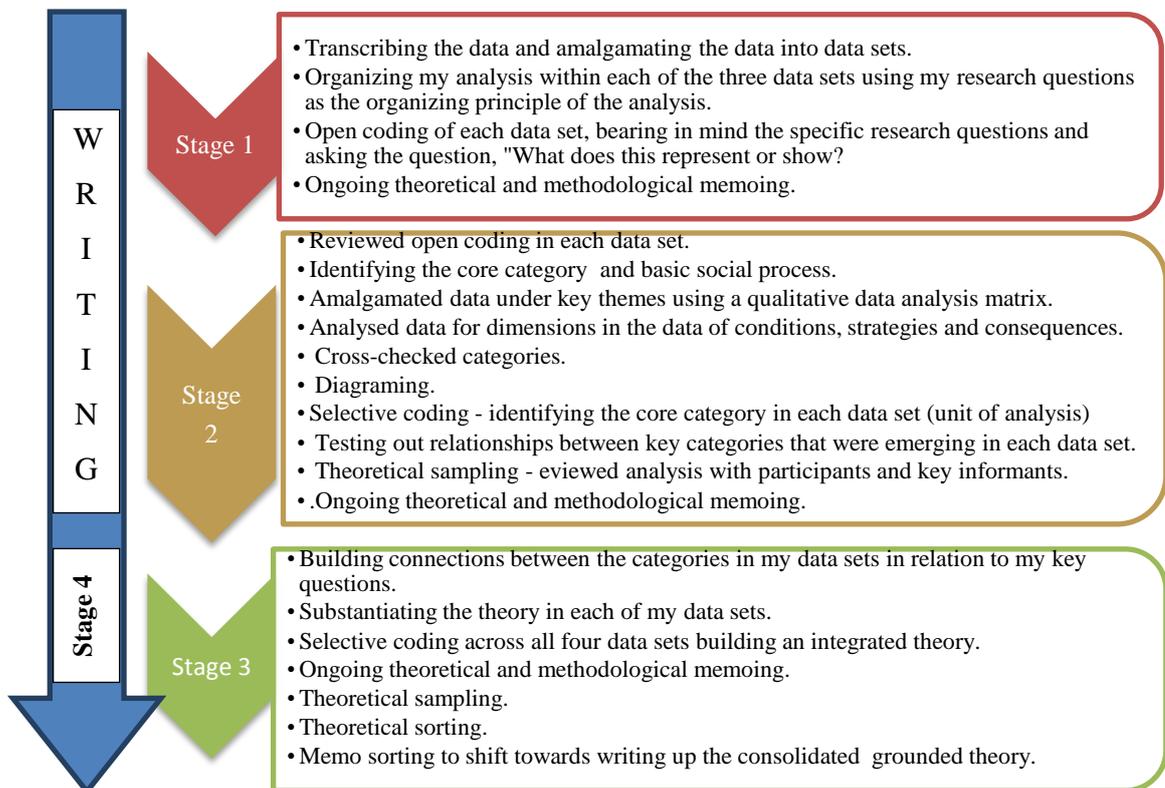


Figure 3.4: *An Overview of the Data Analysis Stages and Processes using the Constant Comparative Method*



The analytical strategy for reducing the data and developing theory involved the use of the four overlapping steps in the constant comparative method recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

During the analysis and presentation of my data using a grounded theory approach I felt there was a lot of congruence between what I was doing and the three concurrent steps of data analysis advocated by Miles and Huberman (1994), namely:

Data Reduction – “selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written up field notes or transcriptions.”

Data Display – “an analytical process that organises and condenses information in the form of visual displays such as matrices, graphs and networks, from which conclusions can be drawn.”

Conclusion drawing/verification - “begins in initial tentative ways during data collection and develops over time as a “final” conclusion is drawn through an iterative process of data analysis and verification. Here meanings have to be tested against the data (ibid, p. 10).

In the section below I describe the specific steps and stages shown in the figure above.

3.10 Stage One: Organisation of the Raw Data and Open Coding

This step of analysis contained the stages of transcribing and organizing the raw data into data sets, openly coding the data and beginning to use the stages in the constant comparative method. These processes are described below.

3.10.1 Transcription of raw data. My analysis of interview data began with the process of transcription. As Gibson and Brown emphasize, this transcription is a form of “representation and must be considered as such” (2009, p. 109). I made the decision to transcribe the interviews in the form of unfocused transcriptions (ibid, p. 116) which were then cross-checked by participants for the accuracy of their intended meaning. This form of transcription is unlike focused transcription which records all the nuances of speech or intonation. Unfocused transcriptions best suited the needs of my research as they are as detailed and accurate as possible, and they seek, “to characterise what is meant within a given piece of data” (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p.116).

3.10.2 Organising the raw data. Once each interview had been transcribed and cross-checked by participants for accuracy, each transcript was then identified with the pseudonym of the participants. I first sorted the content of each interview transcript and questionnaire into broad categories related to my research

questions. I then amalgamated the raw data from all questionnaires and interviews into four data sets or content areas related to my key research questions. Each of these data sets or texts made up a unit of analysis. This was my initial level of analyzing and sorting the raw data. I then began with the process of substantive coding. This involved open coding and then selective coding.

3.10.3 Open coding. The process of developing grounded theory begins with open coding. Open coding of each of the data sets involved identifying and creating categories linked to segments or parts of the data. This I did through a process recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1990) of asking questions and making comparisons. Here I used a process of interpretation and inductive analysis, where each interview and questionnaire response was coded to identify general themes and patterns related to my research questions. I also coded data through asking questions about the data such as “what does this link to?” or “what does this refer to?”. Babbie and Mouton (2009, p. 499) refer to the process of data analysis using a grounded theory approach as involving the labeling of a segment of text by asking the questions “*What is this?*” or “*What does this represent?*”.

I labeled segments of my text using both my own codes as well as using categories or codes I identified participants using. These are referred to as *invivo* codes. The categories I initially identified were compared with and grouped under segments that showed the same responses to the questions I asked of the data. I also counted the number of times each category occurred in the data. This took place through a process of in-depth content analysis. Content analysis is described by Silverman (2001, p. 122) as “establishing categories and then counting the number of instances when those categories are used in a particular item of text” Producing quantitative data from the qualitative data helped me gauge a level of “significance” of themes. Silverman (2001, p. 37) argues that this enables the researcher to “test and revise their generalisations, removing nagging doubts about the accuracy of their impressions about the data” while at the same time giving the reader, “a chance to gain a sense of the flavor of the data as a whole”.

The iterative nature of coding across various interview transcripts was labour intensive and involved having to review codes as they would expand to include a more general category or be spilt into a number of sub-categories. In the analysis of my raw interview data, I also wrote short memos in the margins to indicate broader

themes occurring (See Appendix: F: Open coding of data). In the analysis of interview data Siedman (1998) recommends that researchers ask themselves what they have learned from doing the interviews, and what connecting threads there are among the experiences of participants they have interviewed, how they understand these connections, and how their understanding has shifted or changed. The process of theoretical memoing and drawing conceptual diagrams helped me to test out and make connections between broader categories in the data and their relationships.

Step 1: I familiarized myself with the data in each data set and identified broad categories. These broad categories were used as an initial index under which to categorise the amalgamate data. I reviewed these categories with the initial open coded categories I had generated and then shared these broad categories with the staff in the school in order to cross-check them and access additional data or categories. This was an initial level of broad categorisation. I followed the advice of Gibson and Brown (2009) of constantly revisiting the codes in order to check that they were accurate and that they could be applied appropriately to all examples in the data. The revision of codes included splitting codes to get more refined sub-categories and merging codes where a broader category was more appropriate. Categories were merged under broader themes or code families. I drew primarily on the recommendations by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Miles and Huberman (1994) in the various phases and processes I went through in the analysis of my data. In the open coding of data I found synergy between the systematic steps used by Miles and Huberman (1994) and the constant comparative method recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in grounded theory. They all concur that “qualitative data analysis has to be well documented as a process” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 12) and that “qualitative data analysis is a continuous iterative process” (ibid, p. 12).

Step 2: I went through each data set in detail and using a line by line or phrase by phrase analysis focused on the unit of meaning related to my key questions. While doing this I identified further sub-categories and ideas. This process helped me to form a general index of categories into which I placed excerpts of the raw data that broadly fitted each category. The method of systematic data analysis proposed by Graneheim and Lundman (2004) was used to assist me in the selective coding and abstraction of categories (See Appendix: G). Here I did in-depth and systematic

content analysis of the raw transcribed data from the interviews and the amalgamated questionnaire data: This quote from Graneheim and Lundman (2004) explains the process of analysing the data that I used:

One characteristic of qualitative content analysis is that the method, to a great extent, focuses on the subject and the context, and emphasises differences between and similarities within codes and categories. Another characteristic is that the method deals with manifest as well as latent content in the text. The manifest content, that is, what the text says, is often presented in categories, while themes are seen as expressions of the latent content, that is, what the text is talking about (Graneheim & Lundman 2004, p. 109).

A constant tension I experienced in my initial analysis of data was remaining “open” to allowing categories to emerge from a systematic analysis of the data rather than trying to place them in categories or themes that I was aware of from my own experience in the field and having had a level of exposure to the literature in the area. A grounded theory approach assumes that the researcher is connected to the area of study and will need to draw on his/her insights and practices in the field, as well as exposure to the literature (Hughes, 2009; Glaser & Strauss, 1997). However it also requires the researcher to allow new insights to emerge and explore the connections between complex phenomena. Especially in the initial stages of my analysis of findings in the fieldwork phase I tried to keep an “open mind” and let the data speak.

Step 3: In order to systematically code my data I used the headings of a table (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) into which I placed my key emerging categories and meaning units they were related to that comprising of quotes, phrases or words. Each key piece of raw data was linked to a broad categories. During this stage, the iterative nature of coding across various interview transcripts was labour intensive and involved having to review codes as they would expand to include a more general category or be split into a number of sub-categories. In the analysis of my raw interview data, I also wrote short memos in the margins to indicate broader themes occurring.

During this phase I returned to my initial categories and reviewed and shifted some sub-categories into other categories. I constantly reviewed the categories and sub-categories and grouped them under broader themes. Through a process of theoretical sampling I reviewed these initial categories with the feedback that I received from participants in my presentation of data during the fieldwork phase.

Here I drew heavily on advice from Miles and Huberman's book on Qualitative Data Analysis (1994). Particularly their advice on taking systematic analytical steps and providing a number of data displays in order to support an "inventive, self-conscious and iterative stance" (1994, p. 11) by the researcher. I constantly found myself returning to a review of the categories and of trying to identify what the core category was that other categories were related to.

Glaser (2009) recommends that the researcher "has to stay engaged with the data totally and let the abstract patterns emerge through the constant comparisons, as they surely do. Disengaging from the data leads to conjecture which is counter grounded theory" (2009, p. 10).

Step 4: Once the data from each data set was arranged in a table showing codes and broader sub-categories and categories they related to, I then began the process of abstracting the data using the levels of abstraction (from raw data to theme) set out in the table. Each unit of raw data was given a condensed meaning and then coded. I then reviewed the sub-category it was under. This process also involved at times shifting a section of data to another better fitting sub-category or category. This process of analysis entailed reviewing and adding sub-categories across a whole data set. It also involved moving data under different categories using a constant comparative method of analysis between the raw data and themes and between different themes within a data set. In each data set I coded data in relation to the categories of conditions and strategies. My data sets also highlighted area which focused on conditions, strategies and perceptions related to the well-being of teachers.

During this phase of open coding I also counted the number of responses within each category table and counted numbers of similar responses in a category. Quantifying the number of responses under themes helped to give me an indication of what aspects were most significant to teachers or "a measure of salience" (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 262). According to Miles and Huberman, developing quantitative data from the qualitative data helped "by showing the generality of specific observations...and verifying or casting new light on qualitative findings" (1994, p. 41). In order to cross check my analysis of categories and their relationships I reviewed the initial categories and themes and my analysis of my raw data with my supervisor and Ph.D. support group as well as with participants.

3.11 Focused Data Analysis Phase

This phase involved a more intense focus on the analysis and cross-checking of my data, memo writing, hypothesis testing and theorising. Here I worked with selective coding of data and focused on finding the core category in each of the data sets. Once the data had been saturated in each of the data sets through various processes of theoretical sampling, I amalgamated the categories across all four data sets.

3.11.1 Selective Coding of Data. Selective coding involved a more abstracted level of coding. Here I was looking for the core category in each data set. This also included making linkages between categories and sub-categories in the data as my emerging theory developed. I first did selective coding of each data set. The data in each data set was saturated through a process of theoretical sampling of the data, participant and peer engagement as well as engagement with relevant literature. The next process involved amalgamating the four data sets in developing a grounded theory in relation to my key research question. Here I set about finding a core category and relating other categories in the other data sets to this one. This process and the development of a theoretical proposition is described in Chapter 8 where my substantive theory is presented and engaged with in relation to the literature. This process involved a number of steps that built on the initial open coding of data in each data set. Greater levels of abstraction of categories and their relationships occurred during the process of using the constant comparative method. The steps below illustrate the process steps I went through in the selective coding of data, and the development of a substantive theory.

Step 5. After the process of open coding, each data set underwent a process of selective coding. Each of the categories was then placed under broad themes.

Step 6. Each of my data sets was separately analysed and reworked in order to display the sub-categories and categories under themes. Within each data a core category or basic social process was identified that explained the relationship between this aspect in the data and other categories. Through this process and the engagement with literature an emerging theory within each of the data sets developed. I then compared my findings with key literature in the field to identify

similarities and differences and well as to review the linkages I had made between categories.

Step 7. Within each data set I developed diagrams showing the key themes and the dimensions of each core or key category. Through the process of writing theoretical memos related to each data set, an explanation for relationships between categories within a data set was developed. The processes of data analysis, theoretical sampling and memoing occurred simultaneously. I sought to look for anomalies in the data and test them against hypotheses that I was forming. I report on these anomalies in my analysis of the data and tested them out with key respondents and participants. In Chapters 5 to 7 the process of analysis of each data set is shown as it progresses from the phase of open to selective coding and then on to theorizing and the development of an emerging theory. This I compared to key literature in the field and developed a more substantive theory.

Step 8. I then began the process of making connections between the data sets in order to develop my overarching theory once I began to merge the three sub-theories into an overarching theory about how the principal supported the well-being of teacher in a school in challenging conditions. This process included memo writing and sorting and the writing of my draft chapters. This culminated in the development of a grounded theory proposition which I present in Chapter 8.

3.11.2 Memo writing. Memo writing is a fundamental part of grounded theory development. It occurred throughout all three phases of my research process. During the intensive fieldwork phase my memo writing focused more on the methodological memoing and diagraming as I pursued a level of theoretical sampling during the data capturing phase.

Throughout my fieldwork phase I took field notes in the form of observational, methodological and theoretical memos. At times this was orderly and built upon previous thinking; however at other times this included jotting down quick thoughts and ideas on a piece of paper after an interview or observations of an activity in the schools. The nature of the memos I kept tended to reflect the focus of my research work. In the fieldwork phase a greater number of methodological memos were generated, while in the phase of conducting and transcribing the interviews I began writing more theoretical memos.

The methodological memos helped to shape and deepen the type of questions I probed in my interviews. I used the recommendations by Bogdan and Biklen (1982) of engaging in preliminary analytic strategies such as narrowing down the focus of my study, reviewing my field-notes and interview process to identify where new questions could be asked. This flexibility and opportunistic approach to data gathering within a grounded theory approach is appropriate to enable a deeper engagement of issues and to explore the relationships and connections between complex phenomena (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). My memos included a number of diagrams mapping out the relationships between categories that were emerging within and between the data sets.

3.11.3 Theoretical Sampling. Throughout the process of analysis I conducted theoretical sampling to ensure that the data analysis had reached a phase of saturation. Theoretical sampling included testing out or triangulating my initial findings and hypotheses with participants, sharing them with my peer group and engaging with them in relation to the literature.

3.11.3.1 Participant feedback and hypothesis testing. Asking permission to feedback some of the initial findings at a staff meeting assisted in cross-checking the accuracy of the data, providing a further opportunity for the collection of data and testing out my initial hypothesizing of the relationship between categories in the data and involving staff in validating my tentative proposals. Participant feedback also provided the opportunity for a level of theoretical sampling, where I was able to test out some of my assumptions and gather further data from participants. Where relationships between aspects of the data were tested, new areas were explored in more depth.

At the stage of selectively coding the data and making more abstract connections between categories, I did a level of hypothesis testing and encouraged staff input on the analysis on the connections I was making between categories in the data. Participant validation is a critical part of doing good grounded theory. Glaser (2009) emphasizes the importance of going back to the data, and checking how participants understand and make meaning of the situation:

The researcher has to stay engaged with the data totally and let the abstract patterns emerge through the constant comparisons, as they surely do. Disengaging from the data leads to conjecture which is counter GT; it

undermines grounded. Good grounded theory has never ended up naive, concrete and simplistic. (Glaser, 2009, p. 10).

Based on analysis of the interview data and from the engagement of staff during the feedback of the initial data I developed a short self-completion questionnaire that all teachers were asked to complete anonymously. The questionnaire focused on key areas and themes identified in the individual interviews. The questionnaire was used as a means of theoretical sampling in order to access further data on the role the principal played at a curricular level to support the well-being of teachers. It also raised additional data on how teachers understood the concept of teacher well-being. This data was used to assist with theoretical sampling. Teachers were asked to rate and give reasons for their ratings of how the principal supported their well-being. Their rating gave a general indication of the extent of support related to an aspect. This was also confirmed by the reasons provided. Further data on strategies to improve teacher well-being were gathered from the staff discussion of this data.

During the process of analysing and abstracting the data I was aware of the words of caution raised by Graneheim and Lundman (2004), who contend that there is always the risk of “losing meaning of the text during the condensation and abstracting process” (2004, p. 108). I sought to ensure that no relevant data was excluded during the process of data analysis and that no irrelevant data was included. The engagement of a number of participants in the triangulation of categories, sub-categories and themes and getting their agreement on the categorisation of data helped to cross-check the authenticity of the data and ensure a level of credibility in the analytical process. I was aware that my own history and bias had an influence on the way I interpreted meaning in the texts. In order to balance my interpretations I triangulated my analysis with findings through the process of data analysis with participants in the study.

Sharing my initial analysis of the data with participants helped to build a level of trust and engagement by participants in the research process. One of the teachers only agreed to an interview after the initial data had been publically shared. During this meeting staff had the opportunity to add in further factors. This also presented an opportunity for the two staff members who had not participated in individual interviews to add in data and thus deepen an understanding of those factors identified through collective discussion and analysis of findings.

The sharing of more substantiated findings happened only at a point towards the end of the second year, when I felt I had enough grounding in the data and was confident in my own theorising about the data and where I felt the data had reached what Glaser and Strauss (1967) call a point of data saturation. This feedback happened both to participants and in dialogue with my supervisor and Ph.D. support group. These processes helped to cross-check and confirm categories and themes and triangulate my analysis of the data. Graneheim and Lundman (2004) support dialogue among co-researchers and participants as it assists in confirming the way in which data is sorted and labeled. Through this process I sought to establish “the most probable meaning of these findings from a particular perspective” (ibid, 2004, p. 108) and to present an argument for the most probable interpretation of these findings. Graneheim and Lundman (2004, p. 109) assert that:

qualitative data analysis interpretation involves a balancing act. On One hand, it is impossible and undesirable for the researcher not to add a particular perspective of the phenomena under study. On the other hand, the researcher must ‘let the text talk; and not impute meaning that is not there.

During the analysis process and particularly when I felt overwhelmed by the complexity of the inter-relationships between the data sets I would ask myself what the story line is (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

3.11.3.2 External Peer Validation. In participant feedback sessions to staff and to my supervisor and Ph.D. support group I shared these initial hypotheses and tested out my emergent ideas. All these processes are recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1990). Throughout the phases of my research process I shared my findings with my supervisor and external Ph.D. reference group. This enabled me to cross-check my categorisation of the data during the open coding stage and the connections or relationships I was making between categories of data as I identified broad themes. During the selective coding stage where I had identified a core category with relationships to sub-categories, I used my peer group to test out my hypothesis about the relationships between categories. Towards the end of my analysis process I once again shared my “grounded theory” with my peer support group. Their feedback helped me to review the theoretical propositions I was making. Toward the final stage of my theory development I also got feedback from a mentor who worked in the field of public health. The feedback from this support

group and the questions they asked helped me to explain the connections between categories. They also prompted me to do a deeper level of theoretical sampling of the data and the literature. These external processes of review and engagement helped me to review the analytical processes and refine the development of the theory.

Once I had written up each of the draft chapters focused on one of the data sets, I then went back to the literature pertaining to the focus area of each data set. This could be seen as my fourth step in the process of analyzing the data and developing theory. This level of triangulation allowed me to test out and engage with the theoretical propositions I was making, as well as look at possible linkages between a single data set and the other data sets. Throughout this process I drew diagrams and wrote theoretical memos that helped me to link my growing theoretical propositions from all four data sets into what I call a higher order or more abstracted theoretical proposition linked to my overarching research question.

3.11.3.4 Theoretical sampling of the literature. After I felt I had reached a level of saturation in my own data analysis and theorizing about my data, I then conducted a focused review of the literature in order to compare my findings. I initially did this in relation to each unit of analysis I was looking at. The aim here was to find studies that closely related to my research questions and interest within each data set. I did this only at a stage when I felt I had saturated my own analysis of the data. Using a grounded theory approach, my orientation was not to approach the study with a well conceptualized theoretical framework. Here again theoretical rigor was built inductively through iterative processes of data analysis and internal validation in order to generate theory. Multiple levels of theoretical sampling occurred as I tested out the linkages I was making between concepts against findings from the literature. This process helped to both substantiate some of the connections I had made between constructs in developing my theory as well as identify connections or possible linkages I had not seen. This process built my own sense of confidence in the rigor of the analytical process I had undertaken. It also helped to substantiate the theoretical claims I was making, and added to the “truthfulness” of these interpretations.

My research questions and their key words guided my search of the literature. In summary they were:

- How do teachers understand the term well-being?/ Definitions of teacher well-being/well-being.
- Factors supporting teacher well-being? Factors in schools helping teachers to cope.
- Factors constraining teacher well-being? Factors in schools making it difficult for teacher to cope.
- How does the principal support the well-being of teachers? Principal/leaders/school manager's role in helping teachers cope.

Here I used Gibson and Brown's (2009, p. 41) advice to guide my strategy in doing a focused literature search, namely:-

- Asking the same kinds of questions.
- Using the same kinds of research designs.
- Using the same kinds of methods.
- Using similar theoretical frames.
- Operating in a similar empirical domain.

3.11.3.5 Conducting the literature search. A range of literature from both developed and developing countries was accessed using a variety of sources. As reported on in chapter one, I conducted a review of the literature only once I had analysed my data and had an emerging theory in each data set. I conducted a general search of bibliographic indexes through searches of the SCOPUS and GOOGLE electronic search engines to broadly identify literature and research studies using the key words, teacher, educator, well-being, principal, head teacher and mental heal. A more focused, refined search of the literature was then done using NEXUS, EBSCOHOST and ERIC.

I followed the recommendations made by Gibson and Brown (2009) in planning my search. Firstly I took each research topic and divided it into parts and then divided these into key concepts. The key concepts under investigation were: teachers, well-being, principal, primary school. Each of these concepts was further broken down into alternate phrases under which they may be described in the literature in order to facilitate a Boolean search where both the concept and its alternative/s are used, for example:

- Teacher – educator or instructor.
- Principal - head teacher or school manager or school director.

- Well-being – mental-health or resilience.
- Primary school – school – lower and middle school.
- Grounded Theory – the inductive development of theory through the constant comparative method.

I narrowed my search down to journal articles, conference papers and professional reports and books published between 2000 and 2013 (last 13 years) and articles published in English and Afrikaans. I searched abstracts identifying how many studies had been done in a similar area over the last thirteen years with a similar focus. I then identified how many studies been done in a similar area over the last thirteen years using the methodology of grounded theory/qualitative analysis. I then summarised key findings.

My aim in the search was to clarify concepts and how they were understood and to look for connections between categories and concepts related to teacher well-being and how they were understood in order to test out the linkages I was making in my own theorizing. Two main bodies of literature were engaged with, namely: school leadership; and mental health. In chapter one I report on the number of studies I engaged with and how many of these sources were relevant. The review of the literature focused on synthesizing the literature and summarizing findings with relation to my key research questions and identifying linkages with core and sub-categories of my emerging grounded theory. In chapters 5 to 8 I engage with my findings for this review literature in order to substantiate the theoretical propositions I was making.

3.11.4 Theorising. My process of analysis and theorizing happened from the start of this research process and culminated in the final stages of writing this thesis. The initial stages of theorising focused on linking categories between the different data sets. Here I compared the “case” of how teachers understood the term teacher well-being with the “case” of the school and how this supported and constrained their well-being. Finally I compared the findings in the two “cases” above with the “case” of how teachers perceived the principal to be supporting or constraining their well-being. I compared and contrasted findings and characteristics across the different cases. Through this process I began to develop both a level of theorizing within a data set and between data sets.

Towards the end of the year I shared some of my more “grounded” theoretical explanations with the staff before writing up my final thesis chapters. Although this theoretical chapter came at the end, I started early in the year to write up the presentation of my data sets, drawing diagrams to show the relationship between categories and their dimensions and making theoretical memos linking my four key data sets.

Throughout the research process I constantly reviewed the analysis of my data and the development of my initial “model” or hypotheses. Once again the process of constant theoretical memoing and triangulation of findings against other data sets and finally the literature helped to shift and shaped my thinking. I used the overlapping steps of coding, memoing and theorizing recommended in the constant comparative method of grounded theory (Glaser, 2009; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) (See Appendix: H for an example of a few of my theoretical and methodological memos).

3.11.5 Sorting Memos and Writing. The sorting of memos began the process of organizing my thinking and reflection and writing up the theory. Theoretical and methodological memos were sorted into categories. Theoretical memos were linked into categories which related to the data sets I was focused on. Have electronic memos on the computer helped to facilitate the process of sorting memos and writing. I also had a number of sketches and diagrams that linked to the written memo sets.

The writing process was iterative, ongoing and cyclical. It began with my thesis proposal and initial hunches, developed into the writing of memos and then on to the writing up of draft chapter. I began the process of writing about each of the data sets and presenting my analysis of the data this was the first phase draft of writing which helped to focus my analysis at the open coding and selective coding phase. In the second draft of Chapters 5 to 7 I included a written section on the substantiation of my proposed theory once I had gone back to the literature. Gibson and Brown (2009) recommend that writing has a formative role to play in all stages of the research. The memoing helped develop my analysis and theorizing. Writing up the findings of each data set helped to develop and explain the linkages between the categories in the data.

Throughout my writing up of the study I sought to provide a clear description of the school conditions, culture and context in order to give the reader a rich

description of the setting and characteristics of participants in the study. Graneheim and Lundman (2004, p. 108) emphasize the importance of providing a “rich and vigorous presentation of the findings together with appropriate quotations to enhance transferability” in order to support the transferability of findings to other contexts by the reader.

After writing up and presenting my grounded theory proposition I once again discussed it in relation to the literature, in order to give show how it was substantiated in relation to other findings in the field. Chapter 8 of this thesis presents this discussion.

3.12 Strengths and Weaknesses of Data Collection and Analysis

The phases in my research journey described above have illustrated how I applied the processes of the constant comparative method in grounded theory research. Although I have discussed how I took precautions to ensure the rigor of the research process within the framework of an interpretivist research paradigm, I now present a summary of the strengths and weaknesses in the process of my data collection and analysis. Here I present the precautions I took to build the authenticity of the data and truthfulness of my explanations.

Table 3.5: Summary of strengths of the data collection & analytical process in this study.

Data Collection & Analysis	Criticisms	Researcher Precautions
Adequacy sampling	Single case study	Group analysis. All but one staff member participated in the study. Constant comparative method used. Cross-check against data sets.
Credibility of conclusions	Research bias.	Various processes of analytic induction through participant feedback. Supported reliability of representation of analysis. Respondent validation of initial hypothesis testing grounded in the data. Presentation of data to participants.

Data Collection & Analysis	Criticisms	Researcher Precautions
	<p>Personal transcription of interview and questionnaire data to ensure that the nuances of the context were captured.</p> <p>Selective rendering of data.</p>	<p>Comprehensive data treatment.</p> <p>(Inspecting and comparing all data fragments that arise in a single case. All teacher cases viewed and explored.)</p> <p>Dealing with anomalies and deviations in the data.</p> <p>Incorporating the quantitative in the qualitative analysis.</p> <p>Using appropriate tabulations to show how theory was developing from the data.</p> <p>Constant comparative methods of triangulating the different data sets.</p> <p>Comprehensive data treatment.</p> <p>Be explicit about my method and how I developed theory from data.</p>
Generalisability of findings.	Single case study in a localized context.	<p>Building internal validity through participant and key respondent feedback and also through the constant comparative method the study of respondent validity.</p> <p>Relating my findings to other studies in the field.</p> <p>Level of rigor built through theoretical sampling.</p>

Although I took these precautions to guard against my own subjectivity in the interpretation of the data. I acknowledge that these findings are provisional, however rigorously I have tried to develop a grounded theory. I agree with this view by Silverman (2002, p. 224): “Our knowledge is always provisional and subject to subsequent study which may come up with disconfirming evidence”. I did however draw strength about the truthfulness and authenticity of both my research process and my final grounded theory proposition, from these words by Barney Glaser, namely:-

GT is done best in the hands of the novice PhD and MA candidates because not only of their quest for relevancy, in the face of existant literature that does not fit, work or is not relevant, they are still open to “whatever”, still enthusiastically learning, still unformed in other QDA methods, lack QDA method identity protection, and their skill development fledgling status is uniquely suited to skills development required in the GT process (Glaser, 2009, p. 13).

A number of ethical considerations informing my research are described below.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

As a researcher I was aware that conducting research in areas where issues of safety, protection from harm and confidentiality need to be considered required care and sensitivity. Throughout the study I took a number of precautions to ensure that this study was designed and conducted in a manner which was ethical. Research ethics permission to do this research was obtained from the University of the Western Cape's Research Ethics Committee on the submission of a research proposal and supporting documentation. Research permission and clearance was also obtained from the Western Cape Education Department's Research Division (See Appendix: A). Adverse consequences for participation in this study were not envisaged; however strong ethical and personal precautions were taken. The school and teachers were asked for their written and informed consent to participate in this study. The following ethical procedures were agreed to before the research began.

3.13.1 Consent. Consent by the teachers or school to participate in this research was voluntary, and was obtained through written consent. Consent for participating in the research was checked whenever respondents were asked to participate in the research study and throughout the duration of the study. In order to ensure that consent was informed, all respondents were given a respondent information sheet informing them of the nature and scope of the research as well as any benefits or risks that participation in the research might have. Before each interview or feedback session to the staff I checked that all participants had completed the consent form and were aware of the contents. I also created an opportunity to answer any questions or concerns of participants.

A consent form was made available in the mother tongue of participants and clearly stated options for consent. A translation of the consent form was done in Afrikaans in order to ensure that consent was informed. Respondents were asked to sign the informed consent form (See Appendix: B) before the research process began. The consent form was developed from standard ethical frameworks supported by the University of the Western Cape Ethics Research Committee (CHS Ethics policies; 2003 – Adapted from MRC Ethics Guidelines).

3.13.2 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. Every precaution was taken to respect the privacy of participants, maintain the confidentiality of personal information and safeguard their health and human rights. Participation by teachers was voluntary and confidential. The participation of the principal was voluntary, however his responses were not confidential. In the research no names of individual teachers were used. I sought to guarantee the concealment of the identity of teachers by asking respondents to identify themselves through a personalized code which only they would recognise. In the final report this code was again abbreviated. As a further precaution I chose not to identify respondents by the grade or phase they taught, as this might reveal their identity in a school of 18 staff members. Only the principal was identified as “the principal”. The school was identified by the pseudonym Progress Primary School.

3.13.3 Protection from harm. At any point in the research participants were free to withdraw from the research and their identities would be kept confidential. The final research report and findings were made available to the participants (the teachers and the principal). Permission was sought from the school to share these findings with the broader public and the Western Cape Education Department. My name and contact details were shared with individuals who participated in the research, so far as I felt this would not impinge on my personal privacy and the safety of my family.

In order to ensure the protection against harm of key individuals such as the principal whose identity in the case school could not be hidden, I was careful to check for participant consent throughout the duration of the data gathering process. This was critical particularly at stages where data was fed back to staff and focused on the role of the principal. The identity of the case school and of the principal, as well as all teachers remained anonymous in the final report. During the data gathering process all participants were given a personal code which ensured their anonymity in participating in interview and in the filling in of the questionnaire.

3.13.4 Knowledge of the results. Each individual who participated in the research had the right to be informed of the results of the research through written feedback from me. A copy of the summary of findings of questionnaires and interviews were made available to the respondents in their personal capacities on the

completion of interviews and to the staff as a whole through three staff feed-back sessions. The school received a copy of the research report on the completion of the study.

3.14 Conclusion

In this section I described the stages and processes involved in conducting grounded theory. I outlined the key research phases and research processes I conducted using this approach to research. In conclusion I described the precautions I took to ensure the authenticity and truthfulness of my research findings and to conduct this study ethically. In Chapter four I give a description of my case study school. This is followed in Chapters 5 to 7 with a presentation of the analysis of the data in relation to my key research questions. Each of these chapters shows the analysis of data through the process of open coding to selective coding and theorizing. Here the interrelationships between the core and categories in the data are presented. Each of these chapters concludes with a presentation and discussion of an emerging theory related to this data set. The emerging theory is discussed in relation to the key literature in the area in order to substantiate it. In Chapter 8 the grounded theory emerging from an amalgamation of these data sets is presented and discussed.

CHAPTER 4

School Case Study Report

4.1 Overview

In this chapter I describe the background and context of Progress Primary School. This chapter builds on the brief description of the context and history of the school provided at the beginning of the dissertation. It gives a description of the contextual setting within which to locate the presentation of the data in the chapters that follow. The chapter begins with a description of the contextual location of the school and its history. This is followed by a description of the profile of the teachers and socio-economic background of learners. It concludes with a summary of conditions that highlight why this school can be described as a school in challenging conditions.

4.2 School Community Context

Progress Primary school is situated in a predominantly working class suburb of Cape Town. This suburb was established under the Group Areas Act of the apartheid government in the 1950s. Until 1994 only people racially classified as belonging to a group identified as “Coloured” or of “mixed descent” lived in this community, and their children attended the school.

Since 1994 the community surrounding the school has not experienced much racial integration. Only a few black families live in the area. Teachers at the school describe the community as a predominantly working class one, with a few people having a lower middle class lifestyle.

The school is situated in an urban area bordering a major freeway into Cape Town and an adjacent “township” populated predominantly by Black African families from working and lower middle class backgrounds. The community surrounding the school is characterised by modest single dwelling homes on small plots of land. Most homes are brick and cement structures of a similar design. Some homes include additions in wood or iron where extensions to living space or shelter have been created. Small shacks or temporary dwelling places can be seen in the backyards of many properties. Churches and mosques are found interspersed between houses. A number of small shops or cafes are run from private homes. In the street near the school entrance, three small informal cafes or stalls run from

residential dwellings sell sweets and chips to the school children. The appearance of the community is generally one of neatness and care. Some homes have small front gardens and are well maintained. All roads in this community are tarred and regularly serviced by the city council.

4.3 School History

The school was established in the early 1950s as a public school for primary school learners who were racially classified under the then South African Government as having “mixed” ancestry and were labeled as “Coloureds”. Within the context of political and social change in South Africa in the mid-1990s and the ending of the rule of the apartheid government, this school underwent a number of changes to shift this identity. Under the leadership of the principal at that time, the school adopted a progressive educational and political vision of broadening the demographics of the learner population to include Black African children. This vision also included broadening the curriculum opportunities offered to learners, including a strong emphasis on the performing arts.

The current school principal took over leadership of the school 15 years ago. His vision was to continue to build on the progressive vision of the previous school leader and to ensure that the school demographics included children from all South African families - a real “rainbow nation”. The current principal says he strives to uphold the democratic and progressive ethos of the school. He says, *“We are still trying to marry what a rainbow nation should be, where kids are able to mix freely as South Africans. I have only one “White” kid in my school”*¹⁷. The principal played an active role in promoting a change in staff demographics to appoint more “Black” and “White” teachers onto a staff that was predominantly “Coloured”.

The leadership style of the principal is described as democratic and progressive by most of the staff members. In July 2011 this school principal took up an appointment as a district official and one of the deputy principals took over in a supervisory capacity. The school is recognised by parents as a good school that has a caring and supportive staff. It is also identified as having a proud history of being a progressive school that tries to offer learners a holistic education.

¹⁷ Quotations from my interview data with research participants are placed in italics, in order to differentiate them from references in books, journals or other publications.

The vision of the school which is proudly displayed in the principal's office, the school foyer and on the information sheets handed to prospective parents, sets out to fulfill:

the provision of quality education; which is underpinned by a holistic approach, will result in preparing our learners fully for tomorrow. We shall strive to give each learner a quality school experience during his or her formative years. We shall endeavour to encourage the maintenance of sound values and morals in a multi-cultural environment (School Brochure, 2011, p. 4).

4.4 School Environment

The school buildings consists of a double storey brick and cement structure that houses the administrative offices, staffroom, small kitchen, computer lab, and most of the classrooms. Alongside this building is a long pre-fabricated building housing seven classrooms used by the Foundation Phases. Another newer pre-fabricated building is located on the school field next to this row of classrooms and is surrounded by a fence. This building houses one grade R or pre-school classroom. In total the school has 20 classrooms, a computer lab and a room that has a small library. Large fields are located in the front and back of the school. The perimeter of the school is fenced in and a security gate is located at the entrance to the school. Within this fenced in area, a number of smaller fenced in areas have been created to ensure that children in the different phases play in allocated areas. A small parking lot and garden greet visitors on their entrance to the school.

The appearance of the school buildings and school grounds are neat, however the lack of funding to adequately maintain and improve the buildings and grounds is clearly evident. Sporting facilities such as netball courts and playing fields are limited and in need of attention. The school offers a number of sporting and extra-mural facilities, namely soccer; athletics, and netball.

4.5 School Finances

The annual school fees in 2011 were R660.00 per child per year. In addition to these fees parents are required to pay a number of school levies that contribute towards school funds. They include money towards a raffle, Food Fair and Fun Walk. In total a parent can expect to pay R930.00 per year in school fees and levies. Extra-mural activities which include music require an additional payment of R30 per month.

The school had a projected total budget of R819 200 at the end of the 2011 financial year to allocate towards paying water, electricity, refuse collection and additional resources. In addition to this funding the school makes about R12 900 annually from running one grade R class. The government provides a small subsidy to the school in terms of its quintile 5 rating. In terms of this subsidy, R109 000 is provided for the grade R classes and R163 000 per annum for the other grades. According to the principal the budget never really covers the expenses.

The school opted to remain a Section 20¹⁸ school and not a Section 21 school under the system of school based management which devolved a level of financial management to public schools in 1996. The decision to be a Section 20 school was made by the School Governing Body (SGB), to ensure that the school did not have to take on the additional responsibility of ordering and buying text-books and resources. Teacher salaries and the school property rates are paid by the state. However additional teaching posts paid for by the SGB need to come out of the school budget.

The school needs to raise an additional 25% of its running costs through school-based fund raising. Approximately 20% of parents/guardians do not pay schools fees and these costs have to be covered by the school. Teachers assist in supplementing the school income by focusing on fund-raising activities. In 2010 fundraising by teachers contributed to approximately 15% of the total funds raised. A teacher described the financial challenges the school faced in the following way:

We have a poor community response ... Our school does not have a lot of money. I normally take the people in the kitchen to buy food for the school feeding scheme and when I went to pay I was told there is not cash. The people were shocked. We cannot help it if the kids cannot pay (MA).

In the interviews teachers spoke about spending their own money and resources on improving their classrooms, buying resources, using their cellular phone to contact parents and buying small things for children who they could see were in need. One of the persistent challenges the school faces is to access additional funds to supply resources and support needed as well as to maintain the school grounds and

¹⁸ Legislation brought in for public schools which introduced levels of school based management. A Section 21 school was given a certain level of financial and administrative responsibility in the purchasing of resources for learning and teaching and the maintenance of the school property. A Section 20 school would have the responsibility to cover administrative and maintenance costs however the State would still have to assume a level of responsibility for the ordering and procurement of resources such as textbooks.

buildings and expand its existing facilities. Teachers and the principal spoke of the challenge this poses to the time teachers need to focus on raising additional funding. The principal said “What drives the school is the fund-raising. This has taken teachers a lot out of their classes to keep the school afloat. We have looked at how we can minimise this”.

4.6 School Size and Teacher Profile

In 2011 there were 660 learners in the school and nineteen teaching staff members. The teacher pupil ratios were on average 1:40. The following table gives a breakdown of the average teacher pupil ratio in the different phases in 2011 and 2012.

Table 4.1: Ratio of Teachers to Pupils (2011).

PHASE	RATIO
Foundation Phase	1:35
Intermediate Phase	1:40
Senior Phase	1:42

Thirteen teachers in the school were female and six were male including the principal. The principal and twelve of the teaching staff were part of the permanent staff and six teachers were in contract positions. One of the permanent staff members was a learning support teacher who was at this school for two days per week to support learners in the Foundation Phase. Two contracted teachers were SGB appointed teachers. The majority of teaching staff members (14/19) were between 40 and 56 years of age. Twelve of these staff members had taught for more than twenty years. Two staff members had taught for more than fifteen years. While two staff members had taught for between five and ten years and only three staff members had taught for less than five years. Most staff members (12/19) had a grade 12 or matric level qualification with a three year teacher’s diploma and had done additional short courses and diplomas in teaching. Six staff members had a bachelor’s degree and one staff member had a Master’s degree in education.

All teachers spoke English fluently and most of them could speak English and Afrikaans. One teacher only spoke English and Shona. There were no mother tongue or first language IsiXhosa speaking teachers on the staff, although four staff members reported that they had a level of conversational IsiXhosa. The principal described the staff as fairly stable and absenteeism levels among teachers as moderate, with the exception of one or two teachers that had been off on stress leave or had to undergo medical treatment. Seventy percent of staff members belonged to the teachers' union, the National Association of Professional Teachers of South Africa (NAPTOSA), and 30% were South African Democratic Teacher Union (SADTU) members.

Five teachers lived in the community within five kilometers of the school. The school atmosphere is generally experienced as warm and caring. Most of the staff tend to be friendly and supportive of each other.

4.7 Curriculum and Medium of Instruction

The school followed the National Curriculum for Basic Education for South African schools as set out by the National Department of Education (DoE, 2005). During the period of this research in the school, teachers were in the process of experiencing another wave of curriculum reform with the Revised National Curriculum Statement being replaced by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAP) (DBE, 2011). This outcomes-based curriculum includes the eight learning areas of Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Life Skills, Second Additional Language, Technology, Social Sciences, Natural Science, Arts and Culture, and Economic and Management Sciences. Teachers in the Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase are class teachers who also teach most subjects apart from the additional arts and computer classes to their pupils. In the Senior Phase each teacher has a register class and also does subject specific teaching for all pupils in that phase.

In addition to these learning areas the school offers learners the possibility of taking music and ballet within their art and cultural choices. The school also offers an aftercare facility for learners in the Foundation Phase who need to stay till 2:30 pm. The school day begins at 8am and ends at 14h30 for learners in the Intermediate and Senior Phases. Foundation Phase learners end school at 1:45 or 2pm. All teachers are expected to be at school between 8h00 and 15h30 each day.

The medium of Instruction in the school is English from the grade R or “readiness” year. The second additional language is Afrikaans. Although IsiXhosa was offered as an additional language a number of years ago this ended with staff changes.

4.8 Socio-economic Background of the Learners

Approximately 60% of the learners in the school are IsiXhosa speaking and do not come from the community directly surrounding the school. Although one of the teachers is Shona speaking and may understand IsiXhosa, none of the other teachers are mother-tongue IsiXhosa speakers. This language barrier presents additional learning and teaching challenges to both learners and teachers. This situation is however not unique to this school and is a challenge many schools have to deal with as the demographics of the learner populations have changed much faster than those of the staff complement. Approximately 40% of learners come from homes in the surrounding community where Afrikaans or English is spoken. No White learners that speak either English or Afrikaans attend the school.

Most of the IsiXhosa speaking learners come to school by taxi or bus from a number of what teachers refer to as “township” areas of Gugulethu, Langa, and Khayelitsha. These suburbs of Cape Town are within a radius of 5 to 15 kilometers from this school. Transport strikes, finances for transport and poor weather negatively affect the attendance of learners who are “bussed in”.

According to the principal the school is selected by parents who want their children to be exposed to broader curriculum choices and to be taught in English. The school has a good reputation as being a progressive school that provides good quality education. These factors draw parents from surrounding areas to apply for positions at this public school although they do not stay in the community near to the school.

Teachers and the principal described the socio-economic conditions of learners as varying. Most learners came from working class home backgrounds. Some home environments were stable and learners lived with one or both of their parents. In other home environments teachers said that children lived with a grandmother or guardian. Both teachers and the principal spoke of a number of children being exposed to the impact of poverty, unemployment, gangsterism, poor health, migration of families and substance abuse. Having to address Foetal Alcohol

Syndrome (FAS) and issues related to drug abuse were mentioned by both teachers and the principal as affecting both learning and teaching.

The school has a feeding scheme supported by the Provincial Education Department. In 2011, 160 learners were officially on the feeding scheme, however the staff at the school said that unofficially approximately 220 to 250 learners made use of support from the feeding scheme.

Teachers spoke about having to spend a great deal of teaching time having to address social issues that impact on teaching and learning. One teacher said the following:-

Learners with real learning barriers the parents don't sit with them and the parents don't have resources. We find with single parents these learners have most problems. The majority of the Xhosa speaking learners live with their granny and granny does not have time to teach basics and you don't have time to teach them just certain basics like sit and greet and basics that you expect the domestic context will deal with but you as a teacher have to deal with this (FR).

While teachers in the lower grades had to attend more to matters related to basic caregiving and psycho-social support, teachers in the higher grades spoke of needing to address issues related to discipline and behaviour management and learning support needs.

4.9 Teaching and Learning Challenges Presented by Learners

While social and economic issues were identified as impacting on the lives of learners they also impacted on the lives of teachers. Teachers identified two key ways in which socio-economic issues made it difficult for them to cope. These were the number of hours of teaching time which were reduced by having to attend to bio-psycho or social issues of learners who required support as well as the high number of learners requiring learning support. A teacher describes the challenge in this way, “ *the child will be staying in three places, the dad, the mother and the granny and the child has no fixed abode and this has a bad influence on the child's behaviour*” (GJ).

The table below represents the number of learners the learning support teacherⁱ¹⁹ supported in the Foundation Phase in 2011.

Table 4.2: Number of Learners Accessing Learning Support in 2011 and 2012.

Grade	2011	2012
R	(Only introduced in 2012)	20
1	29	20
2	20	17
3	24	24
4	19	4
Total	92	85

A teacher in the Foundation Phase describes the challenges she faces with accessing learning support in this way:

There is nothing that is done to help me with language barriers. The learners are only tested in grade one. The learning support teacher just skips our classes because all our children are not on the same level. You so much want to reach learners but there is no learning sport (JP).

4.10 A School in Challenging Conditions

All staff members in the school and the school principal described this school as being a school that operates within a number of challenging conditions. The challenges faced by teachers in Progress Primary are similar to challenges faced by most South African primary schools serving learners in working class urban areas. In addition, Progress Primary has to face the challenge of having to raise additional funding to function because of a lower Government subsidy due to its current poverty quintile rating. The school is currently ranked as a quintile 5 school.²⁰ This rating places this school in the same Government learner subsidy range as some of the most privileged public schools in South Africa. However the school faces a number of challenges not experienced by other quintile 5 schools that draw in

¹⁹ A learning support teacher is employed by the DBE to support the specialist learning support needs in a school. In 2011 one learning support teacher was allocated to this school for 2.5 days per week. Her task was to focus particularly on the learning support needs of learners in the Foundation Phase. .

²⁰ All public schools in South Africa receive a state subsidy in accordance with the estimated poverty quintile of the parents or guardians who support children at the school. The quintile range is from quintile 1 schools representing schools where parents are not charged school fees (“no fee paying schools”) to quintile 5 schools where parents/guardians population are regarded as having a middle income level.

children from middle-class parents. Both the principal and teachers feel that the quintile rating is incorrect as they can only annually collect the equivalent of less than half the monthly fee paid by parents in other quintile 5 schools.

A summary of the key challenging conditions experienced by the school is presented in the table below:

Table 4.3: Summary of Key Challenging Conditions Experienced by the School

CONDITIONS IN THE SCHOOL	CONDITIONS IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53% of the learners are IsiXhosa speaking and this language is not spoken by most staff. • 60% of the learners have a home language not used as the language of learning and teaching in the school. • Vandalism and theft of the school property by people in the community. • Shifting demographics of the school learner and parent/guardian population. • The majority of the children attending the school do not come from the community around the school. • Teachers and the principal have to raise additional fees to cover running costs and pay for contract teachers. • Poor parent/guardian attendance of school meetings. • Most children rely on public bus and taxi transport get to school and back. • Learners are not able to attend sporting and cultural activities after school because of transport constraints. • Children lack resources to buy stationery. • Large classes (1:40). • Large number of learners with learning support needs. • Limited learning support provided to learners. • Large numbers of learners that require bio, psycho, social support. • Limited resources to buy in teaching support or additional learning resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quintile 5 rating – limiting funding subsidy to school. • Majority of working class parents are not able to afford higher school fees and some parents struggle to pay fees. • The community around the school do not see the school as “their school anymore”. • Socio-economic issues of gangsterism and substance abuse impact on the school. • Safety and transport issues in “townships” limit parent/guardian attendance of school meetings. • Many children are latch-key children or are looked after by foster or grandparents. • Minimal bio-psycho-social support for children at home. • Limited or no homework support for children. • Many parents/guardians are not literate in English and find it difficult to provide homework support. • Limited educational levels of many parents/guardians place a constraint on homework supervision and support. • Poverty and substance abuse in communities impact on children’s lives. • Constant curriculum change and administrative pressures from the Education Department. • External pressure from the Education Department on schools to improve their Annual National Assessment (ANA) results.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter provides a general description of the location of the school, a brief history and a description of the contextual conditions of the school. The next chapter will deepen an understanding of this case by highlighting what teachers

identify as the factors in the school which both support and constrain their well-being. How teachers experience the principal as supporting their well-being will be discussed in relation to these contextual conditions.

CHAPTER 5

How Teachers understand the term 'teacher well-being'

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present my analysis of the data on how teachers at this school understand the term teacher well-being. This chapter follows the logic of the four key processes that in essence define the classic grounded theory method, namely, coding of the data through open and theoretical coding, the use of the constant comparative method, theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation. These processes were described in detail in chapter four. In this chapter I show how these processes guided me towards the emergence of a theory that is grounded in data.

I begin by showing my analysis of the raw data from the stages of open coding to the level of selective coding and the identification of a core category. An emerging theory about how teachers understand the term teacher well-being is presented and discussed in relation to relevant literature. The chapter concludes with a presentation of a substantive theory.

5.2 Analysis of Data through Open Coding

Through the process of open coding a number of general categories in the data were generated from the analysis of interview and questionnaire transcripts, as well as my observational notes. The key categories identified through the initial process of open coding of data were: Good Leadership, Collegial Support, Personal Health, Caring Relationships, Teaching and Learning Resources, Good Environment, Being Happy, Balancing Work and Home Life. These categories all related to the core category of teacher well-being. Each of these categories comprised a number of sub-categories.

5.3 Analysis of Data through Selective Coding

After a process of reviewing the open coding of data, I developed a table into which I placed the initial codes and emerging categories. I used this table to systematically link the raw data to codes and then into more abstracted sub-categories and broader categories. Using the constant comparative method, this assisted me in cross-checking and reviewing the categories.

Using the guidance of a classic grounded theory (CGT) approach I did not try to fit the raw data into pre-determined categories (such as conditions, strategies or consequences) but let the categories emerge from the data using the key questions recommended by Glaser (2012, p. 28). Following this guidance I compared codes, incidents, concepts and categories with each other. In reviewing the relationships between categories I constantly asked myself the question “What is the main concern or issue for these teachers?” I decided to also count the number of responses teachers gave under a category or theme. This I felt gave some indication of the intensity of association teachers had in relation to this aspect.

Four main themes and a number of categories and sub-categories related to how teachers understand this concept emerged from this process of analysis. I present these themes with an indication of the number of responses from the raw data. The four main themes in order of the weighting responses from teachers were: Caring and Supportive Relationships (27/70), A State of Being (15/70), Environmental and Working Conditions (13/70) and Purpose (12/70). The core or key category that links these sub-categories is teacher well-being. The diagram below provides a summary of the main themes and categories that arose from this process.²¹ Each of these dimensions is described in more detail below. This section concludes with a presentation of an emerging theory of how teachers at this school understood the concept of teacher well-being.

²¹ In this diagram the sizes of the aspect related to the core category teacher well-being, provide an indication of the weighting of responses by teachers to each category. Showing most responses identified teacher well-being with caring and supportive relationships. The least number of responses were related to a sense of purpose.

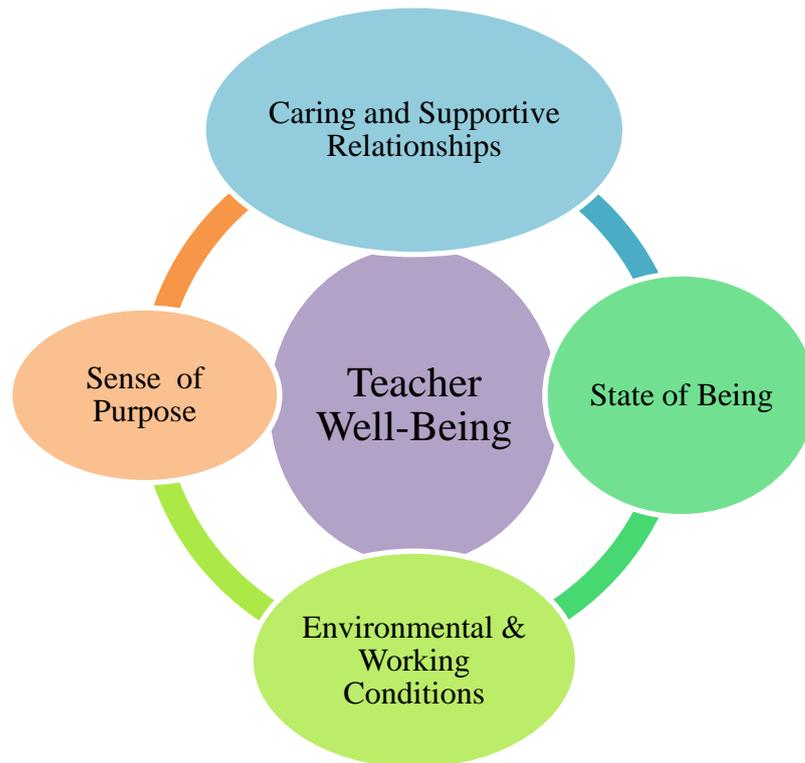


Figure 5.1: *A Schematic Diagram of the Core Category and Sub-Categories Related to the Concept of Teacher Well-Being*

5.3.1 Caring and Supportive Relationships. Most responses (27/70) from teachers, related teacher well-being to this theme. Under this theme two main-categories emerged, namely supportive working relationships (17/28) and management support (11/28). Each of these categories is described below.

5.3.1.1 Supportive working relationships. Care and support to teachers as a result of supportive working relationships (17/28) included a number of sub-categories. They were supportive personal and professional relationships by colleagues as well as support from parents or guardians and learners. Teachers did not mention caring and supportive relationships by external support providers such as the Department of Education or Non-Governmental Organizations as being related to their sense of well-being.

5.3.1.2 Collegial support. Being in a generally supportive collegial environment and having collegial professional support promoted a sense of well-being. Supportive collegial relations were associated with positive personal and professional relationships that included good inter-personal relationships and

attitudes. Various teachers described their sense of well-being in relation to a supportive collegial environment as²²:

“great communication with colleagues nice personal relations and attitudes” (JY).

“Being in a positive environment” (FZ).

“Happy environment” (MG).

“Comfortable...this is the place where I work and I am welcome here” (KI).

In addition to the above, being taken care of by colleagues was also seen as contributing to a sense of well-being. One teacher described this as *“being taken care of as a teacher”* (AS).

The second aspect identified as important relating to collegial support was having positive professional relationships. This included aspects such as team work, good communication, collective problem solving, assistance with administrative tasks, a sense of feeling supported by one’s peers, being with colleagues that were open minded, professional support and being taken care of as a teacher. A teacher describes the sense of well-being she gets from colleagues working as a team: *“That you work together as a team and that you pull together”* (MA). Another teacher described well-being as a sense of job satisfaction that comes from *“Good work relationships (e.g. positive attitude, co-operation)”* (JY).

Finding creative and collective solutions to problems and having colleagues that were open to new ideas were aspects of professional support that teachers identified as giving them a sense of well-being. A teacher used these words, *“finding solutions where there are problems even if it means creative/out of the box thinking to solve problems”* (JY).

5.3.1.3 School community support. Having the collective support from the school community which included management and peers, as well as parents and learners was identified by three teachers as needing to be in place to give them a sense of well-being. One teacher interviewed said her sense of well-being was related to support from the school community which she described as, *“the support of her seniors, her peers and the parents of course”* (RA). Another teacher described well-

²² Quotations from my original data are shown in italics while any references to other sources are not in italics.

being as *“Being able to do your job with all the required support: principal, staff, parents, learners”* (TR).

5.3.1.4 Support from the principal and school management team.

Responses falling under this category specifically refer to the category of management support. In the analysis of the data a number of sub-categories emerged. They included support from management which related to: teachers’ concerns being addressed; support systems established; creating a positive atmosphere; personal support; professional support; flexibility and empathy; freedom of expression; enabling leadership, providing incentives and staff being made to feel welcome.

Having teachers’ needs and concerns addressed was mentioned by four teachers as providing them with a sense of well-being. These needs related to management addressing both personal and professional support needs. One teacher describes this aspect of support by management as, *“where your professional and personal needs are met, within reason”* (FZ). Another teacher described management support as, *“It is that the grievances of teachers are taken care of”* (GJ). Teachers related their well-being to the role of the principal and (SMT) in establishing support systems that enabled them to do their work:

“A support system to facilitate my efficacy as an educator” (FR).

“conducive to learning & teaching (positive atmosphere)” (SP).

“Being able to do your job” (TR).

Supportive management relationships (from the principal and SMT) also relate to teachers feeling acknowledged and having incentives. One teacher said, *“Well-being also has to do with creating supportive environments and providing incentives to get the best out of teachers”* (MA). She elaborated further that working in an environment where there was freedom of expression enabled her to have a sense of well-being, *“teachers feel comfortable expressing themselves and there is no pressure”* (MA). For some teachers supportive management relationships were also associated with being able to take agency or leadership. One teacher said, that well-being was related to the staff working together to find, *“Solutions where there are problems even if it means creative/out of the box thinking to solve problems”* (GJ).

Working in a collegial environment where staff is made to feel welcome and is motivated was identified by a senior staff member as being an essential aspect of management support that enabled the well-being of teachers. Ensuring that the care

and support needs of teachers were taken care of by management was also raised by some teachers. The ability of management to be flexible and to empathise with the pressures teachers work under was another aspect of support highlighted. One teacher described this as “*being treated like a professional and also that there is a level of understanding of the workload of teachers and sometimes cut them a bit of slack in their work*”(JJ). She went on to say that:

Well-being has got to do with understanding that the teacher has all those factors (like being a social worker too) in the label teacher...Support included a level of genuine interest and concern for staff at a personal and professional level by management...there is a level of interest in them, as a teacher as a person and a professional (JJ).

5.3.2 A State Of Being. The second largest number of responses defined well-being as a personal “State of Being”. Under this theme four categories emerged. In order of the weighting of responses in each category they are, a state of happiness (6/18), a state of health and harmony (5/18); a state of peace of mind (4/18), a state of balance between work and home life (2/18). These aspects of well-being related to personal or subjective aspects of well-being.

The diagram below depicts the categories and sub-categories related to teacher well-being as a “State of Being”.²³

²³ The different sizes of the categories related to a “State of Being” show the number of responses teacher gave to a specific category. Most responses identified a State of Being with a Sense of Happiness and least responses were related to a State of Peace of Mind.

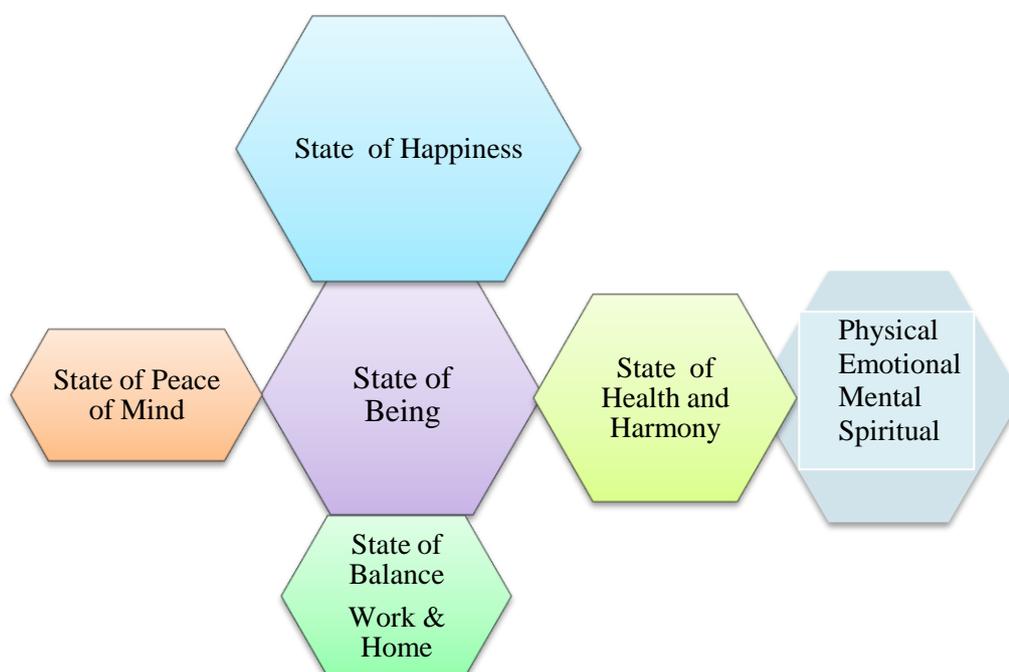


Figure 5.2: A Summary of the Categories and Sub-Categories Related to Teacher Well-Being as a State of Being

5.3.2.1 State of happiness. Six responses from teachers referred to well-being as a state of happiness. Five of these teachers made a connection between a state of happiness and related professional and environmental conditions. Conditions mentioned were, “*being at school*” (RM), “*to feel you want to be here*” (GR), “*Happy all rounded (sic)*” (MA), being comfortable and “*enjoying teaching and learning*” (KI), “*That I’m supposed to be happy*” (BJ), “*to be happy to be here and in the morning when you get here*” (GR). One teacher expressed this state as one which “*makes life pleasant*” (RA).

5.3.2.2 A state of health and harmony. In some of the responses teachers understood well-being as a state of personal health and harmony or balance between different aspects of one’s being. One teacher said, “*Teacher well-being means a general state of good health and your general state of mental and physical health and balance in all aspects of your life*” (MA). For another teacher well-being included a state of mental health which includes emotional and psychological well-being: “*My definition is the physical and emotional and psychological well-being of the teacher*” (FR).

Two teachers expanded on the dimension of a state of teacher well-being by adding in a spiritual state of harmony. One said “*The overall state of the teacher (taking into account the physical, emotional, spiritual, etc.). How in harmony all are*” (HP). Another teacher said, “*it encompasses all aspects of your life physical, spiritual, mental emotional your whole being... Ya, it would be balance between those aspects*” (HP). For one teacher these dimensions of health and their state of well-being, were related dynamically to the school environment. For this teacher the term well-being: “*Refers to your emotional, physical and psychological state and how the occupational environment affects this state* (FP).

5.3.2.3 A state of balance between work and home life. Two teachers identified their well-being as being related to the ability to strike a balance between work and home life demands. One of these teachers said, “*For me it means having a quality of home and work life and I try to strike a balance between that. I do not necessarily take home what I experience at school and nor do I bring to school what I experience at home so I just try to go level*” (TR). Another teacher describes this sense of well-being as, “*Balance between aspects of life (work and home). Ability to deal with these aspects in a way that leads to balance*” (MA).

5.3.2.4 A state of peace of mind. Four teachers mentioned well-being as meaning a sense of personal harmony and peace or a state of mind. One teacher described this as:

I think to be more at peace with yourself more emotionally as well as being comfortable in whatever phase you are in, being happy and peaceful and relaxed. When teachers feel that way it also brings that out in the learners and you are able to create a better teaching and learning environment. If we do not have that well-being it will cause a huge impact on us and on the learners (SK).

5.3.3 Environmental and Working Conditions. Under this theme responses related teacher well-being to environmental conditions. Two main categories emerged, namely working conditions and resources. Under these categories a number of sub-categories were identified each of which is described in more detail below.

5.3.3.1 Working conditions. For some teachers well-being related to having appropriate working conditions. Appropriate working conditions included the sub-categories of working in an environment where there was less or no stress (4/8); less

of a load to carry (2/8); less of a distance to travel between work and home (2/8) and how the occupational environment affects one's health (1/8). One teacher describes teacher well-being as being related to her having a job close to her work environment, "*being close to my home and I chose a job close to my place, I did not want to travel a lot*" (JY). No teachers directly related remuneration or work related perks to what teacher well-being meant although in the interviews teachers did mention these as factors which constrained their well-being.

5.3.3.2 Physical resources and conditions. Under this theme teachers related teacher well-being to the conditions of the physical environment they taught in, as well as access to resources and facilities which could enable them to teach effectively. Having a comfortable work space at a classroom and school level, as well as the appropriate physical resources and facilities were related to a sense of well-being. One teacher described teacher well-being as having the necessary resources to support learners: "*involves resources that they require to impact on the children*" (GJ).

5.3.4 Sense of meaning & purpose. Some of the responses related well-being to having a sense of meaning and purpose. Having a sense of purpose was related to doing what you felt you needed and wanted to be doing. Under this theme two categories of meaning and acknowledgement were identified.

5.3.4.1 Meaning. Some teachers identified teacher well-being with a sense of meaning from doing one's job, which was associated with a passion and love for their profession as teachers. This aspect overlapped with the sense of happiness teachers felt about being at school, however I have intentionally not merged the categories at this stage as these aspects highlight a sense of meaning related to job satisfaction. Teachers made these comments:

"That one enjoys teaching and loves coming to school" (MR).

"I think the teacher should be enjoying what she is doing in terms of job satisfaction" (RA).

"you need and want to teach and that's your passion and your calling although sometimes the kids may give you a headache" (GR).

"you need to feel you want to be here" (GR).

Enjoyment and love for the teaching profession was mentioned as being related to well-being by two teachers, however both of them said that having resources and facilities impacted on this. Achieving success for one teacher was an important aspect of his sense of well-being: “*The success of your teaching um... how successful you can be as a teacher*” (AS). For another teacher her political and social commitment to provide a quality education to learners from poor communities gave her a sense of well-being: “*when somebody says I am going to give up, I say what are you going to do, work in a shop, I try to encourage them to stay I will be motivating people to stay there for our kids*” (KI).

5.3.4.2 Acknowledgement. Being valued as a professional and acknowledged for the contribution they make to education was identified as related to a teacher’s sense of well-being in four of the responses. One teacher described her understanding of well-being as being “*valued as professional people; valued for their contribution to education*” (JJ). For the other teacher well-being was related to “*providing incentives to get the best out of teachers*” (MA). Acknowledgement was also related to the “*success of one’s teaching*” (AS) and to the feeling of gratification and acknowledgement a teacher got from learners performing well.

5.4 An Emerging Theory

Presented below is an emerging theory on how teachers in a school in challenging conditions understand what teacher well-being means to them. In Section 5.5 I will discuss this theory in relation to definitions and models of teacher well-being found in my literature search. In conclusion a substantive theory is presented. The figure below provides a graphic representation of my emergent theory.

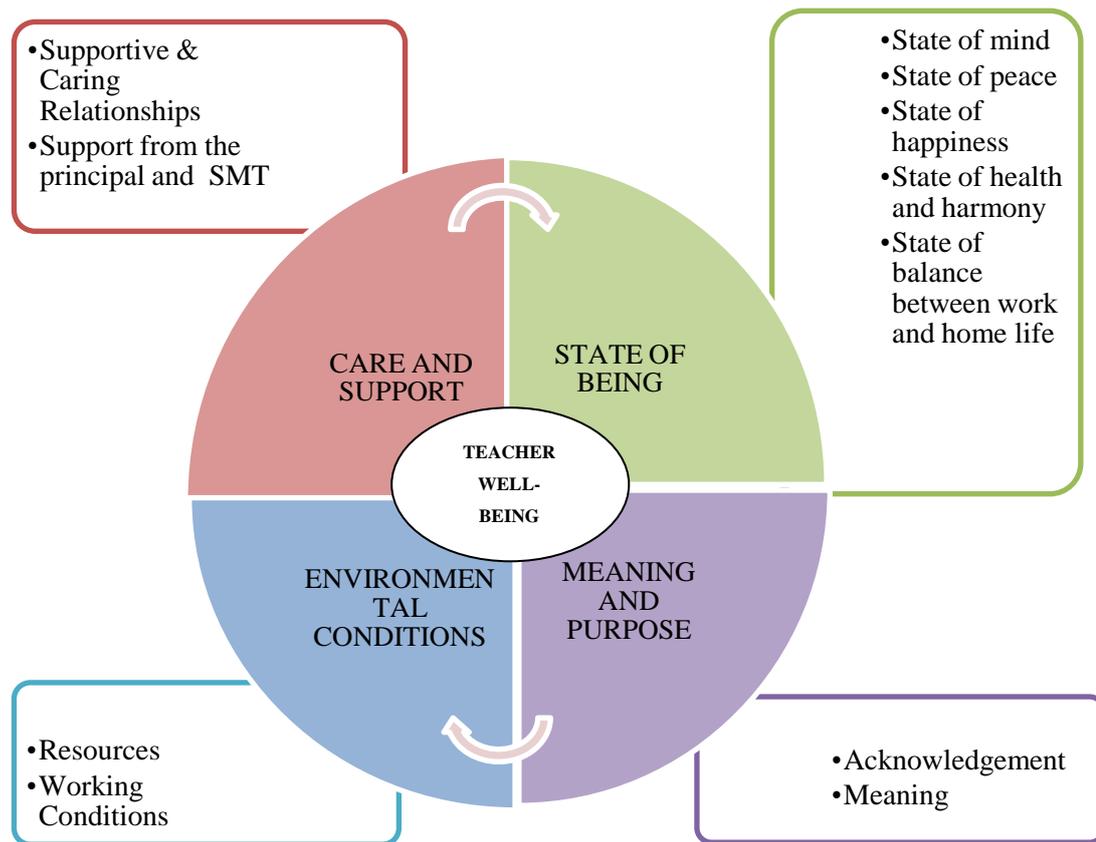


Figure 5.3: *A Summary of the Themes and Categories Teachers Identified as Related to the Concept of Teacher Well-Being*

The term teacher well-being is a complex construct. As a core category it is related to a number of concepts and their inter-relationships at different levels of a teacher's daily experience. Teacher well-being is related to a number of key aspects namely: Caring and Supportive Relationships; a State of Being, Environmental Conditions, and Meaning and Purpose. All four of these aspects are dynamic and influence a teacher's sense of well-being over time. For the teachers in this school in challenging conditions, Caring and Supportive Relationships and a subjective State of Being were associated more often with a sense of well-being than Environmental Conditions and a sense of Meaning and Purpose. All these aspects are however inter-dependent and influence each other. Caring and supportive inter-personal relationships and a teacher's own subjective sense of well-being are primarily identified with a teachers' sense of well-being, although both the environmental conditions and their sense of meaning and purpose also contribute to this. Caring and supportive relationships and a teacher's own State of Being influence their sense of Meaning and Purpose and their Environmental and Working Conditions.

Caring and Supportive Relationships include supportive collegial relationships and support by the principal and to a lesser degree the school management and broader school community and parents.

A subjective **State of Being** includes the dimensions of: a state of happiness; a state of health and harmony; a personal state of balance between home and work life activities and a state of peace of mind. The **Environmental Conditions** teachers work in include the working conditions they operate in and the resources at their disposal to do their job. This includes a comfortable working environment at a school and classroom level and working in an environment where teaching load and responsibilities are shared fairly and where stress levels are lower. Teacher well-being is also related to a sense of **Meaning and Purpose** through being able to teach and seeing learners achieve, as well as to a sense of acknowledgement that one gets from others in the school community.

Factors not directly associated with a sense of well-being are external support providers such as district officials and non-governmental organisations or community and business organisations. People associated with the school such as people in the surrounding community are not identified with a teacher's sense of what well-being means. Neither do teachers directly mention curriculum demands, remuneration or the broader policy context as being related to their understanding of what teacher well-being meant to them. However teachers when teachers are asked about what factors either support or constrain their sense of well-being they do mention the above people, organisations or factors.

The figure below provides a representation of the key aspects teachers identify as contributing to teacher well-being. The size of these aspects gives a representation of how often these aspects were mentioned by teachers as being associated with the concept teacher well-being.

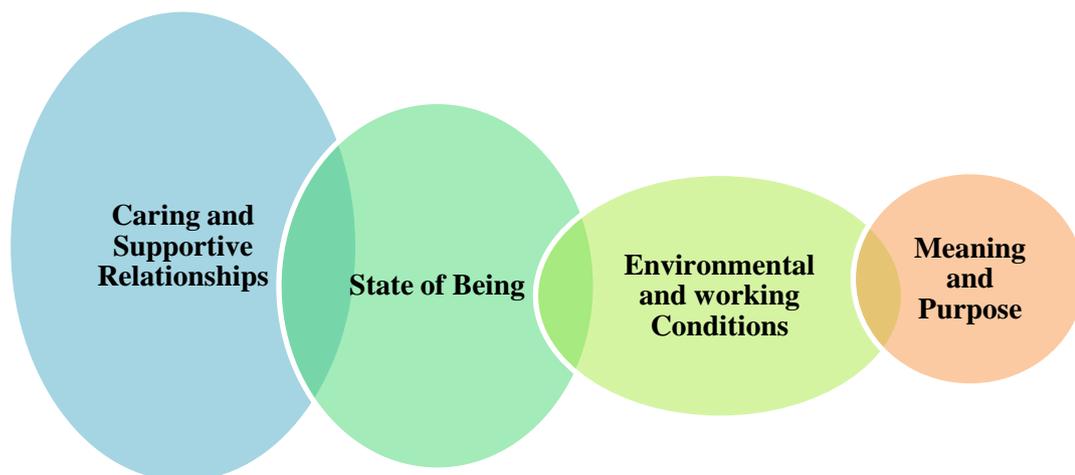


Figure 5.4: *Key Aspects of Teacher Well-Being*

Based on my analysis of the data and in relation to processes of theoretical sampling from participants and my Ph.D. support group, I propose the following definition of teacher well-being:

A fluctuating and holistic state of health, harmony and balance in one's personal and professional life, as a result of being part of a caring and supportive school community which provides the physical, cultural, and professional environment and working conditions conducive to supporting effective and meaningful teaching and learning.

5.5 Discussion of the Emerging Theory in Relation to the Literature

In this section I will discuss and compare my emerging theory to current research findings in the field of well-being and specifically teacher well-being.

As mentioned in chapter one, a review of the literature in the field of teacher well-being shows that a number of studies both internationally have been conducted in this and related areas of teacher stress, burn out and well-being. I draw eclectically on these studies to review my theoretical proposition of how teachers understand the term teacher well-being.

My initial examination of the literature related to well-being and specifically the well-being of teachers, shows this concept to have varied definitions depending on the range of perspectives from which the notion of well-being is viewed.

John Coleman (2009, p. 284), having reviewed the literature in relation to well-being within the school setting, concludes that²⁴:

there are five different approaches to well-being. In the first place, well-being as an approximation for studying happiness. Seligman et al., represent this approach. Second, well-being as an approximation for emotional literacy or emotional intelligence. Ecclestone & Hayes, and Hallam, are examples of this approach. Next, a concept such as resilience is explored as a reflection of one key aspect of well-being, exemplified by March & Martin, and by Hall et al. Another approach can be seen in the papers by Webb et al., looking at professional well-being, which could be described as having high morale and job satisfaction. Finally there is a more philosophical approach, considering well-being as linked to libertarian ideas of freedom and choice, exemplified in the paper by Schwartz. (p. 284).

Coleman acknowledges that there are serious problems over definitions of well-being (2009). Depending on the approach and definition it is difficult to identify the indicators. A similarity between other definitions of well-being and teacher well-being and my theory about what defines teacher well-being is the fluctuating nature of this state over time, as well as in relation to both external and internal conditions the individual or teacher finds themselves in.

Seligman (2002) quoted in Day (2007, p. 110) identified two states of long-term well-being: “(i) a feeling of gratification that arises when one is engaged in pursuing one’s strengths, and the resultant feeling of “flow”, and (ii) a sense of meaning that derives from pursuing goals in the service of something of wider significance than oneself”.

Well-being is defined by Myers (1993) as “the pervasive sense that life has been and is good. It is an ongoing perception that this time in one’s life, or even life as a whole, is fulfilling, meaningful, and pleasant” (downloaded Google 28 January 2013 http://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/teaching_well-being.htm).

These two definitions of well-being lay strong emphasis on a psychological sense of feeling good and that life is meaningful. In a similar vein the findings by

²⁴ In his article John Coleman did not give detailed references to the authors he refers to in either the text or the reference list.

Suh, Diener and Fujita (1996) show that four key factors have a direct impact on an individual's well-being or vulnerability, namely:

- Stability of the event;
- Adaptation;
- Structure of the event;
- Personality.

Based on their research on teachers in English schools, Day et al., (2007, p. 109) recommend adding professional life phase influence, values, and a number of situational and professional factors to these key factors. In order to understand the complexity of the notion of well-being, the findings by Day et al., (2007) and Suh et al., (1996), show the need to consider the interrelationship between personal, professional and contextual factors within a specific historical time-frame and in relation to the professional life phase of a teacher. This approach to viewing the well-being of teachers fits more closely with the categories I have identified. This is particularly relevant when one views teaching and learning as an emotional practice where a relationship needs to develop between teachers and learners and teachers and their professional community, as well as school community. No teachers in my case study school directly related well-being to a phase in their professional life, however they linked it strongly to their own state of being, inter-personal relationships and environmental and working conditions.

When comparing the approaches to well-being identified by Coleman (2009) above with the dimensions I identify in the emerging theory there are a number of similarities and differences. Similarities are related to an approach to teacher well-being that relates to well-being as an approximation for studying happiness. However I do not relate it to an approximation for emotional literacy or emotional intelligence. I do however make the connection between professional well-being as high moral and job satisfaction. The definition of well-being as linked to libertarian ideas of freedom and choice I would argue has a connection to the category I identify as Caring and Supportive Relationships, where teachers identify the type of democratic management and the principal as influencing their sense of agency and well-being. The table below illustrates the similarities in approach between other studies into teacher well-being and the categories I have identified.

Table 5.1: Different Approaches to Teacher Well-Being.

CATEGORIES	LEVEL OF WELL-BEING	APPROACHES TO TEACHER WELL-BEING
Caring & Supportive Relationships	Inter-personal well-being	Emotional well-being – happiness/emotional intelligence. Psychological well-being. Social well-being – job satisfaction.
State of Being	Personal/subjective well-being	Emotional well-being. Psychological well-being. Social well-being.
Environmental Conditions	Environmental Conditions (inter-personal/contextual)	Emotional well-being. Psychological well-being. Social well-being/ professional well-being.
Meaning & Purpose	Inter-personal/contextual	Emotional well-being. Psychological well-being. Social well-being.

Coleman (2009) in his review of the literature on well-being within the school setting does not specifically point out an approach that highlights **environmental conditions**.

Coleman also quotes the systematic review carried out by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2008) (cited in Coleman, 2009, p. 290) in which well-being is classified into three different types, namely:

- Emotional well-being related to feelings;
- Psychological well-being related to characteristics of resilience and coping; and
- Social well-being related to understanding and managing social relationships.

A comparison with these three classifications of well-being and categories I have identified show a relationship to Emotional (State of Being), Psychological (State of Purpose) and Social well-being (Caring and Supportive Relationships), however the environmental level that I have identified in my study is not mentioned. However the aspects of working conditions I have identified under environmental conditions may be studied under social well-being.

The following definition of well-being by Bird and Saltmann (2011) includes all the dimensions of well-being I identified in my emerging theory, as well as includes the interaction between personal, social and environmental factors in the daily lives of teachers. It also reinforces the inter-dependent relationship between the personal, professional and environmental dimensions of teacher well-being:

It is an holistic concept which embraces the emotional, physical, spiritual, social and cognitive dimensions to development and emerges when a range of feelings are combined and balanced. Well-being is dynamic and changeable, enacted differently in varying cultures and is about feeling and functioning well. In broad terms, wellbeing is the state of being flowing from the dynamic integration of a broad range of personal, social and experiential factors. It is the result of beliefs, manifested in values, given expression in skills, and shared through relationships. It is both an outcome and an input into the pedagogical components of the teaching and learning environment (Bird & Saltmann, 2011, p. 145).

This definition extends the definition I have made in my emerging theory by highlighting well-being as an input into and a product of the teaching and learning process. However my emerging theory and definition highlight a focus on the importance of caring and supportive social relationships within the school community and specifically between teachers and the principal and broader management as well as a teacher own State of Being as influencing the environmental and working conditions and teachers own sense of purpose and meaning.

The study by Tsvara on the relationship between the role of the school leader and teacher job satisfaction in a number of South African schools (2013) found that teachers related job satisfaction to, “working conditions, interpersonal relations, rewards and recognition systems, promotion and growth in the organization, work allocation by management, communication and discipline” (p. 251). These findings help to substantiate a relationship between, the personal, professional and organisational aspects of well-being in relation the job satisfaction of teachers in the South African context.

The dimensions in the School Well-Being Model developed by Konu and Rimpelä (2002) holds a lot of synergy with the categories in my emerging theory, as they identify personal, professional and contextual factors related to well-being. This model derives its theoretical foundation from the sociological theory of welfare used

by Allardt (1976) and Konu (2002) in the evaluation of the quality of working life. This framework looks at the aspect of health from the sociological concept of welfare and well-being. Konu and Rimpelä (2002, p. 82) note that according to Allard (1989) “welfare: also stands for well-being in the Nordic Languages, and “includes aspects of living and quality of life” According to Allard (cited in Konu and Rimpelä 2002, p. 82), well-being is determined historically and needs to be redefined when living conditions change. Accordingly well-being is defined as, “a state in which it is possible for a human being to satisfy his/her basic needs” (ibid, p. 82). Indicators of well-being according to Allardt include material and non-material basic needs that fall into three broad categories of indicators, namely: Having, Loving and Being.

- School conditions/health – Having;
- Social Relationships- Loving;
- Means of Self-fulfillment – Being.

From the perspective of educators they contend that some of the indicators of well-being would have to be changed. They recommend that the aspect of “teaching and education” be changed to “supplementary education” and learning to “achievements in work” (1992, p. 84).

South African researchers Jackson, Rothmann and van der Vijver (2005) propose a model of work related well-being of educators. Their research sought to test the validity and internal consistency of constructs in a model of work related well-being and to test a structural model of their relationships. Their findings showed that a:

good fit was found for a model in which burnout (exhaustion and mental distance) mediated the relationships between job demands and ill-health, while work engagement (vigor and dedication) mediated the relationship between job resources and organisational commitment. Job resources contributed strongly to low burn out and high work engagement (2005, p. 263).

They conclude that these results suggest that “both positive and negative aspects of work-related well-being (i.e. burnout and work engagement) can be integrated into one model” (ibid, p. 263).

Their model of teacher work related well-being, helps to affirm the connection between a personal state of well-being and the environmental conditions teachers work in. Under the category I have of environmental conditions both working conditions and environmental conditions and resources are identified by

teachers as being related to their understanding of well-being. The categories of job demands and job resources help to give a finer definition to the category I have identified in my emerging theory as working conditions. However they do not include the environmental conditions such as the influence of the surrounding community on the school and the impact of the environmental conditions of the learner/parent population on job demands and job resources.

5.5.1 Summary of Key Issues. A number of different approaches are taken to studying teacher well-being, namely, emotional, psychological, physical, spiritual, professional, social and contextual. Within these approaches a number of levels of well-being have been focused on, namely subjective or personal well-being, interpersonal well-being, professional well-being and to a lesser extent the influence of contextual factors on teacher well-being.

What is common to all definitions of well-being is the notion of the state of well-being as being dynamic and that a personal state of well-being is dynamically related to the external condition one is in. What also becomes clear is that there are different understandings of teacher well-being based on the different approaches researchers have taken in understanding this nature of well-being.

My own emerging theory holds most synergy with those approaches to understanding teacher well-being that take into account factors at a personal, professional and contextual level within the job milieu of teachers that influence a sense of teacher well-being (Allardt, 1989; Day et al., 2007; Jackson et al., 2005; Konu & Rimpelä, 2002; Littleford, 2007; Salter, 2010, Spratt et al., 2006a; Tsvara, 2013).

The table below presents the different approaches to viewing teacher well-being and how I have modified and related my own emergent theory to these approaches. I have borrowed most extensively from the model by Konu and Rimpelä (2002) in making modifications to my categories and their inter-relationships. However where I differ from their model of well-being is that I do not place health in a category on its own but rather within a State of Being, where physical and mental health are related. I have split working conditions into job demands and job resources based on the model of work-related well-being of educators proposed by Jackson et al., (2005). However I have maintained environmental conditions as a factor related

to teacher well-being as they are also broader than job demands and job resources although they influence job demands and resources.

Table 5.2: Dimensions of Teacher Well-Being.

ASPECT	TEACHER WELL-BEING			
	INTERCONNECTED & HOLISTIC STATE FLUCTUATING OVER TIME			
Approaches to Well-Being	Environmental Contextual Material	Social Emotional	Psychological Professional	Emotional Psychological Physical Spiritual
Level of Well-Being	Contextual	Inter-personal	Personal Inter-personal Professional	Personal/subjective
State of Well-Being	HAVING	LOVING	MEANING	BEING
Dimensions	School Community Conditions	Social Relationships	Sense of Purpose	State of Health & Happiness
Factors	Environmental Conditions	Care & Support	Learner achievement	Health
	Job Demands	Colleagues	Acknowledgement	Happiness
	Job Resources	Management	Professional satisfaction	Balance personal and professional

Based on theoretical sampling from the literature I will now present my revised substantive theory about how teachers understand the concept teacher well-being. The perspective from which I present this definition of teacher well-being is an ecological systemic one which looks at the teacher holistically and in context.

5.6 Presentation of a Substantive Theory

Teacher well-being is a dynamic state. It is related to a number of factors at a personal, professional and contextual level. Teacher well-being includes a state of HAVING, LOVING, MEANING and BEING. Each of these states has a number of dimensions. A state of HAVING includes the dimensions of the school and community conditions the teacher is located in and relates to job demands, job resources as well as the influence of the broader school community context on the teacher. A state of LOVING includes social relationships in the school community. A state of MEANING includes a sense of professional purpose and acknowledgement. A state of BEING includes the dimensions of health, happiness, spiritual well-being and a balance between personal and professional demands.

For teachers in a school in challenging conditions all four states of HAVING, LOVING, MEANING and BEING are important to support their well-being. However in conditions where external support resources are limited, teachers identify LOVING and BEING most with what well-being means to them. LOVING and BEING enable teachers to access a level of HAVING and MEANING. This highlights the social and emotional, physical and psychological aspects of supporting the well-being of teachers as being important. The aspects of HAVING and MEANING are also important and relate to a sense of BEING and LOVING. Having the environmental conditions and job resources that support teachers' ability to address their job demands are also critically related to their sense of well-being; however one could argue that the control that teachers have over influencing and changing these aspects are less than at a personal or inter-personal level. This highlights role of leadership and specifically the principal in having a level of authority to influence the well-being of teachers at personal, professional and contextual level.

The Figure below illustrates the inter-relationships between the aspects supporting teacher well-being.

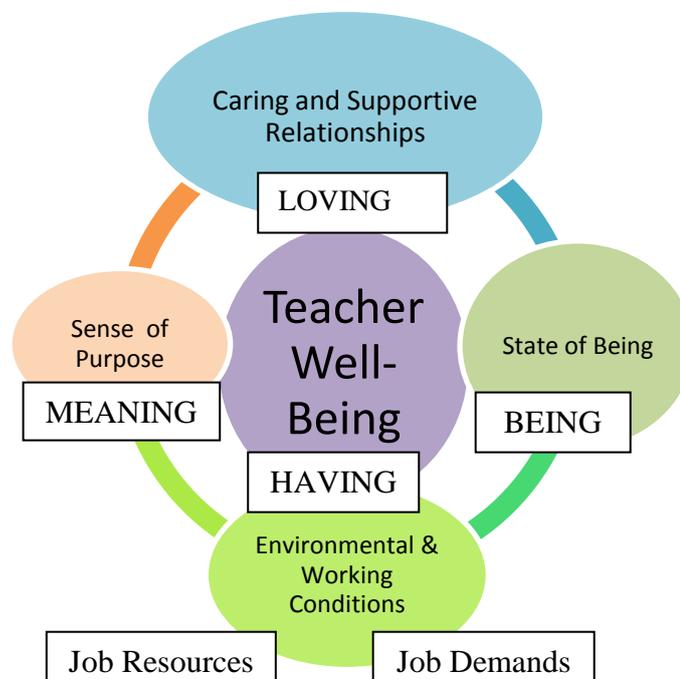


Figure 5.5: *A Schematic Representation of the Inter-Relationships Between the Aspects Related to the Concept Teacher Well-Being*

Based on the findings from my study and my engagement with the literature, teacher well-being can be defined as:

A dynamic and holistic state of having, loving, meaning and being in one's personal and professional life, as a result of being part of a school community and this community's influence on the physical, social and cultural environment and working conditions in support of teaching and learning.

5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented my analysis of the data related to how teachers understand the concept teacher well-being. I have shown the presentation of my findings and analysis during the phases of open and selective coding. I have then presented an emerging theory which I have discussed and reflected on in relation to the literature. In conclusion I have presented a substantive theory about how teachers in a school in challenging conditions understand the concept of teacher well-being. In the next chapter I will present the analysis and discussion of findings on the factors teachers identify as supporting and constraining their well-being in a school in challenging conditions. Both this chapter and the next chapter provide the scaffolding for the development of a theory on how teachers in a school in challenging conditions perceive the principal as supporting their well-being.

CHAPTER 6

Factors Identified by Teachers as Supporting and Constraining their Well-being in the School Context

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe in more detail the factors that teachers identify as supporting and constraining their well-being in the school context. In the previous chapter teachers identified well-being as meaning care and support, a sense of being, the environmental conditions they worked in and a sense of meaning and purpose.

This chapter describes in more detail those factors that enhance the care and support of teachers and address the environmental conditions they work in. It serves as a backdrop to the next section of data that is presented, which identifies how teachers experience the principal as supporting their well-being. This chapter begins by presenting my analysis of the raw data related to my open and selective coding of the data and theoretical sampling in relation to the participant groups. It starts with the factors in the school context that teachers identify as supporting their well-being. This is followed by factors that teachers identify as having a negative influence on their well-being. My emerging theory of the key factors that support and constrain the well-being of teachers working in a school in challenging conditions is then presented. This emerging theory is then discussed in relation to the literature related to teacher well-being. The chapter concludes with my presentation of a substantive theory about the factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions.

6.2 A General Analysis of Factors Supporting Teacher Well-Being

In the analysis of the questionnaire and interview data from 18 teachers, using both open and then selective coding of the data, the theme of support was identified in a large number (65/81) of responses. The other two themes identified as supporting teacher well-being were meaning (7/81) and learners (9/81). Figure 6.1 below represents the key factors that teachers identified as supporting their well-being in a school in challenging conditions.

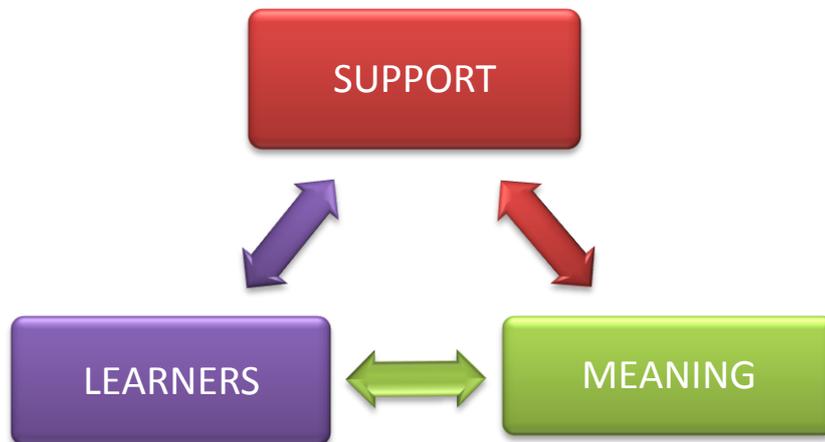


Figure: 6.1: *Key Factors Identified by Teachers as Supporting Teacher Well-Being in a School in Challenging Conditions.*

The table below gives a description of the sub-categories, codes and number of responses identified under the key factors that teachers identified as supporting their well-being after a number of processes in the selective coding of data, viz:

Table 6.1: *Codes, Sub-Categories and Categories of Factors Identified as Supporting Teacher Well-Being.*

CODE	SUB-CATEGORY	CATEGORY	THEME
Professional support Inspire a vision Provide resources Support teacher professional development Treat teachers professionally Include Grade R teachers as staff Support people to take initiative Challenges people	Support by principal 23/65	School Level Support	SUPPORT 65/81
Personal support Being approachable Treating staff with respect			

CODE	SUB-CATEGORY	CATEGORY	THEME
Fair Listens to teachers Provides personal support			
Supportive personal relationships Light moment of humour. Close personal relationships. Spookies – gifts. Supportive professional relationships Approachable colleagues. Respecting the ideas that others bring. Collegial team work towards common goals. Willingness to assist each other. Acknowledgement. Professional sharing. Administrative support. Showing care and support.	Support from colleagues 17/65		
Developing a positive teaching environment. Support and monitoring by grade and phase head in the Foundation Phase. Reduction of class size in the Foundation Phase. Ability to introduce new ideas and take initiative. Providing resources to support teaching. Concern by HOD and principal for the well-being of staff in the Foundation Phase.	Support from management 6/65		
Some parents provide homework support. Some parents/guardians look after and care well for their children. Some parents communicated with teacher and responded to reply slips.	Support from parents 3/65		
Personal Agency Having a positive attitude.	Support to self. 13/65	Self Support	

CODE	SUB-CATEGORY	CATEGORY	THEME
<p>Drawing on coping mechanisms. Taking agency. Drawing on own resources. Getting involved in sport. Improving my classroom environment. Focus on what is important at a classroom level. Studying further. Being open curricular changes.</p> <p>Inter-personal relationships Holding boundaries between work and home life. Keep on good collegial terms. Not associating with groups/camps.</p>	<p>Personal agency Inter-personal relationships</p>		
<p>Having supportive family members or spouse. Emotional support from friends.</p>	<p>Support from family 1/65 Support from friends 2/65</p>	Family & Friends	
<p>Professional engagement Learners are important to us. Learners who are motivated and willing to learn. Well behaved “good” learners. Satisfaction from seeing learners learn and achieve. Challenging to work with learners with learning barriers. Most important factors in supporting my well-being as a teacher. Interaction with learners – Ahaa! Moment. Children assist me to teach – translate.</p> <p>Personal engagement Enjoy personal conversation and interactions with learners.</p>	<p>Professional 8/81 and Personal engagement with learners. 1/81</p>	<p>Positive Engagement with Learners</p>	<p>LEARNERS 9/81</p>
<p>Extrinsic Factors Being in a school that offers a holistic curriculum.</p>	<p>Extrinsic factors giving meaning 3/81</p>	<p>Sense of Meaning and Purpose</p>	<p>MEANING 7/81</p>

CODE	SUB-CATEGORY	CATEGORY	THEME
<p>Identifies with school values and vision. Meaning from pride in the achievement of learners and the school.</p> <p>Intrinsic Factors</p> <p>Feeling committed to teaching learners from poor/disadvantaged backgrounds. Meaning and pride from seeing learners achieve against all odds. Committed to making a contribution to the community.</p>	<p>Intrinsic factors giving meaning 4/81</p>		

6.2.1 Support. Under the theme of support, three key categories were identified as supporting the well-being of teachers, namely: - school level support, self-support and support from family and friends. The greatest level of support for the well-being of teachers came from support systems directly within the school and through the principal and colleagues and then from self-support. Significantly weaker levels of support within the school came from the management and parents. At a level slightly removed from daily life of the school, very few responses from teachers mentioned support for their well-being as coming from family or friends. The data under these categories and their sub-categories are presented below.

6.2.1.1 Support by the principal. Under the general theme of support, most of the responses from teachers about what supported their well-being as teachers were directly related to support provided at a school level by the principal. This included both personal and professional support. At a professional level teachers mentioned the principal's ability to inspire a vision; provide resources, support teacher professional development, share what he has learnt with the staff; treat teachers professionally and his inclusion of Grade R teachers as part of the staff. The role of the principal in supporting the well-being of teachers will be elaborated on in more detail in the next chapter.

6.2.1.2 Support by management. Support by the management as a team or the SMT was identified in very few responses. Support to enhance the well-being of

teachers by the “Management” was described as including the development of an environment that is positive, and one that supports growth and development. Management team support was related to the support and monitoring by grade heads of teachers in the Foundation Phase and the reduction of class sizes in this Phase. One teacher commented, *“There are few children in the Foundation Phase in a class. 30 children per class nobody has reached 40. This is so that we can reach all the children”* (JP).

Management support included the freedom staff felt to introduce new ideas and a level of provisioning of resources to support teaching and learning: *“I have freedom to introduce my own ideas and adjust it to how I would like to do things and my colleagues, I feel also they (colleagues) respect what I do, in other words they respect my inputs”* (JJ).

More comments identifying management support as important were made by teachers in the Foundation Phase than in the Intermediate and Senior Phases. A teacher in the Foundation Phase described being in an environment where one could take initiative to make improvements, as contributing to her well-being: *“Having a place for growth and development and improvement and you have a positive attitude and you feel comfortable”* (JY). Another teacher said that the support she received from the principal and HOD showed they were concerned about her well-being, she said, *“The involvement of the HOD and the principal in the class is good, the HOD will come in and say how you are today? They do not know me but they are concerned about my well-being”* (JP).

6.2.1.3 Support by colleagues. Under the general theme of support, support by colleagues was identified as the second highest category contributing to their well-being of teachers. Collegial support can be subdivided into supportive personal relationships and professional relationships with colleagues.

Supportive professional relationships included having colleagues that respect the ideas that other colleagues bring; are approachable; support collegial team work towards common goals; are willing to help and assist; show respectful attitudes; acknowledgement; informal, personal and professional sharing and demonstrate positive relationships. According to one teacher: *“I am in a fine place because somebody shows me how to do my register and fill in my union form”* (JY).

At a personal level teachers experienced their well-being as being enhanced by having light moments with colleagues where they can share a laugh and a joke; having close personal relationships with colleagues and the showing of care and support through things like gifts and cards. A teacher described her experience of positive personal relationships with her colleagues in this way: *“Probably the few close colleagues I have and that we can always joke”* (FZ). Another teacher spoke about a good personal relationship with a colleague, *“she knows personal things about me and I know personal things about her and talking to her on a personal level this contributes to my well-being. It makes me feel like I can come to her at any time to talk about anything which I have done”* (AS).

A Foundation Phase teacher described a practice of caring and support between teachers: *“we have Spookies. I initiated this where we buy a small gift under R50 for a colleague, we are going to reveal who our Spookie is by the end of this term, and I buy each Foundation Phase teacher something and this is why we have respect”* (FZ).

6.2.1.4 Self-support. Within the general theme of support as a factor which enhanced the well-being of teachers was self-support or drawing on one’s own subjective resources to promote well-being. At a personal level teachers described this as including: *“having a positive attitude; overlooking what I can’t get; drawing on coping mechanisms; having a problem solving attitude; taking agency; drawing on own resources; get involved in sport; changing my class into a nice place; focus on what is important in the classroom; personal studies and being prepared and willing to teach the new curriculum”*.

One teacher described how she took personal agency to improve her well-being in this way:

I invest a lot of my time and weekends I made arrangements to come to school and clean the carpets and paint the walls. I do those things because sweeping takes my stress away because if you don’t create your own positive working environment then you will be miserable (JY).

At an inter-personal level self-support included maintaining friendly and/or cordial relationships with colleagues; not associating with camps/groups; holding boundaries and being respectful. A teacher made the following comment:

once you get involved with your colleagues there is too much politics in terms of you will always find in any organisation there are different

camp and especially in teaching, camps of teachers always huddle together and I don't belong to any group (TR).

6.2.1.5 Support by parents/guardians of learners. Under the theme of support as a factor enhancing the well-being of teachers, only a few responses from teachers showed how support from parents or guardians contributed to their well-being. These included a view that there were some supportive parents in the school, which was described as showing care for children and supervising homework. A teacher said:

The learners just appear a little better looked after which then shows you there is a measure of control and parental interest and supervision where their homework is concerned, which was almost totally lacking in other schools and those were primary schools I have worked in (JJ).

One teacher remarked that parents of the children in her class did communicate with the teacher and responded to reply slips:

I have a class where about 75% of my children have parents that care for them and they err... look at the children's homework and if I ask for parents to sign children's work and hand in forms I will get 80% of forms returned and that is almost unheard of in those other areas. I have a level of support from the parents as well (JJ).

Another teacher said there was “very good support from a few parents” (RA).

6.2.1.6 Support by family and friends. Support from family, a spouse or friends was mentioned by a few teachers as enhancing their well-being. Three teachers specifically mentioned support from family and friends as assisting their feeling of well-being. One teacher spoke of the importance of the support from a spouse, saying “I am fortunate that I have the partner that I have, and my home and we get in the car after work and start chatting and before we get home and then all of that is sorted out because there are always people issues. We are fortunate” (KI). Another teacher spoke about meeting with friends outside of school hours as supporting well-being: “I love sitting around with friends and having a cup of tea” (CJ).

6.3 Positive Engagement with Learners

The theme of positive engagement with learners was identified in a few responses as a factor supporting teacher well-being. Under this theme teachers described how they enjoyed their professional and personal interactions with learners. They describe how important learners are to them and their sense of well-

being. One teacher said that learners were the most important factors in supporting a sense of well-being at school: *“I will say the learners are more important to me than any other person in the school. This is what keeps me in my job.”* (FR). Teachers spoke about *“enjoying”* their interaction with learners and the satisfaction they got from both personal interaction with learners and in seeing them learn. A teacher described a sense of satisfaction from watching a learner learn something that s/he has been teaching: *“They have the Ah Haaa! moment in class when I am teaching them and I see the child’s face light up and I know that I have gotten through to a child”* (TR). Another teacher spoke about the challenge of working with learners with barriers to learning as providing a stimulating and challenging work context and thus contributing to his well-being: *“At the moment it is trying with the slower learners, I am getting them to work at a faster pace and a quicker pace and for me this is a challenge”* (TR).

Having learners who are easy and willing to learn was another factor that supported a sense of well-being in teachers. One teacher made this comment: *“a lot of good learners compared to a few rotten apples or bad learners in your class.”* (GR). Another teacher said, *“the children they are very easy and my time is very short and very full”* (HB). Having learners that were motivated made teaching easier and contributed to teacher well-being. One teacher spoke of the role that learners played in supporting her in her teaching task: *“the children can help to translate in my class”* (JP).

6.4 Meaning

Having a sense of meaning and purpose from doing the job of teaching was identified as a theme linked to factors that promoted teacher well-being in a few responses. Factors mentioned under this theme related to extrinsic or external as well as intrinsic factors that reinforced a sense of meaning and purpose. These two categories are described in more detail below.

At a school contextual level teachers mentioned that their well-being was supported by being in a school that offered a holistic and creative curriculum. They also believed in the values and vision that the school strove for in giving attention to the arts and music, as well as promoting learner and teacher achievement. A teacher put it this way: *“we can educate children holistically and this has an effect on how you can relate to learners and make use of your teaching time to teach”* (JJ). One

teacher mentioned how pride in the achievements of the school and the learners supported her well-being.

At a personal level a number of teachers felt that they identified strongly with the progressive vision of the school and this related to their personal and political commitment to help learners from disadvantaged communities achieve success. One teacher spoke about her commitment to the learners by saying, “*they come from poor backgrounds and it is a real challenge to teach them and change their behaviour for the good and I feel so excited when learners come back and they go to colleges and universities*” (MA). Another teacher described the feeling of motivation and commitment it gave her to work with learners that had come from communities that had been disadvantaged: “*you want to contribute to the community*” (RA).

6.5 Summary of Factors Supporting the Well-Being of Teachers

The factors that supported the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions were primarily the supportive personal and professional relationships within the school between staff and the principal. For teachers, having good professional and personal relationships with learners promoted their well-being. This was enhanced by working in a school that gave teachers a personal and professional sense of meaning and purpose through the holistic curricular opportunities it offered to learners, as well as the positive identity, achievements and values promoted by the school in making a contribution to promoting the education of children from communities who had been historically disadvantaged.

The greatest level of support for the well-being of teachers at this school was identified as coming from the principal then from colleagues and then from self-support. Support from parents/guardians, teachers’ families and friends were less significant in supporting the well-being of teachers within the school. Support from members of the management team was not mentioned as a significant factor in this school. No teachers made mention of either individuals or structures linked to an Institutional Level Support Team (ILST) as supporting their well-being.

These practices reflect something of the caring and supportive values and culture in the school. The support from the principal and colleagues at a personal and professional level were significant factors in supporting the well-being of teachers. The role of the principal is supporting the values of care, respect and acknowledgement was identified in a number of responses as well as his role in

encouraging a commitment towards the educational needs of the children and broader community.

Support from colleagues, both formally and informally, within phases or between friendship groups is identified as supporting the well-being of teachers. Teacher initiated informal activities such as the ritual of giving small gifts to each other helped promote a feeling of collegial support, acknowledgement and well-being.

Support from parents and guardians, as well as family members were mentioned in only a few responses. No external support providers or members of the WCED or the DBE or broader community were identified as directly or indirectly playing a role in supporting the well-being of teachers.

The meaning that teachers found in their jobs in this school supported their sense of well-being. This was gained from being in a school that offered a broader range of curriculum opportunities to learners, that gave teachers an opportunity to feel that they were making a contribution to developing learners that had been historically disadvantaged and feeling a sense of pride in the achievement of the school and learners were important factors in building their sense of well-being.

Positive engagement with learners at a personal and professional level was a key factor in supporting a sense of well-being in teachers. Experiencing learners achieve success and having the support of learners in the teaching environment contributed to enhancing the sense of well-being.

6.6 Factors Identified by Teachers as Constraining their Well-Being

An analysis of the questionnaire and interview data shows that two general themes emerged as constraining teacher well-being, namely: internal environmental conditions (84/117) and external environmental conditions (33/117). Each of these themes can in turn be divided into a number of categories and sub-categories.

Under internal conditions that impacted negatively on teacher well-being, working conditions (74/84) and poor physical conditions (10/84) were identified as key categories. Under external conditions, the categories of socio-economic conditions (23/33) and the influence of the DBE (10/33) arose. Under socio-economic conditions, two main sub-categories can be identified, namely the socio-economic conditions of learners (15/23) and community conditions (8/23).

Figure 6.2 below provides an illustration of the key factors and their significance in negatively influencing the well-being of teachers in this school.

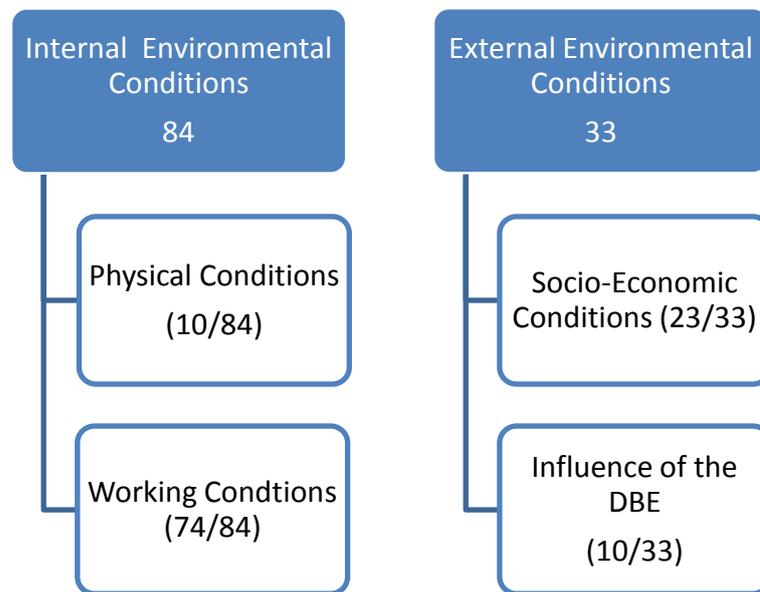


Figure 6.2: *Key Factors Identified by Teachers as Constraining their Well-Being in a School in Challenging Conditions*

The table below provides a general overview of the main themes, categories and sub-categories of factors that constrain teacher well-being. Each of these aspects and their negative influence on the well-being of teachers will be elaborated on in more detail below.

Table 6.2: Key Themes and Categories Negatively Influencing Teacher Well-Being

THEME	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY
Internal Environmental Conditions (84)	Poor Physical Conditions (10/84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited Resources(5/84) Poor physical conditions (5/84)
	Working Conditions (74/84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor Leadership and Management (20/74) Barriers to learning (17/74) Large Classes (8/74) Language Barriers(8/74) Workload (7/74) Poor learner discipline (5/74) Poor Collegiality (5/74) Multiple roles teachers (4/74)
External Conditions (33)	Socio-Economic Conditions (23/33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-Economic Conditions of Learners (15/23)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Conditions (8/23)
	Influence of the Department of Education (10/33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence of the Department of Education

6.6.1 Internal Environmental Conditions that Constrain Teacher Well-Being. Internal environmental conditions (84/117) were identified more frequently than external conditions (33/117) in constraining the well-being of teachers. Under the theme of internal environmental conditions, teachers mentioned the working conditions (74/84) more frequently than the category of the physical environmental conditions (10/84) as constraining their well-being. External conditions such as the community environment surrounding the school and the home environments of learners had a direct influence on the day-to-day functioning of the school and the well-being of teachers. In order to describe the conditions in the school that teachers mentioned as constraining their well-being, these categories and their sub-categories will be presented in more detail below.

Table 6.3: Dimensions of Key Internal Environmental Conditions Constraining Teacher Well-Being.

THEME	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY
Internal Environmental Conditions (84)	Poor Physical Conditions (10/84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Resources(5/84) • Poor physical conditions (5/84)
	Working Conditions (74/84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor Leadership and Management (20/74) • Barriers to learning (17/74) • Large Classes (8/74) • Language Barriers(8/74) • Workload (7/74) • Poor learner discipline (5/74) • Poor Collegiality (5/74) • Multiple roles teachers (4/74)

6.6.1.1 Working conditions. Under the category of working conditions, the following sub-categories of factors were identified as constraining the well-being of teachers, poor leadership and management; barriers to learning; large classes; language barriers; workload; poor learner discipline; poor collegiality and the multiple roles of teachers.

Poor leadership and management. Poor leadership and management were identified as a factor negatively influencing the well-being of teachers in a number of responses. When staff mentioned poor leadership and management they at times referred directly to the principal and at other time to the poor functioning of the SMT. Poor functioning of the leadership and management in the school was related to the poor functioning of the GB and the SMT, inconsistency in grade and phase level meetings, poor communication between structures as well as lack of sufficient focus on the well-being needs of staff by management.

Reasons teachers provided as contributing to the poor functioning of the GB were its limited ability to raise funding; and poor communication with the staff on the GB matters and decisions. A teacher made this comment about the GB:

Transparency is very important sometimes we do not know what are the plans of the Governing Body? And how we are supported? It is better if it is on paper. It is a bit vague the message that is carried over. They probably have Governing Body minutes but we as teachers do not see this (MA).

Three teachers and the principal mentioned that the SMT did not function effectively and this negatively affected their well-being as a staff. One teacher said, *“The leadership at SMT level is not unified”* (FR). Another teacher made this statement:

everybody seems to be busy with their own things as well and half of them are studying and that type of thing, I mean they are always there but it's not like you want to intrude too much. They are there, there is no doubt about that, but maybe they could do more with regards one's well-being. Maybe they could get together more as management to discuss things (HP).

Inconsistency in grade and phase level meetings was another factor identified as having a negative influence on the well-being of teachers. The lack of regular phase meetings influenced teachers professional functioning as it limited a level of forward planning or planning across the phases. In addition it had an influence on the levels of monitoring and support teachers received from phase leaders. The lack of consistency in phase meetings was more apparent in the Intermediate and Senior Phases than in the Foundation Phase. An Intermediate Phase teacher made this comment: *“In our phase we do not have regular phase meetings”* (D). Another teacher said, *“We need to bring in planning across the grades and phase planning”* (FR).

Poor communication and what teachers described as *“information flow”* between structures such as the GB and SMT members and the limited access some teachers felt they had to information on school developments, was mentioned as having a negative influence on their well-being.

Poor and inconsistent sharing of information about school development processes, as well as no proper system of communication between management and teachers was identified as impacting negatively on teacher well-being. A teacher made this comment about her perception that the principal was not aware of the number of meetings that took place in the school, *“He is not aware that we do have phase meetings once a week”* (CJ).

A lack of sufficient focus by the school management on the well-being needs of staff was mentioned as having a negative influence on teacher well-being. Here teachers specifically mentioned the limited role management played in giving them positive feedback and acknowledgement for improved performance. A teacher commented, *“why could somebody not have said well done, I said if I was here I*

would have said just congratulations and well done for the hard work.”(HB) Another teacher said, “I have not had any feedback yet except from my colleagues” (JJ).

Teachers felt the pressure of the education system and management being focused on reaching performance targets. A teacher describes her experience in this way: “Three days of taxi strikes these impacts on everything. Nobody makes a note of what impacts on the teaching they just want results” (CJ). This teacher went on to say:

We just get beaten up by the principal like with the results in the ANAs for literacy and numeracy in Grade 3 and 6 and then teachers gave their input and the principal said the ball is in your court. The principal is not aware of what we are doing. He has just become so laissez faire and then he just says you must produce the results (CJ).

The poor functioning of the SMT due to tensions between the principal and two of the senior management team members had a negative impact on the staff as a whole and the functioning of the school. Conflict on the SMT affected the well-being of all members of this team as well as the broader functioning of other structures and procedures in the school, as responsibilities were not shared and management decision were taken in staff meetings and SGB meetings.

Barriers to Learning. The challenges experienced in trying to address the needs of children with learning support barriers were identified by a number of teachers as constraining their well-being. This quote by a teacher illustrates the point:

40 different levels in the class there are children that are in between the higher middle and lower levels. The spread of children in the class impacts academically and this impacts on you because there is not the necessary space in the class. There should be 30 kids in the Foundation Phase I have 40 in my class (CF).

Further factors constraining teacher well-being under this category were the large number of learners in classes that required learning support; the wide range of learning support needs; teachers in the Foundation Phase not coping with addressing learning support needs as well as the language support needs; the negative influence of large class sizes on the ability of teachers to provide learning support; the limited ability of the learning support teachers to address the learning support barriers of

learners; Code 1²⁵ learners with learning barriers not being supported by the learning support teacher due to the pressure of the number of learners requiring learning support and the limited capacity of the learning support teachers and classroom teachers. A teacher said, “*Because the class is so big I can’t reach them and I know that I lose them so I would lose a great many of them if I should teach normally this is not normally the done in the intermediate phase but I need to do this in order to get results*” (JJ).

A further stressor for teachers was the departmental directive that requires the learning support teacher not to focus on Code 1 learners. A teacher described the influence of this constraint on teachers:

the teachers are very frustrated about the code one learners...The teacher on top of her load is supposed to do extra with these children they fall under the classroom intervention she has to have special work and have a special programme of these children. At the moment the education department had decided that we have to focus on code 2 (HB).

Other reasons teachers provided for this factor constraining their well-being were that classroom teachers are required to do additional and specialized learning support work that the learning support teachers are not able to address. A teacher highlighted the challenges teachers have in addressing learning support with large numbers of children in the class:

there is a lot of intervention support that is needed and we have identified that are struggling in whichever area and this could be eighteen to twenty children in the class and they all need attention and this is quite stressful with class sizes that are big and the usual pressures (HB).

Teachers mentioned that large class numbers exacerbated the pressures of class teachers are under to provide learning support and do differentiated teaching at a pace appropriate for different children. Teachers felt there was very little time to do the one on one support necessary for intervention support. Because of transportation issues children were not able to remain after school for intervention support. These factors exacerbated the limited access learners had to ongoing intervention support. Providing learning support to a wide range of learners limited the ability of teachers to focus on covering their prepared classroom work to achieve learning targets.

²⁵ A Code 1 learner identified by the learning support teacher is a learner that requires a high level of learning support interventions.

All teachers identified limitations in being able to identify and meet the range of learning support needs of learners in their classes. Feeling incompetent in these areas added to stress levels. Language barriers between learners and teachers further limited their ability to address specialised learning support needs. This was identified as a pressing difficulty in the Foundation Phase where learners had to become literate and numerate in a language that was not their home language.

Administrative procedures and paperwork to place children in schools where they could access additional support were time consuming and the referral system was slow. This resulted in learners not being appropriately paced in schools and had a negative impact on discipline issues. Class teachers interviewed said that they are not well trained to be able to support a range of learners with learning barriers. Teachers felt that they had inadequate learning support assistance from the DBE. One teacher described her frustration at not being able to cope with this aspect and the stress it placed on her as a teacher:

You can only work at intervals or after school and then the learners can't stay because of transport. It is difficult you can't win. It is not outside the classroom but what is going on inside the class that affects me. There is not time to deal with all these things to be honest you get learners that need a lot of support and we can't do it all (FR).

In order to cope some teachers said they had become resigned to the fact they could not address the support needs of all learners. Another teacher described her experience in this way:

They (teachers) just feel that don't want to struggle with the slower learners...maybe people just resign themselves to the fact that you know what, I am just doing the work, I am explaining it the best I can and those that fall by the wayside must just fall by the wayside (pause) I hear that sort of attitude when I hear teachers talk and complain and gripe (HB).

All teachers complained that they were given very limited support in addressing learning support needs by the school and from support providers outside the school. The school had however attempted to provide a level of learning support at the Intermediate Phase level. A teacher said, *"It is now recently that we have a Junior Primary support teacher. This year for the first time we have a person coming in to support the Intermediate Phase. But then there are a lot of children that need support"* (MA). This teacher went on to say that, *"Support services that are meant to assist us, these services are vital for the children because you are here to help the*

children. But they are also under staffed such as psychological support and special education services” (MA).

Large Classes. Under the category of working conditions that negatively affect teacher well-being a number of responses by teachers identified having to teach in classrooms with a large number of learners as having a negative impact. Teachers spoke about having class sizes of between 35 and 42 learners. One teacher said:

I know that last year Grade 3 was a big class and this year she has a big class again. She will have about 40 almost and I see the upper classes they are also quite full grade 7 the grade sixes and grade fives they look very full but I don't know their totals (HB).

At a physical level large class numbers also constrained the activities teachers could do with their learners:

with large classes with 45 and classrooms and here is very little space to move around you can't do extras for the children. You don't have space for tables to put extra things on that children can do when they have done with their work there is just no space to move in many of these rooms (HB).

Greater numbers of learners in classes increased administrative, assessment and teaching loads. A teacher expressed her frustration by saying, “*The admin, keeping up with marking and all the admin duties really if I could just teach and somebody could do my marking I would be happy and my recording and all that and just leave me to teach*” (RG). Another colleague echoed the frustration with the administrative pressures she had with a large class and all the curriculum requirements: “*The workload has increased and the administrative work like the mark-sheets and the assessments and those types of things it just goes on and on*” (TR). Another teacher described her challenge as feeling that she was not able to do justice to her job because of the large numbers: “*I have 43 in the class and I can't get to all the learners in the class. And this is where you have a real academic problem*” (FR).

Large class numbers in the Foundation Phase where children had language barriers and required socialization into school and classroom norms was mentioned as placing additional pressures on teachers. Teachers spoke of the additional demands placed on teachers working in multi-lingual and multi-cultural classes that were large. A teacher explained the pressure she was under in this way, “*forty*

learners in my class and their needs have to be addressed' (CJ). This quote by a teacher sums up some of the factors that negatively impact on the well-being of teachers who have large classes in this multi-lingual school:

Obviously our class sizes have grown the number of children in the school has remained constant but the teacher ratio has dropped and we have on average 40 plus learners in the class when I started here we had 30 to 35, five children extra in the class make a big difference. The demographics with the children from the townships has changed when I started we had let's see, 2 to 3 children in the class that were Xhosa speaking at the moment 50 % of the children in the class are Xhosa this can be a problem with language in terms of reading (JJ).

Language barriers and large class sizes. Language barriers were exacerbated when classroom sizes were large and where teachers felt learners had a range of other learning support barriers. Very little direct external support was provided to help teacher with language barriers. According to one teacher:

I told the district person yesterday that it would make our task easier if the government helped to train assistants in our classes that could help to get through to a child. Then we could refer this child to a teacher assistant so the child could get the same concept in different language (CJ).

A teacher describes how this negatively affected his well-being:

between 40 and 45 learners in the class, this places a stress in terms of understanding, reading it is not in mother tongue and the only time some learners hear English or speak English is at school and in the playground the children will speak Xhosa, if a child does not understand then I will ask another child to explain in Xhosa because I cannot speak the language myself (TR).

Language Barriers. The sub-category of language barriers was identified by some teachers as a factor negatively influencing their well-being. Teachers spoke about language barriers that both learners and they themselves faced in the teaching process as affecting their well-being. In the Foundation Phase teachers spoke about not being able to communicate concepts to children because they did not understand the first language that many of the children in their classes spoke. One teacher said, "The other challenge on me as the teacher is the language barrier. I do not speak the home languages of the children...You feel demoralised and I am not sure I can achieve the results at the end of the day" (GJ). In the Foundation Phase many learners were being taught in English which was not their mother tongue. Teachers spoke about both Afrikaans speaking and IsiXhosa speaking learners as having this challenge. Teachers said that language barriers affected both their teaching and

learning. Teachers felt disempowered by not being able to communicate with learners. Although they had some translation support from other learners, one teacher said what impacted negatively on her well-being was *“Not reaching the learners. I feel sometimes I have tried all avenues and I can’t expect Xhola to translate all the time for me”* (JP).

Support for teachers and learners in addressing some of the language barriers to learning was minimal. No mother-tongue IsiXhosa speaking teachers were employed in the Foundation Phase. Language barriers by learners and teachers also affected the ability of teacher to identify and support learning barriers in the early school years. Teachers mentioned that a support system to help them address language barriers was not in place. One teacher explained that nothing was done to help teachers cope with their language barriers: *“Our children don’t get interviewed to come into the school. Most of our children are IsiXhosa in our schools. For us as teachers half the class is IsiXhosa and nothing is done to help us cope with this. I do not speak IsiXhosa”* (CJ). Although parents were encouraged to register their children in Grade (R) to support their language development this strategy had a limited influence on helping teachers cope. A teacher said the following, *“... the majority of the learners if they come to this school in grade 4 or 5 they can’t speak English well and then you can keep them after school for extra work because of the transport issue* (FR). This grade (R) teacher was not an IsiXhosa mother tongue speaker and she herself struggled with language barriers. The school recommended that parents not enroll their children in the higher grades if they were not able to speak English.

Workload. Having a heavy workload was identified in some of the responses by teachers as impacting negatively on their sense of well-being. As a consequence teachers spoke about having very limited “non-contact” time with learners during the school day. Teachers spoke about having to be on “duty” at break or recess, *“At break you are on duty and the children make demands on you...the children are around you all the time”* (CJ). Workload pressures were mentioned as constraining well-being as they did not have time for a break or to meet with each other as a staff. One teacher said, *“Be too busy there is only a 20 minute break this is only too short”* (RM).

Teachers spoke about having their well-being affected by the workload they were carrying at a classroom, sport and committee level. One teacher said, *“There*

are a lot of committees but teacher don't have all the time in the world to make things happen" (MA). Another teacher in the intermediate phase felt the stress of not being able to cover all the learning areas.

The reality is that I can't manage to do justice to all the learning areas that I am supposed to be teaching is a day that is about six... you can have more in-depth and a greater volume of work being done per learning area if say teachers just have three or four learning areas to focus on... But even although they spread it out over the week I have to touch on them all once every second day (JJ).

Reductions in the number of teachers in the schools and the increase in pupil teacher ratios limited the amount of time teachers had between lessons to attend to all their duties:

When we had 26 teachers every day every teacher would have about on average two to three free periods and we would have enough time to roll off our work and prepare ourselves for the next lesson and now we teach from the moment we walk in until we leave, we do not have a spare moment (TR).

Although the appointment of additional cultural subject teachers provided teachers with some contact time relief, they felt they had very little non-contact time during the school day. A teacher describes her experience in this way: *"Teachers do not have one non-contact lesson really they all have one but what do they do with it. I have two non –contact sessions but here we walk with our children and take them to the next activity and this takes time"* (CJ).

Teachers spoke about how the workload responsibilities between staff members were not fairly allocated and shared and how this negatively affected their well-being. This applied to tasks at an extra-mural and committee level.

A further problem that was identified was the lack of incentives for taking on extra responsibilities. One teacher mentioned that a furlough had been given to teachers in the past as an incentive. However had subsequently been taken away by the DBE. This teacher said, *"The teachers here need breaks they work extremely hard so that they can have breaks so that they can be restored back to health. In the past there used to be furlough"* (MA).

Multiple roles of teachers. The multiple roles that teachers have to perform as part of their jobs were identified by some teachers as having a negative influence on their well-being. Workload included having multiple roles and responsibilities. A teacher described her workload in this way, *"We are expected to do all kinds of*

things to social workers, filing Clarks, teachers, psychologist... I have many roles and I can't take on everything" (CJ). Another teacher said, *"I have many roles and I can't take on everything"* (CJ).

As the school had very limited on site specialist support, class teachers had to take on a range of support roles in addition to their teaching responsibilities. These included addressing the biological, psychological, and social support needs of learners. Having multiple roles and limited support decreased their sense of well-being. When urgent attention had to be given to learners, teachers mentioned that they were not able to ignore issues or wait for outside support to be drawn in.

Apart from these roles, teachers also had to raise funds, serve on a number of committees as well as carry extra-mural responsibilities. One teacher said, *"It is a challenge that we as teachers have to raise funds"* (MA). These responsibilities all made demands on teacher time and increased their levels of stress.

Poor learner discipline. Poor learner discipline was mentioned in some responses as having a negative effect on the well-being of teachers:

Of course discipline is our major problem...you know these things just impact on you and you just don't feel like doing anything and the time is just sometimes taken up by reprimanding children or whatever and you don't get through a day's work (HB).

Poor discipline was linked to large classes, cultural differences between learners and between teachers and learners with regard to behavioural norms. A teacher said, *"There are exuberant boys and they are not the type of child I am used to"* (GJ). Teachers frequently mentioned language and learning barriers as influencing poor behaviour:

levels are too low so this is where it comes about we are told to work only with code 2s and the teacher has to work something around the code ones but the teacher should be focusing around her threes and fours to get them higher. But you know as it turns out the code ones will be the discipline problems, they can't do the work they are bored and they become disruptive and the teacher does not know how to work out things for them and get the codes 3 and 4 to a higher level and she is saddled with the code 2s I can't take it because the timetable is so full I have 9 slots in a day (HB).

Teachers often associated poor discipline with limited parental/guardian support; poor enforcement of rules by the school principal and management team, learners with barriers to learning and the influence of the socio-economic and family conditions on poor learner behaviour and discipline.

Poor collegiality. In a few responses from teachers the issue of poor collegiality was identified as part of their working conditions that constrained their well-being. Two teachers had this to say, “*We don’t come together in the staffroom at breaks*” (CJ), and “*For the past ten years the staffroom has not been used. Everybody just sits in their own classes and this place is not used*” (RM). Another teacher made this comment, “*Well they have a staffroom but they don’t come to the staffroom... I suppose the principal has never insisted that they do so you just don’t see anybody*” HB.

Poor collegiality was identified as staff not sharing ideas; a limited collegial culture of support and staff conflict. One teacher described the atmosphere in the school in this way, “*I have discovered that there is a lot of undercurrent and ugliness that is going on that does not jell with me. The staff does not feel like a family. Peer support is really an individual thing*” (RA).

Tensions between individuals in the SMT were frequently identified as affecting staff unity. A teacher said, “*Conflict on the staff around leadership positions, now the deputy does not support the principal there is fear. The leadership at SMT level is not unified*” (CJ). The lack of formal processes within the school of encouraging staff development and the sharing of professional practice was identified by some teachers as limiting collegiality. A teacher said the following, “*We have not had staff development session in the school this year. I did not experience them last year. We talk about thing in our phase meetings but not in the school as a whole*” (CJ).

Poor physical conditions. Under the theme of internal environmental the influence of the poor physical conditions under which teachers taught was mentioned in some responses as having a negative impact on teacher well-being. These included the poor level of facilities and resources available to teachers and learners; inadequate storage space in classrooms as well as classroom space. Teachers spoke about limited stationery and the lack of a functioning library. A teacher said this, “*The class is small and there is no the space to work. I don’t believe in a busy class*

because how do you control 40 children working at different levels. In the computer class it is also difficult we have it once a week for three quarter of an hour. There are often not enough computers for all the learners” (CJ). Another teacher made this comment, “There is lack of resources I suppose and materials that are needed and the classes are too full that is the first thing that stresses. Large classes there are 40 to 45 and this is really just too many children in a class” (HB).

The general limit in the amount of resources available for teaching and learning; poor levels of maintenance of the school building and grounds, as well as the poor sporting facilities were described as having a negative influence on the well-being of teachers:

Also the teachers here at the school they take from their own salaries and they buy a lot of stuff... Stuff to make the classroom nice and having to buy koki’s for the whiteboard. I will go and buy nice small things like stars and paste this in their books and some teachers pay for the books of some of the children and this is really tough on the children (MA).

The food and beverages sold at the school tuck-shop were mentioned by teachers as having a negative influence on learner behaviour:

Our tuck shop is a killer here. All that sugar hypes the children. The first things that they eat are full of sugar and nothing is done about this. If I think of other schools about what parents are aware of. We all struggle but in this school this is not good. Nothing is done about this (CJ).

6.6.2 External conditions that constrain teacher well-being. Teachers identified a number of factors in the external school environment to the school as constraining their well-being. The factors associated under the categories of socio-economic conditions and the influence of the DBE were mentioned as having a negative influence on the well-being of teachers are described below.

Table 6.4: Key External Conditions Negatively Constrain Teacher Well-Being

THEME	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY
External Conditions (33)	Socio-Economic Conditions (23/33)	Socio-Economic Conditions of Learners (15/23) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Curricular support from parents/guardians • Text poor home environments • Limited access to additional learning resources • Poor communication home/school • High levels learner absenteeism • Unreliable public transport • Vulnerable learners • Low income families
		Community Conditions (8/23) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft and vandalism • Little community ownership and support for school • Poor safety and security
	Influence of the DBE (10/33) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum change and expectations • Administrative overload • Pressure Systemic Tests • Limited External Support • Poor systems for holding underperforming staff to account • Poor professional identity of teachers • Incorrect funding levels of schools 	

6.6.2.1 Socio-economic conditions. Under the category of socio-economic conditions, two main sub-categories of factors were identified: socio-economic conditions of learners and conditions in the school community context. Both of these factors one could argue are part of the school context that influences the well-being of teachers.

Socio-economic conditions of learners. The impact of the socio-economic conditions of learners' family lives were identified in responses as having a negative influence on the well-being of teachers. Reasons teachers gave for how the learners' home environments negatively influenced their well-being were limited curricular support from parents or guardians; limited exposure of learners to text rich

environments; poor communication between school and learners' homes; high levels of absenteeism; unreliable public transport; poor economic status of parents or poverty; and a high level of bio-psycho-social issues that needed to be addressed by teachers, such as the exposure of learners to abuse, the neglect of children and a large number of children living with a single parent or guardian.

Limited curricular support from parents or guardians. Limited curricular support from parents/guardians because of language barriers; limited education; the inability of to deal with and support the barriers to learning of their own children because that were not able to pay for additional support or they did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide the necessary support to their children. One teacher said:

learners with real learning barriers the parent don't sit with them and the parents don't have resources. We find with single parents these learners have most problems. The majority of the Xhosa speaking learners live with their granny and granny does not have time to teach basics and you don't have time to teach them just certain basics like sit and greet and basics that you expect the domestic context to will deal with but you as a teacher have to deal with this (FR).

Most teachers mentioned the extra burden it placed on them to ensure the academic progress of learners because of the limited or poor parents/guardian support for children in monitoring and supporting their academic progress. A teacher said, *"My main worry is that there is no back up from parents with the homework and there is nothing that is forthcoming"* (GJ). Teachers mentioned poor or inconsistent parental support in assisting learners to complete their homework. They spoke about the increased responsibility on teachers to support learners that were *"weak"*, a teacher said this, *"Another concern is the weaker learners the parent does not support the learner so the school is now responsible"* (FR).

Some teachers spoke about the negative impact of learners not returning school textbooks: *"They know the children will not bring books back the department wants us to give the children the books to take home, but we know if we give the children the books they will not come back you know what I mean (laugh)"*(HB).

Text poor home environments. A child not being exposed to books or a range of reading texts in their home environments was described by some teachers as limiting the reading ability of children. This in turn had an influence on poor learner's performance in literacy and language tests. Poor levels of learner's

achievement placed teachers and the school under pressure from the Department of Education and parents. A teacher speaking about conditions in learners homes that impact on the well-being of teachers, said, “*some of them do not have books*” (FR).

Limited access to additional learning resources. Because of poor socio-economic home environments some children did not have access to the necessary or additional learning resources required by the school such as musical instruments to practice on. This influences the level to which learner to achieve mastery of their learning. This in turn was a frustration to teachers as the school did not have the funding to purchase additional resources. A teacher described the situation in this way, “*There is also a problem if they do not practice. They do not have instruments to practice on. Over here because of the social and economic status of children they do not have pianos or keyboards*” (AS).

Poor information flow and communication between school and learners homes. Another factor negatively influencing the well-being of teachers in this school was the poor information flow (or a breakdown in information flow) between parents/guardians and teachers. Teachers said that most parents could not easily be accessed by telephone contact or email. Communication thus depended on responses to written communication taken home to parents/guardians by the learner. Responses were not always returned by parents, and teachers were not always sure that these notices were understood by all parents/guardians as they were only written in English and Afrikaans.

A teacher described her frustration in this way, “*There are mostly single mommies and we try and help where we can ...Mostly our problem is curriculum support, information flow and communication and support from the community to make the teacher’s burden lighter*” (MA). Teachers spoke of the limited access they had to meeting parents or guardians personally because of their long working hours and their inability to get time off work on week days. Single parent homes and homes in which a grandmother was looking after the children presented teachers with additional challenges as learners had very little homework or additional learning and social support. A teacher describes the situation in this way:

We find with single parents these learners have most problems. The majority of the Xhosa speaking learners live with their granny and granny does not have time to teach basics and you don’t have time to teach them just certain basics like sit and greet and basics that you

expect the domestic context to will deal with but you as a teacher have to deal with this (FR).

Lack of public transport and safety constrained the ability of teachers to meet with parents or guardians in the evenings or over weekends. One teacher said, “*I do understand that some of them work different hours and some parents live in a shack and this is difficult*” (FR).

High levels of learner absenteeism. Teachers spoke about how the absenteeism of learners due to public transport and other socio-economic issues affected results and required them to repeat work. This was experienced as frustrating and negatively affected their sense of well-being. Constraints on teaching time were further influenced by some learners not attending the school in the last week of school, or arriving at school late at the start of a term. Economic constraints in families and poverty were cited as some of the reasons for learners not coming to school when their families needed to pay for the use of public transport. A teacher said:

We don't get to the learners that are not coming to school and in the last week of ever term especially those learners that come in the taxis and even the busses. It could be it's a money issue because when they have completed tests then it does not cover the last week (FR).

Unreliable public transport. Many learners made use of public transport in the form of taxis or busses to get from their homes to school. Taxi strikes or service delivery protests had a negative influence on learners being able to access school and this in turn influenced the amount of work teachers could cover. Because many learners depended on public transport to get to school, classroom teaching was severely disrupted when public transport was not reliable. A teacher describes the situation in this way:

when there are taxi strikes, here are a lot of children from informal settlement and if any strike happens it affects them and they will not to come to school and we can't provide busses, by us I mean teachers and not the parents because they do not have much money (MA).

taxi strikes our learners stays away and their absenteeism never end when the strike ends and then about 50% of your class it's not there and it is pointless teaching on these days as stay away then it is difficult to teacher you go on with work but we have to repeat it. About 55% of our learners come from the township. You do go on with work but you have to repeat it (KI).

Additional stress was placed on teachers when learners were unable attend after school sporting activities and they were not able to provide additional intervention support or give learners detention after formal schooling hours. This teacher went on to remark:

This has an impact on my ability to cope with such things as sporting activities and we have an issue in that we cannot have detention because at 2:30 the transport is waiting for the child and the child has to go. How does this child then get back to the township if you detain them? (KI).

Vulnerable learners. Teachers spoke about some learners coming from family environments where they were either looked after by a guardian, a single mother or a relative or grandmother. Children coming from homes in which the socio-economic conditions made them vulnerable to a range of factors such as overcrowding, neglect and abuse, placed a greater level of responsibility on teachers to deal with a range of biological, psychological and social support needs. One teacher describes the influence of the home environment on the behavior of the child in this way, “...the child will be staying in three places the dad the mother and the granny and the child has no fixed abode and this has a bad influence on the child’s behaviour” (GJ).

Teachers spoke about how a number of learners lived in poor socio-economic conditions such as informal settlements. Home environments in which poverty was experienced placed additional challenges on the learning support learners got as well as their focus on the importance of schooling. In some households there was little parental or adult supervision such as in household headed by single working mothers. Learners from these home environments were described as presenting with a number of learning support, as well other psychological and social support needs. Having to deal with aggression from children who came from environments where there were high levels of alcohol and drug abuse, as well as domestic violence, further exacerbated teacher stress levels. A teacher described her experience in this way, “I think that maybe the child does not want to work but you find out that there is something that is happening at home” (GJ).

Low-income families. The low-income levels in families (households) as well as poverty had an impact on the amount of money parents/guardians could afford to pay for school fees as well as the money available to provide for additional learning resources and activities. A teacher said, “Money plays a big role. Principals don’t

get their school fees” (HB). In order to address the non-payment of schools fees and to make provision for the school to cover a few additional teaching posts, teachers were required to support fund raising in the school. Because the school community was not a wealthy one, teachers said that only a small amount of additional income could be raised from such activities resulting in a shortage of resources and funds to improve the school environment. Another teacher explains her frustration in this way:

The lack of funds. I am the netball coach but we do not have the fund for a netball field. This is very frustrating, the children are only in the classroom and there are no other activities for their growth they cannot be in the classroom all the time (GJ).

These factors place a limitation on the number of additional teaching resources or additional financial support teachers could request from the school. This comment by a teacher illustrates the impact of these financial constraints:

We have a poor community response ...Our school does not have a lot of money I normally take the people in the kitchen to buy food for the school feeding scheme and when I went to pay I was told there is not cash. The people were shocked. We cannot help it if the kids cannot pay (MA).

The categorization of the school as a Quintile 5 school was mentioned as placing a further limitation on the funding allocated by the state to the school. More than half of the children in the school did not come from the community surrounding the school.

Community conditions. Some teachers identified issues in the community context surrounding the school as constraining their sense of well-being. Theft and vandalism of school property; little community ownership and support; and poor safety and security were issues raised as external factors which had an impact on the school and contributed to constraining teacher well-being. This quote by a teacher helps to illustrate how this aspect negatively influences the well-being of teachers as well as disrupts the functioning of the school as a whole:

One thing that frustrates the daylight out of us is the crime in the area we have regular burglaries and the building is violated and plumbing whatever the school is without water and these are the comforts we have at home and when you get to school this is not here for you. We have to tell the learners they can't go to the loo. You come to school and our classroom is flooded we had on one occasion to stand on the corner and ask the transport to take the learners back for the day because it is pointless keeping the learners when you have no plumbing and then we lose a day or two of teachings (KI).

Local community - Theft and vandalism of school property. Teachers spoke of the trauma and frustration they faced when their classrooms were broken into and their resources were stolen on a regular basis. Theft and vandalism was reported as happening over weekends and during the school holidays. Some teachers related increased levels of theft of school property to the gangster and drug activity in the community as well as the poor security in the school. Teachers spoke of how traumatized they were by these experiences:

On Thursday thieves broke into my class and invaded my privacy and those of my learners...This was on Friday and I could see that they were going to break in again because they did not take everything and on Monday they had broken into my class again. I said on Friday that they will break into my class... I felt very upset, my classroom is like my home and if somebody goes through your personal things you did not know where they have been (FZ).

Little local community ownership and support. A number of teachers spoke about the community around the school not feeling like they had a stake as many of the children in the school did not come from the community directly surrounding the school. This they felt contributed to vandalism and theft as well as a lack of support teachers felt from the community staying in the area surrounding the school.

Poor safety and security. The poor safety and security in the school had an influence on the levels of theft in the school and the feeling that teachers had that they did not feel safe on the school property when the school day was over. The limited funding the school had placed limitations on the school getting security guards. The alarm and burglar bar system teachers felt had a limited effect on the security of their school resources as well as the safety of their pupils and themselves.

6.6.2.2 Influence of the Department of Basic Education. A number of responses by teachers related to the negative influence of the Department of Education on their well-being. These included, curriculum changes and expectations; policy changes with little support; administrative overload; pressure of systemic testing; limited external support; poor systems for holding underperforming staff to account; poor professional identity of teachers and the incorrect funding level classification of the school.

Curriculum change and expectations. Four teachers mentioned constant curriculum changes as having a negative influence on their well-being. A teacher

said, “*there are all these other issues and everything changes curriculum forms and filing all of that*” (HP). Teachers said that they were constantly in training around changes in the curriculum. One teacher felt that the current curriculum expectations were not in line with the children’s abilities to cope especially when they were coping with language and learning barriers. One teacher described her difficulty with the curriculum in this way:

the curriculum is structured in such a way you have to complete things in a certain time. We have a lot of challenges with learner to get this done. They need all kinds of help. The curriculum is too compact to deal with everything and cover everything in a year. That is the first challenge (FR).

Curriculum pressures in relation to contextual challenges place additional stressors on teachers. According to one teacher: “*They (learners) do cover the curriculum if you do drill you will not be able to complete the curriculum according to the Department. If you work according to the prescription in the Department you can’t complete the content for the year, not with learners we have*” (FR).

Teachers spoke of the stress on teachers created by the Department of Basic Education bringing in policy changes without providing teachers with the necessary levels of support to implement policy.

Administrative overload. Along with the curriculum changes teachers mentioned the number of administrative requirements. These related to learner assessment as well as the large numbers of learners in classes and were a factor that they identified as constraining their well-being. A teacher explains:, “*because you get bogged down with that and you lose the focus sometimes you know, you are not just teaching which is what you want, there are all these other issues and everything changes curriculum forms and filing all of that*” (HP).

Pressure of Systemic Tests. The increasing pressure from the Department of Basic Education on learner performance levels in the annual systemic tests were a factor that teachers mentioned as adding to their stress. They spoke about the feelings of stress teachers had when results came out and learners had not performed well. They complained that the Department did not take into consideration the numerous contextual constraints over which they had no control that impacted on learner performance levels. A teacher made this comment, “*Nobody makes a note of what impacts on the teaching they just want results...three days of taxi strikes these*

impacts on everything. Nobody makes a note of what impacts on the teaching they just want results” (CJ).

Limited external support. Teachers mentioned the limited external support from the DBE as influencing their well-being. Here teachers specifically mentioned the limited support services to schools to help them address the numerous barriers to learning. A teacher said, “*Support services that are meant to assist us these services are vital for the children because you are here to help the children. But they are also under staffed such as psychological support and special education services” (MA).* The one learning support person available to teachers at the school was unable to cope with the number of learners she had to see in her part-time capacity.

Poor systems for holding underperforming staff to account. Teachers mentioned the negative impact in the school of the DBE not being able to hold under-performing staff to account. This had an influence on teachers within the school not being held accountable for poor performance levels. This impacted on the morale of teachers and management in the school who seemed powerless to act. One teacher describes her frustration as follows, “*You take your concerns to the principal and he takes these concerns to the Department and you know that this is a lengthy drawn out process especially if there is a colleague who is permanent” (KI).*

Poor professional identity of teachers. Teachers spoke about the poor professional identity and status they felt teachers had. This was related to how they experienced the DBE as treating teachers as well as the loss of a number of perks and opportunities that teachers had in the past such as the furlough. A teacher described how she was feeling as, “*We are at the bottom end of the professional ladder as teachers” (CJ).* Teachers said they experienced a lot of pressure from the DBE to perform, with very little acknowledgement for the challenges they faced and the role they played in the lives of learners both at an educational and broader social level.

Incorrect funding level classification of the school. The classification of the school according to the poverty quintile 5 was considered by staff to be incorrect as this did not adequately take into consideration the poverty levels of most learners in the school who did not live in the community surrounding the school. This classification of the school meant that the school received less funding support from the government and that the school had to rely on parents or guardians to pay schools

fees and in raising additional funds to cover running and maintenance costs. These expectations on the school, and particularly the teachers by the DBE were felt to be unrealistic. Teachers said they placed teachers under greater pressure to raise funding to develop that school and to pay for additional teaching posts so that their class sizes could be reduced or they could access additional learning support. A teacher made this comment:

the fact that this school is a quintile 5 school and it is classified at the same level as X model C schools of course this school is a far cry from these schools this school is doing baby steps in that direction so ja...there is not much that I can say about the support here (JJ).

6.7 General Analysis of Factors Constraining Teacher Well-Being

Factors at both the internal and micro level of the school as well as in the external environment of the school negatively influenced the well-being of teachers. The day-to-day working conditions of teachers in the school were identified as having the greatest significance in constraining their well-being. These included having to teach in a context where the overall leadership and management was functioning poorly, a large number of learners required additional learning support, and large class sizes.

In addition learners and teachers in this multi-lingual school experienced language barriers, poor learner discipline, weak collegiality; high and unequal workload responsibilities, and the responsibility for a number of roles and responsibilities where external support could not be accessed.

In addition teachers experienced the poor physical conditions and the limited resource base as having a negative influence on their working conditions and sense of well-being.

The neglected school grounds and the poor maintenance of school infrastructure, as well as the lack of teaching and learning resources were directly influenced by the economic position of the learners' parents and their ability to contribute additional funding to the schools. Further factors negatively influencing teacher well-being were the run down appearance of the school, theft, vandalism and the lack of safety in the community environment surrounding the schools.

The DBE to which school and teachers have to account and to which they have to turn to for support, is felt to play a limited role in supporting the well-being of teachers. It is experienced as providing limited support and acknowledgement to

the school and teachers while demanding high levels of learner performance. The well-being levels of teachers are further eroded by on-going waves of curricular reform and policy change demanded by the DBE.

6.8 Presentation of an Emerging Theory of the Factors Supporting and Constraining the Well-Being of Teachers in a School in Challenging Conditions

Conditions which supporting the subjective well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions are related to both how teachers look after their subjective or personal well-being, as well as factors within the school-community environment.

6.8.1 Factors promoting subjective or personal well-being. The ability of teachers to develop strategies to support and promote their own emotional, psychological, physical and mental well-being, as well as the support they receive from friends, spouses or family member assists them in coping with the demands of their jobs.

At a subject level the emotional and psychological self-support strategies that promote teacher well-being include, having a positive attitude; focusing on what is positive; having a problem solving attitude; overlooking obstacles; drawing on one's own resources and resourcefulness; focusing on what is important at the classroom level; making a decision to maintain friendly or cordial relationships with colleagues; and holding boundaries between one's personal and professional life.

Physical and psychological well-being is promoted through teachers getting involved in coaching sport or taking up a sport or physical activity. Mental well-being is promoted by engaging in personal studies to promote professional development; having an open attitude towards change and being prepared to adapt to curriculum changes.

Figure 6.3 below illustrates the dimensions of personal well-being and the strategies teacher engage in to support their own well-being.

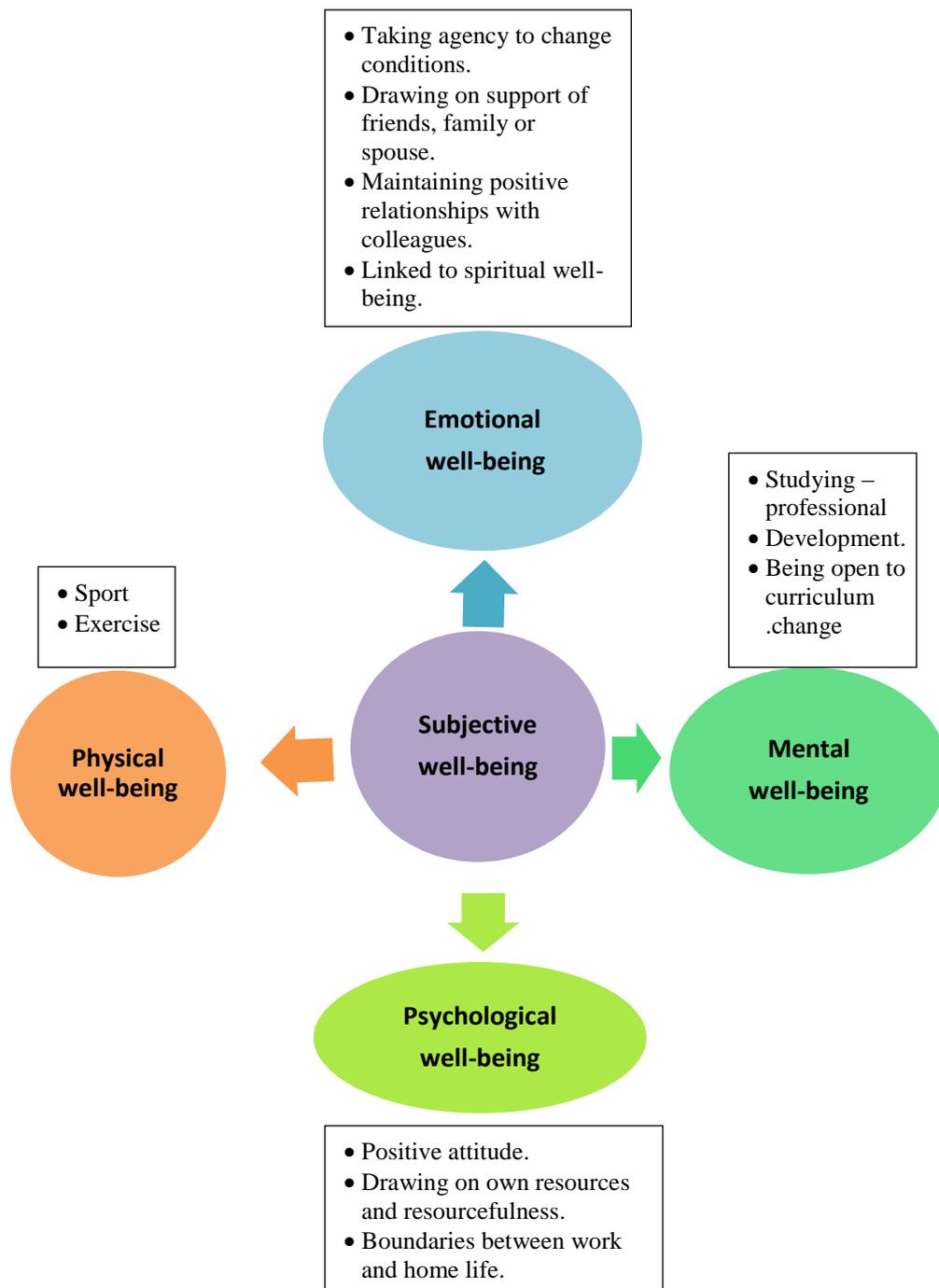


Figure 6.3: Dimensions of subjective or personal well-being and strategies teachers use to support their own well-being

The subjective or personal well-being of teachers is a fluctuating state that includes a number of dimensions of well-being, physical, emotional, psychological, mental and spiritual and influences and is influenced by conditions in the school community environment and private life of the teachers. The personal and professional aspects of a teacher's life are inter-connected. In this school in

challenging conditions the personal strategies by teachers to promote their own well-being focused more prominently on emotional and psychological strategies, than on the physical or mental dimensions.

6.8.1 Factors promoting teacher well-being in the school community environment. Factors promoting teacher well-being in the school community environment include the supportive professional and personal support role played by the school principal, the quality of personal and professional relationships between the teachers, the vision of the school which provides a holistic and challenging curriculum, positive relationships with learners and the meaning teachers get from the development of learner potential. Figure 6.4 below illustrates positive factors in the school environment that support teacher well-being.

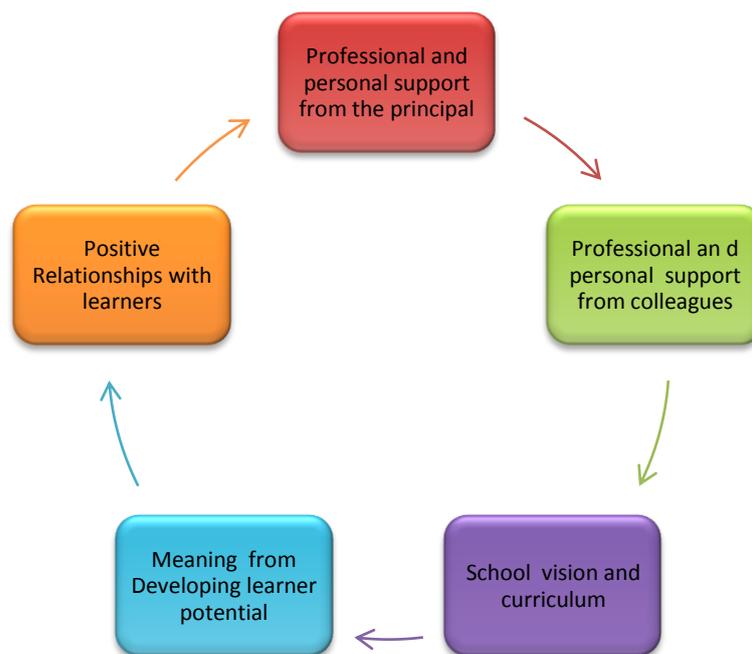


Figure 6. 4: *Positive Factors in the School Environment that Support Teacher Well-Being*

The well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions is strongly supported by positive professional and personal relationships between staff and with the principal. In addition it is supported by positive relationships with learners and in the meaning that teachers derive from supporting the development of the holistic potential of learners. Working in a school environment with a curriculum, vision and

values that inspires teachers was identified as supporting their well-being. These factors support the emotional, mental and psychological dimension of teacher well-being.

6.8.2 Factors constraining teacher well-being in the school community environment. Factors constraining the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions are poor internal working and environmental conditions within the school, as well as the negative influence of the socio-economic conditions in the home environments of learners on the learning and teaching environment of the classroom and school. These factors affect the nature of the demands on the teacher's job, as well as the resources available to the teachers and all place increasing pressure on the teacher well-being at a personal and professional level.

In addition, stressors at the level of the broader school community, the negative influence of the community context surrounding the school in terms of safety and security, as well as the limited support but increased pressure from the DBE for improved educational results all add to the negative impact on teacher well-being. Figure 6.5 highlights those factors at a school community environment level identified as having a negative influence on the well-being of teachers.

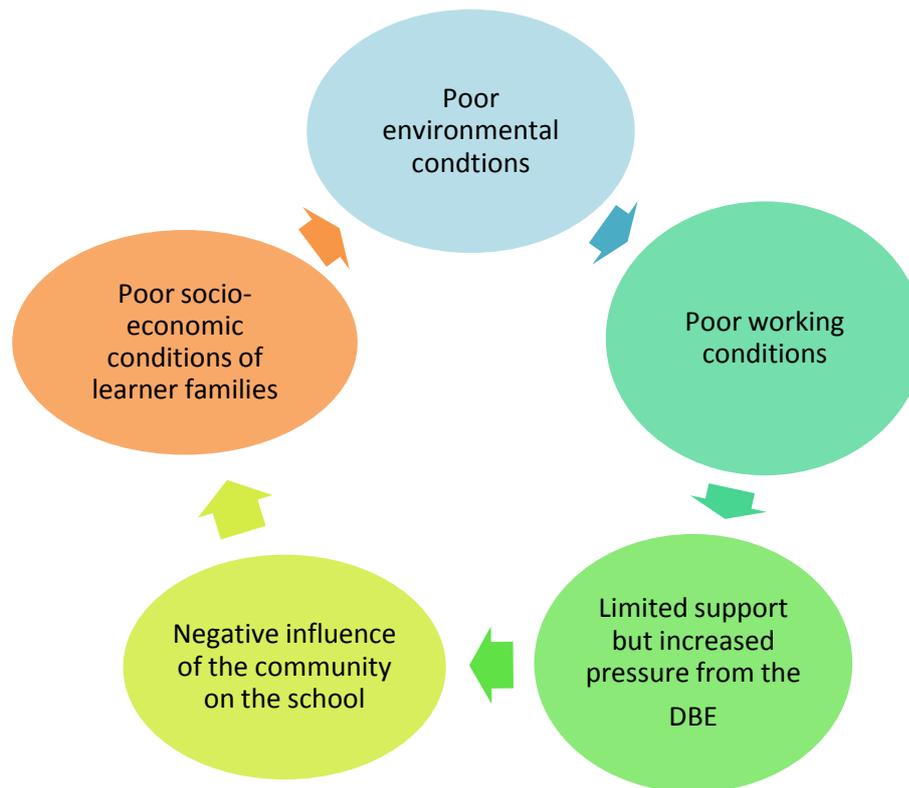


Figure 6.5: Factors at a School Community Environment Level Identified as Having a Negative Influence on the Well-Being of Teachers

Both factors within the school environment at an organisational level, as well as factors beyond the control of the school such as the home environment of the learners and the negative influence of the community surrounding the school impact either directly or indirectly on the well-being of teachers.

The weighting of responses by teachers of factors negatively affecting their well-being show a greater number of responses related to factors within the internal environmental conditions at the school as negatively affecting their well-being. This is understandable as on a day-to-day level the resources teachers have at their disposal and physical conditions they work under directly impact their well-being. However the poor level of facilities, limited resources and the poor condition of the school environment are directly related to amount of school fees parents are able to pay and the amount of security and support the school has from the surrounding community. These factors influence the quality of relationships between teachers, management and learners, and as a consequence teacher well-being.

In order to support teacher well-being the school leadership and the school principal in particular have a key role to play in addressing those factors which

negatively affect the well-being of their staff both at the level of the school as well as at the level of the broader school and local community.

6.9 A Discussion of an Emerging Theory about Factors Supporting and Constraining the Well-Being of Teachers in a School in Challenging Conditions in Relation to the Literature

In this section I will briefly present my emerging theory of factors supporting and constraining teacher well-being in a school in challenging conditions. I then discuss my theory in relation to the literature which focuses on factors supporting and constraining teacher well-being. Here I will look at similarities and differences in my findings and other findings as well as highlight any new connections between aspects of my theory. This theoretical testing process will help refine the relationships between concepts in my theory as well as help substantiate my emerging theory. In the concluding section I will then present my substantiated theory.

6.9.1 An emerging theory of factors supporting and constraining teacher well-being in a school in challenging conditions. Drawing on my analysis of data through the selective coding process, figure 6.6 below provides a schematic representation of the inter-relationships between the subjective, organisational and contextual factors identified as supporting and constraining teacher well-being in this school. This emerging theory is described below and is then discussed in relation to the literature.

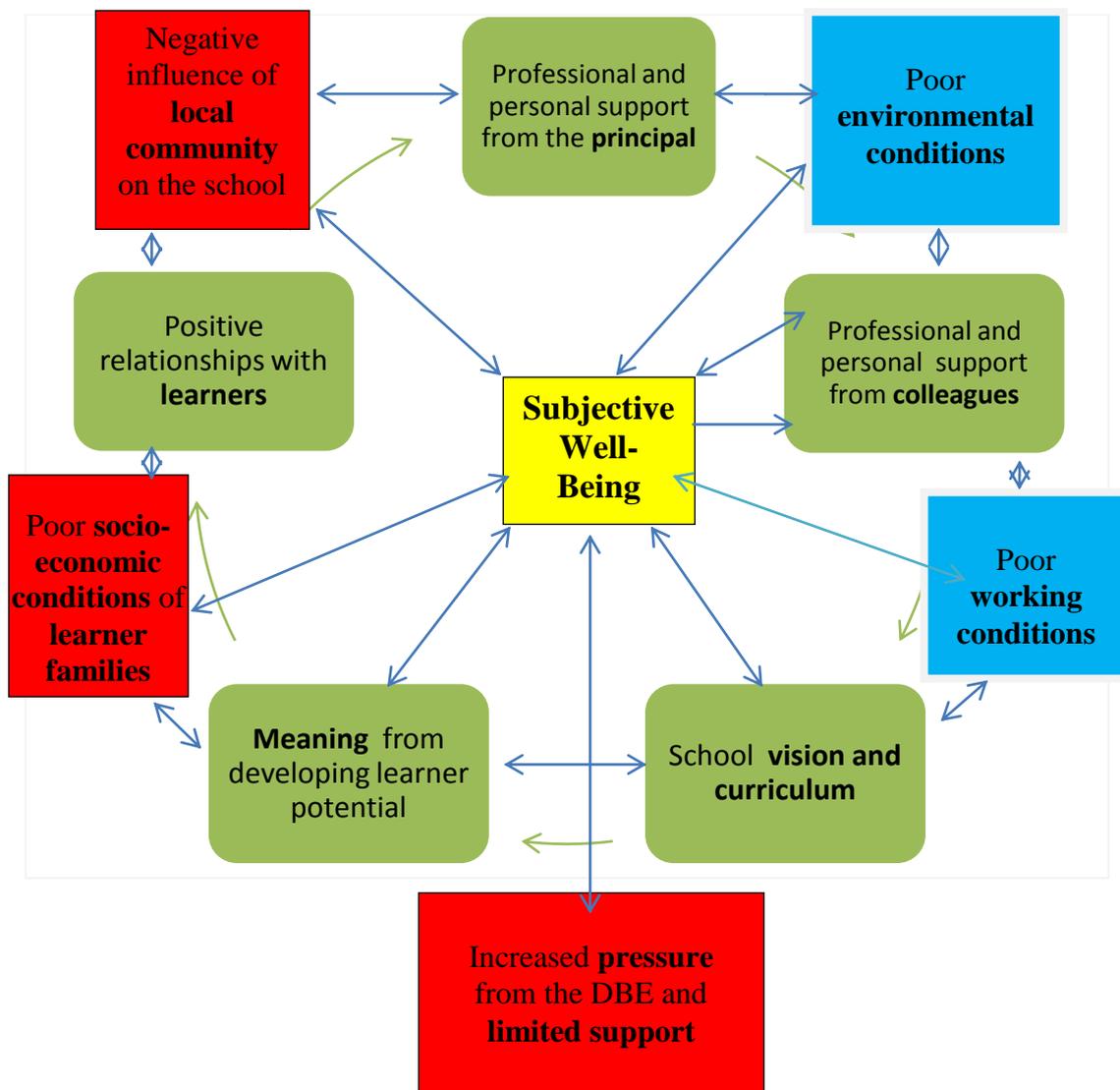


Figure 6.6: *An Emerging Theory of Factors Supporting and Constraining Teacher Well-Being in a School in Challenging Conditions*

Teacher well-being is supported or constrained by a number of factors at a subjective, organisational and contextual level. These factors are inter-related and dynamic.

At a subjective level the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions is enhanced by them taking agency to support their subjective well-being through personal strategies that primarily focus on supporting their social, emotional, psychological, physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of well-being. A focus on strategies to enhance the social, emotional and psychological aspects of well-being had more of an emphasis by teachers in this school, than the physical, mental and dimensions. On a day-to-day basis teachers are able to take greater level of agency and have more influence over their well-being at a subjective level. Key factors

which support their subjective well-being are taking agency, studying further, having a positive attitude, making an effort to maintain good collegial relationships, getting the support of family and friends and keeping a balance between home and work life.

At an organisational level factors that promote teacher well-being include personal and professional support by the principal, the school management and colleagues. At this level teachers can exert a level of agency in promoting their own well-being and that of their colleagues.

At an inter-personal level teacher well-being is promoted through positive caring and supportive relationships between teachers and learners, between colleagues and between teachers and the management and principal.

At a professional level teacher well-being is promoted through a curriculum that inspires teachers and a school vision and values that hold meaning for them. Professional well-being is promoted through supportive professional relationships between colleagues, with management and the principal. Professional well-being of teachers is promoted through positive learner relationships and learner achievement and holistic development.

At an organisational level factors that constrain teacher well-being include factors both internal and external to the school environment. At the internal level teachers are able to exert a greater level of agency in changing their environmental and working conditions. At the local community and the broader school community level teachers have very little influence in changing conditions that impact on their well-being.

At the internal school environment level, environmental and working conditions constrain teacher well-being. Poor environmental conditions include limited teaching and learning resources and the poor physical condition of the buildings and grounds.

Poor working conditions include poor leadership and management; a large number of learners with barriers to learning; large classes; language barriers; workload; poor learner discipline; poor collegiality; and the multiple roles.

At a level external to the school environment the factors that constrain the well-being of teachers are the increased pressure and limited support teachers experience from the DBE; the negative influence of the socio-economic conditions in the lives of the learners at the school; and the negative influence of the local community surrounding the school.

Both factors within the school organisational environment as well as local community surrounding the school and in the broader parent/guardian community linked to homes of learners also influenced the day-to-day functioning of the school and the ability of teachers to teach. Thus these factors too have a direct impact on teachers and influence their subjective well-being. The physical, emotional, mental and psychological well-being of teachers in turn has an influence of the well-being of learners and colleagues and on the broader school community.

The principal and management team has a central role in providing teachers with both personal and professional support to meet their job demands and in addressing issues related to the physical condition of the school and the resources necessary for teaching and learning. The principal and SMT have greater agency to influence change at the whole school environmental level, and have a key role in supporting the well-being of teachers by addressing issues at a level external to the school. This includes engagement with the broader parent/guardian community and local community, the DBE and support services.

Strategies that promote teacher well-being at an organisational level include:

- A focus on promoting good collegial and learner relationships
- Promoting celebration and acknowledgment of learner and teacher achievement
- Holding staff and learners disciplined and accountable
- Helping teachers and learners focus on the vision and purpose of a holistic excellent education
- Drawing in support to address language and learning support barriers
- Strengthening leadership and management support to teachers
- Addressing the working conditions and job demands of teachers so that workload is more evenly and fairly distributed
- Supporting professional development
- Creating appropriate environmental and physical conditions that support effective teaching and learning
- Engaging with the broader parent/guardian and surrounding community and support services to support teachers and learners

6.9.2 Discussion of the emerging theory in relation to the literature.

Much of the literature related to well-being is also related to the study of teacher

stress and burnout or teacher resilience. All these studies are related to the broader focus on teacher well-being and those factors which support or constrain it. A review of the literature shows that teacher stress and burnout are a common feature of South African schools (Jackson, 2002; Jackson, Rothmann & van de Vijver, 2006; Johnson, 2005; Meerkotter, Fataar, Fuglestad, & Lillejord, 2001; Paterson & Fataar, 2007; Rothmann, 2001) and the international public schooling system (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Day et al., 2007; Kyriacou, 1987; Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Patterson, Collin, & Abbott, 2002; Pillay et al., 2005; Sumsion, 2004). A number of factors at a personal and school level are identified as having a positive or negative influence on the well-being and resilience of teachers. These studies highlight a range of factors both internal and external to the school context that contribute to high teacher absenteeism, boarding and lower levels of retention of teachers in the teaching profession.

The notion of teacher well-being as a dynamic and complex construct that is influenced positively or negatively by a number of factors is endorsed by a number of South African studies (Jackson, 2002; Jackson & Rothmann, 2005; Jackson et al., 2006) and international studies (Day et al., 2007; Friedman, 1991; Holmes, 2005; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Pillay et al., 2005).

The relationship between a subjective level of well-being and broader contextual factors is acknowledged and a holistic approach to addressing well-being is emphasized (Friedman, 1991; Holmes, 2005; Jackson et al., 2006; Pillay et al., 2005). South African researchers Jackson et al., (2006) propose a model for teacher work related well-being that demonstrates a relationship between work-related factors and subjective levels of teacher well-being and health. The research by Suh et al., (1996) in English schools examines the interplay between positive and negative life events on subjective and work related well-being. Their findings showed that four key factors have a direct impact on an individual's well-being or vulnerability namely: stability of the event; adaptation; structure of the event; and personality. These findings endorse the link between subjective levels of well-being and school or organisational levels of well-being I have made in my emerging theory.

The relationship between subjective well-being and broader organisational or work related conditions have been established in a number of local (Evans, & Lunt, 2002; Jackson, 2002; Jackson et al., 2006; Rothmann, 2003; Schulze & Steyn, 2007)

and international studies (Friedman, 1991; Kyriacou, 2001; Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985; Patterson et al., 2002). This confirms the linkages I make in my theory between the subjective and organisational links to teacher well-being.

While a number of studies have looked at the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the organisational conditions and work demands (Friedman, 1991; Gold & Roth, 1993; Rothmann, 2003; Jackson et al., 2006) fewer studies (Day et al., 2007; Friedman, 1991; Jackson et al., 2006; Schultz & Steyn, 2007) have examined the relationship between the school and broader contextual factors that support or constrain teacher well-being. My own study helps to highlight how teacher well-being in a school in challenging conditions is influenced by factors at a personal, organisational and contextual level.

A local study by Jackson et al., (2006) testing out a model for work-related well-being of educators in South Africa, explicitly endorses a link between subjective levels of well-being such as burnout or exhaustion and the job demands and job resources in the organisational environment teachers are exposed to. Research by Rothmann (2003) and Pillay et al., (2005) shows that prolonged stress can lead to burnout. Burnout is characterized by feelings of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization or a sense of detachment from people and “reduced personal accomplishment related to negative self-evaluation of one’s job performance” (Pillay et al., 2005, p. 24).

Some studies on teacher burnout indicate that organisational variables play a greater role than individual variables in determining well-being. Friedman (1991) citing the research of Berkley Palling Associates (1977) and Milstein and Golaszewski (1985) argues for a focus on organisational and environmental factors as causes of burnout on the grounds of , “the origins of burnout deriving from role and organisational variables are probably stronger than those deriving from personality variables” and they contention that it , “may be easier to reduce the rate of occurrence and the degree of severity of burnout by intervention on the organisational plane” (1991, p. 326). My own study found that teachers identified caring and supportive relationships within the school as key in supporting their well-being.

Discussion of aspects of subjective well-being. At a subjective level of well-being the notion of agency in supporting well-being is supported by the studies of

Davis, & Wilson, 2000, Schaufeli, 2003 and Patterson, 2001. The dimensions of subjective well-being through teachers taking person agency as identified in my research are mirrored in other research. Holmes (2005) identified the following sub-categories of well-being in relation to the lives of teachers in the classroom and wider context of life, namely: physical, emotional, mental/intellectual and spiritual aspects of well-being. Holmes (2005) acknowledges the connection between these dimensions or sub-categories of well-being. She defines the aspect of well-being in the following way (2005, pp. 8-11).

Mental/intellectual well-being is defined as: “the mindset that encourages continuing professional and personal development.”

Emotional well-being: “the ability to recognise, understand and appropriately express emotions.”

Spiritual well-being: “not dependent upon religious belief ...our need to experience that which extends beyond the material world”.

Physical well-being: “all aspects of our physical being”.

The two categories that I identify in my theory that are not mentioned by Holmes (2005) are social well-being and psychological well-being. Holmes (2005) does not differentiate between aspects of subjective well-being in relation to different school contexts. In my study I found that teachers highlighted factors which enhanced their well-being to be related to the social, emotional and psychological and environmental aspects of well-being. While Holmes tends to place more of an emphasis on the physical and mental dimensions of well-being. A few teachers in my study briefly mention spiritual well-being as a component of well-being at a personal or organisational level, however this aspect was not explored in great depth in my study. The dimensions of organisational well-being and contextual level well-being were not identified by Holmes (2005).

There is a similarity between some of the subjective aspects identified by teachers as promoting their well-being in my study and the research in Australian schools by Patterson et al., (2002) on teacher resilience. Table 6.5 below shows the similarities and differences in the subjective factors I identified and those identified by Patterson et al., (2002) in promoting teacher resilience.

Table 6.5: Similarities and Differences in the Subjective Factors Promoting Teachers Well-Being.

Subjective factors promoting resilience. Patterson et al., (2002) study	Subjective factors promoting teacher well-being identified in this study.
SIMILARITIES	SIMILARITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of personal values that guide decision making. • Taking charge and solving problems. • A high premium on professional development and accessing what is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a positive attitude. • Keeping a focus on what is positive. • Having a problem solving attitude • Overlooking obstacles. • Drawing on one’s own resources and resourcefulness. • Studying further
DIFFERENCES	DIFFERENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing mentorship and leadership to others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on what is important at the classroom level • Making a decision to maintain friendly or cordial relationships with colleagues. • Holding boundaries between one’s personal and professional life. • Drawing in support from family a spouse and friends.

The literature shows that factors promoting resilience are complex and multidimensional. Patterson, Collins and Abbott (2002, p. 4) identify seven key strengths or positive factors that bolster resilience of teachers and teacher leaders:

- Be positive in spite of adversity
- Stay focused on what you care about
- Remain flexible in how you achieve your goals
- Take charge
- Create a climate of personal and professional support
- Maintain high expectations for success for students and teachers and parents
- Create shared responsibility and participation.

Sumsion’s (2004) research of teacher resilience in Australian schools found the following personal factors contributed to teacher resilience and ability to thrive at a personal level.

- Self insight
- A commitment to on-going learning

A philosophical stance or moral purpose
Engagement is conscious.

A number of the subjective factors that support teacher resilience in these studies support the factors I have identified in my emerging theory on factors supporting and constraining teacher well-being.

The study by Day et al., (2007, p. 106) found that a strong sense of “personal and professional agency and moral purpose” contributed to teacher commitment and resilience.” Personal agency is also in the teacher well-being model proposed by Jackson et al., (2006) and is included under work-related aspects of growth opportunities and organisational support identified as supporting teacher well-being.

These findings correlate well with my own findings at a subjective level of teachers relying on their own resources and resourcefulness to promote their own well-being, keeping a focus on what is important at the classroom level and holding a balance between professional and personal life.

While a number of research studies have looked at well-being in relation to life phases or age and work (Day et al., 2007; Schulze & Steyn , 2007) my theoretical sampling did not address this aspect and it would be an important area to investigate further as part of the subjective dimensions of teacher well-being. Day et al., (2007, p. 67) found that “despite individual and work context differences, it is possible to discern distinctive key influences, tensions, shared professional and personal concerns and “effectiveness” pathways or trajectories relevant to most teachers in different phases of their careers”. The findings by Day et al., (2007) show that the professional life phases have an important influence on levels of teacher effectiveness and well-being.

The link between personal and professional level teacher well-being and the quality of professional support and work place demands that I identify in my emerging theory is confirmed in a number of related studies in South Africa (Jackson et al., 2006) and internationally (Day et al., 2007).

The research by Jackson et al., (2006) with a sample of 1177 educators in the North-West Province in South Africa showed found that there was a good fit for a model of teacher work related well-being:

in which burnout (exhaustion and mental distancing) mediated the relationship between job demands and ill health, while work engagement (exhaustion and mental distance) mediate the relationship between job

resources and organisational commitment. Job resources contributed strongly to low burnout and high work engagement (p. 263).

Jackson et al., (2006) use the Job Demand Resources (JDR) model to identify organisational causes of well-being. In this model two psychological processes are linked to the concept of teacher burnout. One is an effort drive process which focus on excessive job demands that lead to exhaustion, and the other a motivation-driven process in which lacking resources lead to disengagement. In the JDR model job demands (which I have called working conditions in my model) are defined as tasks that have to be done that include physical, social and organisational job demands. There are both qualitative and quantitative aspects to this indicator of job demands. Qualitative job demands are the amount of work that has to be covered in a time frame, while quantitative job demands are the affective responses to job demands. Job resources in this model are defined as the physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of the job that support the achievement of work goals and reducing job demands and supporting personal growth and development (2006, p. 265). Jackson et al., (2006, p. 264) drawing on research by others in the field (Kelloway & Barling, 1991; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) point out that job demands are associated with exhaustion, while job resources are associated with work engagement and that poor physical and psychological health is linked to work related stress.

In Jackson et al's (2006) work related well-being model four components are identified under JDR, namely, *Organisational Support, Growth Opportunities, Advancement, Overload* (pp. 268-269). Each of these factors has a number of indicators or items. Many of the items they identify under the factors Organisation Support and Growth Opportunities are related to the factors I have identified under factors supporting teacher well-being at an organisational level. The component they identify as "Overload" relates to factors at an organisational level that I identified as constraining teacher well-being. The aspect of "Advancement" was not highlighted in my study as a key factor.

A review of my own theory in relation to the teacher well-being model proposed by Jackson et al., (2006), confirms the linkages between a subjective level of well-being and the organisational influences of support which they identify as Job Resources and the demands of teacher's environmental and working conditions that

they identify as Job Demands. Broader environmental conditions are not identified by Jackson et al., (2006) as an aspect in influencing teacher well-being.

However the factors that I identified at the level of *organisational support* which Jackson et al., (2006) do not identify are:

- A curriculum that inspires teachers and a school vision and values that holds meaning for teachers
- And positive learner relationships and teacher meaning derived from learner achievement and holistic development

Key working conditions of (job resources) that I identified in my study as negatively influencing teacher well-being were poor environmental conditions and limited teaching and learning resources. Poor environmental conditions referred to the poor physical condition of the buildings and grounds. These aspects were not identified as items to be scored in the JDR model used in the study by Jackson et al., (2006). Based on the findings of my study I would argue that these material resources are fundamental in influencing the ability of teachers to meet their job demands. The aspect of environmental conditions (such pleasant school grounds, a comfortable staff room) although not directly related to the resources teachers need in order to do their teaching job, were mentioned by teachers in my study as influencing their well-being.

Within my own model I did not identify the categories of opportunities for growth and advancement identified by Jackson et al., (2006) as key categories influencing teacher well-being. An exploration of these aspects through theoretical sampling was not done in depth in my study. It is however an important aspect to explore further.

Under the job-related demands on teachers, Jackson et al., (2006) do make a link between the nature of the learner and parent population and job demands. However they do not identify the specific links between contextual factors such as the socio-economic background of learner families and the influence this has on the job demands and job resources of teachers. Important factors I identified as having a negative influence on teacher well-being were the additional level of bio-psycho-social and learning support that teachers had to provide to learners and the need to address language barriers. My findings show an additional factor mediating both job demands and resources related to the financial support base of the parental/guardian

population. This is however not present in the items Jackson et al., (2006) measure in their teacher well-being model. Nor are the pressures and support of the local community and the school community on both job demands and resources explored in their model.

The organisational factors that I identify as both positively and negatively influencing teacher well-being correlate well with the key factors shaping teachers professional lives identified by Day et al., (2007):

- (i) situated factors such as pupil characteristics, site-based leadership and staff collegiality;
- (ii) professional factors, such as teachers' roles and responsibilities, educational policies and government initiatives;
- (iii) personal factors (personal level), such as health issues and family support and demands (p. 69).

They contend that:

it is the interaction between these factors and the ways in which tensions between these personal and professional identities are played out and managed, that produces relatively positive or negative outcomes in terms of teachers' motivation, commitment, resilience and perceived effectiveness (ibid, p. 69).

The categories of job demands and job resources identified in the JDR model by Jackson et al., (2006) and the sub-categories of Organisational Support, Growth Opportunities, Advancement and Overload expand and differentiate the categories of environmental and working conditions I have in my model. However the dimensions that I identify under working conditions I would argue give a deeper insight into a number of factors that influence workload within urban working class primary schools.

I would argue that the strength of my model of factors supporting and constraining teacher well-being in a school in challenging conditions, is its ability to show the influence of factors both internal and external to the school environment on the well-being of teachers.

My findings of the working conditions that supported the well-being of teachers, correspond well with Sumsion's (2004) research on the contextual factors that build the resilience in teachers in Australia:

- Employer support (respect, trust, confidence and support for professional learning)
- Perceived professional freedom and agency.

- Collegiality
- Recognition by others of their professional expertise

In my emerging theory I argue that the principal and SMT have a central role in providing teachers with both personal and professional support to meet their job demands and in addressing issues related to the physical condition of the school and the resources necessary for teaching and learning. In a similar vein Jackson et al., (2006) argue that schools should attend to the work-related well-being of their staff by focusing on management, employee relation, rewards and job design. They recommend that:

School educators might be an important target for interventions to promote work-related well-being...interventions should be aimed at both decreasing the workload or educators, which can be expected to cause decrease in experienced exhaustion (incapacity) and mental distance (unwillingness). Interventions aimed at increasing job resources will lead to more vigor and dedication. Specific areas of intervention include management, employee relations, rewards and job design (Jackson et al., 2006, p. 272).

The study by Day et al., (2007) of resilience in English teachers found that sympathetic responses by school leaders to the pressures in the personal lives of teachers had a direct effect on supporting their resilience while negative or unsympathetic responses reduced resilience. The findings by Tsvara (2013) in South African schools found a relationship between teacher job satisfaction and the role of the school leader. In a similar vein Nguni in his study of leadership in Tanzanian schools (2005) found a relationship between the transformational leadership style of the principal and teacher job satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviour and organisational commitment.

In my emerging theory I recommend a focus by management on both personal and professional aspects of teacher's lives. However I propose that promoting teacher well-being in schools in challenging conditions needs to include a focus on strategies at a personal, organisational and contextual level. I would argue that within the context of the positive and negative factors affecting the well-being of teachers in this school in challenging conditions, the principal has to take greater agency to influence change at the school and broader community level in order to decrease job demands on teachers and increase the level of job resources and support both internally and externally.

The study by Patterson et al., showing that resilient teachers and teacher leaders actively took steps to promote these aspects. Based on these findings we can conclude that the concepts of agency and taking responsibility are key to building resilience. In the literature on health promotion in schools a connection is made between “good leadership” in schools and teacher resilience and between the role of leadership and the promotion of the overall health of the school (WHO, 1999; Patterson et al., 2002; Johnson, 2005). Christie (1998, p. 291) in her study on the breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning in mainstream schools, concludes that:

the breakdown of management and leadership within schools is an important part of their dysfunction. For a culture of teaching and learning to operate, it will be necessary to establish proper and effective management systems and structures with clear procedures and clear lines of authority, power, responsibility and accountability.

Schools such as my case study school have a limited ability to offer financial rewards to teachers. The possibilities of reducing class size or job demands in these schools are minimal. Therefore one could argue that there is a need for the principal to strengthen systems of internal collegial professional care and support as well as to draw in additional support and resources from outside the school.

In the section below I present a substantiated theory on the factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers in a school situated in challenging conditions. This theory is based on my review of the names I gave given to my key categories and the components identified in sub-categories in relation to my theoretical sampling of the literature. Table 6.6 below provides a reviewed summary of my key categories of factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers in this school. The item marked in red show the changes I have made.

Table 6.6 : Summary of Key Categories of Factors Supporting and Constraining Teacher Well-Being in this School.

THEME	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	THEME	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY
Personal Conditions SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING	Negative Personal Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Motivation • Family responsibilities 	Positive Personal Resources	Drawing on personal resources Self-Support Agency Attitudes Support Study	Self-support (13/65) Support family (1/65) Support friends (2/65)
Internal Environmental Conditions SCHOOL OR ORGANISATIONAL WELL-BEING	Negative Job Resources (10/84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Resources (5/84) • Poor physical conditions (5/84) • Poor Leadership and Management (20/74) • Poor Collegiality (5/74) 	Positive Job Resources (46/65)	Support by principal (23/65) Professional support Personal support Support from colleagues (17/65) Management support (6/65) Support from parents (3/65)	Inspires vision Promotes agency Provides challenge Professional support Provides resources Colleagues Personal & Professional support
	Negative Job Demands (74/84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to learning (17/74) • Large Classes (8/74) • Language Barriers(8/74) • Workload (7/74) • Poor learner discipline (5/74) • Multiple roles teachers (4/74) 	Positive Job Demands (16/81)	Intrinsic Factors	Meaning (7/81) Positive Engagement with learners (9/81)
External Conditions COMMUNITY WELL-BEING	Negative External Conditions (33/33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-Economic Conditions of Learners (15/23) • Limited Community (8/23) • Local Community (8/23) • Influence of the Department of Education (10/33) 	Positive External Conditions (not mentioned as a positive factor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental/Guardian support • Local Community Support • Positive support by Department of Education • External Support Services 	

6.10 Presentation of a Substantive Theory of Factors Supporting and Constraining the Well-Being of Teachers in a School in Challenging Conditions

The specific inter-relationships between the key personal and system level factors that influence teacher well-being in a school in challenging conditions are illustrated in figure 6.7 below. A summary of the positive and negative factors that influence teacher well-being at a personal and systems level are summarized in table 6.7. This is followed the presentation of a substantive theory.

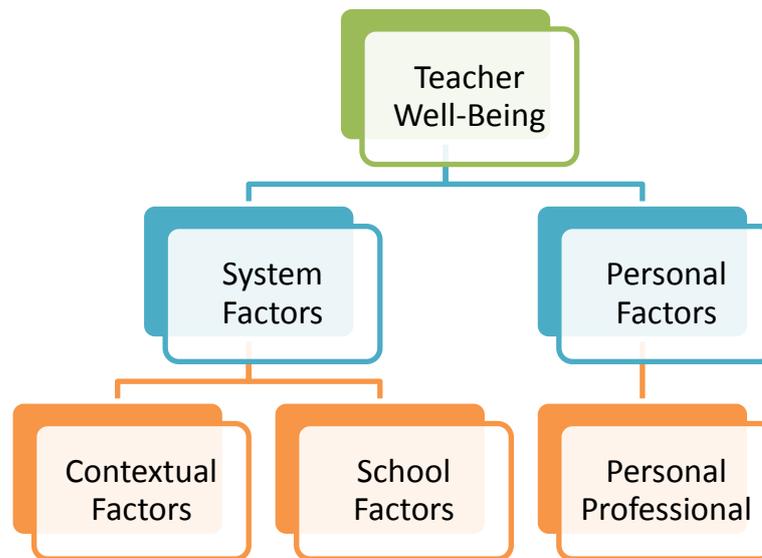


Figure 6.7: *Positive and Negative Personal, Professional, and System Level Factors Influencing Teacher Well-Being in a School in Challenging Conditions*

Teacher subjective well-being is a fluid and fluctuating state of being that is dependent upon a range of personal, professional and system level factors that interact with each other over time. Both positive and negative factors at a personal and systems level influence the subjective well-being of teachers.

Table 6.7: Positive and negative factors influencing teacher well-being.

NEGATIVE FACTORS JOB DEMANDS	LEVELS INFLUENCING TEACHER WELL- BEING	POSITIVE FACTORS JOB RESOURCES
<p>Poor balance between home and work life. Increased family responsibilities. Poor health. Poor motivation.</p>	TEACHER SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING	<p>Positive attitude. Further study. Agency. Support from family & friends. Balance between home and work life. Healthy lifestyle. Meaning & purpose in teaching.</p>
<p>Collegial conflict. Workload not evenly shared.</p>	COLLEAGUES	<p>Professional and personal support from colleagues</p>
<p>Language barriers. High level of learning support needs. High levels of bio-psycho-social support needs. Poor learner discipline. Limited access to learner after the school day. Many learners have to use public transport to commute to school. Absenteeism. Cultural differences.</p>	LEARNERS	<p>Meaning from developing learner potential. Positive relationships with learners. Learners who do well and want to succeed.</p>
<p>Poor leadership & management. Limited support and functioning from SMT. Limited role in supporting curriculum management and management of change.</p>	PRINCIPAL & MANAGEMENT	<p>Professional and personal support from the principal. Acknowledgement of teachers.</p>
<p>Poor condition of buildings, sports grounds and playgrounds. Uncomfortable staffroom. Limited teaching and learning resources. Limited ability of the school to buy in additional teaching staff or support services.</p>	SCHOOL PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCES	<p>Some teaching and learning resources provided. Attempts to improve the staffroom. Computer laboratory. Facilities to promote the arts.</p>
<p>Large classes – overload . High job demands. Multiple roles of teachers. Limited promotion opportunities. Unequal workload distribution.</p>	WORKING CONDITIONS	<p>Inspiring school vision & curriculum. Resonance with teacher values of political and social commitment.</p>
<p>Limited parental/guardian support to learners or teachers. Poor communication channels between home & school. Poor socio-economic conditions of learner families and community. Poor parental/guardian financial base. Single parent households.</p>	PARENTS/ GUARDIANS & HOME ENVIRONMENT OF LEARNERS	<p>Some support from a few parents.</p>
<p>Negative influence of the local community – vandalism and theft. Poor safety and security.</p>	LOCAL COMMUNITY CONTEXT	<p>Some financial and voluntary support from local businesses and community members.</p>
<p>Limited support services.</p>	SUPPORT SERVICES	<p>Some support from government departments, universities and NGOs.</p>

NEGATIVE FACTORS JOB DEMANDS	LEVELS INFLUENCING TEACHER WELL- BEING	POSITIVE FACTORS JOB RESOURCES
Increased pressure and limited support. Curriculum change.	EDUCATION DEPARTMENT	Limited level of support.

The subjective well-being of teachers who work in a school in challenging conditions is influenced by the inter-relationship between a number of positive and negative factors at a personal and systems level. At a systems level both factors within the school and the broader community context influence teacher well-being, however the systems level job demands have a greater negative influence on the well-being of teachers. Personal level resources and school level job resources support the well-being of teachers.

The subjective well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions is positively influenced by teachers taking agency, studying further, having a positive attitude, making an effort to maintain good collegial relationship, focusing of what matters at the classroom level, drawing in the support of spouse, family or friends and keeping a balance between work and home life demands.

At the school level the well-being of teachers is related to their job demands and job resources and environmental conditions and the inter-relationship between these factors and the socio-economic conditions of the learner's home and family lives. At a community level the influence of the school and parent community; the socio-economic conditions in the home life of learners; the local community; the DBE and support services influence both job demands and job resources available to enhance the well-being of teachers.

In a school located in challenging conditions and serving a predominantly working-class and lower middle-class community the primary factors teachers identify as supporting their well-being are related to job resources. No positive features related to job demands were identified. Both positive and negative job resources were identified as influencing the subjective well-being of teachers.

The positive job-related resources were primarily related to professional and personal support by the principal, colleagues and management. Teacher well-being is promoted through positive relationships with learners, and the meaning that teachers derive from developing learner potential and seeing them achieve success, as well as working in a school environment where the school vision and curriculum is inspiring.

No positive job resources were identified at a material level. The subjective well-being of teachers was supported by positive job-related resources of a social, emotional, psychological and intellectual level.

At a school level negative job resources were: poor collegiality, poor leadership and management, limited teaching and learning resources and poor school environmental conditions. At a community level negative job resources included increased pressure from the education department and limited support, and the poor socio-economic conditions of learner families. The negative local community level job resources included vandalism, theft and poor safety in the school.

Teacher well-being was affected by the negative job demands of a heavy workload and poor learner discipline. Factors that influenced a heavy workload were large classes, high levels of learners with additional learning support needs, language barriers, and the multiple roles of teachers had to fulfill.

The socio-economic status of the parent/guardian community has a direct influence on teacher job resources and job demands. The subjective well-being of teachers is negatively affected by the quantitatively high level of job demands and low levels of job resources of a material nature.

Systems level and contextual level factors have a greater influence increasing the job demands on teachers as well as reducing the job resources they have. At a school level job demands are mediated in a limited way by the personal job resources of teachers and the support of colleagues and the principal.

The positive and negative factors influencing the well-being of teacher in a school in challenging conditions highlights areas where the school principal needs to focus attention in order to support teacher well-being. This aspect will be explored in more depth in the next chapter.

6.11 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the process of analysis of the open and selective coding of data related to factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers. It has highlighted key factors which teachers in this school identified as supporting and constraining their well-being. Based on the selective coding of data and theoretical sampling it has presented an emerging theory on factors supporting and constraining teacher well-being within a school in challenging conditions. This theory has been discussed in relation to the literature in order to provide theoretical

substantiation for the various dimensions of teacher well-being at a subjective, organisational and contextual level. In conclusion a substantiated theory related to this data set has been presented.

In the next chapter this theory will be further developed by focusing in-depth on the aspect of the role of the school principal in supporting teacher well-being.

CHAPTER 7

Teacher perceptions of the role of the principal in supporting their well-being

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present my analysis of the interview and questionnaire data on how teachers at this school experience the principal as supporting their well-being. This analysis reflects the stages of open and selective coding of data and the presentation of an emerging theory. Chapter 6 presented a substantive theory on a range of factors which support and constrain the well-being of teachers in this school. Chapter 5 presented a theory on how teachers in this school understood the concept of teacher well-being. This included aspects of management in the school by the SMT, as well as the role of the principal. This chapter will focus on the role of the principal in supporting the well-being of teachers.

It presents both the positive and negative perceptions of his role by the teachers, as both of these highlight key areas where teachers feel support is necessary to enhance their well-being. The identification of these key areas and core categories will be used to present an emerging theory, which will then be discussed in relation to the key literature. The chapter concludes by presenting a substantive theory about how teachers perceive the school principal as supporting their well-being in a school in challenging conditions.

7.2 Teacher Perceptions of How the Principal Supports their Well-Being

An analysis of the interview and questionnaire data shows that 11 of the 18 teachers felt that the principal did support their well-being. Only one teacher said he did not support their well-being and five teachers said that he “sometimes” supported their well-being. Through the analysis of the data using the steps in the constant comparative method, the aspect of support was identified as a core category. The responses by teachers showed how they felt the principal supported their well-being, as well as where they felt he needed to strengthen his role in providing them with support. To avoid duplication of responses by presenting these categories separately they were merged under sub-categories and reported on. Through the process of using the constant comparative method key areas where teachers required support to

enhance their well-being were identified.

Under the key category of support three main categories emerged during the process of open and selective coding data. These categories and the number of responses related to them are: general school management support (28/50), supportive leadership manner and style (19/50), and personal support (3/50).

Table 7.1 below shows the categories of support and the weighting of responses in these categories, as well as the codes under each sub-category. Each category and their sub-categories are described in more detail below.

Table 7.1: Examples of Codes and Number of Responses under Sub-Categories and Categories on how the Principal Supports the Well-Being of Teachers.

CODE	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	SUB-CATEGORY	CATEGORY
Shifted the timetable to accommodate me. Allocated extra time for activities. Class visits. Acknowledges teachers. Reduced class size. Split faster and slower learners. Provision of resources Staff development. Identifies opportunities for staff involvement. Raises awareness of the need for funding. Draws in outside support from parents. Draws in support services to address barriers to learning. Draws in outside support from other schools through a cluster. Supports committees to function. System to deal with discipline with learners. Attends to learner absenteeism Addresses problems with learners. Addresses issues with the DBE Improves physical environment.	1 1 1 2 2 1 1 2 3 1 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 2 1	Providing curriculum support. Staff support and relationships. Addressing barriers to learning. Provision of teaching resources. Drawing in external support . Leadership development. Fund-raising. Parent and local community engagement. Addressing learner discipline. Engaging with the DBE. Improving the school environment.	GENERAL SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT 28/50
Empathetic Trustworthy Respectful Supportive Flexible Lenient Consistent Taking leadership Friendly and approachable Exemplary Leadership style not autocratic Democratic Open to staff raising issues Open to challenge Can say what is wrong	1 2 2 1 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Supportive leadership manner 12 and leadership style 7	SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP MANNER and STYLE 19/50
Provides personal motivation Willing to assist personally Lets me attend to emergency or family matters.	1 1 1	Support with personal matters. 3	PERSONAL SUPPORT 3/50

The figure below depicts the key areas of support by the principal that teachers identified as supporting their well-being. The core category of **support** holds all three sub-categories of support related to the principal's role in enhancing the well-being of teachers in this school. Figure 7.1 below gives a graphic presentation of these key areas of support in positively promoting the well-being of

teachers. Each category of support and a number of sub-categories is then described in detail below.

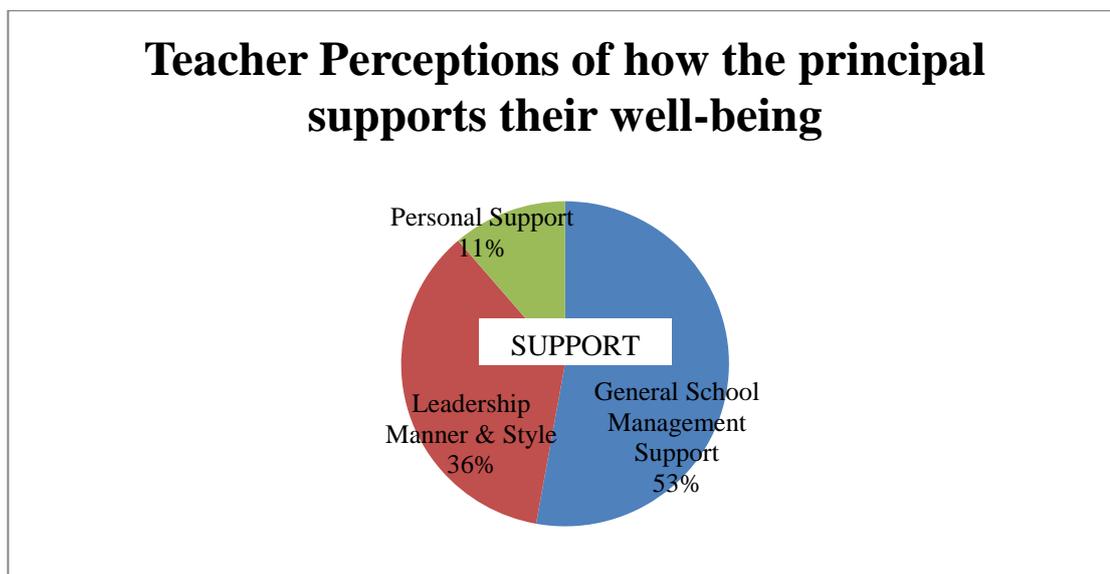


Figure 7.1: *How Teachers Experience the Principal as Supporting their Well-Being*

7.2.1 General school management support. Under the category of general school management support a number of sub-categories of support which enhanced the well-being of teachers were identified, namely, providing curriculum support; staff support and relationships; engaging with the DBE; leadership development; fund-raising; addressing learner discipline and support; improving the physical school environment and local community engagement. Each of these aspects and how teachers experienced them as supporting their well-being are described in more detail below.

7.2.1.1 Curriculum support. The aspect of curriculum support contains a number of sub-categories. This aspect is presented first as it relates to one of the core functions of teachers in schools, namely the education and socialisation of learners through curriculum delivery.

The principal was identified as contributing to the well-being of teachers by providing curriculum support to teachers through addressing the following aspects: curriculum planning and support; promoting staff development; planning the timetable; accessing teaching and learning resources; acknowledging staff professional contributions; drawing in outside support and services; addressing barriers to learning; encouraging parents/guardians to support learners and the school; and

taking responsibility for aspects of the extra-curricular programme. Each of these aspects of curriculum support is described in more detail below.

7.2.1.1.1 Curricular planning and support. Teacher questionnaire responses indicated that a number (12/17) of teachers felt that the role the principal played in improving their curriculum planning had supported their well-being. Teachers also spoke about the curriculum support role the principal played through discussing issues related to their classroom practice, moderating their questionnaires and offering advice and checking on their planning.

According to one teacher, he *“Listens to my concerns. Gives advice and follow up”* (GJ). In the questionnaire data twelve teachers indicated that the principal supported their well-being by helping to improve their teaching. This was done through paying short class visits and having informal discussions with them. This made teachers feel that the principal was concerned about them and how they were coping. A level of curricular support from the principal was also related to classroom management and finding out if teachers were coping with the workload and classes. One teacher said, *“sometimes he will just pop into the classroom and say good day miss are you OK!”* (GR). According to another teacher: *“he does check on me to see if I am fine and coping now and again, this helps slightly”*(SK).

Three comments in the interview data indicated that the implementation and monitoring of plans could be strengthened and a greater level of administrative support could be provided to cut down on workload pressures. A teacher made this comment:

some teachers are battling with reports there is a new system and you find out that they have old reports in the system and suddenly you are told you have two days to complete them. He says we cannot submit late. They should have a mechanism to put a clean report in the system for us to use. We had to change an old one. I had to sit till two in the morning to do this. I am very tired (FZ).

7.2.1.1.2 Staff development. The role that the principal played in supporting staff to attend staff development training sessions and to motivate them with their studies was identified as contributing to their sense of well-being. A teacher said: *“he sort of makes everything nice and attends to the training you need and that sort of thing”* (HB). According to another teacher: *“He encourages us to grow and study further”* (GJ). Teachers however felt that this area needed to be strengthened by the

principal allocating time for internal systems of staff development which would improve support for teacher well-being at a curricular level. This quote from a teacher highlights the need for a greater level of support in getting staff to share their ideas and resources: *“We don’t have staff development sessions in the school. Maybe this was in 2003 and 4 then we have not had them again... I think this does impact on the well-being of the staff the only time we get together is in the morning ”* (MA).

A further area which teachers indicated needed improvement was the system of mentoring support to novice teachers and existing staff. A newly qualified teacher said there is a *“Lack of assistance when it comes to normal orientation and induction when you are not sure to know what to do... No there is not a formal mentoring system”* (SK). Staff also mentioned a greater need for the principal to encourage staff to meet at school staff development sessions to promote professional development.

7.2.1.1.3 Planning the time-table. Shifting the time-table to accommodate the instructional needs of teachers was mentioned as supporting teacher well-being: *“He consulted with me regarding my timetable and numbers of learners in my groups”* (RA). *“I am sure that they altered the timetable to accommodate me. This I am sure is from the principal, this was his support”* (GJ) and *“I have asked for extra rehearsal time and he has given that”* (AS).

7.2.1.1.4 Accessing teaching and learning resources. In the questionnaire data a number of teachers (11/14) indicated that the principal played a role in helping access the resources needed for teaching and learning. A teacher said, *“He provides resources if there are funds available”* (JP). A teachers made this comment about the role he plays in supporting her well-being through providing the teaching and learning resources that are needed, *“doing his duty to ensure that you have resources that you need”* (HP).

Three teachers however felt that he did not contribute effectively to their well-being in this area. This quote by a teacher highlights the need for a greater level of support in resource provision to enable effective teaching, *“I did not have any equipment and I needed it and I just bought it and this works out to thousands of rand. I would have liked for the people in charge of me to say here is what you need to do and how can we assist”* (JY).

7.2.1.1.5 *Acknowledging staff professional contributions.* Acknowledging teachers through thanking them for their professional contributions was another factor that was mentioned as contributed to their well-being. The principal was mentioned as arranging events for staff and acknowledging teachers. In the questionnaire data a large number of responses (13/16) indicated that the principal had played a role in supporting teacher well-being by acknowledging and affirming their achievements and contributions they made to the school:

The principal also contributes to our well-being by initiating several activities in appreciation of the role that educators play at school, e.g. Teachers Day, at assembly, gifts, welcome back to school lunches, birthday treats, etc. It is these small gestures as well, that makes us teachers feel valued and appreciated, and often provides the mental and emotional boost that we need to carry out our duties under sometimes difficult circumstances (HP).

He thinks of us at Teachers Day and he will say thank you and he will have a service here and he will get a minister to pray for all the teachers. He acknowledges us and thanks us (JP).

7.2.1.1.6 *Drawing in outside support and services.* The role the principal played in drawing outside support from parents and other support providers (e.g. volunteers and academic institutions as well as Government Departments such as the DBE and Department of Safety and Security) and other schools was described as contributing to teacher well-being.

The principal's role in supporting their well-being by drawing in these support services was acknowledged by a number of responses (14/17) in the questionnaire data, with only one person feeling that he did not help draw in support services. Extracts from the interview data support this sentiment:

I feel that he is open to requests, and he acts on it by contacting the relevant support services (KI).

He contacts role players to assist and is open to advice (RF).

Where needed, he calls in/ gets outside assistance and support (HP).

also arranges meetings with the social workers to find out what is happening with the children at home (GJ).

Facilitating partnerships with other schools was a further way that the principal helped in drawing in outside support. This was seen as potentially supporting staff development, helping teachers cope with their workload such as lesson planning and enabled the sharing of assessment tasks.

I was really looking forward to this, that we were going to plan and share plans. Instead of me planning for 10 weeks I was only going to plan for 1 week. And then because of the other schools we were going to get plans from the other schools. Also the exams we were going to expose our children to a number of questionnaires this will help us and help our marks...It will lessen my work and I will concentrate on the marking of homework (GJ).

7.2.1.1.7 *Addressing barriers to learning.* The principal was also identified as playing a role in supporting the well-being of teacher by assisting them to address a range of barriers to learning. His support at this level included supporting learning support structures to function, drawing in external support from volunteers and the support services; and recommending changes in instructional practices to address barriers to learning: *“He calls intervention meetings which are expected of all principals” (FZ); “He gets help with UCT students to assist our learners with speech defects and hearing problems” (FZ); “From the curriculum perspective he does get in the support services and screening and hearing aids” (HB).*

His role in recommending changes in instructional practices is described by one teacher in this way: *“from next term we are going to split the learners and the fast learners will be in their own class... They will be split just for the maths period and this is all because of the work of the principal” (GJ).*

In the interview responses three comments identified the principal as needing to strengthen support in this area. A teacher said, *“I don’t know how to work with learners with barriers to learning, what about all the learners that need help, personally I will try and sit with the learners and what about the other 28 learners. Again the numbers are playing against you” (FZ).*

7.2.1.1.8 *Encouraging parents/guardians to support learners and the school.* Encouraging parent/guardian support was identified in most (16/17) of the questionnaire responses as a way in which the principal supported their well-being. Support by parents was encouraged by asking them to assist with the education of their children; act as helpers and assistants in the classes and assist the school with fund-raising:

The principal has encouraged us to look for parent helpers and last year I had a parent that was coming in to assist with reading (GJ).

he sends out letters to ask parents how they could assist the school (RA).

Arranges meetings/events/ functions (at times) that allow us to interact with the community and become closer, as a unit working towards the same goal (HP).

7.2.1.1.9 Taking responsibility for aspects of the extra-curricular programme. The responsibility the principal took in getting involved in supporting the extra-mural programme was also identified as supporting the well-being of teachers: *“Principal is personally involved in school soccer, he draws up the fixtures, calls meetings, mails the necessary correspondence to schools. He attends matches and attends Sport Board Meetings”* (FP).

7.2.1.2 Engaging with the DBE. Addressing issues with the DBE was another role the principal took on which helped to support the well-being of teachers. In this role, he could raise teacher concerns with the department and advocate for an improvement in support or teaching conditions: *“We are going to have a meeting and we want the principal there and our principal speaks out he is known as one who is always on the wrong side of the law”*(HB). Having a principal who was prepared to challenge the DBE on issues was mentioned as an aspect of his leadership that helped support teacher well-being. A teacher gave this example: *“He contacts the Area Manager to gain permission to play away matches and to leave school early”*(FP).

The way the principal accessed support from the DBE and other schools was a further aspect mentioned as supporting teacher well-being: *“Sometimes he contacts the district staff to assist us – e.g. Joining up with other schools to tackle universal issues”* (TM). One teacher mentioned that the *“Principal contacted the Councillor when we had a “problem” with the soccer field.”*(TR).

Some teachers who were interviewed felt it would support their well-being if the principal played a greater role in helping teachers to engage with the departmental officials and address departmental pressures. More support here included the principal providing a greater level of protection or a “buffer” from officials when they came to the school on visits and addressing curricular and support issues with the DBE. This comment by a teacher highlights this aspect of support:

And teachers have a lot of stress from the Dept. and the subject advisors have pressures and they pass these pressures down. They have not got time and things keep changing...Why can't the principal put his foot down and say no to the Department? They need to sit together and

decided what we say no to. So we do not get this. I think that it makes teachers feel protected if the principal says no (HB).

7.2.1.3 Leadership development. The role of the principal in supporting teachers to take initiative and leadership was acknowledged in many responses (15/17) in the questionnaires. This included supporting the leadership development of staff by identifying opportunities for staff involvement and encouraging staff to take initiative: *“He involves us” (AS). “I will say he supports me, I will go to him and say this is what I envisage doing and he will support me, he will give me advice and support me and say where I can go” (KI).* Leadership support by the principal also included assisting teachers with the functioning of committees: *“and we have a little committee so um he is behind them all the way” (HP).*

Some staff members felt that limited consultation with the HOD’s and Deputy Principle limited staff participation in decision making. One staff member felt that *“responsibilities were kept away from some staff” (RM)* and this limited their well-being.

7.2.1.4 Fund-raising. The role the principal played in raising funding and in initiating and supporting activities that accessed funding was identified by most teachers (16/17) in the questionnaire data as helping to support their well-being. According to one teacher: *“The principal is fully active in the community getting things (money or donations) for the school. Getting people involved is one of his strong points”(MR).* He was also identified as playing a role in raising funds: *“He is also good at finding people to sponsor things for the school and getting outside people in” (RM).* One teacher commented *“he sends out letters to ask parents how they could assist the school” (RA).*

7.2.1.5 Addressing learner discipline and support. A number of responses (13/17) identified the role the principal played in addressing learner discipline as supporting their well-being. In the interview data three teachers mentioned addressing issues related to learners and learner discipline. Providing support with learner discipline included helping develop a system to deal with learner discipline, attending to learner absenteeism and dealing with problem learners: *“He has a system for one of my learners that has a behavioural problem” (SK).*

I mean obviously he is always available to discuss if there is a problem with a child, we can hand this over to him... learner that are absent a lot he will call their parents, and see if they need social work or any other

kind of intervention support from outside and he goes out of his way to do that (HP).

The principal's role in supporting learner discipline was also identified by some teachers as needing to be strengthened:

Our principal can be more visible and hands on. This principal knows all the naughty children however he needs to be more hands on. The principal need to speak to the children this bond is missing with most modern day principals. This would help teachers to cope with discipline issues. The principal needs to address these issues because we work hand in hand with him (CJ).

7.2.1.8 Improving the physical school environment. In the questionnaire data a number of teachers (13/17) agreed that the principal supports their well-being by making the classrooms and school a healthy environment for teaching and learning, while only three teachers disagreed that he contributed to their well-being in this area. In the questionnaire data most teachers identified this aspect as the most important area that principal needed to focus on in supporting their well-being. The role the principal took in helping to improve the physical school environment is evident in this comment by a teacher: *"We have a lot of thorns on the field so we have a smooth path to the field because a parent helped and Mr (omit) helped to sort this out" (JP).*

7.2.1.9 Community engagement. Building links between the school community and the local community was another aspect of the principal's role mentioned as helping support teacher well-being. At a school community level the principal played a role in encouraging parents to support the learning of their children. He also initiated collaborative links with other schools. Teachers said this played a role in supporting their well-being by assisting with them getting more support in teaching children.

Engagement with the local community related to accessing resources; encouraging the community to protect the school from vandalism and theft; and profiling the school in the local community. Teachers said the principal supported their well-being in the following ways by engaging the local community:

Principal contacted the Councillor when we had a "problem" with the soccer field (TM)

He tries to encourage the community to take ownership of the school. It does not seem to be working (TM).

Encourages learners to participate in community functions for exposure (RA).

7.2.2 Supportive Leadership Manner and Style. Under the core category of support in enabling the well-being of teachers, teachers identified the second key factor in promoting their well-being to be the principal's friendly and supportive manner and leadership style.

7.2.2.1 Supportive manner. One teacher described the principal's manner and the way he contributes to supporting their well-being as; "*He has an open door. I feel free to go to him*" (BJ). Other teachers described his manner of providing support in this way: "*He is always available / sympathetic towards the personal challenges that we also have to deal with, and makes allowances for times that we have to leave early, attend other meetings / interviews, etc.*" (HP), and "*it was easy to approach him and he was able to support me personally and professionally. I am not afraid of him*" (GJ).

7.2.2.2 Supportive leadership style. Qualities of his leadership style that supported the well-being of teachers were described as being open to staff raising issues, being able to say what is wrong; being open to challenge; and having the ability to be lenient and flexible with rules but also being consistent. The flexibility of the principal but also his role in keeping boundaries was described as an aspect of his leadership style that supported teacher-well-being:

Well he is very lenient, I always try and hand my things in on time, but I suppose he will know who takes advantage and who will genuinely have a reason and he will say, I am sorry and can you get it to me tomorrow or the day after (GR).

According to some teachers: "*in a way we are lucky because he is not that kind of principal who sort of polices you, and you know he is sort of dictatorial and autocratic and that kind of thing, he is not like that*" (HP) and "*.he has a very friendly way of dealing with the staff and I really, really appreciate this*" (AS). "*We all challenge him and then he will come back and say let's look at that, it is not like what he says will be the be all and end all*" (GR).

Other teachers said, "*There are times when he is by the book and times when he isn't.*" (HB) and "*He is exemplary he is kind and he stands by his word. Sometimes we do not observe deadlines and he will remind you that you must hand in this document*" (GJ).

While many teachers identified his democratic leadership style as supporting their well-being, other teachers felt that his leadership style needed to be more assertive in holding staff accountable and that he needed to be more democratic. A teacher made this comment about the principal's inability to address accountability issues directly with staff, "*I want to be held accountable for my actions. If I am not being held accountable there is a problem, every time it is general feedback not specific feedback*" (MA).

Staff recommended that in order to support their well-being the principal needed to play a stronger role in conflict management; getting key structures to function such as the SMT and SGB; consulting staff in decision making and improving communication and information flow to the staff. The following responses relating to improved support to enhance teacher well-being were identified:

- Poor staff consultation in decision making (28)
- Poor holding of staff accountability (16)
- Poor functioning of structures (15)
- SMT not functioning (12)
- Soft leadership style (8)
- Unequal workload distribution (8)
- Poor communication and information flow (7)
- Poorly addressing staff conflict (7).

The staff did not specifically mention the Institutional Level Support Team (ILST) (a key school level structure that addresses barriers to learning through providing both learner and teacher support) as providing a level of support for their well-being as this structure had not been set up, although the principal and the learning support teacher took a level of responsibility to ensure that learning support issues were engaged with. This along with the high number of responses related to teachers not coping with the learning support barriers suggests this form of structure was not functioning effectively to address both teacher and learner support needs. In one of my theoretical memo's (31/10/2012) I note:

In feedback session with the staff they acknowledge that the SMT was not working and as a result the principal did more to give instructional support to teachers and look at how he could assist in supporting barriers to learning. The ILST as a structure was not functional. This would have been a structure supported by the SMT. Teacher

acknowledged that they did not even mention this structure as a support to them (Collett, Theoretical memos, 2012).

The poor functioning of the School Management Team (SMT) may also have contributed to these matters of curricular support in relation to barriers to learning not being adequately addressed.

7.2.3 Personal Support. The third major category of responses relating to ways in which the principal supported teacher well-being related to his ability to provide teachers with personal support. In the questionnaire data most (16/17) responses indicated that the principal had supported their well-being by motivating teachers to be positive despite the challenges they faced. This support may have been experienced by teachers on a more general level than through personal contact.

The principal's manner was described by staff as approachable, empathetic, respectful, supportive, trustworthy and flexible. His manner was related to teachers feeling they could trust him and that they could approach him for support about issues of a more personal and sensitive nature. This was manifested by offering encouragement and motivating them; giving personal support and advice and making time to address their personal concerns. Support at a personal level was also provided through the principal having an open door policy, holding informal conversations with teachers and allowing teachers to attend to emergency matters or family needs. Some of the responses in this regard:

[He]...supports requests, and is a good listener (MG).

The principal is an extremely nice person, very nice, he is very amenable and you can go to him at any time with an issue and he will help you (TR).

My opinion is that he attempts to support all of us personally, sometimes to his detriment (KI).

I have needed to leave school early twice, once for a physical health reason, and he understood why I had to leave (AS).

He allows us, like any other manager, to go home when we have family crises (FZ).

the principal would phone you when you are in need or when you have a personal problem ... he's approachable and will phone you during school holidays sometimes (FP).

He will call you into the office and he will ask you about how you are and he will show his emotional side to empathise with the teachers feelings (MA).

While most teachers felt the principal offered them a level of personal support there were ten comments in the interview data that highlighted the need for the principal to strengthen his role in providing teachers with more opportunities for individual contact to access a personal level of support. Six teachers indicated the need for more emotional support, addressing people directly and initiating personal contact and providing them with more physical assistance such as helping call children into class or getting more physical assistance in organising and cleaning classrooms after a robbery.

7.3 Key Aspects of the Principal’s Role in Supporting Teacher Well-Being

In a staff workshop where teachers engaged with feedback from the interview and questionnaire data, they were asked to identify the most important area of support by the principal that contributed to their own well-being. In order of priority the aspects of leadership by the principal that the teachers in this school prioritised as supporting their well-being are: - being approachable (7/17), having a respectful attitude (5/17), helping to improve learning support (3/17), raising funds (1/17) and being democratic (1/17). This data is reflected in table 7.2 below.

Table 7.2: *How Teachers Prioritised Positive Aspects of the Principal’s Conduct in Supporting their Well-Being.*

Positive Aspects of the Principal’s Role in Supporting Teacher Well-Being	Staff Rating
Open to criticism	
Democratic	1
Open door policy – approachable	7
Respectful attitude	5
Personal support to staff	
Helps to improve learning support	3
Fund raise	1
Reduces fund -raising pressure on teachers	
Supports fund-raising activities by teachers	
Speaks out to the Department	
Improved access to support services	
Strategies to reduce class size in the Foundation Phase	

Positive Aspects of the Principal's Role in Supporting Teacher Well-Being	Staff Rating
Strategies to address discipline of learners	
Addressing issues of parental support/follow up	
Provides support for professional development	
Manage Departmental pressures	
Limits the level of school fees	
Provide resources for teaching and learning	
Strategies to improve poor parental support	
Address support with language barriers	
Address absenteeism	
Improves the school environment	

In the questionnaire data teachers identified the following areas as being most critical in supporting their well-being; Helping teachers to: make the classroom and school a healthy environment for teaching and learning (8); manage their workload (6); manage conflict with colleagues (6) build positive collegial relationships (6); access resources needed for teaching and learning (6); cut down on administrative tasks (5); be positive in spite of current challenges in the school (5); and encourage parents to support the education of their children (5).

These aspects highlight a focus on improving the ability of teachers to support effective teaching and learning. Support requires a focus on helping staff manage their workload and administrative demands; improving learning support; accessing resources to support teaching and learning; raising funds, encouraging parents to support the education of their children; managing staff conflict and relationships and assisting staff to maintain a positive attitude, as well as being a democratic, respectful and approachable leader.

Through the process of theoretical testing whereby I engaged teachers in probing the links between the categories, as well as reviewing the aspects within categories, a number of areas in which they felt the principal needed to strengthen his role emerged. These areas of support overlap with three main already highlighted categories of support, namely; general school support; personal support and the leadership style and manner of the principal. This data also helped to show key areas of tension where support needs to be strengthened to enhance the well-being of teachers, namely the democratic functioning of key structures in the school with a focus on addressing both the job demands and the job resources teachers have and the physical conditions of the school and classrooms. These aspects of school support all

required the principal to address conditions in the school as well as the broader school community and system. Figure 7.2 below illustrates my summary of the key areas where teacher's identified support by the principal needs to be strengthened to enhance their well-being²⁶.

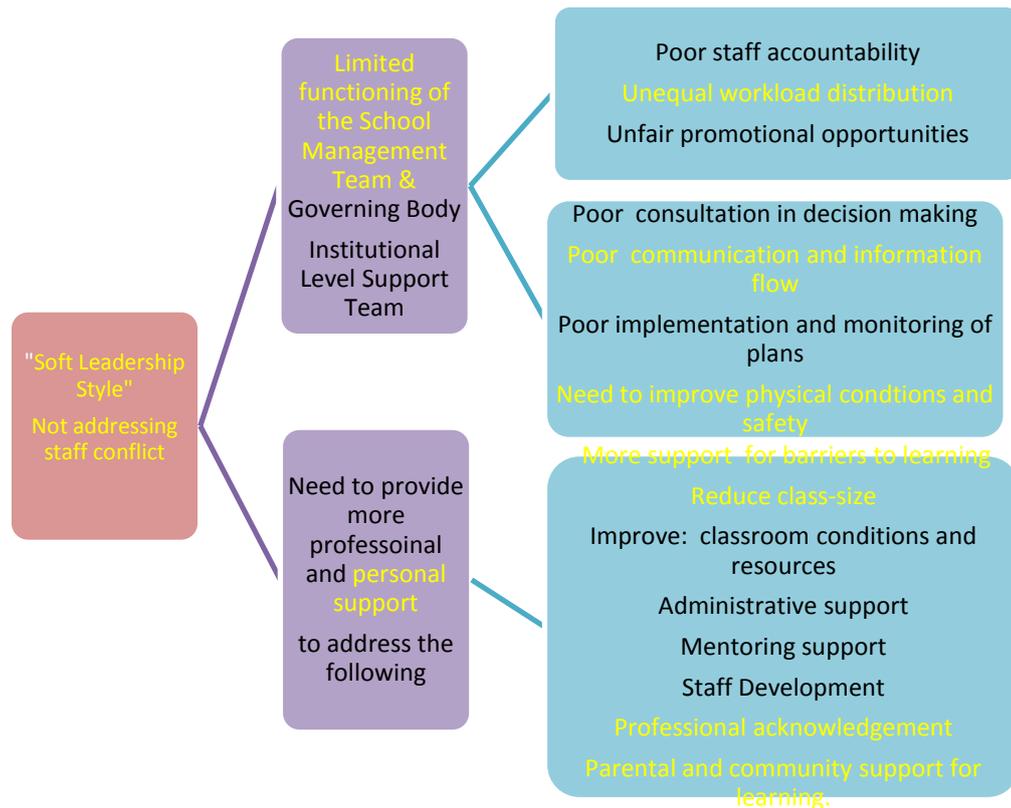


Figure 7.2: *Key Areas of Support by the Principal that Teachers Identified as Needing Strengthening in order to Enhance their Well-Being*

At the whole school management support level these findings highlight the need for a greater focus by the principal on the functioning of the SMT and the SGB as well as the structure that deals with improving learning support; a focus on workload distribution and promotional opportunities, curricular support and administrative support to ease the work load pressures on teachers; a greater provision of resources and professional support to enable teachers to cope with the demands of their jobs; an improvement in the physical conditions of the school,

²⁶ In the diagram below the items marked in yellow show indicate priority areas teacher felt the principal needed to address to enhance their well-being.

classrooms and safety and the need for greater assertiveness in the style of leadership by the principal in holding staff accountability and addressing staff conflict.

Based on my analysis of the data related to both strengths and weaknesses in the principal's role in supporting the well-being of teachers using the constant comparative method, an emerging theory on the role of the principal in supporting the well-being of teacher in a school in challenging conditions is provided below.

7.4 An Emerging Theory of the Principal's Role in Positively Supporting the Well-Being of Teachers in a School in Challenging Conditions

In a school in challenging conditions where internal physical resources to support teaching and learning are limited; parents/guardians have a limited financial resource base to supplement funding of educational resources and services; as well as a limited ability and expertise to provide educational support to learners; external support services to the school are limited; and workload demands on teachers are high from both the internal conditions in the school and system level factors such as pressure by the DBE to improve learner results. Teacher well-being can be enhanced by a principal who focuses on improving teacher support at a personal, school and systems level in order to enhance the ability of teacher to be effective in their task of teaching and learning. Support identified in this study includes the following key dimensions of leadership; the effective general management of the school; engagement at a systems level; having a democratic and approachable leadership manner and style and providing a level of personal support.

Support to teachers at a general school management level includes paying attention to addressing personal, organisational, community and systems related issues that have an impact on improving the teaching and learning environment.

Support at the school level requires the principal to focus on ensuring that key structures in the school such as the SMT, SGB, and ILST, function and that leadership capacity is developed to enable these structures to function effectively. Ensuring effective information flow and communication; staff support and development, which includes facilitating staff to manage their workload and administrative demands; sharing the teaching load; providing equal opportunities for promotion; managing staff conflict and building relationships; assisting staff to maintain a positive attitude and acknowledging the contribution teachers make;

providing curricular support; improving learning support; accessing resources and services to support teaching and learning; addressing learners discipline and support; improving the physical environment of the school and classrooms; encouraging parents to support the education of their children and raising funds.

Support for the well-being of teachers includes a principal having a leadership and management style that is respectful, trustworthy and approachable, and that he/she is democratic and assertive and able to respond to the needs of the situation. Personal qualities of the principal that enhance teacher well-being are the ability to be empathetic, trustworthy, respectful, supportive, flexible, lenient, consistent, exemplary, friendly and approachable, as well as showing the ability to take leadership. Support includes the principal showing concern for both the professional and personal dimensions of teachers' lives and being empathetic and supportive of these needs.

At the level of the broader system, support by the principal to enhance teacher well-being includes building relationships with the local community structures to access resources for the school and improve the safety and security and profile the school in the local community. At the level of the school community, support by the principal includes encouraging parents to play a greater role in the education of their children and supporting the raising of funds for the school, as well as making contact with a dispersed school community to profile the school.

Support for teacher well-being includes initiating links with other schools to support curricular improvement and workload management. Support at the broader community level includes the principal in addressing teacher concerns with the DBE and in drawing in additional support services from other governmental departments and organisations.

Support relates to the principal addressing environmental or contextual issues that influence teacher's well-being, as well as the nature of the personal and professional levels of support teachers are able to access from the principal as a result of his leadership manner and style.

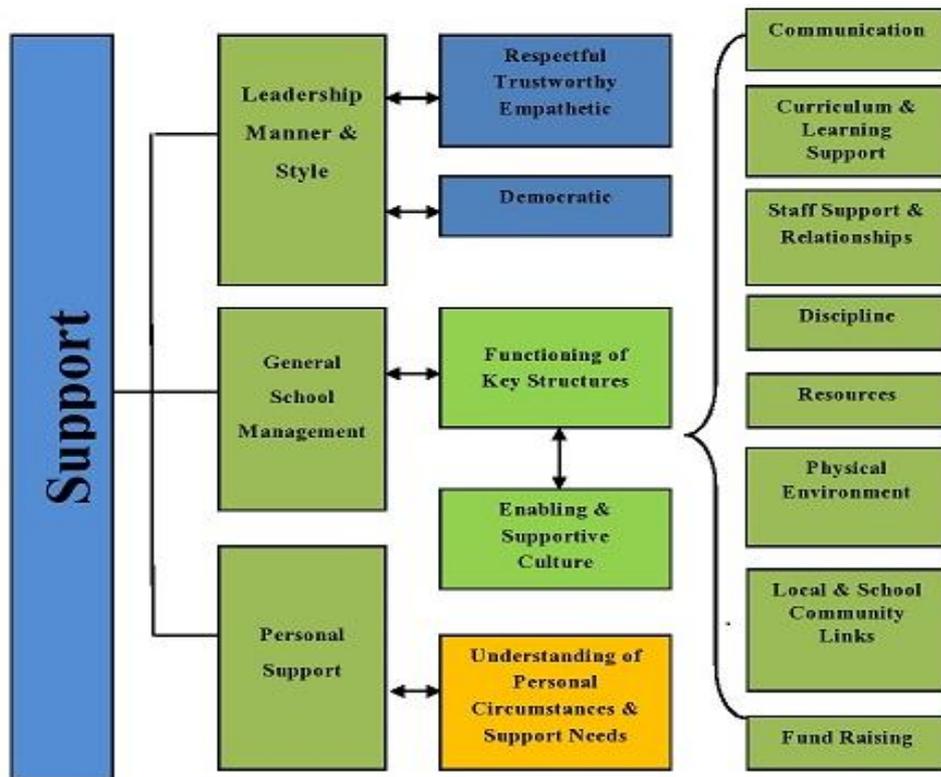


Figure 7.3: *Emerging Theory of the Key Dimensions of the Principal's Role in Supporting the Well-Being of Teachers in a School in Challenging Conditions*

A discussion of this emerging theory in relation to the literature related to the role of leadership in supporting teacher well-being is presented below.

7.5 A Discussion of the Emerging Theory in relation to Relevant Literature

Drawing on the literature, I begin this section by discussing the role of the school principal in promoting teacher well-being. I then discuss the relationship between the principal's role in influencing the general school environment through providing general management support and the promotion of teacher well-being. Here I draw on my findings and other research studies to discuss the following aspects of general management support and their influence on teacher well-being, namely: the functioning of key structures; communication; curriculum and learning support; staff support, development and relationships; discipline; improving the physical environment; managing school and local community links and fund-raising. I then proceed to a discussion on the nature of the principal's leadership manner and style in promoting teacher well-being. In conclusion I discuss the relationship

between the principal's role in providing personal support and the well-being of teachers. In order to substantiate my theory, each of these leadership aspects is discussed in relation to relevant literature on teacher well-being.

For the purpose of this study my findings were compared to three broad bodies of literature. These related to the field of social psychology which focused on teacher well-being and resilience; literature related to school leadership and literature related to school development and health promotion in schools. In my literature search I decided to include the broader topic of school leadership and its role in promoting the well-being of teachers and to look at what the literature reveals in relation to studies in both primary and high schools. In this way I sought to identify key practices that principals engage in to support the well-being of teachers.

In my review of the relevant literature I found twenty key sources which linked either directly to indirectly to the role of leadership in schools and the promotion of teacher well-being, namely, Johnson (2005); Singh, Manser and Maestry, (2007); and Theron (2007 & 2009), Tsvara, (2013) in the South African literature, and Bogler (2001); Adams (2001), Briner and Dewberry (2007); Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, (2002); Day et al., (2007); Evans (2001), Gu and Day (2007); Intercamhs (2010); Patterson, Collins and Abbott (2002); Littleford, (2007); Nguni, (2005) Salter, (2010); Salter Jones (2012); Suh et al., (2004); Spratt, Schucksmith, Watson and Phillip (2006a); in the international literature. In order to identify what recommendations are made about the role of leadership in promoting teacher well-being, I also read a number of studies which sought to test or measure aspects of teacher work-related stress, burnout or well-being (Adams, 2001; Fernandes & da Rocha, 2009; Jackson, Rothmann & Van der Vijver, 2005; Montgomery, Mostert & Jackson, 2005; Pozo, Ferrer, Morillejo & Mendez, 2008; Russell, Altmaier & Van Velzen, 1987; Taciano, Milfont, Denny, Ameratunga, Robinson & Merry, 2008).

The dearth of research on the role of the school principal in fostering teacher well-being highlights the need for further studies in this area. The studies by Salter (2010) on English schools and Littleford (2007) on American schools were the only two grounded theory studies that I found in my search which related specifically to understanding the relationship between teacher well-being and motivation and the role of leadership in schools. I did not come across any other grounded theory studies in South or Southern Africa that focused on this relationship. However the study by

Tsvara (2013) in the South African context and Nguni (2005) in Tanzania do to illuminate the relationship between the role of leadership and job satisfaction in the African context. The dearth of studies in this area helps to substantiate my motivation for conducting my research using a grounded theory approach within the Southern African context.

7.5.1 Role of the principal in supporting teacher well-being.

Although very few studies in South Africa or internationally have focused specifically on the relationship between the school principal and the promotion of teacher well-being or resilience. However there are a number of studies relate to the role of the school principal and teacher motivation and job satisfaction (Nais; 1981; ; Nguni, 2005; Phurutse & Arends, 2009; Singh et al., 2007; Tsvara, 2013) teacher stress and burnout (Jackson et al., 2005; Montgomery et al., 2005; Schulze & Steyn, 2007), and learner and teacher resilience (Day et al., 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Johnson, 2005).

A South African study by Singh et al., (2007) highlights the relationship between the emotional intelligence of the school principal and teacher motivation. A number of other South African studies have focused on measuring different dimensions of teacher well-being in relation to a number of organisational and subjective variables (Jackson 1994; Jackson et al., 2005). Within these studies the role of the school leadership is identified as an important factor in attending to teacher personal, professional and organisational stressors through addressing both personal and organisational aspects.

South African studies and books on educational leadership endorse the central role of the principal in promoting aspects of both learner and teacher well-being or resilience (Botha, 2004; Christie, 2005; Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002; Davidoff & Sterling, 2006; Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana; 2011; Johnson, 2005). These studies show a relationship between the role of the formal leadership in the school and the development of a healthy functioning and resilient school (Christie, 2005; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010) and health promotion in schools (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2011; Johnson, 2005; Theron; 2007 & 2009).

In the South African literature on teacher resilience, motivation and stress in schools (Johnson, 2005; Jackson et al., 2005; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Patterson & Fataar, 2002; Theron, 2007, 2009;) and international literature (Adams, 2001; Day et

al., 2007; Littleford, 2007; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012; Spratt et al., 2006a; Suh et al., 2004) a link is also drawn between the level and extent of teacher burn-out and demotivation and the nature of the day-to-day environmental conditions of the schools and the role of leadership. Spratt et al., (2006a) in research on the promotion of health in Scottish schools highlight the important role school principals have in improving environmental conditions in schools. They contend that:

the school environment too has the potential to either enhance or damage the mental health and well-being of both staff and pupils, and that school managers thus carry a significant responsibility to create an environment that promotes good mental health, acts to prevent development of problems in vulnerable groups and supports those experiencing difficulties (p. 18).

In their study of 13 principals in township and rural schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa, Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) note the key role of principals in “having taken a lead in restoring a culture of teaching and learning amongst staff and pupils” (2010, p. 211) My own study found that teachers’ sense of well-being was integrally connected to their ability to teach effectively and to experience the achievement of learners. These factors were related to the role of the principal in effectively managing the school. A similar finding was made by Briner and Dewberry (2007), whose study shows a link between teacher well-being and school performance levels. In 2011 an international round table meeting held in South African to share lessons on school reform and the key role of leadership in schools, noted that: “School leadership, notably by principals, plays a key role, especially in motivating teachers and creating a culture of learning” (CDE Round Table no 18, 2011, p. 5).

In the South African literature on schools and schools improvement processes strong or “good” leadership is cited as a key factor in supporting educational change and whole school organisation development (Botha, 2004; Christie, 2005; Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002; Davidoff & Sterling, 2006; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; November, Alexander & van Wyk, 2010; Paterson & Fataar, 2002; Taylor & Prinsloo, 2005). I rarely came across specific references to leadership in promoting the well-being of teachers, with the studies by Day et al., (2007); Littleford (2007); Salter, (2010); Salter Jones (2012) and Spratt et al., (2006a) as exceptions. In the literature related to leadership and school improvement or whole school organisation development I did not come across specific connections being made between a focus by leadership on

teacher well-being and a relationship to school improvement, although reference is generally made to staff development and support. I identified one international study by Briner and Dewberry (2007) that showed a relationship between a focus on teacher well-being and improvement in learner performance, although a number of studies have emphasised the importance of a focus on strengthening learner systems of care and support in order to enhance learner school performance and attendance (Johnson, 2005; Vigg & World, 2005).

The Integrated School Health Policy (DoH, 2011) recently introduced in South Africa and the conceptual framework on the care and support for teaching and learning (DBE & MIET Africa, 2011) endorses an increased focus on the systems of support for learners in order to support learner retention, improved results and increased access to bio-psycho-social support. At the level of the school the responsibility to make staff aware of these policies and the implementation of policies and strengthening support systems fall under the responsibility of the school leadership.

The link between effective leadership and the promotion of school improvement is also a finding in numerous international studies in Norway (Dalin, 1998), Britain (Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1996, Spratt et al., 2006a & 2006b), Australia (Mulford, Silins & Leithwood, 2004), Canada (Fullan, 2002; Leithwood & Janitz, 2005), America (Sergiovanni, 1994; Senge, 2000; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003) and Europe (Spratt et al., 2006a; Sumsion, 2002; WHO, 1996). The role of the formal school leadership is identified as a key factor in promoting teacher motivation and resilience in international studies (Day et al., 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Littleford, 2007; Patterson et al., 2002; Sumsion, 2002; Wyn, Cahill, Holdsworth, Rowling, & Carson, 2000).

The study by Day et al., (2007) shows that the quality of leadership by the principal in the school was a key aspect in supporting the effectiveness of teachers and their ability to cope. Day et al., (2007, p. 123) recommend that “*school leaders need, as a priority, to establish school wide structures and cultures which support teachers if they are to sustain their sense of agency, well-being and effectiveness in different professional life phases and in different identity scenarios.*” These researchers also found that leadership has a key role to play in “*maintaining a positive sense of identity is closely related to teachers’ sense of well-being and agency*” (Day et al., 2007, p. 122).

Two recent grounded theory studies on the emotional well-being of teachers by Salter Jones in English schools (Salter, 2010 & Salter Jones, 2012) and in American schools (Littleford, 2007) show that leadership in schools has a central role to play in supporting the emotional well-being of teachers. In a similar vein, Spratt et al., (2006) in their research in Scottish schools, found that the commitment of the school leader to the notion of health promotion had a key role to play in supporting the well-being of teachers and learners in schools.

International studies related to health promotion in schools and the development of learners and to a lesser extent the well-being of teachers identify the commitment of the principal as a key factor in enabling the development of the school as a health promoting school (Spratt et al., 2006a; Weare, 2000;). A South African study by Johnson (2005) related to learner resilience and health promotion in school identified the leadership in schools as having a key role to play in the development of a health promoting environment in schools.

In my review of the leadership literature in South Africa and internationally I found that most of the aspects of the principal's role that I had identified as supporting teacher well-being were also highlighted as being associated with "good" or "effective" leadership. Table 7.3 below shows the correspondence between the aspects I identify as promoting teacher well-being in my study and a grounded theory study in South African by Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) on effective leadership in schools in challenging conditions.

Table 7.3: Dimensions of Principal Leadership.

Collett (2013)	Ngcobo & Tikly (2010)	Littleford (2007)
South African Primary School Leadership promoting teacher well-being	South African secondary schools Effective leadership	American Primary Schools Principal leadership promoting teacher morale
<p>General School Management Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functioning of structures • Curriculum support & development • Staff Support and Relationships • School & Local Community Links • Physical Environment • Providing resources • Fund-raising • Discipline <p>Leadership style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic style holding both Transactional and transformational leadership roles based on contextual needs - contingent style. • Instructional leadership <p>Manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful, approachable and trustworthy' <p>Personal Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledges the personal stressors in the lives of teacher and provides support. 	<p>Leadership Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing discipline • Accessing resources • Financial management & fund-raising • Managing across the boundaries Centrality of vision and values • Distributed leadership • Instructional leadership <p>Leadership style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingent style with a focus on transactional and transformational leadership based on contextual conditions <p>Qualities of effective leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustworthy • Integrity • Communication skills 	<p>Leadership Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being visible • Shared decision making • Visionary • Strategies to manage change • Communication Acknowledgment • Value teachers as professionals • Identifying with teachers • Building community within and outside of the school <p>Leadership Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformational and servant leadership <p>Qualities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathetic • Sincerity • Trustworthy • Humour <p>Personal support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging the personal lives of teachers and the influence this stress has on professional performance.

Based on the evidence in the literature one can conclude that the principal has a key role to play in promoting the well-being of teachers through leadership at a

general school management level focusing on improving the teaching and learning environment, as well as providing support at a professional and personal level. Based on the findings in my study I will discuss the specific dimensions of support by the principal in promoting the well-being of teachers in relation to other studies.

7.5.2 General School Management Support and Teacher Well-being.

The role of the principal in supporting the general functioning of the school is noted extensively in both South African (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002; De Jong, 1999; Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2011; Johnson, 2005; McLennan & Thurlow, 2004; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; November et al., 2010, Tsvara, 2013) as well as in international studies (Dalin, 1998; Day et al., 2007; Fullan, 1993 & 2004; Gu & Day, 2007; Leithwood & Janitz, 2005; Littleford, 2007; Salter Jones, 2012; Spratt et al., 2006a). This literature highlights the responsibility of the principal in enabling the general functionality of the school in all its dimensions.

These findings support my proposition that the principal has a key role in supporting the well-being of teachers by addressing the day-to-day conditions teachers work in. This requires that the principal pay attention to the effective functioning of its key structures and procedures, as well as the establishment of a caring and supportive personal and professional ethos and school culture.

Improving the school environment, as well as addressing the personal capacity of teachers has been shown in both international and national studies as contributing towards promoting the well-being and resilience of teachers. In a study on health promotion in 100 Australian schools by Ridge, Northfield, St Leger, Marshall, Sheehan, & Maher, (2002), it was found that 66 of these schools nominated teacher health and well-being for inclusion in the professional development offered as part of their health promoting schools project. Literature on educational change and school leadership (Dalin, 1998; Davidoff & Sterling, 2006; Johnson, 2005; MacGilchrist, Reed & Myers, 2004) highlights the key role that leadership and the school culture have in supporting the development of an enabling school environment. In the development of schools as health promoting schools in Scotland, research by Spratt et al., (2006a) found that the commitment of the principal was key to developing a school environment that supported the promotion of the mental health of both learners and teachers.

The key role of the school principal and the style of management have been identified in both local (Johnson, 2005; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010, Tsvara, 2013) and international studies (Bogler, 2001; Day et al., 2007; Friedman, 1991; Hornby & Atkinson, 2003; Russell, Altmaier, & van Velzen; 1987; Nguni, 2005; Southworth, 2004; Weare, 2000) as promoting teacher and learner resilience, well-being and motivation. Salter Jones (2012) based on her grounded theory research on teacher well-being in a number of English schools also recommends that leadership in schools has a key role in supporting the emotional well-being of staff by addressing issues within the broader school environment that impact on the ability of teachers to teach.

Within the current South African context of school based management and a shift towards policies which support democratic leadership (SA Schools Act, 1996) the formal leadership in schools is mandated with creating a school environment that supports the development of learners, staff and to an extent the broader school community. In the literature on health promotion in schools a connection is made between “good leadership” in schools and teacher resilience, and between the role of leadership and the promotion of the overall health of the school (Christie, 1998; Johnson, 2005; Patterson et al., 2002; WHO, 1996). Pam Christie (1998) in her study on the breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning in mainstream schools, concludes that:

the breakdown of management and leadership within schools is an important part of their dysfunction. For a culture of teaching and learning to operate, it will be necessary to establish proper and effective management systems and structures with clear procedures and clear lines of authority, power, responsibility and accountability (p. 291).

South Africa is following a similar trend promoted internationally through the initiatives of the World Health Organisation (WHO, 1986) and the encouragement of national governments to develop schools as health promoting sites to address a range of primary health care prevention needs. Spratt et al., (2006a) note a similar trend in Scottish schools and in educational, health and social policy. Within this policy and environmental context school principals have to take up the challenge of promoting the well-being of their school communities. Weare (2000) advocates a whole school development approach to promoting mental, social and emotional health in schools.

Currently in South Africa, the Integrated School Health Policy (DoH, 2011), and the Framework for the Care and Support of Teaching and Learning (DBE &

MIET Africa, 2011) both support a health promoting schools approach to addressing the care and support of learners through an increased focus on schools as sites of identification and delivery of support. Although both these documents address the need for support to learners and to a lesser extent teachers. I would argue that they do not place enough emphasis on the key support need of teachers, in order for them to provide support to learners and their families. Clearly with the implementation of this policy schools have to take on an increasing level of responsibility to address a range of learning and primary health care support needs. I would argue that this is particularly the case in school contexts where external support to schools is limited and the funding base of schools to buy in additional support is small.

My own findings point to the school leader as having to attend to a range of aspects at a general school management level in order to promote the well-being of teachers. In the section below I discuss these in more detail.

7.5.2.1 The functioning of key structures. I found that a key aspect of the principal's role in being able to provide support at a general school management level, was related to his ability to ensure that key structures in the school such as the SMT, SGB and ILST were functioning. The effective functioning of the SMT and SGB are identified in the leadership literature as being essential for the effective functioning of schools (Day et al., 2007; Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002; Theron, 2007, 2009; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010, Tsvara, 2013). Within the context of School Based Management endorsed by the South African Schools Act (DoE, 1996) these structures are critical in managing the broader development of the school and the ability of teachers to provide effective teaching and learning. They also provide the opportunity for teacher agency through distributive leadership. These structures deal with making decision and providing support at a whole school level as well as drawing in external support and resources.

Based on the findings of my research, I would support the position of Spillance, Halverson and Diamond (2004) who argue that structure enables agency. They base their argument on an understanding of the nature of school as comprising loosely coupled systems (Weick, 1976), where teachers often feel a sense of isolation. The findings of my own study show a need for the school leaders to focus on enabling key structures and procedures to function well, in order to create the holding context to build staff and community cohesion and agency. Based on my

research I would argue that within the context of cultural diversity, conflict and day-to-day uncertainty, having effectively running structures in place helps to create a platform or forum to build continuity and enable a cohesive school community culture to develop. Thus structure helps to enable the ability of teachers to take agency as well as promote opportunities for the development of a cohesive staff culture. The nature of leadership by the principal in these key structures would be a key factor in enabling teachers to participate in raising their needs for support and in taking agency. November et al., (2010) recommend that the principal plays a key role in creating platforms for democratic participation and engagement and the promotion of schools as learning organisations.

Functioning of the SGB. The effective functioning of the SGB is of key importance for schools in challenging conditions to assist with links to the broader parent/guardian community, as well as address issues of accountability and finance and fundraising. The research by Smit and Liebenberg (2003) in South African schools highlights the importance and challenge of building relations between the home and school environments in high poverty contexts. In my study the ability of the school to form supportive relationships with the local and broader school community was important in addressing issues of parental participation in the education of learners, as well as in ensuring the maintenance, security and improvement of the school physical resources and developing additional teaching posts. However the effective functioning of SGB structures in South African schools is a challenge in many schools as shown in a number of studies (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Tsvara, 2013).

From a review of the literature (Bogler, & Somech, 2004; November et al., 2010; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Southworth, 2004, Tsvara, 2013) on leadership in schools it is clear that the effective functioning of key structures provides a formal platform for teacher agency and distributed leadership. A relationship between the ability of teachers to take agency, and their sense of motivation and the lowering of stress levels, has been shown in the literature (Day et al., 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Nguni, 2005; Southworth, 1999 & 2004).

Functioning of the SMT. The leadership literature confirms the functioning of key structures such as the SMT as key in ensuring that there is a holding structure, in order to enable teacher agency and support. I make a similar finding in my research.

The SMT has a direct influence on enabling adequate levels of curriculum support to teachers through distributed leadership). Southworth (2004), in researching English schools, highlights the role the middle level managers in the school can play in distributed leadership. The research by Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) on effective leadership in a sample of South African “township” schools found that leadership was distributed across a number of structures and included agency being taken by individuals within the school at a number of levels. They found:

Leadership was typically dispersed not only to deputy heads, heads of department and class teachers but also to pupils, parents and members of the wider community. This happened both as an aspect of formal school processes and of less formal relationships, networks and embedded cultural norms (p. 201).

Teachers in my case study school highlighted the negative effect on staff morale and the general functioning of the school when structures such as the SMT were not functioning optimally and how this negatively influenced support for effective teaching and learning. This hampered a level of distributed leadership which had a negative influence on teachers.

The principal’s own difficulty in managing conflict at this level and holding senior staff more accountable hampered his ability to ensure the effective functioning of this structure. This raised questions about the level of authority of the principal at both a de jure and de facto level in holding staff accountability. This is an important area for further research as it had an influence on limiting the effectiveness of instructional leadership practices at a school wide level which negatively influenced teacher support and well-being.

Functioning of the ILST. My study found that due to the large number of learners with a range of learning support barriers it was critical for learning support needs to be addressed in a consistent and focused way. The ILST is the structure in the school that is mandated by policy in White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) to address issues of learning support and inclusive education. However in my own study teachers did not mention the functioning of this structure as supporting their well-being. Teachers did mention that there was a small committee lead by the principal and a few teachers to address learning support needs. This committee focused primarily on addressing the learning and other support needs of learners. This committee was not functioning fully as a ILST specified by policy guidelines (DoE, 2001c).

Wyn et al., (2000, p. 595) contend that “it is indeed part of the “core business” of schools to promote the mental health and well-being of their students (and personnel)”. I would argue that the limited functioning of this structure, both in how it was constituted and its level of functioning, limited the levels of support received by teachers to adequately address learning support, language and disciplinary issues. It also gave rise to a limited level of focus on the support needs of teachers at a formal institutional level, to enhance their well-being needs.

The research by Linda Theron (2007 & 2009) on the influence of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in South Africa on teachers and schools, recommends strongly that teachers need additional support to cope with the changing demands of their jobs. She notes the increasing role of teachers in having to attend to a range of bio-psycho and social support roles related to the HIV and AIDS pandemic in South Africa. Her research (2007) highlights the need for the effective functioning of both the ILST and SMT as well as external support structures to support teachers. She also argues for the strengthening of a culture of compassion and caring in schools.

Although in my study no teachers directly mentioned the impact of HIV and AIDS on their well-being they did raise concerns about the large extent of bio-psycho-social and learning support needs they were required to address. While teachers did not mention this aspect directly, I would argue that this aspect has a level of influence on the well-being levels of teachers although they did not want to speak about it. A research study by Olsen (2011) in a South African school highlights the stigma and silence by teachers in relation to the pandemic. The research by Theron (2007, 2009) highlighted the need for increased support to teachers and schools in the light of the influence the HIV and AIDS pandemic on teachers and school communities.

The functioning of the ILST has been identified by a number of researchers as a critical school level structure in South African schools, tasked by policy to hold both learner and teacher well-being needs (Johnson, 2005; Theron, 2007 & 2009). The Education White Paper (DoE, 2001c) emphasises the importance of inclusive education and addressing barriers to learning and development, in order to transform education in South Africa. The policy describes educational support in inclusive education and training as support for all learners with an emphasis on a systemic and developmental approach (DoE 2001c, p. 6).

In the leadership literature and the literature on school improvement and instructional leadership, the importance of the leadership in ensuring the effective functioning of the ILST structure within the school to address both teaching and learning support needs is not emphasised. Based on the findings of my study I would argue that this is a key formal institutional level structure mandated by policy to provide learner and teacher support. It thus becomes one of the key school level structures with the potential to support the well-being needs of teachers in a consistent and formal way.

General discussion. I found that the effective functioning of key structures was also related to supporting teachers to participate in decision making and problem solving and feeling that they were valued as professionals. This contributed directly to their sense of well-being and perceptions about the level of democratic leadership in the school. The effective functioning of structures also enabled the key aspects of curriculum and learning support; learner discipline; the school physical environment; local and community links and support and fund-raising to be addressed.

The effective functioning of school structures also had a key role to play in school-wide communication and how teachers experienced the leadership support of the principal. The effective functioning of school-based structures in promoting democratic and instructional leadership is recognised in the South African leadership literature (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; November et al., 2010). November et al., (2010) argue that:

In our view, forums created for instructional leadership can be a platform for meaningful principal-teacher engagement, participation and decision-making, especially with regard to issues dealing with democratic citizenship. Through deliberative and conscious actions, principal-educators would be taking bold steps to promote democratic practices. In this way, their efforts should form part of a whole school development process – meaning that the process of transformation should be facilitated in a holistic sense, not only in schools, but in the wider community as well (p. 790).

I would argue that key structures in the school such as the SGB, SMT and ILST facilitate the ability of teachers to take agency and collectively problem solve around a range of curricular and learning support needs. They can also facilitate the building of staff cohesion. The research by Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) shows that effective functioning of such structures also affects the general management of the school and communication and information flow.

In my theory I argue for the link between the effective functioning of key structures and the ability of the principal to provide more formal levels of support to teachers to enable their well-being in relation to communication; curriculum and learning support; staff support and development; discipline; developing the physical environment; addressing school community and local community links and fund-raising. I also argue that they enable teacher agency and efficacy which has been shown in studies (Ngcobo, 2010; Ridge et al., 2002) as a factor that promotes teacher well-being. These aspects are discussed in more detail below.

7.5.2.2 Communication. Effective communication by the school leader was an aspect of general school management that teachers identified as having an important influence on their sense of well-being. In a study by Adams (2001) conducted on individual and systems related variables that affect teacher stress, she found that open communication by school administrators and the involvement of teachers in decision making were key factors which reduced stress. My own study showed a similar trend. Here teacher perceptions of democratic leadership and their involvement in decision making and opportunities for teacher agency were related to the extent to which teachers are well informed about matters in the school, as well as the extent to which they felt they have opportunities to participate in decisions and to take action.

Studies by American (Littleford, 2007) and English researchers (Day et al., 2007; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012, Spratt et al., 2006a) of teacher motivation and well-being identify effective communication by the principal and management as promoting teacher well-being. Salter Jones (2012) based on her research in English schools recommends strengthening communication by:

frequent opportunities for staff support through a formal system called 'Staff Voice', which provides regular, effective communication channels between the staff and the senior management team (SMT). This promotes the notion of feeling valued and supported by the SMT. The school had a dedicated staff WB²⁷ co-ordinator. She was described as a well-respected, approachable and effective member of staff, who holds drop-in sessions for staff, allowing frequent opportunities for questions to be raised and staff views to be heard. This strengthens communication systems between SMT and the staff (p. 26).

²⁷ WB was an abbreviation the author used to indicate a well-being coordinator.

Similarly effective information flow and communication is identified in the literature on school leadership as a key function of effective leadership by the school principal (Davidoff & Sterling, 2006; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; November et al., 2010). Effective communication procedures and distribution of information and knowledge within the school community is identified by November et al., (2010) as building social cohesion, promoting school and staff development and developing the school as a learning organisation.

Salter Jones (2012) recommends that communication channels be kept open and that staff are listened to and feel valued. Littleford (2007) found that teacher morale was boosted by principals who listened to teachers, were sincere and who were direct in their communication.

She recommends, *“Effectively communicating to all stakeholders is imperative to having successful schools, but the teachers interviewed expressed that knowing what is happening and why it is happening could relieve the stress of ambiguity and the unknown”* (Littleford 2007, p.76).

November et al., (2010) argue that communication by the school leader is key to the effective functioning of key structures in the schools, and that this supports democratic leadership. They contend that communication is:

very important for transparency and building consensus to enhance a culture of openness and the interaction and the participation of all stakeholders in school meetings and debates. All role-players should contribute to the agenda of meetings held in the school, and the contributions of every stakeholder should be encouraged and acknowledged with consensus being reached on aspects pertaining to governance, management and teaching and learning at school to inculcate a culture of communication, interaction and participation (November et al., 2010, p. 792).

Littleford’s (2007) research shows a link between the level and type of communication between the teachers in the school and authentic levels of trust and relationship between staff and the principal. She found that, *“teachers must be able to trust the principal to be truthful, direct, and sincere so that two-way trust can be built”* (Littleford, 2007, p.76). Similarities between my study and Littleford’s finding (2007) relate to teachers wanting the principal to communicate respectfully and directly with them, as well as to be straightforward and direct in his/her communication.

In my study the respectful manner in which the principal communicated with teachers was identified as promoting their well-being. However teachers also felt it would promote their well-being if the principal addressed issues with staff directly and held them accountable. This raises the need for principals to look at how they hold the balance between being respectful and addressing difficult issues directly. One of the findings made by Littleford (2007) sheds light on this matter, showing that teachers wanted the principal to raise issues in a straightforward manner but discuss sensitive issues such as low performance results with teachers in private.

In my study the access that teachers had to information enabled them to take or participate in taking agency, as well as their role in feeling that leadership was distributed and democratic. The role of the principal in ensuring that teachers got access to key information and were part of decision-making processes did contribute to their sense of well-being. Littleford's (2007) study made a similar finding. My research showed that both formal and informal methods of communication and the circulation of information by the principal helped to either promote or inhibit teacher well-being.

Salter Jones (2012) recommends that it is essential to support the emotional well-being of staff members by developing both an atmosphere that helps to facilitate communication and relatedness, as well as having a designated person to improve communication specifically related to teacher well-being needs. She recommends that school management attend to:

Creating an atmosphere that facilitates an openness and approachable ethos. Staff can then develop positive relationships with colleagues, enhancing peer support. The appointment of a WB co-ordinator who is well respected and approachable (Salter Jones, 2012, p. 29).

These studies and my own show that improving channels of staff communication and information flow generally assist in promoting the effective functioning of the school, as well as support teacher well-being. I would argue that they point to the school leader's role in establishing a democratic and open culture in the school through more effective processes of both formal and informal communication in order to enhance teacher well-being.

7.5.2.3 Curriculum and learning support. The role of the principal in providing curriculum and learning support was critical in supporting teacher well-being in my research. For teachers this was the key role the principal needed to play

in helping them to cope with the demands of their job. This included helping to manage workload and administrative demands; providing curriculum support; addressing learning support needs; and accessing the necessary resources and support to enable effective teaching and learning.

7.5.2.3.1 Managing workload and administrative demands. My study found that the ability of the principal to support teachers in managing workload and administrative demands influenced their level of well-being. This included putting good administrative systems in place, ensuring fair distribution of workload and holding staff accountable in carrying their workload responsibilities.

The key role leadership can play in schools in supporting staff to manage workload and administrative demands has been identified in South Africa (Jackson et al., 2006;) and internationally (Patterson et al., 2002; Holmes, 2005; Spratt et al., 2006a; Day et al., 2007; Littleford, 2007; Salter Jones 2012) as related to teacher stress and burnout. The findings by Montgomery et al., (2005) with a sample of South African school teachers showed high levels of teacher stress and an imbalance between job demands and job resources. They recommend a focus by management on decreasing teacher workload and increasing job resources in order to support the well-being of teachers:

interventions should be aimed at both decreasing the workload or educators, which can be expected to cause a decrease in experienced exhaustion (incapacity) and mental distance (unwillingness). Interventions aimed at increasing job resources will lead to more vigour and dedication. Specific areas of intervention include management, employee relations, rewards and job design (p. 271).

Littleford's (2007) findings showed the important role the principal played in reducing teacher stress levels by acknowledging both the professional and personal workload stressors of teachers. The principal in my school showed a similar level of empathy and compassion about the professional and personal workload stressors of teacher. The well-being needs of teachers at an administrative level could have been relieved by the principal strengthening school-wide administrative systems. Adams (2001) found that school leaders could support teachers to deal with work overload and lower stress levels by improving the level of resources and up-to-date technology.

Teachers in my study felt the principal could have provided them with a greater level of "hands on" support when they faced challenges, such as having to

deal with discipline issues where they felt he needed to be more visible. The importance of additional support by the principal when teachers face a crisis was confirmed in Littleford's study (2007). She found that morale was increased when the principal showed a willingness to assist teachers with day-to-day crisis-related issues such as dealing with conflicts between learners or with parents.

7.5.2.3.2 Providing curricular support. A level of curriculum support by the principal was identified by most teachers in my study as supporting their well-being. This involved the providing staff feedback on aspects of their curriculum planning and assessment and encouraging staff to attend in-service education and training courses and drawing in external support.

In the literature on school leadership, the role of the principal in focusing on the quality of teaching and learning in schools through taking instructional leadership has been a focus of a number of studies related to school improvement and change management in schools (De Jong, 1999; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003; Fullan, 2004; Leithwood & Janitz, 2005).

All teachers in my case study school identified curricular challenges such as dealing with curriculum changes, large classes, learner assessment, attaining performance targets; language barriers, and addressing learning support needs as having a negative influence on their well-being. With the limited functioning of the SMT they looked to the principal and their heads of department to help them deal with the challenges of their jobs. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) argue that school leaders have "an important role to play in drawing people together and motivating them to take leaps into often risky futures" (p. 37).

The central role of the school leader in encouraging staff collaboration and development is well documented in the literature on school leadership (Fullan, 1991 & 2004; Hargreaves, 1998; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003 & 2006; Liethwood & Jantzi, 2005; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Senge, 2000; Tsvara, 2013). While teachers did not specifically speak about the principal's role in helping them manage change, they did speak about him/her giving them support to address some of their curricular concerns. The principal's ability to help teachers manage change is cited in a number of studies as helping to promote teacher well-being (Littleford, 2007; Salter, 2010; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Tsvara, 2013). In my study the poor functioning of the SMT may have had a negative influence on the general ability of the leadership in the

school and particularly the principal to support teachers to manage change. As a result the principal personally took on a greater level of curricular monitoring and support to individual teachers.

In my study the curricular and supervisory support teachers received from the principal included both formal and informal curricular feedback. Formal curricular feedback included the principal providing staff support through feedback on their assessment tasks and holding staff meetings where the performance results of the school were analysed and discussed. The principal attempted to play a greater role in monitoring standards of assessment across the school and encouraging staff to engage in discussions about improving teaching and learning. I would argue that here the principal demonstrated aspects of both transformational and transactional leadership, by holding on to the values and vision the school is trying to achieve and at the same time trying to hold staff more accountable for improvement in the quality of assessment tasks they set their learners. At an informal level staff spoke of the principal as being open to have discussions with them on aspects of their curricular practice and in popping into their classes and asking them how they were doing. Adams (2001) found that supervisory support from leaders assisted in reducing teacher stress.

I noted that due to the poor functioning of the SMT in this school, the instructional leadership practices were held either by the principal or focused at a phase level with the heads of department. A school wide focus on curricular support across subject areas and between phases was poor. I would argue that this limited a focus on instructional leadership with a focus on both supporting the teacher at a classroom level to improve teaching and learning and addressing the physical and cultural dimensions of support in the school as a whole. Southworth (2002) makes the linkages between this type of leadership and the development of the school as a learning community with strong social cohesion links.

Based on the findings of her study, Adams (2001) recommends reducing teacher stress levels by enhancing teacher peer support. She proposes interdisciplinary meetings, mentorship programmes, and a range of social event and teacher support groups as strategies to assist in alleviating teacher stress. All these aspects relate strongly to the role of the leadership in creating platforms for curricular learning and innovation. A focus on these aspects of instructional leadership support were limited in my case study school.

In my review of the literature I did not come across any studies that directly linked the instructional leadership role of the school principal with the well-being of teachers, however there were a number of references to the increased ability of staff to take agency at a curricular level and teacher well-being (Adams, 2001; Patterson et al., 2002; Spratt et al., 2006a; Singh et al., 2007). This highlights the importance of peer learning and support networks in enhancing teacher well-being.

An aspect mentioned by Adam (2001) in supporting teachers to address the area of task related stress is capacity building in the area of time management and organisational skills. Although no teachers mentioned these aspects in my study, and it was not possible within the scope of my study to investigate this aspect further, this may be an important area to research in more depth.

Professional Development. Teachers in my study identified the principal as playing a positive role in encouraging them to develop professionally through attending professional development courses. Day et al., (2007) in their study in English schools also found a relationship between teachers accessing opportunities for further study and professional development and their own levels of improved motivation and well-being.

The main way the principal supported staff development in my case study school was through encouraging staff to attend school focused in-service training opportunities and to encourage them to further their studies. However his focus on school-based inset and the professional development of staff through establishing mentorship programmes and forum for staff sharing of professional practice were not evident. The principal may have been at a stage of personal exhaustion where according to Hargreaves and Fink (2006) who quote Byrne (1994) he may be, “‘burned out’ by excessive demands and diminishing resources having neither the physical energy nor the emotional capacity to develop professional learning communities” (2006, p. 9).

Providing opportunities for teacher relatedness and empowerment within the school community context have been shown to build teacher well-being and resilience (Adams, 2001; Hanco, 2002; Greenglass, Burke, & Konarski, 1997; 2004; Gu & Day 2007; Holmes, 2005; Nguni, 2005; Russel, Altmaier, & van Velzen, 1987; Littleford, 2007; Salter Jones, 2012; Tsvara. 2013). Similarly my findings show that

the principal had a key role to play in contributing to the well-being of teachers by promoting staff development and support.

The research by Webb, Vulliamy, Sarja, Hämäläinen, & Poikonen (2009) on professional learning communities in schools in England and Finland, shows a connection between teacher well-being and participation by teachers in professional learning communities. They contend that “While ideal notions of PLCs may be difficult to realise, it is argued that it is an important concept worth developing for its potential contribution to teacher well-being” (Webb et al., 2009, p. 405). Their research also showed that the development of a collaborative culture is one of the results of leadership supporting the development of professional learning communities in schools.

The study by Littleford (2007) showed that teacher morale was boosted by a principal who fostered staff collegiality and encouraged the building of school community relationships related to improving teaching and learning. The importance of the role of the principal in developing and sustaining school and inter-school level opportunities for on-going professional development is also acknowledged in the South African leadership literature (Dehaloo, 2011; November et al., 2010; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Tsvara, 2013) and international literature on school leadership (Day et al., 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Littleford, 2007; Nguni, 2005; Senge, 2000; Webb et al., 2009). Within the South African context November et al., (2010) argue that staff development supports the ability of staff member to manage the change process and provides opportunities to enhance teacher motivation and democratic practices within schools:

Recent changes in the education system of South Africa which have placed internal and external pressures on principals and educators alike necessitate a review of the role of principal educators. To absorb the related stressors which are associated with change, low levels of job satisfaction and a decrease in professional commitment, it is incumbent upon the principal-educators to be the initiators of staff development programmes that can assist teachers...Principal-educators are in the best position to plan and implement development programmes with staff collaboratively, especially the programmes which relate to democratic practices (pp. 789-790).

Opportunities for school-based and school-focused in-service training are related in the literature to building teacher self-esteem and competence, reducing isolation and supporting collective problem solving (Trent 1997, cited in Pillay et al.,

2005; Littleford, 2007; Salter, 2010). In my study the development of good collegial relationships was a key aspect teachers identified as supporting their well-being. The literature on effective leadership and school improvement (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002; Day et al., 2007; Fullan, 1993, 2006; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Ngcobo & Tickly, 2010) shows that functioning school structures held the capacity to promote teachers collaboration and cooperation. November et al., (2010) argue that the challenge for school leaders is to re-create schools as learning organisations that promote collaborative school cultures.

I would argue that the limited functioning of the SMT hampered teachers' ability to engage in collaborative staff development practices. Hargreaves and Fink (2003) found that a form of leadership by the principal that sustains learning and develops leadership of others builds sustainable capacity in the school. They argue that sustainable leadership is promoted by leaders that "develop sustainability by how they approach, commit to and protect deep learning in their schools; by how they sustain themselves and others around them to promote and support that learning" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003, p. 3).

I would also argue that the limited functioning of the SMT limited the ability of teachers to collectively problem solve and build staff relations around professional practice. Staff curricular support was limited to staff accessing support from the principal and their heads of department or colleagues as school wide systems for curricular support were weak. Formal mentorship and induction processes were not in place for novice teachers or teachers in general. Salter Jones's (2012) findings on teacher emotional well-being in a selection of English state schools, showed that in order to support the emotional well-being of teachers supervision and mentoring systems need to be developed which provide the opportunity for staff to express emotions, and that there is a "dedication to continuing professional development for all staff"(p. 29).

The studies by Patterson et al., (2002), Littleford (2007) and Salter Jones (2012) showed that teacher morale, resilience and well-being were built by supportive principals who focused on supporting teachers to improve their ability to both support learners and to support their colleagues.

Drawing in External Support . A few teachers mentioned the support role played by the principal in drawing on external support services to give additional

curricular support to teachers. Links with academic institutions and other schools were mentioned as providing a level of assistance to teachers. Assistance to teachers from the formal curricular and learning support services provided by the DBE was not mentioned as a support factor, although one would assume have they would play a key role. According to staff interviewed they received only limited support from the DBE support services. In Scottish schools, Spratt et al., (2006a) found that teachers felt they were supported to some extent by external support services who worked in the school to address the welfare needs of young people.

In schools in a challenging context I would argue this is a key role the principal needs to take on in supporting his staff through drawing both district support through the district support service provided by the DBE, as well as more broadly through those services in the broader community and offered by non-governmental organisations.

7.5.2.3.3 Addressing learning support needs. An important aspect of curricular support identified in my study was the ability of the principal to provide support to teachers to address a range of learning support needs. A few studies both nationally (Hay, Smith, Paulsen; 2001; Johnson, 2005), and internationally (Kyriacou, 2001; Evans & Lunt, 2002; Spratt et al., 2006a) have looked at the relationship between teacher well-being and their role in addressing a range of barriers to learning and supporting the inclusion of children with a range of educational support needs within mainstream schools. The relationship between a teacher's ability to respond adequately to the support needs of learners and teachers own levels of stress have been noted in studies by Kyriacou (2001).

No teachers mentioned the functioning of this structure as supporting their well-being although as I have mentioned earlier, there was a small committee supported by the principal and a few teachers who met around issues of learner support. The limited functioning of this structure with a focus primarily on learner support needs within the context of an inclusive education policy I would argue goes some way towards explaining the limited levels of support and capacity building teachers had in adequately address their support needs in order implement this policy.

Research studies locally (Johnson, 2005; Hay, Smith & Paulsen, 2002)) and internationally (Spratt et al., 2006a; Roffey, 2012)) have highlighted the role the

principal has to play in establishing an inclusive education environment by making sure that the environmental conditions and the school ethos are supportive. Hay et al.,(2002) in study of a sample of 2577 teachers predominantly free state primary schools with 13 years of experience, found that “*teachers felt unprepared to teach integrated classes, and ascribed this to the lack of training, lack of time, large classes, lack of facilities, and lack of teaching experience*” (p. 218). They also found that 63% of respondents received no support at all in assisting them to cope. (2001, p. 217). Based on the finding of their research Hay et al., contend that “The average teacher is apparently neither prepared nor ready to teach learners of inclusive classrooms effectively.” (2001, p. 218).

Spratt et al., (2006a) found that teachers found it difficult to access support to address challenging learner behaviour. They found that in some cases teachers felt “completely isolated when faced with challenging behaviour, and reluctant to seek support due to their fears of loss of credibility with other staff as is demonstrated” (Spratt et al., 2006a, p. 18). Spratt et al., (2006a, p. 20) advocate that curricular support includes “not advocating that teachers deliver specialist interventions, but that the school and the staff develop teaching and learning strategies in their classrooms that can meaningfully engage vulnerable pupils” (p. 20). This supports the importance of the principal giving a focus to staff development interventions that encourage the staff to collaborate on sharing strategies for improved learner support and learning interventions.

Based on the findings from my study I would argue that within contexts of limited external and internal support, the principal has a key role to play in taking some of the weight off the shoulders of teachers in addressing a range of barriers to learning, by ensuring the effective functioning of the ILST.

Roffey (2012) found that promoting teacher well-being enhanced the capacity of schools to meet a range of support needs of diverse learner populations. Roffey (2012) argues that the whole school must support the well-being need of teachers in order to promote pupil well-being. Johnson’s research (2005) in South African schools which focused on youth resilience supports this position and makes the recommendation that “our schools adopt the health promoting schools concepts and address the challenge of risk by providing supportive environments to promote well-being” (p. 323).

In my school teachers highlighted the need for the principal to draw in additional support, as well as to increase teacher support systems within the school to enable them to deal with the range of learning support needs they had to address. A number of local studies have called for an increased level of teacher support in order for teacher to address and cope with a range of learning and teaching barriers they experience (Johnson, 2005; Theron 2007 & 2009). One could argue that the senior leadership within schools and particularly the principal has a key responsibility in supporting the mental health of teachers through building their systems of social support from within the school and from outside of the school, as well as in building their coping skills and self-esteem through staff development and mentoring activities. Within the context of the HIV and AIDs pandemic in South Africa it does call on a quality of leadership by the principal that builds a collegial culture of both compassion and mutual support as a school community level. This form of leadership I would argue would fit well with an ubuntu model of leadership (Mbingi, 1997, p. 139, cited in Bush, Bisschoff, Glover, Heystek, Joubert, & Moloi, 2006, p. 404), where within an African cultural tradition the values of communal support and interconnectedness are emphasised within a democratic ethos.

7.5.2.3.4. Accessing resources and services to support teaching and learning.

Teachers in my case study school felt that the principal needed to play a key role in helping them access the resources and support they needed to teach effectively. My findings here are similar to those identified by Ngcobo & Tikly (2010) in their grounded theory study of effective leadership in 13 schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. They found that effective principals played a key role in ensuring that resources were accessed and the basics were in place to enable effective teaching.:

In my study the poor physical environment and inadequate or insufficient teaching and learning resources greatly affected the ability of teachers to teach and their sense of well-being. These factors were also found to be a challenge for school leaders in poor school communities in other South African studies (Montgomery et al., 2005; Ngcobo & Tickly, 2010; Schulze & Steyn, 2007; Tsvara, 2013;). A key part of the principal's role is to ensure that teachers have the resources they need to teach. The principal challenge in schools in poor communities is to raise funding and support, to ensure that the school environment is maintained and resources are adequate. The school's quintile ratings determine the level of government subsidy.

7.5.2.4 Staff support and developing staff relationships. The findings of my study showed that the principal's role in providing staff support, promoting staff relationships and collegiality and managing staff conflict played a role in helping to support their well-being. Staff support included providing equal opportunities for promotion; helping staff to maintain a positive attitude; acknowledging their contributions and managing conflict and relationships.

7.5.2.4.1 Equal opportunities for promotion. In my study I found that ensuring that all teachers were provided with equal opportunities for promotion and development was an aspect of leadership by the principal that was related to promoting their well-being. Some of the earliest studies in social psychology on teacher motivation (Hertzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1957, cited in Montgomery et al., 2005) identified opportunities for promotion as one of the key factors related to job satisfaction. In their well-being model developed from research studies in South Africa and internationally, Montgomery et al., (2005) identify opportunities for promotion as a key environmental factor supporting teacher well-being. Hargreaves and Fink (2003) in their study of sustainable leadership in American schools found that providing equal opportunities to enhance the development of all staff built sustainable leadership capacity in schools. This type of leadership they argue, "carefully husbands its resources in developing the talents of all its educators rather than lavishing rewards on selecting and rotating a few already-proven stars" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003, p. 9). Ensuring that all staff have opportunities to develop their capacity and that promotional opportunities are fairly addressed are aspects related to teachers' professional sense of well-being. These aspects are linked to the democratic leadership practices in the school as a whole and to the role of the principal in supporting and developing teachers. The aspect of democratic leadership and its influence on teacher well-being is discussed below.

7.5.2.4.2 Maintaining a positive attitude. The principal's role in assisting staff to maintain a positive attitude was found in my study to be important in supporting the well-being of teachers. This was provided both formally through what he said to them in staff meetings and informally in more personal discussions. The role of the principal in motivating teachers to keep a positive attitude despite challenges was also highlighted in the studies by Littleford (2007) in American

schools; Salter (2010) in English schools; and Tsvara (2013) and Ngcobo and Tickly (2010) in South African schools.

7.5.2.4.3 Acknowledging the contribution staff make. Teachers in my case study school found that acknowledgement from the principal for the contribution they made toward the academic and sporting achievement of learners and the broader development of the school, helped boost their sense of well-being. Teachers were particularly sensitive to issues of acknowledgement within a climate of the annual publication and analysis of academic results through both the systemic tests for grades 3 and 6 and national assessment tests for all grades. Littleford (2007) identified teacher acknowledgement as one of the key practices by leadership in supporting teacher well-being. Similarly Holmes (2005) and Tsvara (2013) contend that working in environments that gives recognition and rewards for effort and achievement builds teacher well-being and job satisfaction. Based on Johnson's study in South African schools she recommends that the development of "supportive environments results in the unfolding of processes that foster resilience. The fostering of resilience involves relationships, beliefs and opportunities for participation and power" (Holmes, 2005, p. 318).

Viewed from a resilience perspective, one could argue that the resilience of teachers (which is an aspect of well-being) is strengthened through support of "assets" or protective factors at both a personal and contextual level in the school community. I would argue that this highlights the importance of the principal focusing on teachers' assets and finding way to make them shine rather than focusing on their liabilities. This is particularly in an educational context where it is sometimes difficult to see the light and to hold out hope and optimism. Littleford (2007) recommends that acknowledgement for teachers can come in the form of the principal both verbally acknowledging them but also in the manner in which the principal provides support to teachers through servant leadership. She also found that the acknowledgement of teachers came through supporting teachers in their efforts to improve as professionals and trusting that they would go a good job.

7.5.2.4.4 Strengthening staff relationships and managing conflict. Building staff relationships and getting staff to work together was an important task that teachers felt the principal needed to address. In my study this related to the principal's role in strengthening staff relationships and managing conflict.

Strengthening staff relationships. The importance of the link between teachers receiving social support and the reduction of teacher stress and burn-out as well as the potential this has to enhance their well-being has been noted in a number of studies (Day et al., 2007; Holmes, 2005; Jackson et al., 2005; Leithwood et al., 1996; Littleford, 2007; Spratt et al., 2006a; Salter, 2010). Research on teacher burnout has shown that the well-being of teachers through social support systems at school level helps to mediate the impact of professional disengagement (Day et al., 2007; Pierce & Molloy, 1990; Pozo, 2008; Tsvara, 2013). While some studies show that supportive relationships by the principal contribute to teacher well-being or reducing stress levels (Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987; Spratt et al., 2006a; Jackson et al., 2007; Salter, 2010 & 2012; Tsvara, 2013) other studies show that supportive relationships with fellow teachers significantly influence stress levels or promote a sense of job satisfaction and well-being (Greenglass, Burke, & Konarski, 1997; Holmes, 2005; Pozo et al., 2008; Tsvara, 2013).

Littleford (2007) and Salter Jones (2012) both found social support networks and staff cohesion important for enhancing teaching motivation and well-being, and that they created platforms within which the relationship between individual and organisational values and goals could be strengthened. Littleford (2007) notes:

The participants conveyed that when teachers feel a part of their school community, they enjoy the camaraderie, and they share that feeling with other stakeholders. In addition, faculties who pull together like families have a desire to work not only for self-improvement but also for the school as a whole (p. 88).

Based on these studies one can generally conclude that enhancing opportunities for social support through peer or school wide opportunities for social cohesion supports teacher well-being. Some studies have shown the social support role of the principal as directly contributing to the well-being levels of teachers. Within the duties and responsibilities of the school we could assume that either directly or indirectly the principal plays a key role in promoting social support by enhancing the environmental conditions within which teachers work, and developing forums and policies to support the development of collegial communities of practice.

Salter's (2010) grounded theory study related to teacher well-being recommends that leadership in school fosters the development of strong peer support in order to strengthen the well-being of teachers. Her findings show that peer support occurred formally and informally (Salter Jones, 2012).

The establishment of a supportive collegial culture within my case study school was supported by the principal's own respectful manner to staff. However increased opportunities for collegial support and cohesion seem to have been undermined by the principal's limited ability to manage conflict on the SMT, of which he was a part. Teacher perceptions of the nature of democratic leadership on the SMT negatively influenced staff relationships, and levels of collegial interaction and well-being. I would go so far as to argue that the limited functioning of this structure and the principal's lack of ability to effectively manage staff conflict on the SMT, had a negative impact on the level of responsibility staff in key leadership positions took for building and supporting a collaborative collegial school culture. Littleford (2007) found that having a positive learning community in a school built teacher morale. She acknowledges that "Principals must work very hard to build a positive learning community that has teachers wanting to come to work" (Littleford, 2007, p. 91). My own study and that of Tsvara (2013) highlights the importance of the effective functioning of the SMT in building positive learning community and promoting staff cohesion across the school.

Durrant and Holden (2006, p. 70) emphasised the need for "open and trustful dialogue and collaborative working when shaping school culture together with joint/team working involving the sharing and ownership of responsibility across school community". I would argue that within my study, the difficulty that the school principal had in establishing a more collaborative school culture was related to his inability to effectively deal with getting the SMT to function. This in turn had a negative influence on the level of to support teachers. Once again I would stress the importance of a focus by the principal on ensuring that structures are functioning to enable the development of democratic school practices and a collaborative culture. This structure should play a key role in creating forums for staff sharing and participation related to enhancing their professional practice. This I would contend would build opportunities for staff cohesion, professional development and the development and reinforcement of the core cultural values of democracy, a commitment to learning, accountability and caring. Based on her research into teacher well-being in American schools, Holmes (2005) identifies the need for teachers to work in a positive school environment in order to enhance their well-being. The features of the environment Holmes proposes include:

- high expectations to create strong communal identity;

- respectful and dignified treatment as professionals;
- participation by teachers in decisions affecting their work;
- regular opportunities for interaction and sharing with colleagues; (2005).

Tsvara in his study on the relationship between teacher job satisfaction and the role of the school leader identifies similar features of the school environment in promoting teacher job satisfaction.

I would argue that developing these aspects is a key responsibility of the school management in general and the school leader in particular. My own emphasis would be on ensuring that the appropriate forums and structures are consistently functioning in the school to enable this type of staff and organisational culture to develop.

Managing conflict. My findings show that the ability of the principal to manage conflict and build staff relations was a key aspect identified by teachers as necessary for their well-being. The principal's role in holding teachers accountable and ensuring that the workload was evenly spread and that resources and support was fairly allocated, were factors underlying staff conflict that needed to be addressed. Conflict between individuals on the SMT was an area of great concern to staff and had a negative impact on various factors related to the day-to-day functioning of the school as a whole, and thus the well-being of teachers. In the literature on school leadership the ability of the school leader to manage conflict is cited as a key role that school leaders need to play (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002).

Littleford's (2007) and that of Tsvara (2013) study shows the importance of the school leader being fair and treating all staff in an equitable manner in order to build a strong collegial community and promote job satisfaction.

7.5.2.5 Discipline. In my study the role the principal took in addressing issues of learner discipline had an important influence on the day-to-day well-being of teachers. Teachers related difficulties with discipline to a range of barriers to learning and language barriers, as well as cultural differences and conditions in children's homes and community environments. They also felt that the principal had a key role to play in providing a presence to monitor and enforce good discipline, as well as in putting in place proper procedures to deal with poor learner discipline.

A number of studies highlight the effect of poor discipline and learner disrespect on teacher stress and burnout levels and mental and physical health and safety (Friedman, 1995; Burke, Greenglass & Schwarzer, 1996; Hastings & Bham, 2003, Tsvara, 2013). Roffey (2012) in studies in a group of Australian schools found teacher well-being to be under threat when they had to deal with poor or abusive learner behavior. Based on the results of her study Roffey recommends that schools give less prominence to issues of control and more to the skills needed to connect meaningfully with students (Roffey, 2012, p. 14).

Although no teacher in my case study school mentioned the threat of violence from students in relation to discipline, they at times found behaviour management a challenge and looked to the principal as the key figure in the school to provide them with support in dealing with matters of learner ill-discipline. The importance of teachers having social support systems in place to deal with the stress caused by learner ill-discipline has been highlighted in a number of studies (Johnson, 2005; Leithwood, Menses, Jantzi, & Leithwood, 1996; Ngcobo & Tickly, 2010; Tsvara, 2012).

Clearly the focus by a school leader on maintaining a school ethos and environment in which learner discipline is addressed supports teacher well-being. Within schools in challenging conditions it also points to the role of the school leader in addressing discipline within a broader understanding of the social and cultural forces that influence learner discipline and from a perspective in which a range of learner barriers to learning need to be addressed.

7.5.2.6 Improving and Maintaining the Physical Environment. Having a school leader concerned about maintaining and improving the physical day-to-day working environment of the school such as the classroom, common rooms and school grounds was identified by teachers in my study as promoting their well-being. Improving the funding base of the school and ensuring that fees were collected had an influence on the maintenance and improvement of the physical environment of the school. Salter Jones (2012) recommends that the leadership in schools needs to focus on the “maintenance of communal working environments” (2012, p. 29) in order to support the well-being of teachers and learners. Within the context of school based management endorsed by the South African Schools Act

(DoE, 1996) schools are mandated to attend to issues of maintaining and improving their own facilities.

The research of Friedman (1991) focusing on the identification of factors associated with teacher burnout, argues for a focus on organisational and environmental factors as causes of burnout on the grounds of, “the origins of burnout deriving from role and organisational variables are probably stronger than those deriving from personality variables” and they contend that it , “may be easier to reduce the rate of occurrence and the degree of severity of burnout by intervention on the organisational plane” (p. 326). Improving the aesthetic and functional features of the physical environment in which teachers work each day and their sense of well-being and motivation has been found in a number of studies (Day et al., 2007; Littleford, 2007; Johnson, 2005; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Salter, 2010, Salter Jones, 2012; Tsvara, 2013).

The leadership literature shows that attending to both the physical and psychological environment of the school is part of the domain of leadership in schools. Johnson’s research (2005, pp. 311-312) in South African schools recommends that school environments need to build resiliency for learners, as well as teachers. She also recommends that schools are both welcoming and safe environments where appropriate support is provided.

In my study the poor functioning of school toilets had a direct impact on the ability of teachers to teach and increased their levels of stress and frustration confirming findings in a multiple case-study research project on teacher well-being in four South African primary schools (Collett, et al., 2013).

7.5.2.7 Local and School Community Links. My study found that the role of the principal in establishing closer relationships between the school and the broader school community, as well as the local community promoted the well-being of teachers. The focus of these relationships was strategic in building relationships of support for learners and parents at the school community level and assisting in the raising school funds. At the level of the local school community, activities that helped to address the well-being needs of teachers included drawing in support services, addressing issues of security and vandalism, accessing a level of local support and profiling the school in order to attract local children to the school.

In the literature a number of studies on effective leadership attributes in South African (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Tsvara, 2013) and internationally (Day et al., 2007; Littleford, 2007; Nguni, 2005; Salter, 2010) show how leaders have made links with the broader community, in order to access both resources and support to improve teaching and learning.

In their study of a group of township schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) found community links related to accessing resources as well as supporting teaching and learning. Both formal and informal links by school leadership were effective and schools benefited from these relationships, and they argue for the centrality of these links for effective leadership. Research by Hargreaves and Fink (2006) on sustainable leadership shows a concern by school leaders for taking agency and activism and addressing issues at a local and community level.

Strengthening school community links. In this study I define school community as including those individuals that have a direct link or relationship to the school as a result of their children or grandchildren attending the school or having had a history of involvement in the school. The school community may not necessarily live in the area surrounding the school, however they have a sense of being connected to the school through the expectation of their participation in school-related activities. Links at the school-community level that supported the well-being of teachers were with the parent/guardian community; other schools; and with the educational support services.

Links with the parent-guardian community. In my study I found that the well-being of teachers was promoted through the principal by encouraging parents/guardians to support the education of their children, as well as to assist in fund-raising. The profiling of the school that the principal did in the school community also assisted in drawing new learners to the school. This meant that the school could maintain its staff compliment within a context of increasing competition by parents for their children to attend good English medium schools.

Ngcobo and Tikly's study found that effective principals in township schools spent a lot of time working "intensively with the community in ways related to the local context to mobilize resources and to broker a safe and secure environment for learners to learn" (2010, p. 221). They recommend that "Bringing the best out of our

most disadvantaged learners requires that the school engages with the contexts that they are from and seeks ways to actively empower parents with ways to support their children's learning" (Ngcobo & Tikly 2010, p. 221). Although they did not make the link between the school-community and the well-being levels of teachers, they did indicate that involvement at this level helped enhance learner attendance and parent engagement in their children's work. Both of these aspects were mentioned by teachers as being factors which helped promote their well-being.

My research showed that the principal's role in supporting his school to link with other schools in the area held the potential to support the well-being of teachers through curricular improvement and workload management. However it also showed that developing this relationship required increased support to teachers within the school by the principal to build their capacity for collaboration and networking. This innovation initially increased their workload responsibilities and thus limited their sense of well-being.

Supporting teachers to enhance their well-being by the principal at a broader school-community level included addressing teacher concerns with the DBE. My findings show that the ability of the principal to challenge the DBE on a number of issues related to curricular support, teacher performance and the quintile rating of the school was identified as supporting teacher well-being.

The principal also played a role in drawing in additional support services from other governmental departments such as the Department of Social Service and Safety and Security and other organisations such as non-governmental organisations and universities to increase levels of support to learners and teachers. These leadership tasks are in line with those advocated by the Conceptual Framework for the Care and Support of Teaching and Learning (DBE & MIET Africa, 2011).

Strengthening local community links. In my study I have defined the local community as the residents, small businesses and support services and schools that are physically located in the neighbourhood near the school. My study showed that the principal's role in engaging with the local community helped to some degree to build relationships with local community structures and businesses to access resources for the school and attempted to address safety and security concerns of teachers and the school related to vandalism and theft of school property. It also helped to profile the school at local community level.

7.5.2.8 Fund-Raising. Ensuring that the school was raising enough funds to cover its expenses and pay for the renovation of the school grounds, as well as the appointment of additional staff had an influence on both teacher workload and resources. Research by Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) provided a picture very similar to the one experienced in my case study school. They found that principals in township schools spent a large amount of time collecting fees and raising funds.

In my review of studies related to teacher resilience and well-being I did not come across other studies that identified these issues as important in influencing teacher well-being. However in a cross-case study research project I was involved in at four primary schools in the Western Cape in South Africa (Collett, Chisulo & Buchler, 2013), one of the findings on factors negatively affecting the well-being of teachers was the responsibility on schools and teachers to raise additional funding to support both resources and the employment of teachers in governing body posts.

7.5.3 Leadership Manner and Style. My emerging theory argues that teacher well-being is supported by a respectful, trustworthy and approachable leadership manner and a democratic leadership style. Adams (2001) in her development of a causal model of vocational teacher stress recommends that in order to address some of the system level variables that influence teacher stress, school leaders may “need to evaluate their own management style and adjust it to fit the needs of teachers they direct” (p. 241). In my study I found the school leader although remaining consistent with his own value base and that of the broader ethos of the school, varied his leadership style and manner in relation to addressing a range of school level and contextual needs.

7.5.3.1 Leadership manner. Teachers in my study identified the respectful, trustworthy and approachable manner of the principal as promoting their well-being. His manner influenced the ability of teachers to approach him for support with matters of a more personal nature. Teachers linked his empathetic and respectful manner to assisting in promoting a culture of inter-personal respect between teachers and between teachers and learners. My findings are supported to some extent in an South African Ph.D. study by Peter Manser (Cohen, 2005 cited in the Sunday Argus) on leadership practices in a school in the Eastern Cape that makes the link between teacher motivation and the “emotional intelligence” of the principal. Manser identifies the following key intra- and interpersonal factors as supporting teacher

well-being:- communication, conflict management, ability to manage relationships, empathy and trust, self-awareness, self-control, adaptability and optimism/hope (2005, p. 10).

In a similar finding to my case study school where the principal modelled respectful behaviour, Salter Jones (2012, p. 27) found where there was an “open and approachable” ethos in schools, staff felt they could draw on their peers in both formal and informal ways to support their well-being. Littleford (2007) shows that the empathetic and respectful manner of the principal boosted staff morale. In a similar vein Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) found that personal dimensions of effective leadership were linked to the personal integrity and respect leaders had.

Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) found that the financial trustworthiness and acumen of school leaders was an attribute of exemplary leadership. A number of experts in the area of school improvement and educational leadership emphasise the importance of the role of the principal in both being a trustworthy person and having the ability to build a culture of openness and trust in the school community (Day et al., 2007; Hargreaves, 2006; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Littleford, 2007). The following studies have shown a link between a teacher’s sense of personal and professional well-being and the climate of trust and support established in the school. (Day et al., 2007; Hargreaves, 2006; Webb et al., 2009). Trust is also important in building professional learning communities in a school (Webb et al., 2009). November et al., (2010) drawing on their research in South African schools, argue that the principal has a key role to play in supporting the development of democratic values and enabling the development of learning communities in schools.

The above research highlights the need for schools to be able to draw in the necessary support at a district and local community level in order to enhance the well-being needs of teachers. This raises the need for the provision of adequate systems of psychological support to teachers and school leaders who are required to hold and respond to a range personal and inter-personal needs in the lives of the children they work with and the school communities they come from. Based on the result of her studies in relation to HIV and AIDS and teacher support, Theron (2007, 2009) makes a similar plea but calls on increased levels of support systems to schools as well as the building of internal capacity for resilience by schools.

A review of the literature confirms a relationship between compassionate, trustworthy and exemplary school leaders and their ability to foster those values in

the broader culture of the school community. The findings from my study and from other research (Littleford, 2007; Salter, 2010; Salter Jones, 2012; Spratt et al., 2006a) show a relationship between the approachable and trustworthy manner of the principal and the ability of teachers to feel comfortable to ask for a level of personal social support. In her study related to the role of the principal and the building of teacher morale, Littleford concludes "It's all about interpersonal skills and being treated with respect" (2007, p. 102).

Christie et al., cited in Christie (2004, p. 10), advocate three aspects central to good leadership, namely: reflexive self-monitoring; moral preparedness 'to do the right thing and cause the right change' and operating with a sense of the whole. These factors support values of learning, citizenship and democratic practice. Christie (2004) calls for an ethics of intellectual rigor, an ethics of civility and an ethics of care. I could argue that teachers in my case study school experienced the principal as modelling these three aspects at a personal level, but his ability to activate organisational learning and distributed leadership remained a challenge within a context of inter-personal conflict and differences of leadership value and style on a management team.

7.5.3.2 Democratic leadership style. Having a principal with a democratic leadership style was identified by teachers in my case study as promoting their well-being. Democratic leadership was contrasted with autocratic behaviour. Within the day-to-day running of schools the formal leadership in the schools has a great deal of mandated authority to build and support agency and the empowerment of staff within the overall development of the school. Empowerment is regarded as a key aspect of health promotion (WHO 1998). Markham and Aveyard (2003, p. 1218) contend that in order to be health promoting, "organisations such as schools should focus on their organisational systems and people's interactions within organisations".

While most teachers in this school felt the principal was democratic, some felt he was not, and needed to ensure decisions were made democratically and that they had adequate access to information. Littleford found that "Lack of shared-decision making and not having vision were themes the participants repeatedly described as lowering morale" (2007, p. 63). She found that teacher morale was also boosted by teachers feeling they could disagree with their principal without feeling intimidated in any way (Littleford, 2007). Similarly Borg and Riding (1991) in their

research on teacher stress levels, found a correlation between high levels of work related pressure through job demands and low involvement of teachers in decision making and limited levels of support.

November et al., (2010) argue that in the South African context democratic leadership remains a challenge. They contend that:

despite the fact that education legislation paved the way for thinking differently about education in South Africa, principal-educators are not necessarily imbued with the ideals/virtues of democratic practices needed to empower them to engage in reflective democratic practices within a school context. We argue that the virtues of democracy must be learned through practising democracy” (November et al., 2010, p. 786).

An analysis of the leadership style adopted by the principal in my study shows that within his approach to democratic leadership he tended to focus on a contingency approach to leadership (Bush , 2007; Bush & Heystek, 2006; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010) using both a transformational and transactional approach towards supporting staff. In my case study school the principal tended to take a more transformational approach to leadership with staff who showed a willingness to take agency and leadership and a more transactional approach towards staff whom he perceived as challenging his leadership. His leadership approach corresponds with the findings by Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) in their study of a sample of South African principals, who showed:

a mixture of top down, transactional approaches and more democratic transformational ones reflecting on the one hand the realities posed by local settings and the broader process of transformation from authoritarian to more democratic practices (p. 222)

Many of the attributions the principal in my study displayed in his support of teachers correspond well with what Littleford (2007) found in her study as being descriptive of servant leadership. There are examples of the principal extending himself to support teachers at both a professional and personal level to enable them to cope.

Leadership approach. Within the principal’s democratic leadership style he tended to focus his efforts on supporting teachers and school development through instructional leadership. This is defined by Bush (2007) as focusing on:

teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students. Leaders’ influence is targeted at student learning via teachers. The emphasis is on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself. (p. 401).

Research by Southworth (2002) makes the link between instructional leadership and the development of the school as a learning community with strong social cohesion links. Although the principal in my study took on an instructional leadership role it was limited in the extent to which it developed the school as a learning community. One of the factors related to this was the limited level of functioning of the SMT which had an influence of poorly defined distributed leadership roles in relation to instructional leadership.

Drawing on my understanding of the curricular pressures teachers faced in my case study school, I would argue that both the external pressures on schools to improve their performance targets, as well as internal pressures by teachers who were struggling to cope with the new curricular demands, large classes and high levels of learning support may have influenced the principal's focus on the holding dimension of leadership. His own role as a teacher at this school as well as also having to do some classroom teaching may also have been influential factors promoting this focus. The poor functioning of the SMT also increased his level of responsibility for providing curriculum monitoring and support.

Based on my analysis of the principal's leadership style I would say that in motivating staff he showed both transactional and transformational leadership in his instructional leadership role.

At a school level his instructional support role I would argue remained at a transactional level through individual staff support and monitoring of assessment tasks. Although he did play a role in supporting teacher well-being by supporting individual teachers and ensuring that the standard of assessment at a school wide level were being monitored, this role was limited. Opportunities for instructional leadership being provided effectively at a whole school level were very limited as key forums to engage in meaningful curriculum learning were not established or functioning poorly. Although the principal gave a level of support to teachers to enable more effective curriculum delivery, opportunities to build greater social cohesion and well-being for the staff as a learning community were lost.

Although I would argue that the instructional leadership role the principal took at a school level was limited, he showed an ability to take transformational leadership around the curriculum in relation to the DBE and his engagement with other schools. One of the features teachers identified as supporting their well-being was the principal's ability to raise their concerns related to curriculum delivery,

support and the funding levels of the school with the DBE. Here the principal took action to lobby on behalf of the teachers for improved support within the context of increased demands by the state for schools to improve results. In this sense the principal was acting as a champion in relation to teacher support needs. The principal's role in engaging other schools to improve levels of curriculum performance in line with the school vision also showed his ability to take transformational leadership. His engagement with other schools focused on addressing issues related to the improved performance of learners and increased support for teachers. In this way he was building capacity for support to teachers to address their concerns about improving their performance standards. He was also able to inspire and motivate teachers in relation to the school's broader vision, while at the same time addressing constraints at a systems level that limited support to teachers and his school.

Drawing on national and international leadership research, Botha (2004, p. 241) outlines the following key values of principal's leadership within what is described as a new professionalism of school leaders, namely; reflection; vision; commitment and courage; power and empowerment and the role of the head learner. These aspects correspond well with some of the factors which resiliency research shows to promote resilience of teachers. The qualities of vision, commitment, courage, power and empowerment were mentioned by teachers in this study as being held by the principal, whereas his strengths in documenting and communicating shared learning were not mentioned. Based on the findings of my study I would add the values of respect and acknowledgement to the list of key values promoting well-being and resilience.

In order to enhance the well-being of teachers, both transformational and transactional leadership styles are required to motivate staff. However as was also evident from the findings in this school, the ability of the principal to take on a more transformational leadership style also depended upon the ability and willingness of teachers engage in democratic practices. Transformational leadership clearly requires leaders to have the courage to address accountability issues in their own school as well as at a systems level in order to promote teacher well-being.

Based on the findings of this study I would argue that a focus on creating effective structures and supporting staff to take leadership around instructional issues (with an emphasis on addressing a range of educational and psycho-social barriers) is

key to developing the agency of teachers. Agency in turn has been shown as a factor promoting teacher well-being in other studies (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003; Spratt et al., 2006a; Wyn et al., 2000). I would argue this supports a holistic and health promoting approach toward both teacher, institutional and community development through a focus on the well-being of teachers. Both De Jong (2002) and Johnson (2005) advocate health promotion within a holistic approach to institutional development.

A focus on instructional leadership with an emphasis on addressing learning support barriers has only been mentioned in a few of the studies that address school leadership issues from a health promoting schools approach (Johnson, 2005; Spratt et al., 2006a & 2006b; Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2011; Salter, 2010, Salter Jones, 2012). I recommend that this aspect needs to be understood in more depth in relation to what it means for teachers, as well as how it supports their sense of well-being in schools.

7.5.4 Personal Support. In my emerging theory I propose that teacher well-being is enhanced by support from the principal that shows concern for both the professional and personal dimensions of teachers' lives. A similar finding was made by Littleford (2007) who found that teacher morale was boosted by principals showing a concern for teachers both personally and professionally. The research by Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) showed that effective leadership by principals that enhanced staff motivation was related to both a personal and professional relationship with their staff. They found:

principals were also perceived to value their relationships with staff and to trust them. They spent a lot of effort encouraging staff. One principal regularly visited staff in their homes and many had an open door policy allowing staff to approach them with problems. Respondents also commented on the level of compassion and understanding shown by principals. All of these inter-personal factors were considered important for motivating staff (Ngcobo & Tickly, 2010, p. 220).

Research shows a relationship between high level of support by the principal and a lowered potential for teacher burn-out (Littleford, 2007; Russell, Altmaier & Van Velzen, 1987; Spratt et al., 2006a; Wyn et al., 2000). Although these studies show the importance of the relationship between teacher well-being and support from the principal, there have also been studies that have shown that teachers have turned to colleagues rather than to the principal in supporting their well-being (Poso et al.,

2008)). This highlights the need for varying levels of inter-personal support for teachers as they may not feel comfortable discussing certain issues with the school leader. At the same time one could argue that in a context with limited external support, the principal does become a key figure teachers can turn to for support. This may especially be the case in contexts where the principal does not carry as heavy a teaching load as teachers or has greater flexibility with his time.

In my study the respectful and trustworthy manner of the principal made staff feel that they could go to him for support with more personal matters. The research by Salter Jones (2012) and Littleford (2007) found that inter-personal trust between colleagues and between teachers and the principal was an important factor in promoting teacher well-being. Littleford's (2007) study on the relationship between teacher motivation and the role of the principal in a selection of American primary schools found that both professional and personal support by the principal was key to supporting the motivation of teachers. However she also found that the principal played a key role in building staff cohesion and community.

Similarly Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) highlight the importance of teachers feeling they could trust the principal. They (ibid, 2010) contend that having a trustworthy leader supported effective leadership in schools and had an influence on teacher morale and motivation. Theron's research (2007) on teacher support within the context of the HIV and AIDS pandemic calls for a leadership of compassion. I would argue that a culture of compassion would be difficult to establish in a school if the principal did not demonstrate genuine empathy and care for staff, learners and the school community. My study showed that teacher well-being was enhanced by a principal who would empathise and listen to the personal concerns of staff, and who would then support them in problem solving and addressing their concerns. What the principal modelled in his personal manner and values influenced both general levels of personal well-being as well as the extent to which they approached him for support with regard to more personal matters.

7.5.5 Summary. This section has reviewed aspects of my emerging theory in relation to the relevant literature on teacher well-being and leadership in schools. This showed an important and contingent relationship between the leadership role of the school principal and the support for the well-being needs of teachers. Many of my findings were supported in other studies reviewed, namely the qualities of school

leaders; the leadership style; leadership practices linked to staff support; curriculum support; personal support; relationship building; dealing with discipline; accessing resources and improving the environment. This supports the need for a holistic, whole school and systems approach to understanding how school leaders support the well-being of teachers. I also highlight the need for differentiated and context-related approaches to appropriately supporting teacher well-being needs.

Similarly relationships between categories I identified in my emerging theory were endorsed in many of the studies I compared my findings with, particularly the relationship between the school leader's role and the professional development of teachers as well as improving the school environmental conditions. The principal's role in supporting both the personal and professional lives of teachers was also evident in a growing number of recent studies. A finding from my own study which was not strongly emphasised in either the leadership literature, or literature on psychological models of teacher well-being, was the need to support teachers adequately in addressing a range of barriers to learning. My findings show that the well-being of teachers is negatively affected by increased job demands related to supporting a range of barriers to learning and teaching, in conditions of limited external support and large class sizes unlike the findings by Adams (2001) who found that teacher internal factors had a greater influence on the well-being than system level factors. My study shows that in challenging school contexts the school and system level context factors play greater roles in negatively affecting the well-being of teachers, thus emphasising the need for school principals to address the personal, school and system level factors in supporting teacher well-being.

In my emerging theory I particularly emphasise the need to increase systems of internal and external support to teachers by the school principal, focusing on the effective functioning of key structures in enabling cohesive staff relationships. I argue that a culture of caring and collaborative learning can be developed through the principal focusing on developing supportive structures and procedures. Based on a discussion of these findings in relation to the broader literature, I will present my substantive theory on the role of the principal in supporting teachers' well-being.

7.6 Presentation of a Substantive Theory on the Role of the Principal in Supporting the Well-Being of Teachers

The well-being of teachers is promoted by a school principal who embodies and models the qualities of trust, respect, empathy and support of others at a personal and professional level. Good leadership should focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning and help teachers do their job, and inspire and motivate staff with a vision of learner and teacher achievement and success, towards the development of the broader school community and society. The principal should hold the well-being of staff through acknowledging a responsibility for the development and support of the educational and care and support needs of learners, teachers, the school and the broader school community. S/he needs to acknowledge the key role of support and empowerment of teachers, in order to hold and support the educational and bio-psycho-social support needs of learners and to an extent their families. S/he needs to put in place strategies or access additional support to also assist the bio-psycho-social support of teachers. Through democratic and transformational leadership practices s/he needs to build the relationship between teacher personal motivational needs and the needs of the school and school community. The glue that helps to bind this common focus is found in promoting the values and practices that support teachers to enhance learner education, achievement, development and care. In essence it requires the principal to strive towards build a supportive school culture that promotes excellence, safety and care.

A principal supports the well-being needs of staff by having style of leadership that is democratic. Depending on the ability of staff to take on leadership responsibilities the principal is able to respond flexibly and contingently to motivating staff through both transactional and transformational leadership strategies. S/he supports the well-being needs of teachers through the supportive and empowering nature of his/her leadership and management style, supporting the effective general management of the school with a focus on improving teaching and learning and the development of the school as a learning organization, as well as providing staff with a level of personal support and empathy. S/he understands that teachers often carry a dual workload both at school and within their families and communities.

The well-being of teachers is supported by a principal who is able to hold and model the “heart” in schools through caring and acknowledgement and inspiration, while at the same time showing the courage and strength to ensure the key structures of the SGB, SMT and ILST function to help improve the quality of teaching and learning support in the school. This includes the ability to empower others and distribute leadership, as well as address staff accountability and manage conflict.

Key aspects within the general management of the school that the principal needs to ensure are functioning in order to support teachers to manage their workload demands are communication; curriculum and learning support; staff support and relationships; discipline; procuring resources for teaching and learning; improving the physical environment of the school; building local and school community links and support; and raising funds.

The well-being needs of teachers are supported through ensuring that they have the necessary material conditions to enable them to teach, such as resources and technology to support their teaching as well as a conducive physical environment. The knowledge base, skills and abilities of teachers to teach within the context of constant curriculum reform and innovation needs to be developed. Curricular capacity needs to be continually developed through both external and internal staff development activities.

Teacher well-being is promoted through a focus on strengthening forums for school-based peer support and distributed leadership. Teacher social relationships need to be built around the common goal of improving teaching and learning where increased problem solving and teacher agency around issues of teaching and learning is promoted.

In order to build social cohesion and relationships, the principal needs to ensure that organisational learning is recorded and shared appropriately through improved systems of communication. Different forums and forms of communication that are ongoing need to be established in order to enhance the ability of teachers to feel they are informed and up-to-date on school matters. This also enhances the ability of teachers to access democratic participation in school decision-making processes.

Strengthening systems of internal and external support to address a range of learning support barriers experienced by both teachers and learners is a key area of curricular support and leadership the principal needs to focus on in order to support

the well-being of teachers. This requires them to engage with the broader school community in order to address both some of the causes and symptoms affecting the well-being of both learners and teachers. A particular focus needs to be placed on ensuring that schools are safe and health promoting environments and that parents/guardians are encouraged to be involved in the life of their children and the broader school community.

In order to support the well-being needs of teachers the principal needs to have the ability to address issues at a personal, school and systems level. To take on this role, principals themselves need to have support for their own well-being needs. This emphasizes the need for distributive leadership, and the strengthened functioning of key structures within schools, to enable support to teachers on varying levels, as well as strengthening and drawing in support and resources from the broader school community and support services. An internal focus on staff support, as well as building strong staff cohesion through formal and informal processes of acknowledgement, learning and communication are necessary, in order to access and lobby for improved resources and support to enhance the well-being needs of teachers.

Within an educational context of downsizing of external support services and increased responsibility of schools through school-based management to procure resources and support as well as show improved performance standards, the principal supports the well-being of teachers by having the courage to challenge the broader educational system to take on greater responsibility to provide adequate support and resourcing to schools. Here an activist type leadership is required to champion the needs of teachers and learners. This is particularly pertinent in schools in communities that have experienced historical disadvantage through the apartheid system, and who continue to experience the multiple poverties of unemployment, community violence and fragmentation and the impact of HIV and AIDS in communities they serve.

In essence the well-being of teachers is enhanced by a principal who is exemplary and has a heart that is both caring and courageous. A leader who is both able to support and challenge teachers. A leader who works towards building the collective capacity of the staff to take leadership in improving the educational and support needs of learners, teachers and the school community they serve. Leadership that promotes teacher well-being in schools in challenging conditions needs to

include a focus on strategies at a personal, organisational and contextual level. In order to decrease job demands on teachers and increase the level of job resources and support to teachers, both internal and external systems of support need strengthening. Within the spirit of building the school as a learning community, the principal needs to have the courage to lead staff processes of reflection, introspection, acknowledgment and self-understanding, in order to identify where teacher well-being needs to be enhanced.

Figure 7.3 below provides a schematic representation of my substantive theory on the key dimensions of the principal's role in supporting the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions.

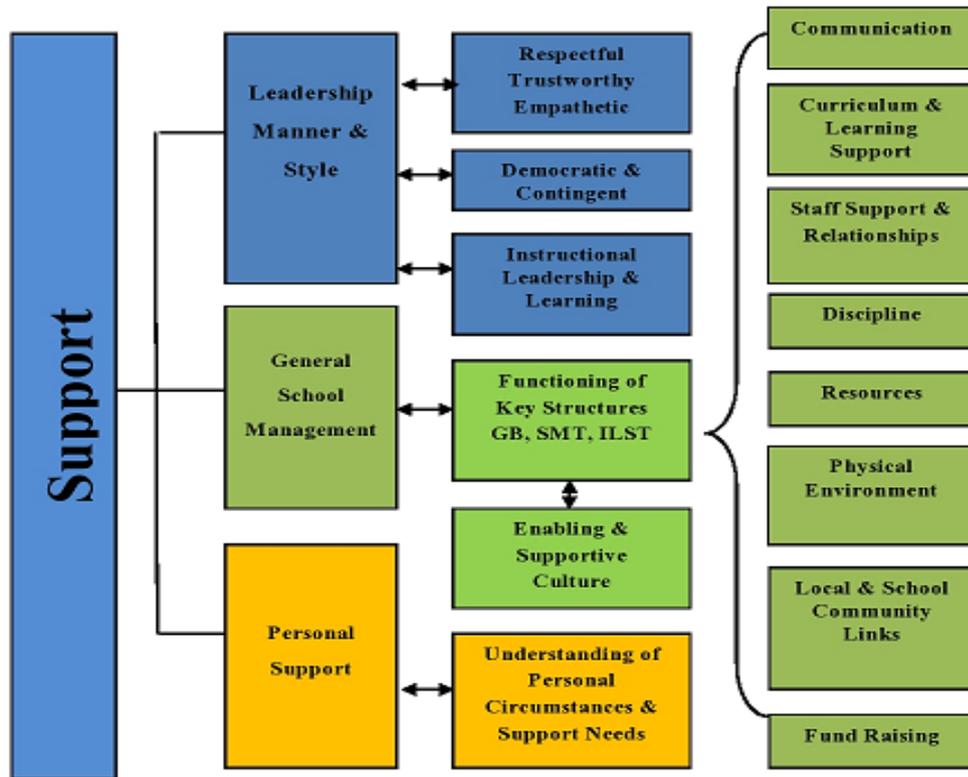


Figure 7.4 : *A Grounded Theory Model of the Key Dimensions of the Principal's Role in Supporting the Well-Being of Teachers in a School in Challenging Conditions*

Although individual school conditions and teacher well-being support needs may differ from school to school, the findings of this study show that the principal has a responsibility of enhancing the well-being of teachers through providing SUPPORT to:

- Influence the day-to-day teaching and learning environment
- Help teachers and learners focus on the vision and purpose of a holistic excellent education
- Ensure that key structures are functioning
- Distribute leadership and empower teachers
- Provide opportunities for teacher agency or efficacy
- Model and promote a culture of care, respect and empathy
- Provide a level of personal support and mentoring to teachers
- Promote and lead instructional leadership/curriculum leadership²⁸
- Address learning and teaching support barriers

²⁸ I have chosen to use the term curriculum leadership and not instructional leadership in my diagrams and substantiated theory as this is the term teachers used more frequently.

- Address the working conditions and job demands of teachers so that workload is more evenly and fairly spread
- Promote good collegial and learner relationships
- Encourage parents/guardians to support the education of their children
- Provide consistent and relevant communication
- Create forums for organisational learning and communication
- Establish administrative systems and procedures that limit administrative tasks
- Promote the celebration and acknowledgment of learner and teacher achievement
- Draw in external educational, biological and psychological and social support to enable effective teaching and learning
- Address the environmental and physical conditions that support effective teaching and learning
- Raise funding to improve the school and its resources
- Hold teachers, learners and parents/guardians accountable
- Champion the needs of teachers with the DBE, other government departments and support services
- Mediate the implementation of policy
- Challenge the DBE to increase levels of support and funding to school in poor communities
- Look after his/her own well-being needs.

7.7 Conclusion

Chapter seven has shown the analysis of data on how teachers feel the principal supports their well-being through the processes of open and selective coding and theory testing. An emerging theory was presented. This theory was then discussed in relation to relevant literature related to school leadership, teacher well-being and resilience and health promoting schools. This engagement with the literature helped to deepen the process of theoretical sampling and to substantiate this theory by identifying similarities or differences in other research studies and highlighting a number of gaps and anomalies. The chapter concluded with the

presentation of a substantive theory of teacher perceptions of what a school principal in a school in challenging conditions needs to do to support their well-being.

In Chapter 8 the three substantive theories from chapter 5, 6 and 7 will be merged in order to propose a consolidated theory on teacher perceptions of how a principal in a primary school in challenging conditions supports teacher well-being. The theoretical propositions I make will then be discussed in relation to the literature in order to develop a grounded theory in relation to my research aims.

CHAPTER 8

8.1 Introduction

Based on the findings from my case study school and my engagement with relevant literature, in this chapter I present and discuss my grounded theory on how a principal supports the well-being of teachers in a primary school in challenging conditions. I begin by presenting an amalgamated grounded theory by drawing together my substantive theories on how teachers understand teacher well-being; the factors that they identify as supporting and constraining their well-being; and the role of the principal in supporting the well-being of teachers.

I then briefly discuss this theory in relation to three models related to teacher well-being, namely Antonovsky's (1987) Sense of Coherence; Konu and Rimpelä's (2002) School Well-Being Model, and a Health Promoting Schools approach including the model proposed by Wyn et al., (2000). I conclude this chapter by raising a number of key issues related to the role and capacity of the school principal in promoting teacher well-being.

8.2 Presentation of a Grounded Theory

Teacher well-being is a dynamic, fluctuating and holistic state of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING in a teacher's personal and professional life, as a result of being part of a school community and system, and the SUPPORT it provides to enhance the physical, social and cultural environment and working conditions of teachers. There is an inter-dependent relationship between the aspects of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING in influencing teachers' personal and professional ability to cope with their job demands. LOVING is related to the support teachers receive through caring and supportive relationships. A teacher's subjective STATE OF BEING includes her/his state of mental, physical, emotional, social and spiritual health and well-being, and the ability to balance working life and home demands. HAVING includes both the material and non-material resources a teacher needs to enable effective teaching and learning. MEANING relates to the sense of purpose and satisfaction teachers gain from doing their job and being part of a school community with a vision and values that meet their own personal and professional values and aspirations. A teacher's well-being resources are enhanced through SUPPORT at a personal, professional and environmental level. The principal plays a key role in providing and sustaining SUPPORT to teachers in order to

enhance their job resources and balance and reduce their job demands. In schools in challenging conditions both personal and systemic factors have an influence on teacher well-being, however a greater number of factors at a systems level than at a personal level have a negative influence on teacher well-being.

In schools in challenging conditions where few strategies, policies and support systems have been put in place to support the teacher well-being, the principal has a key role to play by providing them with increased levels of SUPPORT. SUPPORT to teachers is required in order to reduce or ease their job demands and increase their job resources. Providing SUPPORT includes building the capacity for LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING at a personal, professional, school community and systemic level to increase job resources. SUPPORT to reduce job demands requires the principal to address the need for HAVING at a whole school and systems level. Teacher well-being is supported by a principal who models a number of key leadership styles and abilities and who focuses attention on the effective functioning of school structures and a caring and supportive school culture. Leadership styles and abilities that support teachers' well-being include a democratic and contingent leadership style and a respectful and caring personal manner; a focus on attending to the personal, professional and school wide and systems level needs of teachers; as well as the ability to show moral courage and take leadership. Key aspects of SUPPORT for **LOVING** include: enhancing, caring and supportive relationships among staff and within the broader school community; promoting opportunities for staff development and collegial learning; acknowledging staff achievements; and modelling respect, trust and empathy as well as moral courage. Key aspects of SUPPORT for **BEING** include: understanding teachers' personal circumstances and support needs; building linkages between the personal and professional goals and aspirations of teachers and organisational goals; putting in place strategies and policies to support workplace well-being. Key aspects of SUPPORT for **HAVING** include: addressing improvements in the environmental and working conditions of teachers; providing curriculum leadership and learning support to teachers to address a range of learner barriers to learning; as well as curricular change; addressing discipline and accountability; ensuring the provision of adequate teaching and learning resources; improving the physical environment; promoting fund-raising; building local and school community links and drawing in support services; ensuring the effective

functioning of the SMT, SGB and ILST; and addressing key issues with the DBE and other duty bearers. Key aspects of SUPPORT for **MEANING** include: inspiring teachers and the school community with the vision and purpose of excellence in educational achievement; promoting democratic values and the development of the school community; promoting opportunities for open and transparent communication and organisational learning; celebrating achievements and providing opportunities for teacher agency and distributed leadership. While teachers consider all four of these aspects of **LOVING**, **BEING**, **HAVING** and **MEANING** as important in supporting their well-being, in schools in challenging conditions where external support services are limited, teachers identify the aspects of **LOVING** and **BEING** as playing the biggest role in supporting their well-being. These two aspects build their capacity to access a level of **HAVING** and **MEANING**. At a systems level the aspects of **HAVING** has the greatest negative influence on their well-being thus requiring the principal to focus at this level.

In a primary school in challenging conditions. the need for the principal to take leadership in supporting teachers in addressing a range of barriers to learning is of central importance in addressing their ability to cope with their job demands in an environment with limited job resources. This requires attention to the above mentioned strategies to support teachers at a personal, school wide and systems level. Figure 8.1 below provides a schematic representation of my grounded theory model of the key dimensions of the principal's role in supporting the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions. The inter-relationship between these dimensions is elaborated upon.

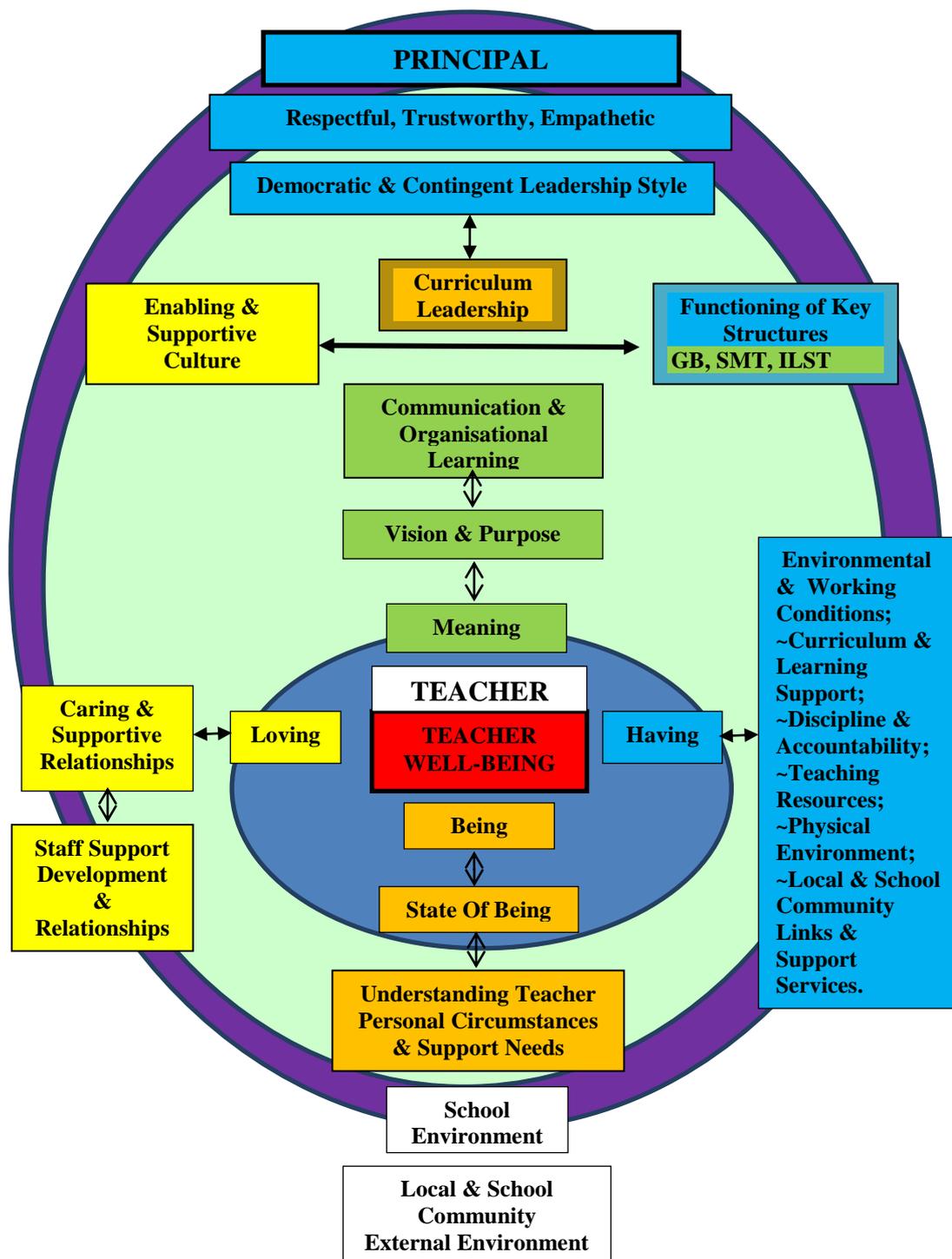


Figure 8.1: *A Grounded Theory Model of the Key Dimensions of the Principal's Role in Supporting the Well-Being of Teachers in a School in Challenging Conditions*

8.3 Discussion

Similar relationships between categories that I identified in my emerging theory have been endorsed in a number of other studies (Littleford, 2007; Salter-Jones, 2010 & 2012; Spratt et al., 2006). Research by these authors has shown the

relationship between the school leader's role in supporting teachers' professional development and improvements in the school environmental conditions and teacher well-being. The interrelationship between various aspects of leadership in influencing the well-being of teachers through both a skills-based and environmental approach is emphasised. A finding from my own study which was not strongly emphasised in either the leadership literature, or literature on psychological models of teacher well-being, was the need to support teachers adequately in addressing a range of barriers to teaching and learning. Although a number of studies have focused on the role of the principal in supporting teachers through instructional leadership and developing the capacity of the school to become a learning organisation, I did not come across studies that specifically emphasise a focus on the relationship between the instructional leadership role of the principal and the support to teachers to address barriers to learning. In my emerging theory I particularly emphasise the need for the principal to increase systems of internal and external support to teachers by focusing on the effective functioning of key structures in enabling cohesive staff relationships. I argue that a culture of caring and collaborative learning can be developed through the principal focusing on developing supportive structures and procedures.

8.4 Discussion in Relation to Three Models of Teacher Well-Being

Below I discuss my grounded theory in relation to three models related to health promotion, namely Antonovsky's (1987) Sense of Coherence; Konu and Rimpeläs (2002) School Well-Being Model, and a Health Promoting Schools approach in order to explore and ground my theory.

8.4.1 Antonovsky's (1987) salutogenic model of human health.

Aaron Antonovsky's (1996) paper, "The salutogenic model as a theory to guide health promotion", proposes that a Theory of a Sense of Coherence is useful for taking a salutogenic approach to health research. This model is based on his study of "strengths and weaknesses of promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative ideas and practices, it is a theory of the health of the complex system, the human being" (Antonovsky 1996, p. 13). This model is based upon the assumption of a health/disease continuum. He argues that a salutogenic orientation as a basis for health promotion has a focus on salutary factors or a focus on what enhances health. Based on an analysis of a number of general resistance resources Antonovsky developed a

construct referred to as a ‘Sense of Coherence’ (SOC). This is defined as “a generalized orientation towards the world which perceives it, on a continuum, as comprehensible, manageable and meaningful” (Antonovsky 1996, p. 15). The strength of one’s SOC he proposes is a “significant factor in facilitating the movement towards health” (Antonovsky 1996, p. 15). His research found that a strong SOC is based on life experiences which have built it and which the individual is able to apply to new situations. The following three types of life experiences are identified by Antonovsky as building a strong SOC, namely, “consistency, underload-overload balance and participation in socially valued decision making” (Antonovsky 1996, p. 15). According to Antonovsky (1996), a person’s SOC can be both individually and collectively built. I would argue that there are a number of areas of resonance between Antonovsky’s salutogenic model of health and my grounded theory. Firstly promoting teacher well-being by focusing on a positive asset, in contrast to teacher stress or demotivation, emphasises a focus on building and maintaining strength. It falls within a positive psychology paradigm which promotes and builds on positive assets and resilience. Secondly my theory advocates a whole school and systems approach to strengthening capacity for teacher well-being. This also resonates with aspects of Antonovsky's theory which focus on the human being within a dynamic context. My own study highlights a number of linkages between how a teacher's own sense of well-being is influence by the personal, professional and organisational dimensions of loving, being, having and meaning. The third aspect of Antonovsky’s model which resonates with my findings is a relationship between the three types of life experience he identifies as building a strong sense of coherence (namely: consistency, underload-overload balance and participation in socially valued decision making) and some of the key experiences teachers felt the school principal needed to enhance to promote their well-being, (namely: the functioning of key structures and procedures; helping teachers balance their job demands; participation in democratic decision making and school communities of practice).Fourthly the proposition by Antonovsky that a person’s SOC can be built individually, as well as collectively, resonates well with my categories of loving, being, having and meaning which have both personal and professional or collective dimensions. The aspects Antonovsky identifies as building a person’s strengths through manageability, comprehensibility and meaningfulness, also resonate well with the categories of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and

MEANING teachers identified as enhancing their well-being. Comparing my finding with Antonovsky's salutogenic model helps to substantiate my theory for increased SUPPORT at an individual, school and systemic level to enhance the capacity for teacher well-being. It also reinforces the holistic and eco-systemic focus I make of the principal's role in enhancing the conditions in the school to help teachers manage their workload and find meaning and purpose individually and collectively in their work. While it is not within the scope of this thesis to do an in-depth comparison of Antonovsky's salutogenic model and my grounded theory, it would be an interesting area to research more deeply. It would also be of interest to see how Antonovsky's model, which has been developed through a number of large scale empirical tests, would shed light on understanding how school leaders and the broader educational system can enhance teacher well-being.

8.4.2 School well-being model by Konu and Rimpelä (2002). In my grounded theory on how the principal supports teacher well-being, I found that the categories which I had related to a personal, professional and whole school sense of well-being, corresponded well with those in the School Well-Being Model (Konu & Rimpelä, 2002). Their model, which focuses on the dimensions of learner well-being, and adapted a model of well-being from the work of Allard (1989) to a school setting. While their conceptual model focuses on the well-being needs of learners, it also holds significance for understanding the dimensions of teacher well-being.

Table 8.1 below gives a brief summary of the similarities and differences in the models developed by Konu and Rimpelä, Allard and myself.

Table 8.1: Summary of Similarities and Differences in Three Well-Being Conceptual Models.

Allard (1989) ²⁹	Konu & Rimpelä (2002)	Collett (2013) * ³⁰
<p>Having - school conditions & health Loving - social relationships Being - means of self-fulfilment</p>	<p>Having – school conditions Loving – social relationships Being – means of self-fulfilment Health – health status.</p>	<p>Loving – relationships of care and support Being – subjective/personal dimensions of well-being (including health) Having – school and environmental conditions & school community conditions. Meaning – individual & school values/aspirations/vision.</p>

A common element of all three models is that they use similar broad categories of loving, being and having. They identify both material and non-material needs for well-being or objective and subjective indicators of well-being. There is an acknowledgement of the interrelationship between a personal state well-being and the influence of the broader system. Where we differ is in our categorisation of the aspect of health, and in my addition of the category of meaning. Allard includes health under having, while Konu and Rimpelä place health as a category on its own. I have placed health under a sense of being. Where I differ from both Allard and Konu and Rimpelä is in my category of meaning. This category includes personal levels of meaning as well as meaning that is generated through inter-personal school wide processes of teaching and learning. While all three models show the interconnectedness of all of these dimensions of well-being, my own grounded theory model shows how the aspects of loving and being are key in enabling teachers to leverage having and meaning. In addition it highlights the need for the principal to pay particular attention to supporting both the material and non-materials needs of teachers, through a focus on aspects of loving and being and having at school and systems level.

8.4.3 A relationship between a Health Promoting Schools focus and my proposed theory. My theory advocates for a whole school and systemic response to support the well-being of teachers. It is also premised on the notion of

²⁹ Allard (1989 cited in Konu & Rimpelä (2002, p. 82).

³⁰ This reference is to own citing of the findings in this thesis.

supporting the building of positive assets and promoting well-being, as well as addressing the personal, professional and school community determinants of health. These assumptions resonate well with the elements of a holistic and eco-systemic approach to building capacity for health and well-being which is found in a number of interventions that have supported the development of schools as Health Promoting Schools (HPS). A study by Lemerle (2005) found that the mental health and well-being of teachers in schools that adopted a HPS approach were enhanced. Within a HPS focus the key elements of capacity building address both skills and improvements in the environmental conditions. This relates to building both material and non-material capacity and resources through strengthening skills, policy, environment, community, and services (SPECSS). Within a South African school based HPS intervention (Struthers, Rooth, Collett, Lawrence, Moolla, Sonn, & Wegner, 2012) the aspect of self-care is highlighted. This SPECSS approach resonates well with my own emphasis on building the well-being of teachers through SUPPORT for LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING. Although the aspect of policy was not highlighted by teachers in my study as positively influencing their well-being, this aspect is critical in helping mandate the development of a supportive environment for teachers. It also highlights the need to develop school based policy and guidelines for practice that support teacher well-being. The findings of my study resonance with the HPS model proposed by Wyn, et al., (2000) in a number of areas, , namely the need to address well-being through: a whole school and environmental approach; an acknowledgement of the inter-dependence of the well-being relationships between learners, teachers and learner home environments; a focus on curriculum, organisational ethos and environment, and the need for drawing in partnerships and services. A strong area of coherence between the model proposed by Wyn et al., (2000) and my own findings is the emphasis on the need to also address the support needs of teachers. My study however highlights areas of teacher well-being at a curricular, whole school, systems and personal level that need to be addressed. It therefore adds to a focus on teacher well-being within a Health Promoting Schools approach. Generally within the international and national literature on HPS very little attention has been paid to supporting the well-being needs of teachers. My study contributes to strengthening research in this area.

8.5 Argument for a Holistic and Systemic Approach to Supporting Teacher Well-Being

What is common to the above models of well-being is the notion of the state of well-being as being dynamic and fluctuating. A personal state of well-being is dynamically related to external conditions. What also becomes clear is that there are different understandings of teacher well-being based on the approach researchers have taken in understanding the nature of well-being. My own emerging theory holds most synergy with those approaches to understanding teacher well-being by Allardt (1976); Day et al., (2007), Jackson et al., (2006); Konu and Rimpelä (2002); Salter (2010) and Salter-Jones (2012) and a Health Promoting Schools approach. These approaches all take into account factors at a personal, professional and contextual level within the job milieu of teachers that influence a sense of teacher well-being. They also look to addressing the social and systemic issues that influence teacher well-being, thus emphasising a need to address the social and physical determinants of health and well-being systemically. Both an environmental and skills based approach to building resilience and well-being was found by McGrath (2000) to support learner resilience in a study of Australian schools involved in the 'bounce back' programme. The common elements in my own grounded theory, as well as the grounded theory research on the role of school leaders in supporting teacher well-being by Littleford (2007) in American primary schools and Salter (2010) in a sample of English secondary schools, shows the need for a holistic, whole school and systems approach to promoting teacher well-being, the key role of the principal in helping to build staff cohesion, support and an ethos of care and compassion, as well as the need for differentiated context specific approaches to supporting teacher well-being.

8.6 Supporting the Principal and School to Enhance Teacher Well-Being

My theory proposes that a great deal of responsibility rests on the shoulders of the school principal to support the well-being needs of teachers. While this is indeed the case in many schools, such as my case study school, where external support services are limited, levels of school community cohesion and the funding base is low, I do not advocate that the principal can manage this on his/her own. Clearly the energy and activation of the broader school community needs to be engaged through a process of distributed leadership. However I also argue that the

principal needs to advocate and lobby for a greater level of support and funding from the DBE and broader social support system.³¹ The well-being needs of the principal can only be compromised by shouldering most of the responsibility for supporting the well-being needs of teachers. The findings of this study highlight the need for educational support services to play a greater role in providing psychological and organisational support to teachers and schools in challenging conditions. The current implementation of the Integrated School Health Policy (2011) and the endorsement of the framework for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (2011) by the National Department of Education will require a greater level of support to schools, in order for teachers and principals to implement these policies. Although the intentions of these policies are noble they may severely impact on the job demands and well-being of teachers if additional staffing, support and resources are not given to schools and particularly schools in challenging conditions. In order to assist the principal to provide a greater level of support to teachers and learners, I would argue for the funding and resource base of schools serving a predominantly working class community to be increased. The current review of the norms and standards for public schools may help to facilitate this. This would enable principals to buy in and access additional support for their staff. Increasing district level support to schools by the DBE may serve to lighten the load the principal carries. However this is currently constrained by a number of factors at a systemic level. My research highlighted a number of systemic constraints such as inequalities in quintile ratings of schools; poor systems of community and district level support; inadequate functioning of school district based support teams to schools as well as high levels of poverty and unemployment. At the systemic level of support closest to the school a factor which may limit increased psychological support to teachers to address some of their well-being needs is related to how school psychologists define the nature of their work in supporting schools. Within the South African context, Moolla (2011) argues for educational psychologists to play a greater role in supporting schools through engaging in a whole school community based approach to supporting the health and well-being. My theory helps to highlight some of the social and environmental conditions in the school and community that the principal and district support team

³¹ The current review by the DBE of the norms and standards for schools holds the promise of more equitable resourcing and support to schools. The action by organisations such as Equal Education who challenge the DOB and who argue for binding minimum norms and standards holds the promise for better levels of basic infrastructure to schools (Govender, 2013, June 23). *Sunday Times*, p. 6.

and broader support services could help primary schools address in order to promote the mental health and well-being of teachers. While I advocate strongly for the promotion for increased systems of teacher support to enable their well-being, I am also cautious and concerned about the ability of principals to be able to support teachers if their well-being is not supported. Principals need to look after their own well-being and receive increased support from the DBE to address the enormous responsibilities for both developing their schools and school communities and delivering on the promise of improved level of education for all learners. In South Africa very little is currently done by the DBE through policy or support programmes to support and acknowledge the well-being needs of teachers nationally. My study has highlighted a need to strengthen capacity for the well-being of teachers at a school and systems level, and has proposed a theory on how school principals in primary schools in challenging conditions could support the well-being of teachers. However I argue that the responsibility for providing support and resources to enable teacher well-being needs to be engaged with critically. Here we can learn lessons from countries like Australia where the notion of promoting teacher well-being has been strongly connected with a drive by educational authorities to promote school effectiveness and learner achievement. The findings by Dworkin (2001) in the United Kingdom, have shown a relationship between teacher burn out and school reform. Similarly within the realities of the Australian context, Peter Kelly and Derek Colquhoun (2003) highlight the need for teachers and school leaders to engage with the notion of teacher well-being critically in relation to increased responsibilities by schools and school leaders through school based management to deliver on promises of improving the quality of education. They argue that:

in a policy context that devolves various responsibilities to self-managing schools, the government of the stressed self emerges as an ethical concern for teachers and those who manage them Our purpose is to problematise these processes so that responsibilities for delivering on the promise of effective schools might be differently framed and debated (Kelly & Colquhoun, 2003, p. 191).

8.7 Conclusion

Chapter eight has presented a consolidated grounded theory on teacher perceptions of how a principal in a primary school in challenging conditions supports teacher well-being. This theory was briefly discussed in relation to three models of well-being, namely Antonovsky's (1987) Sense of Coherence model, Konu and

Rimpela's (2002) Model of School Well-Being and a Health Promoting Schools model. It concluded with raising some key concerns related to the role of the principal in supporting the well-being needs of teachers. Based on the findings of this study, chapter nine presents a summary and conclusion of this thesis and makes a number of recommendations.

CHAPTER 9

Summary of Insights, Limitations, and Contribution of this Study

9.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the key insights, limitations and contribution of this study. Based on the findings of my thesis, I conclude by making a number of recommendations for further research, as well as suggesting where capacity building related to teacher well-being interventions could be strengthened.

9.2 Revisiting the Research Questions

The aim of my research study was to develop a grounded theory in order to explore and inform the way primary school teachers working in a school in “challenging conditions” experienced the role of their principal in supporting their well-being. In order to achieve this my specific research questions were:-

- How do teachers understand the concept teacher well-being?
- What factors do teachers identify as supporting their well-being in a school in challenging conditions?
- What factors do teachers identify as constraining their well-being in a school in challenging conditions?
- How do teachers experience the principal as supporting their well-being?

Using the steps of the constant comparative method, I gathered data related to these four key research questions in order to develop a grounded theory. My study was conducted through interviewing eighteen teachers and a school principal in one urban public primary school in Cape Town, South Africa.

9.3 Review of Chapters

Chapter one introduced the study. Here I set out my rationale and aims and briefly contextualised the need for a research study of this nature at a national and international level.

Chapters two and three described my research methodology and design. I explained the theoretical paradigm that informs my research, the steps in a grounded theory research methodology and my process of data collection and analysis.

Chapter four provided a description of my case study school. This chapter provided a picture of the school's physical location and size, as well as a brief history and background to the development of the school and its current school community. This chapter highlighted the challenging conditions under which teachers in this school work.

Chapter five presented an analysis of my data in relation to teacher perceptions of the concept of well-being. An emerging theory was presented and discussed in relation to relevant literature in the field of teacher well-being and resilience. The chapter concluded with the presentation of a substantive theory on how teachers in this school understood the concept of teacher well-being.

Chapter six presented and analysed the data relating to key factors teachers identified as supporting and constraining their well-being and an emerging theory on factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers was presented. My emerging theory was reviewed in relation to the literature and a substantive theory on factors supporting and constraining the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions was presented.

Chapter seven focused more specifically on the role of the principal. It presented my analysis of the data and emerging theory related to teacher perceptions of how the principal supports their well-being. Once again an emerging theory was presented and engaged with in relation to the literature on school leadership and school improvement. At the end of the chapter a substantive theory related to the role of the principal in supporting teacher well-being was presented.

In chapter eight I presented a grounded theory of the role of the school principal in supporting the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions. This theory was an amalgamation of the substantive theories from three key data sets presented in chapters five, six and seven. In order to further substantiate the relationships between the core and sub-categories in my grounded theory, I compared it to three models of well-being, namely Antonvosky's (1989) Sense of Coherence, Konu and Rimpelä's (2002) School Well-Being Model and a Health Promoting Schools Model (Wyn et al., 2000). This chapter concluded by raising a number of issues related to the role of the principal in supporting the well-being of teachers within the South African context.

In chapter nine, I present a conclusion to this study by reviewing research aims and describing an overview of the research process presented in each of the

chapters. Here I review my findings and reflect on the contribution this study makes to the field of leadership in schools and the mental health and well-being of teachers. It concludes with recommendations for further research and improvements in practice and my own reflections on how this study has influenced my own development practice.

9.4 Summary of Key Findings

The key findings are summarised under each of my key research questions and then in relation to an amalgamated grounded theory.

9.4.1 Teachers understanding of the concept teacher well-being.

This study found that teachers in this school understood the concept teacher well-being as having a number of dimensions. A sense of well-being was understood as a dynamic, fluctuating and holistic state, relating to the personal, professional and environmental influences on the working lives of teachers. In order of significance of responses, teacher well-being is related to:

- Caring and Supportive Relationships;
- A State of Being;
- Environmental and Working Conditions;
- Meaning.

These dimensions are related to a teacher's sense of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING. The state of mental and physical health of teachers includes a sense of BEING. Teachers have more control at a personal level to enhance SUPPORT for the aspects of LOVING and BEING, however they require a greater level of SUPPORT from the principal in enhancing a collegial and school community level of LOVING, as well as improving conditions for HAVING and MEANING.

Based on the findings of this study I define teacher well-being as: a dynamic, fluctuating and holistic state of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING in a teacher's personal and professional life, as a result of being part of a school community and systemic context and the SUPPORT it provides, in order to enhance the physical, social and cultural environment and working conditions of teachers.

9.4.2 Factors teachers identified as supporting their well-being in a school in challenging conditions. Key factors supporting the well-being of

teachers in a school in challenging conditions are personal, professional and systemic in nature.

Personal factors include having a positive attitude, making an effort to maintain good collegial relationships, focusing on what matters at the classroom level, drawing in the support of a spouse, family or friends; keeping a balance between work and home life demands; doing exercise and getting involved in sport; taking agency around improving teaching and learning conditions in the classroom and studying further.

Professional level factors enhancing teacher well-being include professional and personal support from the principal; support from colleagues and HoDs; acknowledgement by the school principal and colleagues; staff morning prayer and inspirational meetings; having the necessary resources and conditions to teach effectively; working in a safe and supportive school environment; having a school vision and curriculum that is inspiring; opportunities for professional development; support to address learner barriers to learning; positive relationships and interactions with learners; learners doing their homework; motivated learners; the meaning that teachers derive from developing learner potential and seeing them achieve success and supportive relationships with parents/guardians.

At a school community and systems level the well-being of teachers is supported through support for learners' homework and learning from parents/guardians; some parents providing classroom and relief assistance; provision of external support services to address learning and caring support needs of learners; the principal limiting teacher responsibilities for fund-raising; support with fund-raising from parents/guardians and the local community; and sharing ideas with colleagues from other schools.

9.4.3 Factors teachers identified as constraining their well-being in a school in challenging conditions. Key factors constraining the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions can be divided into personal, professional and systemic factors. At a systemic level factors within the school and broader school community as well as the wider system influence teacher well-being. In a school in challenging conditions the negative influence of conditions in the school and broader system have a greater level of influence on teacher well-being than teachers' own personal or professional resources.

At a personal level factors that have a negative influence on the well-being of teachers include: stress; poor physical and mental health; lack of ability to balance work and home life demands; and increased family demands or crises. Female teachers indicate a higher level of stress related to responsibility for increased family demands.

School level factors which negatively affect the well-being of teachers are poor levels of collegiality at a whole school level; staff conflict; learner behaviour; learners not doing their homework; poor leadership and management through the poor functioning of the SMT and SGB; limited curricular support; limited resources and capacity to address a range of learning, language and bio-psycho-social support needs; limited distributed and democratic leadership; limited opportunities for promotion; limited ability of the principal to hold staff accountable; inconsistent and insufficient communication; limited opportunities for collegial support and learning; little formal support for the well-being of teachers; limited teaching and learning resources and poor school environmental conditions; administrative overload; limited curricular and learning support from the DBE; limited and unreliable systems of communication between the school and home environment of learners and within the school; limited contact hours with learners after the basic school hours; limited parental/guardian support; and poor safety and security.

School related factors which increase job demands and negatively affect the well-being of teachers are large classes with teacher pupil ratios of 1:40 or more, large numbers of learners requiring learning and bio-psycho-social support; language barriers; unfair distribution of workload; limited support staff to address language barriers in both the foundation and intermediate phases; poor learner discipline; learner absenteeism requiring work to be repeated; poor learner transport facilities limiting teacher contact time; limited funding base of the school to buy in additional teaching support or resources, and a geographically dispersed school community requiring more effort by teachers and the school to make contact with learner home environments.

At a school community level teachers experience a limited level of support to enhance their job resources from the parents/guardians and/or local community and support services. Poor-socio-economic conditions of many learner families; single-parent or guardian headed households; limited funding and resources provided by the parent/guardian community to the school; poor communication channels between the

home and school; increased levels of bio-psycho-social support needed for learners due to home related trauma; limited educational levels of some parents/guardians limited the level of homework support learners receive; language barriers between parents/guardians and teachers; limited support services from the DBE and limited availability of support services to address teacher and learner support needs. At a local community level the vandalism and theft of school property as well as threats to teacher and learner safety limited teacher well-being.

At a broader systems level teacher well-being is negatively affected by increased pressure from the DBE for learners to achieve higher performance standards; constant curriculum innovation and policy change; teachers having to attend retraining workshops that do not fully capacitate them to implement new curricular demands; limited teacher union support and limited levels of on-site teacher support from the DBE.

9.4.4 How teachers experience the principal as supporting their well-being? The primary way teachers experience the principal as supporting their well-being in a school in challenging conditions is through whole school management support; a democratic leadership style and approachable and respectful manner; and providing both personal and professional support. Whole school management support includes a specific focus by the principal on curriculum leadership, with an emphasis on supporting teachers address a range of barriers to learning; addressing issues with the DBE; raising additional funds and building supportive links with the broader school community.

9.4.5 Grounded theory. In schools in challenging conditions the principal supports the well-being of teachers by acknowledging that both the personal and professional support needs of teachers need to be addressed as part of sustaining and promoting the capacity of the school to provide effective teaching and learning and its ability to address the care and support needs of learners. How the principal takes leadership and provides SUPPORT to teachers is contingent on the fluctuating contextual needs of the broader school community and the principal's understanding of teachers' personal and professional needs. Teacher well-being is enhanced through SUPPORT at a personal, professional and systems level. In a school in challenging conditions the school and system level factors place a greater stress on the job demands of teacher as well as reduce the level of job resources they have to support

their well-being. The principal plays a key role in providing and sustaining SUPPORT to teachers, in order to enhance their job resources and balance and reduce their job demands by focusing on addressing both system and personal level factors. Increasing teachers sense of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING through a focus on increasing SUPPORT promotes teacher well-being. A whole school and holistic approach to enhancing systems of SUPPORT for the well-being of teachers at a school, and school community level, is thus required to address both environmental and contextual conditions and the personal capacity of teachers.

SUPPORT from the principal to enhance a teacher's sense of LOVING includes; strengthening caring and supportive relationships through staff development; establishing personal and professional learning opportunities, acknowledging and celebrating staff achievements; building staff cohesion and managing conflict and providing teachers with a personal level of support and enhancing caring and supportive relationships in the school community.

SUPPORT from the principal to enhance a teacher's sense of BEING includes providing personal support and empathy, and assisting teachers to balance work-life and home demands, as well as to address self-care needs.

SUPPORT from the principal to enhance a teacher's sense of HAVING requires a focus on improving their working and environmental conditions by placing an emphasis on curriculum leadership and support, discipline and accountability, accessing teaching resources; improving the physical environment; fund-raising, drawing in local and community support and services; strengthening relationships between learners, parents/guardians and teachers and challenging the education department to provide adequate support and resources.

Support from the principal to enhance teachers' sense of MEANING include connecting them to the broader vision and mission of the school; building teacher motivation and competence through linking individual and organisational goals; providing opportunities for teachers and learners to succeed and be acknowledged; and keeping teachers informed about developments in the school and broader educational field; providing opportunities for teacher agency and leadership. SUPPORTING teachers to succeed as good teachers and to adequately address the learning, and bio-psycho-social support needs of learners in their care enhances their sense of meaning as does building social cohesion around the common professional

goals and values for teachers, schools, parents/guardians, learners and the education department.

The four states of SUPPORT through enhancing LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING are inter-connected and influence each other in a dynamic way in relation to the personal and professional lives of teachers within specific school community contexts. In a school in challenging conditions, an emphasis by the principal on promoting teacher well-being through strengthening the aspects of LOVING and BEING are key in promoting social cohesion and agency to access a greater level of material and non-material HAVING and MEANING. This requires a focus by the principal and the school management team on both the personal and systemic factors that need to be addressed. In a school in challenging condition this requires a principal to lead with a courageous and compassionate heart; model the values and actions of LOVING, BEING, HAVING and MEANING, and empower others to do likewise.

9.5 The Contribution of this Study

I have chosen to reflect upon the quality of my research contribution both at the level of the research process as well as its product. I use the four criteria used by Guba and Lincoln (2002, p. 206) to review case study reports, namely: Resonance, Rhetoric, Empowerment and Applicability. I conclude with a summary of the limitations of this study and provide a short reflection on the way in which this study has contributed towards my own development.

9.5.1 Resonance. According to Guba and Lincoln, the criteria of resonance “is the degree of overlap, or reinforcement between the case study report as written and the basic belief system undergirding the alternative paradigm which the inquirer has chosen to follow” (2002, p. 207). Here they contend that “the final product of the inquiry will be composed with the emergent paradigm’s world view in mind” (Ibid, 2000, p. 204). I would argue that in both the product and the process of inquiry of my research I have sought to remain true to a constructivist paradigm. I have tried to make explicit my own ontological and epistemological values and beliefs and showed how they have shaped my research questions and influenced my analysis of the data.

I have acknowledged my own subjectivity within the research process and highlighted how I have tried to mitigate against my own bias. I have also set out the ethical considerations informing my study. In the presentation of findings and the development of a grounded theory I have tried to show the multiple voices and realities of the research participants. I have also shown in as much detail as possible the steps and stages I took in the process of data analysis and theorizing. I have presented numerous summaries of the tabulation of results and shown the steps in my abstraction of concepts using the constant comparative method.

In presenting my findings and in making recommendations I have been cautious in making broad generalizations. I have tried to illustrate the steps in my process of developing, substantiating and grounding my theoretical propositions. In the writing of this thesis and the development of my grounded theory I have tried to show what Guba and Lincoln call “conscious reflexivity” or the ability to reflect “intensely personal processes on the part of the researcher” (2002, p. 207).

9.5.2 Rhetoric. This review criteria, according to Guba and Lincoln (2002), relates to the “form, structure and presentational characteristic of the case study” (p. 207). In my writing and crafting of this thesis report I have tried to ensure a logical flow in the description and presentation of my work. In the structuring of individual chapters and in the way I made links with successive chapter I attempted to build an internal coherence in the development of my thesis. This thesis report has sought to “rhetorically exemplify” (Guba & Lincoln 2002, p. 204) my own interpersonal involvement in this study, and the steps I took toward the development of a substantiated grounded theory.

9.5.3 Empowerment. According to Guba and Lincoln (2002) the criteria of empowerment relates to the extent the report is able to empower and stimulate the reader to action:

the ability of the case study to evoke and facilitate action on the part of the readers. Such criteria include fairness, educativeness, and actionability...or the power of such an inquiry to enable those whom it affects directly or indirectly to take action on their circumstances (p. 211).

I hope that my own commitment and enthusiasm around this area of research has been conveyed through the presentation of this thesis. I make no claims as to the extent these findings, or this thesis report, may empower others to take action.

However I do hope that my findings support improvements in practice within my case study school. Furthermore I hope that these findings and insights resonate with the experiences of other teachers, school leaders and researchers and prompt them to strengthen their call for increased systems of teacher support.

9.5.4 Applicability. The criteria of applicability is described by Guba and Lincoln as “the extent to which the case study facilitates the drawing of inferences by the reader that may have applicability in his or her own situation” (2002, p. 211). Guba and Lincoln (2002) recommend three ways in which transferability of findings may be useful. Namely: A case may provide a sense of vicarious, “*déjà vu*” experience; it may be used as a metaphor or in a metaphoric sense where the case provides a context for comparison and learning; and thirdly a case can be used for “re-examining and reconstructing one’s own construction of a given phenomenon” (p. 212).

Using the criteria of applicability highlighted by Guba and Lincoln (2002) I would argue that the findings from my study have applicability in other school contexts, where they can provide a basis for comparison and learning. In the development of my substantive grounded theory, I have shown how some of the findings from this case study school are related to findings by other researchers on some of the factors that support or constrain the well-being of teachers and the role of school leadership (Littleford, 2007, Salter, 2010; Spratt et al., 2006a & 2006b; Tsvara, 2013) in other school contexts.

As a grounded theory it provides an abstracted conceptual framework which enables broader applicability. As Glaser asserts that, “The product, a GT, will be an abstraction from time, place and people” (2012, p. 28). The purpose of developing a grounded theory is to inform an improvement in practice. I anticipate that the grounded theory I have developed through this study holds applicability in other working class primary school contexts and may also hold lessons for improved practice in other school contexts.

I believe the findings of my study and the grounded theory I propose make a meaningful contribution to informing research and practice in the area of school leadership and the mental health promotion of teachers. They have also made a contribution to my own personal and professional development. The contribution of this research is described below.

In particular within the South African context the findings of this study shed light on the workplace conditions and job demands affecting teachers serving predominantly working class and historically disadvantaged school communities. Its unique contribution here is the development of a theory based on understanding the inter-relationships between teacher perceptions of well-being; the factors supporting and constraining their well-being and the leadership role of the principal.

At the level of contributing to research this study adds to the growing tradition of grounded theory studies as well as adds to a small pool of studies that look at the relationship between the role of the school principal and the promotion of teacher well-being.

It adds to the research on the role of leadership in schools and the mental health promotion of teachers by proposing a theory that can inform improved practice by school leaders. A review of the literature in this area has shown that well-being and resilience of teachers is under-theorized in the literature on school leadership and in health promotion in schools. School leadership theory both nationally and internationally has a limited focus on the role of leadership in creating a holding context within which care, support and organisational health and well-being is modelled. These findings contribute to current conceptual work on the role of leadership in care and support; resiliency research; and research into mental health promotion and school health promotion.

An unexpected finding for me was the emphasis that needs to be placed on building teacher well-being through a focus on enhancing caring supportive relationships within the school community and supporting teachers to cope personally, while at the same time creating the rituals and structures within the daily life of the school to enable this culture. This highlights the importance of the role of school leaders in building social cohesion and developing collegial communities of practice, as well as ensuring that key structures are functioning to promote this agency.

The findings of this study also re-emphasise the need for a holistic and whole school development approach to supporting the well-being needs of teachers. It has also highlighted the limited focus of research within a health promoting schools approach on the well-being needs of teachers. It thus contributes to the growing body of theory in the areas of school leadership and management, mental health, and the development of Health Promoting Schools.

This study helps to shed light on understanding more deeply how teachers and schools as organisations are trying to cope with the escalation of functions of holding both a health and educative focus. This grounded theory may assist in informing improvements in practice and support advocacy within schools and the educational system around teacher well-being and improved systems of support.

At a policy level the findings from this study, could help to inform policy debates focused on enhancing systems of care and support to teachers who work in challenging school contexts. The findings could inform the strengthening of policy focused on health promotion, teacher support and curricular reform in schools. The provide a reference point to review the current Integrated Schools Health Policy (DoH, 2011) and CSTL (DoE & MIET, 2011) framework, in order to include a greater level of provisioning of support to teachers through personal and whole school interventions.

At the level of improving practice this study highlights the needs to enhance teacher support in order to enable them to cope with the range of bio-psycho-social and educational needs they face. My grounded theory shows the multiple levels of teacher support needed at a personal, organisational and systems level. It sheds light on why programmes focused only on personal self-awareness and wellness related interventions may only have limited effect in addressing teacher well-being.

These findings also identify the need for providing principals with greater support. They show area where increased support needs to be provided, namely: the need for a focus within the instructional/curriculum leadership role of school principals on supporting teachers to address a range of barriers to learning; a focus on the functioning of key structures to enable teacher agency and distributed leadership and attention to the personal, school and systemic factors that influence teacher well-being.

These findings also highlight the need to enhance levels of psychological and whole school development support for teachers and school principals at a systems wide level. The also highlight the need strengthened school level policy and practices to support well-being in the workplace.

This study reinforces findings by other research of the need to focus on both the personal and professional dimension of teachers' lives, thus emphasising the need for both a skills based and environmental approach to supporting capacity for teacher well-being.

The findings of this study could inform the professional development programmes for teacher and school leaders. The grounded theory (model) I have developed could be used as an analytical framework to support reflection and engagement by teachers and leadership on how to strengthen systems of support to teachers and learners in schools from a whole school perspective. This could complement existing whole school evaluation processes by adding to the dimension of teacher support and development from a well-being perspective.

This research could inform training programmes for school leaders and teachers, such as the National Advanced Certificate in School Leadership³². I would argue that the findings are important for teacher development programmes, where novice teachers can be supported to understand the different contextual realities of schools and how they need to access support to enhance their own well-being.

These findings could compliment the implementation of the recently endorsed framework for Care and Support of Teaching and Learning by the Department of Basic Education (DBE & MIET Africa, 2011) and the Integrated School Health Policy (DoH, 2011). My findings provide insight into factors that both strengthen and weaken the capacity of teachers, as well as a theory on how school leaders (and external support providers) could assist in strengthening the capacity and well-being of schools as a whole and teachers in particular.

My hope is that this research may add to the development of health and educational programmes which promote positive and preventative interventions.

9.5.6 Limitations of this Study. The findings of my study and the development of a grounded theory are based on my research in a single case study school. In chapter 2 I highlighted the limitations of single case study research in making claims for applicability in other contexts. The findings of this study focus specifically on the experiences and perceptions of teachers within a public primary school in a working class urban area. While a number of similarities have been found between my findings and those undertaken by other researchers in schools in other countries, I acknowledge that these findings are location specific and may not be applicable to other contexts.

³² Currently the DBE support the development of leadership qualification of school principals through a two year part-time advance certificate programme in school leadership and management.

One of the areas that I was not able to address in greater depth in my study was the impact of HIV and AIDs on teachers. This was partly as a result of teachers being reluctant to speak about this aspect, as well as the limitation of my own capacity in terms of the broad range of well-being issues I was engaged in exploring.

The levels of theoretical saturation I reached in the development of my grounded theory are subject to reinterpretation based on findings in other contexts or the analytical skills of another researcher. However this holds the potential for further research to reinforce, reshape or extend this theory.

My research had the intention of developing a theory that highlights and provides an explanation of how a principal supports the well-being of teachers in a school in challenging conditions. As such it serves to inform practice rather than to make claims about predicting reality or trying to make general claims.

9.6 Recommendations for further study

This study has highlighted the need to expand research into the area of teacher well-being, as well as proposed by a theory on how principals can facilitate increased systems of teacher support. This is particularly important within the context of increased pressure on schools for teachers to take on a greater support role to learners. Based on the findings of this study I would recommend further research is done in order to:-

- Explore how the dimensions of Loving, Being, Having and Meaning relate to teacher perceptions of well-being in other school contexts.
- Understand and compare factors that support the well-being of teachers in a range of primary and high schools.
- Explore the perceptions of principals on how they support well-being of teachers in a range of school contexts.
- Investigate school level personal and organisational strategies and programmes promoting teacher well-being.
- Identify how teacher development programmes and training programmes build the capacity for teacher well-being in higher education institutions.
- Explore how instructional/curriculum leadership practices by principals and school management team members support the well-being of teachers by assisting teachers to address a range of learning barriers.

- Research the relationship between personal and professional social relationships within schools and the promotion of teacher well-being.
- Research the functioning of ILSTs, in supporting the educational and bio-psycho-social support needs of teachers.

9.7 Concluding Remarks

My research journey has influenced my own experience and understanding of well-being at a personal and professional level. I am filled with a renewed level of admiration and respect for the challenging task that school teachers and principals have in supporting and developing learners and in nurturing the development of a nation. I have a deeper understanding of the complexity of the notion of well-being within the challenges of our personal and professional lives as South Africans.

This study has helped to reinforce my commitment to promoting the well-being of teachers and school leaders, in order to support an improvement in the quality of our schools as caring, supportive environments where excellence in education can be achieved.

My own practice as a school development practitioner has been enhanced through both the findings and process of conducting this grounded theory research. Firstly as a novice grounded theory research I have gained confidence and a level of expertise in using this approach to research. I realise in hindsight how well it compliments my own professional orientation towards action research and working inductively. I also realise how my own concerns about accuracy in data analysis were indicative of my own lack of expertise as a grounded theory researcher. I look forward to developing and sharing my expertise in this area with others.

Secondly at a professional level my initial hunches about the key role the principal needs to perform in supporting teachers both personally and professionally in order to enhance their well-being have been confirmed. I have a deeper insight into the range of factors influencing teacher well-being in schools in challenging conditions and the need for increased systems of external and school level support to assist teachers with their workload demands related to the bio-psycho-social and educational needs of learners.

At a personal level this thesis journey has reinforced my own sense of the multiple dimensions of well-being and the inter-relationship between the personal, professional and systemic factors that hold it in balance. I have experience first-hand

the importance of learning to look after my personal well-being; needing to draw in the support of others in order to help me to cope with the demands of my personal and professional life and holding onto the aspects of LOVING and BEING in order to access HAVING and MEANING.

In my personal and professional life it has made me more self-reflective about my own role as a leader. It has highlighted my need to: take more leadership in holding my own well-being needs so that I can support the well-being needs of others; place greater attention on building inter-personal relationships within the workplace and home; acknowledge and support both the personal and professional aspects of people's lives and make time for meaningful engagement and learning.

At a professional level my own sense of well-being has been enhanced through the process of the research journey, as well as the prospect of achieving a Ph.D. In future I hope to pursue this field of study and make a meaningful contribution to the literature in this field, with the intention of improving the lives of teachers at the chalk-face.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Research Permission from the Western Cape Education Department

Ms Karen Collett

Faculty of Education
University of the Western Cape
Private Bag X17
BELLVILLE
7535

Dear Ms K. Collett

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM IN SUPPORTING TEACHER RESILLENCE IN SPECIAL YOUTH CARE AND EDUCATION CENTRES

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 **19th January 2009 to 30th September 2011**.
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 R. Cornelissen 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: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 06th October 2008

Appendix B: Information Sheet and Consent Form

INFORMATION SHEET

PROJECT TITLE: **The role of the school principal in supporting teacher well-being: Learning from a South African public school in challenging conditions**

RESEARCHER: **Ms Karen Collett, University of the Western Cape**

I am a student in the Education Faculty at the University of the Western Cape. I am currently studying for a doctoral degree in the area of educational leadership. I would like to request your permission to undertake the research project described below. The information below provides an outline of the purpose of the study, the research requirements from participants, the ethical guidelines within which the research will be conducted, as well as consent for participation in the research. You may refuse to sign this form and not participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to provide a reason for your withdrawal. If you do withdraw from this study, it will not affect your relationship with the University of the Western Cape or with me as the researcher.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research is an enquiry into school leadership factors which support teacher well-being. The research aims to understand the role of the school principal in supporting teacher well-being in a working class urban primary school. This study is framed with broader body of resiliency research which focuses on "...the strengths or assets that exist within individuals, communities, schools and families." (Rink & Tricker, 2005, p. 40). It will attempt to understand how the school principal supports the well-being of teachers through enhancing protective factors and building the "assets" of teaching staff. It will also identify those factors which the teachers and

principal identify as influencing the well-being of teachers in a primary school located with a working class urban environment.

PROCEDURES

You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, your participation will involve you filling in an anonymous questionnaire and having an in-depth interview. The focus of the questions in the interview and questionnaire will be on the role of leadership in supporting teacher well-being. The questionnaire will take you about half an hour to complete and will be administered during the school break time. The interview will be approximately an hour long and will be recorded by audiotape. All interviews will be done after the school day and at your convenience. The audiotape will only be used by the researcher for purposes of this research. You will receive a copy of the transcription of your interview to check the accuracy, as well as a copy of the final research report. Your school will be asked to make available documentation to support this research, such as your school and staff development plans. Documentation will be requested in writing from your Management Board and Governing Body in advance of a research visit. Access to documentation will be based on the consent of the Management Board and School Governing Body of the school. Documentation which is the property of the school will be treated confidentially and if copies are made they will be destroyed once the research is complete.

RISKS

Although there are **no risks or discomforts anticipated**, you or your school have the right to refuse answering questions at any time. Please keep in mind that all information will be kept confidential and anonymous. There will be **no discrimination** involved in choosing participants to interview based on sex, race, age, religion, status, educational background or physical abilities. In all respects the researcher undertakes to conduct this research according to the highest ethical standards.

BENEFITS

By participating in this study, you will help to **increase the knowledge** and understanding of others on the role of leadership in supporting teacher well-being. The findings of this research study and a summary of the interview and questionnaire

data may support your school in strengthening its own **leadership strategies** for the promotion of protective factors to build the well-being of teachers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your participation in this study is **anonymous**. That means that your answers to all questions are private. No one else apart from you colleagues and Governing Body will know that you participated in this study and no one else can find out what your answers were. Your name and the name of your school will not be associated in any way with the information collected about you or with the research findings from this study. The researcher will use a **pseudonym** instead of your name. The school will not be identified. By signing this form you give permission for the use and disclosure of your anonymous information for scientific purposes of this study at any time in the future.

CANCELLING THIS CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You may withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose information collected from you, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to kcollett@uwc.ac.za.

INFORMED CONSENT

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask and I have received answers to any questions I had regarding the study.

By signing and dating this document:

- I understand that any information obtained during this study will not be linked to my name;
- I understand that I will not be remunerated for participation in this study;
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I agree to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization form. I have also read the attached information sheet and am aware of its contents.

Participant's Name and Surname

Date

Participant's Signature

Researcher Contact Information:

Ms Karen Collett.

Transforming Institutional Practices (TIP)

Education Faculty

University of the Western Cape

South Africa.

Tel: (021) 959 2235. Email: kcollett@uwc.ac.za

Appendix C: Teacher protocol and Semi-structured Interview Guide

TEACHER PROTOCOL AND INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name of interviewer: _____

Date: _____

Interview protocol: Thank you for participating in this research. I would like to speak to you about what the principal does to help you to cope in your job.

It is important that you know that nothing you say will ever be tracked back to you personally. Your responses will be given a code. I will not repeat what you have said to me to your colleagues, to any district official or elsewhere. This interview will last approximately one hour. I would like to ask your permission to audio tape the interview and make notes. If you agree to participate in this research, please read this consent form and sign it for me. I would like to stress that your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the interview at any point. Please be as honest as possible in your responses. Remember they will be treated confidentially and your name will not be used.

Background details: Code First 4 letters of your mother's first name, first four letters of your father's first name. e.g. Mother's name Annette. Father's name Jacob.

Your code: ANNEJACO

Code:

1.1 Male/Female	
1.2 Number of years teaching	
1.3 Number of years in this school	
1.4 Highest Teaching qualification	
1.5 Your age this year.	
1.6 Responsibilities in the school	
1.7 Post level Phase level	
1.8 Status of employment (permanent, contract, governing body) etc.	

1. What makes you stay in this school?

2. What factors within the school help to build your strength to face the challenges of your job?
3. What helps you to cope with your job?
4. What makes it difficult to cope with your job?
5. Does the principal play any role in helping you to cope?
6. Is there anything you would like to say that I have not asked you about?

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix D: School Principal Protocol and Semi-structured Interview Guide

PRINCIPAL PROTOCOL AND INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name of interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Interview protocol: I would like to speak to you about what you do as the principal of the school to support teachers to cope with the demands of their jobs. It is important that you know that nothing you say will ever be tracked back to you personally. Your responses will be given a code. I will not repeat what you have said to me to your colleagues, to any district official or elsewhere. This interview will last approximately one hour. I would like to ask your permission to audio tape the interview and make notes. If you agree to participate in this research, please read this consent form and sign it for me. I would like to stress that your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the interview at any point. Please be as honest as possible in your responses. Remember they will be treated confidentially and your name will not be used.

1.1 Male/Female	
1.2 Number of years of experience as a school principal.	
1.3 Number of years in this school as the principal.	
1.4 Highest Teaching qualification	
1.5 Age	
1.6 Responsibilities in the school	
1.7 Post level	
1.8 Status of employment (permanent, contract, governing body) etc.	

1. What makes you stay in this school?
2. What factors within the school help to build your strength to face the challenges of your job?
3. What helps teachers to cope?
4. What makes it difficult for teachers to cope?
5. Describe the role you play in supporting teachers to cope with the challenges of their job?

6. Is there anything you would like to say that I have not asked you about?

Thank you for participating in this interview.

Appendix E: Questionnaire for Teachers

Questionnaire:

Role of the Principal in Supporting Teacher Well-being

Code First 4 letters of your mother's first name, first four letters of your father's first name. e.g. Mother's name Annette. Father's name Jacob.

Your code: ANNEJACO

Code:

NB: Please fill in

Male/Female	
Number of years teaching	
Phase and grade you teach in	
Your age this year	
Number of years at this school	
Permanent or temporary staff member:	

By completing this **anonymous** questionnaire you will help to identify strategies to support increased care and safety for teachers. Please write clearly and give a true account of your feelings and experience. Please answer all questions.

1. What does the term teacher well-being mean to you?
2. Describe any activities you are involved in which promote your ability to cope with the responsibilities of your job as a teacher.
3. Describe any activities you and your colleagues are involved in which promote your ability to cope with the responsibilities of your job as a teacher.
4. Does your principal support you to cope with your professional responsibilities as a teacher?

Yes	
Sometimes	
No	

5. If **YES** or **SOMETIMES** was marked in Q 4, please tick (/) and comment on **each** of the following ways in which your principal provides you with support, in order to help you to cope with your responsibilities **as a teacher at the school**.

ASPECT: My principal supports me to:-		Yes	No	Comment
1.	Improve my teaching.			
2.	Improve my curriculum planning.			
3.	Manage my workload.			
4.	Cover the curriculum.			
5.	Improve my relationship with learners.			
6.	Improve my relationship with parents.			
7.	Improve the way I learn from other colleagues.			
8.	Improve my professional support to other colleagues.			
9.	Manage conflict with my colleagues.			
10.	Build positive collegial relations.			
11.	Deal with my personal issues			
12.	Manage my personal, physical or mental health issues.			
13	Be positive in spite of current challenges at school.			
14	Stay focused on what I care about as a teacher.			
15	Remain flexible in how I achieve my goals as a teacher.			
16	Maintain high expectations for success for learners.			
17	Acknowledge and affirm my achievements and contribution to the school and learners.			
18	Model our school values.			
19	Respect the rights of learners.			
20	Access the resources I need for teaching and learning.			
21	Manage learner discipline.			
22	Cut down on administrative tasks.			
23	Use school time effectively for teaching.			
24	Make the classroom and school a safe environment for teaching.			
25	Make the classroom and school a healthy environment for teaching and learning.			
26	Take initiative and leadership.			
27	Encourage parents to support the education of their children.			

ASPECT: My principal supports me to:-		Yes	No	Comment
28	Access outside support services.			
29	By getting funding to support the school needs.			
30	By encouraging the school governing body to assist the school.			
31	Are there any other things not mentioned above that the principal does to support you?			

6.

1. **Make a circle around** four support aspects in the table above, which you consider **most important in promoting your well-being**.
2. **Rate the four support aspect you have identified above** in the table below. (1 least important, 2 important, 3 very important, 4 critically important)

RATING	NUMBER OF THE ASPECT
1 = least important	
2 = important	
3 = very important	
4 = critically important	

7. How does your principal support you at a **personal level** to cope with the demands of your job?

8. What does the principal do at a **school level** to support your capacity to do your job and to feel motivated about your work?

9. What does the principal do at a **school community level** to support your capacity to do your job and to feel motivated about your work?

10. What role does the principal play in helping you to **access external support services**? (E.g. Does your principal help you get assistance from your district staff.)

11. What **advice** would you give to strengthen the role the principal plays in helping you to cope with the demands of your job?

12. Any other comments?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix F: Exemplar of Open Coding of Data

After amalgamating data from different interviews into categories or data sets, I then open coded the data, looking for general themes or patterns emerging.

Colour coding:

Yellow – state of happiness/being happy

Green – support

Red – state of health/balance

Blue – environment

Red underlined – my theoretical memos

“**Being happy** at the school **and getting support from the staff and being supported by the principal.**” (RM) **(State if happiness related to being supported by the principal and staff) Condition of happiness related to support by staff and principal.**

“Teacher Well-being means a general **state of good health and your general state of mental and physical health and balance in all aspects of your life.** That you work together **as a team and that you pull together** and that **people are not discontented the interactions with people** and how dealing with the children could also contribute to the mental aspects because if the type of child that you have in your class in the sense that there **are a lot of social and background problems** this could also affect your well-being because you find yourself going out of your way to help them and then you neglect yourself. And your interaction with people and what the boundaries are and they are clear.” (MA) **(Physical and mental health, balance, /Staff work as a team/not disconnected/able to hold boundaries/effect of children and their backgrounds/environment.)**

“Specifically this would **be a comfortable work space great communication with colleagues nice personal relations and attitudes** if you need help to make you **feel happy.** It is having my **comfortable work space, having my equipment ready, being close to my home** and I chose a job close to my place, I did not want to travel

a lot and I am here very early. If you **work well with your colleagues** and you have a nice comfortable work space, then you can really focus on the learners, whoever comes I teach. I find the administration very difficult and especially when you are a new teacher and it seems that just doing these types of things shift you from the creative process of teaching and if **somebody helps me** with this it will contribute to my well-being. I struggle at the moment because I have not access to a computer. Here **people offer help** and see what they can do. If I look at my situation now I am doing well. A few months ago I was at a school where everything was chaotic and everybody was older and they were **not open to new ideas** the situation here at this school is better for me because in that school I had quite a lot of stress and maybe it was the principal. Just a few months ago I had no support what so ever.” (JY) **Environment, comfortable work space, resources necessary, close to home, /communication with colleagues/ nice personal relationships, administrative and technological support, support and help from staff, staff open to new idea.) Environment/ Support.**

“Firstly we need **to be happy** to be here and in the morning when you get here **you need to feel you want to be here** not to get to the gate and say oh I can’t cope with another day, and it’s just the fact that you want to be here and **you need and want to teach and that’s your passion and your calling** although sometimes the kids may give you a headache” (GR) **(Be happy, want to be at school, want to teach passion and calling) (Able to fulfil calling/passion as a teacher).**

“I think this is a general interest in how the teachers experience at school **that there is a level of interest in them as a teacher as a person and a professional** and **being treated like a professional and also that there is a level of understanding of the workload** of just and sometimes **cut them a bit of slack in their work** because you understand what they go through every day ...what they have to deal with every day because you are not just a teacher you are everything I mean I have to listen lots of children’s stories they come and tell me about grandmother, mommy this, my brother did this and this one did not come home and this one fought with me and my granny this, lot and lots of stories I have to listen to...I mean I have to be a social worker too and like I say I have a huge degree of latitude so then. Well-being has got to do **with understanding that the teacher has all those factors to in the label teacher too.**” (JJ) **(Interest as a person and professional, being treated like**

a professional, understanding of workload, support principal cut slack, understand teacher has multiple roles (social worker) listen).

“For me it means having a **quality of home and work life and I try to strike a balance** between that. I do not necessarily take home what I experience at school and nor do I bring to school what I experience at home so I just try to go level.” (TR. **(Balance between home and work life)**)

“I think I have always looked at teacher well-being as making teachers here or whoever has come to (omit) for the first time um feel that this is **the place where I work and I am welcome here**, and I am at the forefront of **making people feel like they are welcome on the staff**. Um... the other thing is that when somebody says I am going to give up, I say what are you going to do, work in a shop, I try **to encourage them to stay I will be motivating people to stay there for our kids**. I had a friend in New Zealand who said why don't you come and teacher here, I said no because who is going to be left behind for our kids. He still sent me a card to say he was so proud of that conversation. Another example is in our morning brief we used to have our motivation we had a name and a data. I decided that in the December vac we needed to start the day off on a positive note. I asked who of you would like **to start the day off with a motivation**. I went to the Principal and now we have a motivation, I love the fact that you still have to listen to our motivation and it inspire us in the day. We started this in 2011 and I am quite proud to say that I normally watch the staff after the person reads and I think teachers will think about this when they leave, they will leave on a positive note.” (KI) **(Feeling welcome, encouraging staff, commitment to our kids (political), being positive and motivated).**

Appendix G: Exemplar of Tabulated Selective Coding of Data

Unit of analysis: Amalgamated Text - Interview and questionnaire data: How do teachers understand the term teacher well-being?

MEANING UNIT	CONDENSED MEANING UNIT	CODE	SUB/CATEGORY	CATEGORY	THEME
great communication with colleagues nice personal relations and attitudes if you need help to make you feel happy (JY)	Great inter-personal relationships and communication	Supportive personal relationships	Collegial support	SUPPORTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS 17	CARE AND SUPPORT 27
Being supported by colleagues and manager (principal). (MR) Q	Collegial support	Collegial support	Collegial support		
“Good work relationships (e.g. positive attitude, co-operation). Solutions.” (JY) Q	Supportive working relationships, collective problem solving.	Supportive collegial relationships	Supportive relationships		
If you work well with your colleagues... ” (JY)	Good working relationships with colleagues.	Collegial support	Collegial support		
“great communication with colleagues nice personal relations and attitudes if you need help to make you feel happy” (JY)	Great communication and personal relationships	Supportive inter-personal relationships	Supportive colleagues		
That you work together as a team and that you pull together (MA)	Team work	Collegial support	Collegial team work		
Happy environment. (MG). Q	Happy environment	Happy environment	Atmosphere		
Teaching in a positive environment (FZ). Q	Positive environment	Atmosphere	Positive environment		
“Comfortable; welcome.” (KI).Q	Feel welcome	belonging	State of ease		
Being taken care of as a teacher. (AS) Q.	Care for teachers	Teacher support	Support and Care		
With all the required support: principal, staff, parents, learners (TR). Q	Collective support for teachers	Collective support	School Community support or teachers		
A few months ago I was at a school where everything was chaotic and everybody was older	Having open minded colleagues	Collegial support and open attitudes	Colleagues open to new ideas		

MEANING UNIT	CONDENSED MEANING UNIT	CODE	SUB/CATEGORY	CATEGORY	THEME
and they were <u>not open to new ideas</u> the situation here at this school is better for me because in that school I had quite a lot of stress and maybe it was the principal. Just a few months ago I had no support what so ever.” (JY)					

Appendix H: Exemplars of a Theoretical and Methodological Memoing

KC Methodological memoing 3 Jan 2012 (Analysis of data teacher understanding of TWB)

Three possibly four categories coming up, state of mind or bodily health, - being able to do one's job, -state of mental and bodily health linked to environment, - linked to support. Not sure if these categories are correct. Seem to overlap. Environment that enables effective teaching seems one with various forms of support. Review data. Also go back and check aspects under these categories. Then focus on selective coding of these main categories terms of the conditions that give rise to it; the context (its specific set of properties) in which it is embedded; the action/interactional strategies which is handled, managed, carried out; and the consequences of those strategies. (These features become a sub-category of a key category) will have to explore this as I go.

KC methodological memoing 5th Jan 2012. (Analysis of the data teacher understanding of the term TWB).

First review the open coding of the interview and questionnaire data. Also rated frequency of aspects mentioned in the interview and questionnaire data. Now will break the data up from the questionnaires and interviews into the four general categories with quotes and check for sub-categories. Then should be able to write and present the data. Still not sure if I am doing the GT analysis steps correctly however know that I have done and re-done the open coding and now have some general key codes with a memoing diagram where I have placed the concepts and categories coded under the areas of (Context, Condition, Actions/interactions and Consequences). Not sure how to being to write the data presentation chapter but will give it a try.

Theoretical Memo: TWB KC (Jan 5, 2012).

Teachers mention many features related to their state of mental and physical health; the physical conditions of the school and state of mind as being related to their understanding of what TWB means. No or little mention is made of broader policy context, curriculum or remuneration or even the broader socio-economic context and political context. Is this because the notion of well-being is thought of as a personal responsibility not a professional one or socio-economic one? Need to explore this.

Appendix I: Schedule of Interviews

Ph. D. Research – Teacher Well-Being

Schedule of Interviews:

DATE	TIME	CODE NAME	NAME	Draft given out	Draft returned
9/3/2011	13h30-14h30	HB	(Actual names deleted)	18 th March	*
	14h30-15h30	MA		18 th March	*
15/3/2011	12h30-13h30	Mr X Principal (Interview 1)		31 March	Done April
	13h30-14h30	JP		18 th March	*
	14h30-15h30	CJ		18 th March	*
16/3/2011	13h30-14h30	JJ		18 th March	*
	14h30-15h30	TR		18 th March	*
22/3/2011	11h00-13h00	Mr X Principal (Interview 2)		11 April	*
23/3/2011	13h30-14h30	KI		11 April	*
	14h30-15h30	RA		11 April	*
28/3/2011	13h30-14h30	GR		11 April	*
	14h30-15h30	LI		11 April	*
29/3/2011	13h30-14h30	GJ		31 March	*
30/3/2011	13h30-14h30	FZ		11 April	*
	14h30-15h30	FR		11 April	*
APRIL	TIME	CODE	Data Collection	DRAFT	DRAFT
11/4/2011	14h00-14h45	MA	Teacher Interviews	16 May	Returned 7 th June
	14h45-15h45	SK	Teacher Interview	16 th May	*

DATE	TIME	CODE NAME	NAME	Draft given out	Draft returned
13/4/2011	14h00-14h45	AS	Teacher Interview	16 th May	*
	14h45-15h45	JY	Teacher Interview	16 th May	*
14/4/2011	14h00-14h45	HP	Teacher Interview	16 th May	Returned 7 th June
	14h45-15h45	MA	Teacher Interview	16 th May	*
21/4/2011	14h00-14h45	TR	Teacher Interview	16 th May	*
16 May	14h00-16h00	Staff Feedback meeting data 1	Check factors Group factors	done	*
End May	x	Meeting Principal	Feedback data on principal's role	done	*
21 May	2 hours	Mr X Principal interview 3	3 rd interview	27 th July	
End May	x	Hand out draft case school	Check school case data (short chapter)	Mr X	January 2013
6 th June	14h00-16h00	Staff Feedback meeting data 1	Check role principal In supporting TWB	Done	*
7 th June	Staff break	All staff	Questionnaire	Done	*
14 th June	9h00-11h00	RM	Teacher Interview	18 th July	*
14th June	11-13h00	Mr X Principal interview 4.	Fourth Interview	27 th July	*
27 th July	3h30-5h30	Mr X Principal interview 5.	Fifth Interview	16th August	*
2011	2h30-16h00	Staff feedback workshop	Staff feedback and cross-checking of analysis. Short follow up interviews.	November	*
2012	2h30-16h00	Staff feedback workshop	Staff engage with theoretical propositions.	March	*
