

# **The Role of Principals as Instructional Leaders:**

**The Case of Umlalazi Inspection Circuit in South Africa**

By

**L.T. MAGWAZA**

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**STD FDE BEd (Hons) MEd**

**Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Education in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the Department of Social Sciences Education at the University of Zululand**

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**Date Submitted : March 2016**

## DECLARATION

I, Lungile Thokozile Magwaza, the undersigned, hereby declare that ***The role of principals as instructional leaders: The case of Umlalazi inspection circuit in South Africa*** is my own work, and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been properly acknowledged and referenced.

Signed by -----

on the ----- day of -----2016

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my husband, Dumisani Sithembiso Magwaza, for his constant support, patience and encouragement.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Embarking on this wonderful life-changing journey would not have been possible without the encouragement of many people. In this regard, I want to acknowledge those who had an impact on my studies and have provided ample support in completing my journey. In completing this research I would like to humbly express my profound thanks and gratitude to:

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## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study explored the roles of principals as instructional leaders. Several models of instructional leadership were briefly discussed, and a theoretical framework for the present study was outlined. Individual interviews were conducted with principals, deputy principals, heads of department and post-level 1 educators. Qualitative data were collected using interviews and questionnaires. Themes and sub-themes emerged from the study. It was found that the quality of the role of the principal posed a challenge to principals. The participants reported that principals were expected to manage the school in terms of day-to-day functionality, buildings and grounds maintenance, managing of finances and human resources, and many other matters. On the other hand, the principal was also expected to be an instructional leader, which involved setting clear goals, allocating resources to instruction, managing the curriculum, monitoring teaching and learning, and creating opportunities that were conducive to learning. It was found that most secondary school principals concentrated on management instead of instructional leadership.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, education has come to be increasingly characterised by the shifting and blurring of boundaries. At the beginning of the new millennium schools find themselves in a period of extraordinary transition, of being trapped between an old and a new world. For principals, the question arises as to what it means to be a school leader under such trying circumstances. Principals find themselves expected to do more with less, and to do this in innovative ways that are both effective and efficient.

School leadership in South Africa has undergone significant changes in the post-apartheid era. Not least among these are the introduction of School Governing Bodies (SGBs), School Management Teams (SMTs), and the implementation of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), which assigned a considerable degree of decision making to schools and teachers (Hoadley, Christie, Jacklin, & Ward, 2008).

Bloch (2009) states plainly that “our students are just not hacking it when it comes to reading and maths at very basic levels.” Kallaway (2009:10) says: “The crisis that has been predicted by many experienced professionals ever since the early ‘90s is finally reaching such tragic proportions that we have to face the real prospect of a ‘lost generation’ in terms that we never imagined in the past.”

Principals are key role players in the developing and maintaining of academic standards in schools (Glanz, 2006; Nicholson., Harris-John & Schimmel, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1984). The poor academic standards, as indicated above, could be, amongst other causes, indicative of a lack of effective leadership and commitment at school level. A number of researchers concur with the belief that many South African school principals lack the skills to effectively manage and lead their schools (Kallaway, 2009; Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008; Mestry & Singh, 2007; Mestry, 1999). The rapid rate at which change has taken place and still is taking place, together with the increased volume of paper- work, has placed principals under an enormous amount of pressure.

Goslin (2009) argues that many principals overlook their responsibility to give instructional leadership because they are not fully aware of their primary task, or because they are too busy attending to administrative duties of managing the school buildings and the people who work in them. Fink and Resnick (2001) point out that the principal's day is so filled with management tasks (scheduling, reporting, handling relations with parents and community, dealing with the multiple crises and special situations that are inevitable in schools) that they spend relatively little time on instructional leadership. Research conducted by Bush and Heystek (2006) reveals that South African principals are mainly concerned with financial management, human resource management and policy issues. Chisholm et al. (2005, as cited by Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009), agree that a principal's time is largely consumed by administrative activities.

According to Kruger (2003), many school principals lack the time for, and an understanding of, their instructional leadership task. Murphy and Hallinger (as cited by MacNeill, Cavanagh & Silcox, 2003) note that a major challenge to the principal is balancing the administrative role with the curriculum/instructional role, hence they query whether one person can do the job, and suggest the need to empower others to exercise leadership.

Researchers on instructional leadership (Alig-Mieczarek, 2003; Bush, 2007; Hoadley et al., 2008; McKewan, 1998; Yu, 2009), agree that principals can and should make a difference in student learning and creating conditions for improved instruction. The primary responsibility of the principal to enhance the school's teaching and learning activities has been broadly identified as his/her instructional leadership role (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2008). In essence, a school principal has general managerial duties as well as instructional leadership duties.

It is very important that principals have a clear idea of their roles and that they balance their managerial and leadership duties, as neglect of either could seriously disadvantage the culture of teaching and learning at their schools (Blasé et al., 2010; Bush, 2007; Gupton, 2003).

The research problem was: What is the role of principals as instructional leaders, and how does this contribute to effective teaching and learning? This research problem can be encapsulated in the following questions:

- What does instructional leadership mean?
- How do principals perceive their core curriculum duties?
- What challenges do they face in balancing their dual roles of manager and instructional leader?
- What recommendations can be given to help principals become more effective instructional leaders?

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

Leithwood et al. (2006), cited in Bush and Glover (2008), state that leadership accounts for five to seven per cent of the difference in learner achievement across the schools. Bush et al. (2009; Bush and Glover, 2008; Ali and Botha (2006), agree that when leadership is focused on teaching, learning and the frequent management of instruction, results are better.

The majority of South African principals have grappled with the role of principals and their management, following the democratic transformation of the curriculum since 1997. It is now widely agreed that quality in products and services, including education, is a prerequisite for becoming a player in the world of markets. It should be clear that secondary school principals need to gain certain skills, knowledge, experience and techniques that provide them with a basis for effective management and teaching.

According to Bush (2007), there has been huge interest in educational leadership because the quality of the leadership the school has can affect the performance of students. Kunene (2007) argues that the principal as an instructional leader should create an environment that enables the effective delivery of the curriculum. This study builds on that basis and addresses the following values:

- The need for educators and school managers to enhance their capacity for quality management;
- The need to be creative, imaginative and transformational with respect to teaching and learning;

- The ability to ensure smooth community relationships and effective school-community programmes.
- The ability to take measures to promote quality teaching and learning.

### 1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In schools principals are key role players in the developing and maintaining of academic standards ( Glanz.2006,Nicholison;Harris-John & Schimmel, 2005,Seigiovanni, 1984). The poor academic standard , as indicated above could be amongst other causes , indicative of a lack of effective leadership and commitment at school level . A number of researchers concur with the belief that many South African school principals lack the skills to effectively manage and lead the schools (Kallaway, 2009; Naidu, Joubert, Mestry , Mosoge & Ngcobo 2008, Mestry & Singh 2007;Mestry , 1999). The rapid rate at which change has taken place and still is taking place , together with the increase volume of paper- work, has placed principals under an enormous amount of pressure . Leadership is through influence so it is expected that principals use their leadership abilities to influence the relevant stakeholders to effectively manage school.

The problem which is of paramount concern in this study is:

- What are challenges experienced by principals as instructional leaders at Umlalazi circuit ?

In dealing with this concern posed in the above question, it is necessary to sub-divide it into the following questions:

- What is the role of principals as instructional leaders?
- What can principals do to ensure that they fulfill their tasks as instructional leaders?
- What strategies that can be employed to enhance good leadership of principals?
- What mechanism to be used to improve the quality of principal's leadership?



## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **Main research question:**

- Do principals in the Umlalazi Circuit perform their roles effectively as instructional leaders?

### **Secondary questions:**

- What are the roles of principals as instructional leaders in schools?
- What can principals do to ensure that they fulfil their task as instructional leaders?
- What are the challenges which principals face when endeavouring to be instructional leaders?

## **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- To ascertain whether principals in the Umlalazi Circuit perform their roles effectively as instructional leaders.
- To understand the roles of principals as instructional leaders in schools.
- To apprehend challenges which principals face when endeavouring to be instructional leaders.

## **1.6 DELIMITATIONS**

According to Punch (2000), delimitations are the boundaries that the researcher puts on the study in order to ensure that it remains manageable. Le Roux (2000) states that these boundaries narrow it down to ensure that the topic can be effectively researched. In this study, delimitations included the following measures:

- The study was restricted to a limited geographical area, that is, the Umlalazi Circuit in the Uthungulu District in KwaZulu-Natal. The study focused on the principals and their role as instructional leaders.
- Because the researcher was limited in terms of resources, finances and time, she chose only a selection of schools in the Umlalazi Circuit.
- In order to enable the researcher to spend about two hours transcribing interviews, the time for each interview with the principals was limited to approximately one hour.

## **1.7 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Instructional leadership has been a popular research topic for international researchers, but there has not been much research on the topic, especially how principals in rural South African schools view and perform their roles as instructional leaders. In an attempt to fill this gap, this study focused specifically on the instructional leadership role of the secondary school principals in the Umlalazi Circuit. It evaluated approaches principals used to improve the instructional performance of educators in the Umlalazi Circuit.

The findings of this research may enable the researcher to develop guidelines for the management of staff development programmes for the new CAPS curriculum, and to improve principal efficiency. This in turn may result in the improvement of the management of staff development programmes that are offered to principals at secondary schools. Moreover, this may enable principals to make the paradigm shift from the old NSC system to the new CAPS system.

## **1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study investigated the roles of principals as instructional leaders in the Umlalazi Circuit. In order to understand how the roles of principals were perceived by the principals, heads of department (HoDs) and teachers, questionnaires and interviews were used to gather data within the qualitative research design. McMillan & Schumacher (2006) define the qualitative approach as one that helps the researcher to discover the problem that exists within the phenomenon in depth and in detail

### **1.8.1 Instrumentation**

A pilot study was conducted before the instrument was used to collect information from respondents. The aim of these activities was to get greater insight into the practical aspect of the problem under investigation. The questionnaires were distributed, and the researcher made sure that respondents completed and returned them. The questionnaire was employed, because it is the most convenient tool to collect information on opinions (Wellman & Kruger, 1999).

The idea was to maximise validity and minimise inconvenience to the respondents. According to Sax (1997), one is able to estimate the reliability or accuracy of the inferences and generalisations made from the sample findings to the total population

by means of percentages. Graphical presentations were also made to make reading and interpretation easier.

According to Borg (1981), descriptive research can be classified as either survey or observational research. In the survey, research questionnaires (open-ended questions) and interviews were used in order to determine the opinions, attitudes, preferences and perceptions of the participants, which were of great interest to the researcher. This qualitative approach, involving open-ended questions, entails correlation, analysis and using data-collection instruments (tools) such as questionnaires (containing open-ended questions) and interviews.

### **1.8.2 Population and Sampling**

In this study, the respondents were chosen from nine secondary schools in the Umlalazi Circuit. The population sample was made of principals, deputy principals, HoDs and post-level 1 teachers, a total of 195 respondents. Data from the respondents were in the form of responses that were grouped according to themes. A simple random sampling method was used to achieve the sample size (Vermeulen, 1998). Data analysis was based on the information acquired from the questionnaires and deduced from the semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were used to collect qualitative data.

### **1.8.3 Analysis**

When relevant data had been collected and recorded, they were analysed qualitatively. Data were coded and grouped according to themes.

## **1.9 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS**

The following are the definitions of key operational concepts in this study:

### **1.9.1 Role**

The concept of “role” is the position that is defined by a set of expectations about the behaviour of any job incumbent. The principal plays a major role in initiating activities and in assisting or facilitating with the follow-through. The degree to which the principal attends to these tasks will determine school success.

### **1.9.2 Leadership**

This study adopted Northouse's (2007) definition of leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.

### **1.9.3 Leadership and Management**

According to Clarke (2007), management is about efficiency and effectiveness, and managers are concerned with operational effectiveness. To ensure operational effectiveness management has to perform four basic tasks, viz: that of planning, leading, organising and controlling.

### **1.9.4 Instructional Leadership**

The study adopted Blasé and Blasé's, (2000) interpretation of instructional leadership as specific behaviour such as making suggestions, giving feedback, modelling effective instruction, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and giving praise for effective teaching.

## **1.10 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

The research study was planned as follows:

- **Chapter 1** serves as an orientation to the study. It focuses on the introduction, statement of the problem, definitions of terms, aims of the study, motivation for the study, research, questions, and the significance of the study, the research methodology, and the structure of the study.
- **Chapter 2** provides the literature review.
- **Chapter 3** deals with the qualitative research approach and instruments.
- **Chapter 4** analyses and interprets the data by making use of themes.
- **Chapter 5:** concludes the study. The findings of the research are summarised, strengths and weaknesses are discussed, and recommendations made.

## **1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter introduces the theme of the research project, namely: "*The roles of principals as instructional leaders*". It presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, and the basic assumptions of the study. The next chapter provides the literature review.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, the problem under investigation was introduced and highlighted in terms of its nature and scope. The background to this study was also provided, and operational terms and other relevant concepts were defined. The aims and objectives of the study were outlined, together with the delimitation of the field and the method of the study, followed by the methods of data analysis. This chapter provides an overview of the literature on instructional leadership. It consists of a review of local and international research on the roles and responsibilities of principals as instructional leaders whose main responsibility is to influence teaching and learning.

##### 2.1.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study adheres to the theoretical framework of instructional leadership. According to this framework, the primary role of principals is to focus on cultivating an effective instructional climate. Instructional leadership has as its focus the way in which principals can encourage effective teaching and learning.

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003), an effective instructional principal has to define the mission of the school, manage the curriculum and instruction, supervise teaching, monitor learner progress, and promote an instructional climate.

The conceptual framework of this study is drawn from Hallinger's (2003) model of instructional leadership. This model has three facets, namely, defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive climate conducive to favourable teaching and learning. Hallinger's latest version (2009) of instructional leadership is called Leadership for Learning. He asserts that there are four areas in which Leadership for Learning improves on the earlier version of instructional leadership:

- Leadership for Learning as an organising construct for school leadership is not limited to the principal, as was the case with instructional leadership.

- Leadership for Learning incorporates awareness that instructional leadership practices must be adapted to the nature and needs of the school's particular context.
- Leadership for Learning integrates educational features grounded in conceptions of instructional leadership with selected features of transformational models such as modelling, individual focus and capacity development.
- Leadership for Learning can be viewed as a process of mutual influence in which leadership is but one key factor in a process of systemic change.

This framework was used in this study because the researcher believes that while the principal is the main instructional leader, he or she cannot perform instructional leadership duties alone, but has to work in collaboration with other stakeholders such as the deputy principal, the HoDs and all the other teachers. Hallinger's conceptualisation shows that instructional leadership involves collaboration and inclusive decision making. Even though the main focus of this study is on the principal as an instructional leader, the study also attempts to determine how the principal can work through the other players in ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place.

## **2.2 CONCEPTUALISING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Bush (2007) asserts that there has been a huge interest in the study of educational leadership. He says that this interest started at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and was driven by the belief that the way in which the principal performs his or her duties as an instructional leader determines the way in which learners achieve academically.

There are many definitions of leadership. Instructional leadership is defined by De Bevoise (1984) as those actions that are taken by the principal or allocated to others that facilitate student learning. According to Greenfield (1985:56), "instructional leadership involves actions undertaken with the intention of developing a productive and satisfying working environment for teachers and desirable learning conditions and outcomes for children." Leithwood (1994) defines instructional leadership as a series of behaviours designed to affect classroom instruction. The Department of Education defines instructional leadership as the principal's connection to the classroom (DoE, 2009). According to Doyle and Rice (2002), the role of the principal as an instructional leader involves focusing on instruction, building a community of

learners, sharing decision making, sustaining the basics, leveraging time, supporting ongoing professional development for all staff members, redirecting resources to support a multifaceted school plan, and creating a climate of integrity, inquiry, and continuous improvement.

## **2.2.1 Philosophies Underpinning School Leadership**

There are four broad philosophical schools of thought that apply to education today. They are idealism, realism, pragmatism (sometimes called experientialism), and existentialism. These schools are studied as they all contribute to improved leadership behaviour. Learning from philosophers can only enrich a comprehensive view of leadership.

### **2.2.1.1 Idealism**

Idealism is a philosophical approach that relies on the central tenet of viewing ideas as the only true reality, and consequently the only thing worthwhile knowing. In a search for truth, beauty and justice that are enduring and everlasting, it is imperative to consider conscious reasoning in the mind. Plato (429-347 BC), the father of Idealism, held this view about 400 years BC, and voiced his opinions in his famous book, *The Republic*. He believed that there were two worlds. The first was the spiritual or mental world, which is permanent, eternal, organised, regular and universal. There was also the world linked with appearances, the world experienced through the senses of sight, touch, smell, taste and sound that is subject to imperfection.

This division is often recognised as the duality of mind and body. Reacting against what he regarded as too much of an emphasis on the immediacy of the physical and sensory world, Plato discussed a utopian society in which there was education for body and soul to bring forth, as an ideal, all the beauty and perfection of which they are capable. In his Allegory of the Cave, it is vital for the shadows of the sensory world to be overcome with the light of reason and, of necessity, universal truth. If truth is to be understood, one must probe knowledge and consequently identify with the Absolute Mind. Plato also maintained that the formation of the soul preceded birth, and is complete and at one with the Universal Being. The birth process impacts on this perfection, so education entails bringing latent ideas (fully formed concepts) to consciousness.

In Idealism, the goal of education is to delve into and develop each individual's unique abilities and full moral excellence as a measure to improve service to society. The curricular emphasis should be on the subject matter of the mind, embracing literature, history, philosophy and religion. Teaching methods are essential, and focus on dealing with ideas through lecture, discussion and Socratic dialogue (a method of teaching that employs questioning to assist students to discover and clarify knowledge). Introspection, insight, intuition and whole-part logic are implemented to bring to consciousness aspects or concepts which are potentially present in the mind. Character is honed through imitating examples and heroes.

### **2.2.1.2 Realism**

Realists believe that reality can exist independently of the human mind. The ultimate reality should be the world of physical objects. The main focus is on the body/objects. Truth is objective, and refers to what can be observed. Aristotle (384-322 BC), a student of Plato, started his own way of reasoning and broke with his mentor's idealist philosophy. He is called the main inventor of both Realism and what we know as the scientific method. In this metaphysical view, the aim is to interpret objective reality through "the diligent and unsparing scrutiny of all observable data" (John Milton, 1608-1674).

Aristotle believed that to understand an object, the individual had to fathom its ultimate form, which does not change. For example, a rose exists irrespective of whether or not a person is aware of it. A rose can exist in the mind, and it does not have to be physically present, but ultimately, it has many properties in its form in common with all other roses and flowers, although one rose may be red and another peach-coloured. Aristotle was the first proponent to teach logic as a formal discipline which focused on the ability to reason about physical events and aspects. The actions involved in rational thought are viewed as the ultimate purpose for humankind. The Realist curriculum emphasises the subject matter of the physical world, especially science and mathematics. The teacher organises and presents content systematically within a discipline, demonstrating the use of criteria in making decisions. Teaching methods involve mastery of facts and basic skills through demonstration and recitation. Students must also demonstrate the ability to reason critically and scientifically, using observation and experimentation. Curriculum should be scientifically approached, standardised, and based on the distinct discipline. Character is developed through training in the rules of conduct.



### **2.2.1.3 Pragmatism (Experientialism)**

For pragmatists, only those aspects that are experienced or observed are real. In this late 19<sup>th</sup>-century American philosophy, the focus is on the reality of experience. Unlike the Realists and Rationalists, Pragmatists contend that reality is constantly changing, and that we learn best through applying our experiences and thoughts to problems as they surface. The universe is evolving and dynamic, a "becoming" view of the world. There is no absolute and unchanging truth, but truth is deemed to be what works. Pragmatism is derived from the teaching of Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), who asserted that thought must produce action, instead of just lingering in the mind and giving rise to indecisiveness.

John Dewey (1859-1952) applied pragmatist philosophy in his progressive approaches. He believed that learners must adapt to each other and to their environment. Schools should emphasise the subject matter of social experience. All learning is dependent on the context of place, time and circumstance. Different cultural and ethnic groups learn to work cooperatively and contribute to a democratic society. The ultimate goal is the creation of a new social order. Character development is based on making group decisions, bearing in mind the consequences.

For pragmatists, teaching methods focus on effective problem-solving, experimenting and projects, often engaging students in groups. Curriculum should fuse the disciplines together to focus on solving difficulties in an interdisciplinary way. Rather than passing down organised bodies of knowledge to new learners, pragmatists contend that learners should apply their knowledge to real situations through experimental inquiry. This prepares students for citizenship, daily living, and future careers.

### **2.2.1.4 Existentialism**

The nature of reality for existentialists is subjective, and is situated within the individual. The physical world is meaningless outside of human existence. Individual choice and individual standards are focused on rather than external standards. Existence comes before any definition of what we are. We define ourselves in relationship to existence by exercising our personal choices. We should not adopt anyone else's predetermined philosophical system: we should take responsibility for

deciding our identity. The focus is on freedom to develop as authentic individuals as we make meaning of our lives.

There are several different orientations within the existentialist philosophy. Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), a Danish philosopher and minister, is considered to be the father of existentialism. His was a Christian orientation. Another group of existentialists, largely European, believes that we must admit the finiteness of our lives on earth, rather than having faith in salvation through God. Our existence is not guaranteed in an after-life, so there exists tension about life and the certainty of death. Unlike the more austere European approaches viewing the universe as meaningless, and facing the certainty of the end of existence, American existentialists held a different view, acknowledging human potential and the quest for personal meaning. The focus on values is an outgrowth of this movement. Following World War II, the French philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre, proposed that for youth the existential moment arises when they realise for the first time that they have freedom of choice, and that they are responsible for their personal well-being. Their existential question becomes "Who am I and what should I do?"

Related to education, the subject matter of existentialist classrooms should be viewed by the individual as a matter of personal choice. Teachers regard the individual as an entity embedded within a social context in which the learner must face and confront others' views to mould and adapt his/her own view. Character development emphasises individual responsibility for decisions. Real answers stem from within the individual, not from outside authority. Examining life through authentic reasoning involves students in genuine learning experiences. Existentialists are opposed to viewing students as objects to be measured, tracked, or standardised. Such educators want the educational experience to concentrate on creating opportunities for self-direction and self-actualisation. They start with the student, rather than on curriculum content

### **2.2.2 Instructional Leadership Models**

Researchers define instructional leadership through the traits, behaviours and processes a person needs to lead a school effectively. Thus a multitude of conceptual models that demonstrate instructional leadership exist. This section will review three prevailing conceptualisations of instructional leadership.

### 2.2 2.1 Hallinger and Murphy's Model (1985)

Hallinger and Murphy (1985) developed their model of instructional management from examining the instructional leadership behaviour of 10 elementary principals in one school district, and a review of the school effectiveness literature. They collected information from principals, school staffs and central administration supervisors via a common questionnaire on instructional leadership behaviour. They supplemented this data with organisational information extracted from school documents, such as observations of the principals during clinical assessments, narratives that describe activities the principals engaged in to support the curriculum and instruction in their schools, and faculty meeting minutes and agendas.

From the synthesis of questionnaire and the organisational information, Hallinger and Murphy created a framework of instructional management with three dimensions and 11 job descriptors. They used the job descriptors from the three dimensions of instructional management to create an appraisal instrument of principal instructional management behaviour, the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale. Hallinger and Murphy's conceptualisation of instructional management is illustrated in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Framework of Instructional Management (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985)**

<b>Defines the Mission</b>	<b>Manages Instructional Programme</b>	<b>Promotes School Climate</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Framing school goals</li> <li>✓ Communicating school goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Supervising and evaluating instruction</li> <li>✓ Coordinating curriculum</li> <li>✓ Monitoring student progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Protecting instructional time</li> <li>✓ Promoting professional development</li> <li>✓ Maintaining high visibility</li> <li>✓ Providing incentives for teachers</li> <li>✓ Enforcing academic standards</li> <li>✓ Providing incentives for students</li> </ul>

The dimension of defining the school mission includes the principal job descriptors of framing and communicating school goals. Principals demonstrate framing school goals by working with parents and staff to identify the areas of improvement within the school, and developing performance goals for these areas. The function of

communicating school goals refers to the ways the principal expresses the importance of the school goals to staff, parents and students. This can be achieved through the use of formal or informal communication (e.g. handbooks, staff meetings, school assemblies, conversations with staff or students, bulletin boards, and teacher and parent conferences). Hallinger and Murphy confirm that managing the instructional programme dimension involves working directly with teachers in areas related to curriculum and instruction. Job functions included in this dimension consist of supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring student progress.

Hallinger and Murphy posit that supervising and evaluating instruction comprises activities that provide instructional support to teachers, monitor classroom instruction through informal classroom visits, and align classroom practice with school goals. Coordinating the curriculum refers to the principal's activities that provide opportunities for staff collaboration on alignment of curriculum to standards and achievement tests. The instructional management job function of monitoring student progress refers to the principal's use of test results for setting goals, assessing the curriculum, evaluating instruction, and measuring progress toward school goals.

Promoting a positive school learning climate dimension encompasses principal behaviours that protect instructional time, promote professional development, maintain high visibility, provide incentives for teachers, develop and enforce academic standards, and provide incentives for learning. The principal's job functions mostly consist of indirect activities that help create a positive learning environment. Hallinger and Murphy conclude by stating that principals can influence student and teacher attitudes through the creation of a reward structure that reinforces academic achievement and productive effort; through clear, explicit standards embodying what the school expects from students; through the careful use of school time; and through the selection and implementation of high-quality staff development programmes. This study draws heavily on this model, especially the idea that the principal needs to involve other stakeholders in performing his/her instructional leadership role.

### 2.2.2.2 Murphy's model (1990)

Murphy (1990) provided a systematic and comprehensive review of instructional leadership in his synthesis of research findings from the effective schools, school improvement, staff development and organisational change literature. Using this review, he built an instructional leadership framework which incorporates studies and findings. The framework consists of four dimensions of instructional leadership broken down into different roles or behaviours. According to Murphy, the dimensions of the instructional leader are:

- developing mission and goals;
- managing the educational production function;
- promoting an academic learning climate; and
- developing a supportive work environment.

Developing a mission and goals is fundamental in creating a sense of shared purpose and linking efforts within the school around a common vision. Murphy broke down this dimension into two major roles or behaviours of the principal: framing school goals and communicating school goals. Framing school goals encompasses setting goals that emphasise student achievement for all students, incorporating data on past and current student performance, and including staff responsibilities for achieving the goals. Communicating goals frequently, formally and informally to students, parents and teachers stresses the importance that school goals have in guiding the activities of the school.

Managing the educational production function of the school is the second dimension of Murphy's framework. This dimension emphasises management behaviours of the principal. The instructional leader promotes quality instruction by conducting teacher conferences and evaluations, visiting classrooms, providing specific suggestions and feedback on the teaching and learning process, and determining teacher assignments in the best interest of student learning (Teddlie & Stringfield, 1985). Additionally, the principal allocates and protects instructional time with school policies and procedures. He/she works with teachers to coordinate the curriculum through aligning school goals and objectives with state standards, assessments and district curriculum. The instructional leader monitors the progress of students frequently. He/she models how to use assessment data to set goals and evaluate instruction (Murphy, 1990).

Promoting an academic learning climate refers to the behaviours of the principal that influence the norms, beliefs and attitudes of the teachers, students and parents of a school (Murphy, 1990).

Principals foster the development of a school learning climate conducive to teaching and learning by establishing positive expectations and standards, by maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and students, and promoting professional development. (Murphy, 1990:174)

This dimension deals directly with the teaching and learning process in classrooms.

The final dimension of Murphy's (1990) framework, developing a supportive work environment, denotes how an instructional leader establishes organisational structures and processes that support the teaching and learning process. The principal that exemplifies this dimension creates a safe and orderly learning environment, provides opportunities for meaningful student involvement, develops staff collaboration and cohesion, secures outside resources in support of school goals, and forges links between the home and school.

Murphy's instructional leadership comprehensive framework, as illustrated in Table 2.2, provides an extensive examination of an instructional leader.

**Table 2.2: Murphy's Comprehensive Instructional Leadership Framework (1990)**

Developing Mission and Goals	Managing the Educational Production Function	Promoting an Academic Learning Climate	Developing a Supportive Work Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Framing school goals</li> <li>✓ Communicating school goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Promoting quality Instruction</li> <li>✓ Supervising and Evaluating instruction</li> <li>✓ Allocating and protecting instructional time</li> <li>✓ Coordinating the curriculum</li> <li>✓ Monitoring student Progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Establishing positive expectations and standards</li> <li>✓ Maintaining high visibility</li> <li>✓ Providing incentives for teachers and students</li> <li>✓ Promoting professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Creating a safe and orderly learning environment</li> <li>✓ Providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement</li> <li>✓ Developing staff collaboration and cohesion</li> <li>✓ Securing outside resources in support of school goals</li> <li>✓ Forging links between the home and the school</li> </ul>

**2.2.2.3 Weber's Model (1996)**

Weber addressed the need for instructional leadership regardless of the school's organisational structure. He concludes that:

The research suggests that even if an instructional leader were not packaged as a principal, it would still be necessary to designate such a leader. The leaderless-team approach to a school's instructional program has powerful appeal, but a large group of professionals still needs a single point of contact and an active advocate for teaching and learning. (Weber, 1996:254)

Weber's point is especially pertinent in today's educational arena of shared leadership and site-based management. Attention to instructional leadership will need to continue regardless of the hierarchical nature of a school organisation. Weber (1996) identified five essential domains of instructional leadership: defining the school's mission, managing curriculum and instruction, promoting a positive learning climate, observing and improving instruction, and assessing the instructional programme.

Weber described defining the school's mission as a dynamic process of cooperation and reflective thinking to create a mission that is clear and honest. The mission of the school should bind the staff, student and parents to a common vision. The instructional leader offers the stakeholders the opportunity to discuss values and expectations for the school. Together they work to create a shared mission for the school. Managing curriculum and instruction must be consistent with the mission of the school (Weber, 1996). The instructional leader's repertoire of instructional practices and classroom supervision offers teachers the needed resources to provide students with opportunities to succeed. The leader helps teachers use current research in best practices and instructional strategies to reach school goals for student performance. Promoting a positive learning climate comprises the expectations and attitudes of the whole school community. "Indeed, of all the important factors that appear to affect students' learning, perhaps having the greatest influence is the set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that administration, teachers, and students hold about learning" (Weber, 1996:263). Leaders promote a positive learning climate by communicating instructional goals, establishing high expectations for performance, establishing an orderly learning environment with clear discipline expectations, and working to increase teacher commitment to the school (Weber, 1996).

Observing and improving instruction starts with the principal establishing trusting and respectful relationships with the school staff. Weber (1996) proposes that observations are opportunities for professional interactions. These interactions provide professional development opportunities for both the observer and the one being observed. In other words, a reciprocal relationship develops where both people involved gain valuable information for professional growth. Principals enhance the experience by emphasising research as the foundation for initiating teaching strategies, remediation, and differentiation of the lessons.

Weber's last domain of instructional leadership, assessing the instructional programme, is essential for improvement of the instructional program (Weber, 1996). The instructional leader initiates and contributes to the planning, designing, administering and analysis of assessments that evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. This continuous scrutiny of the instructional programme enables



teachers to effectively meet students' needs through constant revision and refinement

Weber's model of instructional leadership incorporates research about shared leadership and empowerment of informal leaders to create a school that underscores the emphasis on academics and student achievement for all students. However, this model, like Murphy's model, has not been empirically tested. It is not clear that if a principal demonstrates behaviours from Weber's model, high levels of student achievement will result. Weber's model is summarised in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Weber's (1996) Instructional Leadership Framework**

<b>Defining the school's mission</b>	<b>Managing curriculum and instruction</b>	<b>Promoting a positive learning climate</b>	<b>Observing and improving instruction</b>	<b>Assessing the instructional programme</b>
The instructional leader collaboratively develops a common vision and goals for the school with Stakeholders.	The instructional leader monitors classroom practice alignment with the school's mission, provides resources and support in the use of instructional best practices, and models and provides support in the use of data to drive instruction.	The instructional leader promotes a positive learning climate by communicating goals, establishing expectations, and establishing an orderly learning environment.	The instructional leader observes and improves instruction through the use of classroom observation and professional development opportunities.	The instructional leader contributes to the planning, designing, administering, and analysis of assessments that evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum.

#### **2.2.1.4 Hypothesised Framework of Instructional Leadership**

Synthesising the three predominant models (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Murphy, 1990; Weber, 1996) of instructional leadership already discussed, three distinct similarities emerge. All three models indicate the importance of instructional leaders in defining and communicating goals, monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process, and promoting and emphasising the importance of professional development. The three similarities parallel Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory (1984, 1990), which postulates that setting defined, challenging goals helps motivate individuals to increase performance toward the goals. Feedback is important to maximise the motivating force of the goals. Additionally, individuals may need resources or professional development opportunities to assist in the development of specific task strategies to accomplish the goals. The three dimensions of instructional leadership demonstrate the goal-setting theory in

practice in an educational setting. An instructional leader needs to work collaboratively with staff to define shared goals for the school year. The leader needs to monitor and provide feedback on the teaching and learning process as it relates to the specified, shared goals. Finally, it is the instructional leader's responsibility to provide resources and professional development opportunities that help the staff reach the goals.

### **2.3 THE ROLES OF PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS IN SCHOOLS**

Botha (2004) asserts that the role of the principal can no longer be viewed as merely being a manager and an administrator, but rather as a learning-expert and lifelong learner. This means that principals are expected to establish appropriate preconditions for effective teaching, learning and assessment, and follow through with interventions aimed at improving teaching and learning.

Considerable evidence exists that a strong instructional leader is a fundamental characteristic of an effective school (Edmonds, 1979; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Purkey & Smith, 1983). Barth (1990) asserts that the principal is the key to a good school, and the school principal is directly responsible for the quality of the educational programme. The principal is the most crucial dynamic force behind the growth and development of the teachers. A poor, ineffective principal can also be held accountable for teachers who become stifled on the job. The school climate is determined by the manner in which the principal operates and runs the school. It is the common perception that a good school is run by a good principal: the two are interwoven. The school effectiveness research reinforces these statements as substantiated in the review below.

According to Quinn (2002:447), instructional leaders must influence others to "pair appropriate instructional practices with their best knowledge of the subject matter." The same author describes an effective instructional leader as someone performing at a high level in four areas, including that of the principal as an instructional leader.

In-depth studies of teachers' perceptions about characteristics of school principals that influence teachers' classroom instruction have concluded that the behaviours associated with instructional leadership positively influence classroom instruction (Larson-Knight, 2000; Blasé & Blasé, 1998, 1999a, 1999b; Sheppard, 1996; Chrispeels, 1992).

Blasé and Blasé (1999a, 1998) postulate that when instructional leaders monitor and provide feedback on the teaching and learning process, there is an increase in teacher reflection and reflectively informed instructional behaviour. There is also a rise in implementation of new ideas, greater variety in teaching strategies, more response to student diversity, and lessons are prepared and planned more carefully. Teachers are more likely to take risks and have more focus on the instructional process. They also use professional discretion to make changes in classroom practice. In Blasé and Blasé's study, teachers also indicated positive effects on motivation, satisfaction, confidence and sense of security.

Conversely, principals that did not engage in monitoring and providing feedback of the teaching and learning process had a harmful effect on teachers and classroom practice (Blasé & Blasé, 1998). Teachers with non-instructional leaders felt a sense of abandonment, anger and futility, as well as lower levels of trust and respect for the principal, and of motivation and self-efficacy. Instructional leadership behaviours associated with promoting professional growth and staff development yield positive effects for classroom practice (Larson-Knight, 2000; Blasé & Blasé, 1998, 1999a, 1999b; Sheppard, 1996; Chrispeels, 1992). In particular, leaders engage in behaviour that:

- informs staff about current trends and issues;
- encourages attendance at workshops, seminars, and conferences;
- builds a culture of collaboration and learning;
- promotes coaching, uses inquiry to drive staff development;
- sets professional growth goals with teachers; and
- provides resources to foster teacher innovation in using a variety of methods, materials, instructional strategies, reflective practice, and technology in the classroom. This, in turn, increases the likelihood of increased student achievement (Blasé & Blasé, 1998; Sheppard, 1996). Locke and Latham (1990) assert that goal setting is an effective way to increase motivation and performance.

They postulate that goals increase:

- attention to completion of the task;
- the effort to achieve goal-relevant activities;

- persistence to achieve; and
- the development of strategies to obtain the goal.

This is true even in organisations such as public schools. Bookbinder (1992) explains that frequent communication of school goals by instructional leaders promotes accountability, a sense of personal ownership and instructional improvements. Principals that define and communicate shared goals with teachers provide organisational structures that guide the school toward a common focus. This common focus on academic pressure influences teachers' behaviour within the classroom, which leads to more effective schools (Blasé & Blasé, 1998, 1999a; Bookbinder, 1992; Smith & Piele, 1997).

Hallinger and Heck's (1996) extensive review of the empirical research about the principal's role in school effectiveness reveals that of the 22 original studies testing the direct effects of the principal on student achievement, six of them indicate a positive relationship, seven indicate a mixed effect, and nine demonstrate no direct effect. Their review of 19 studies modelling a mediated variable between the principal and student achievement indicate 15 studies show a positive effect by the principal, two demonstrate a mixed effect, and two signify no effect. These findings support the need for a model of instructional leadership that works through a mediating variable.

## **2.4 CHALLENGES FACING PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

There are many challenges faced by principals in South African schools. These include, amongst others, the fact that most principals get into their principalship without some form of mentorship or even qualification related to instructional leadership. As shown in Chapter 4, the data reveal that some principals believe that their managerial duties should come first. The challenge here is being able to balance instructional leadership and administrative tasks.

The other problem is that of delegation. Principals have to delegate some duties to educators owing to the multiple responsibilities that they have to perform. Lumadi (2012) asserts that the delegation of responsibilities to educators is essential in order to manage the school curriculum effectively. He states that delegation involves the evolution of a shared vision in schools that perpetuates quality curriculum teaching. Similarly, Van Rooyen and Rossouw (2007) argue that the delegation of responsibilities

to co-opted senior educators, subject heads, HoDs and deputy principals should be done by principals if their schools will thereby get maximum learner achievement.

Hallinger and Heck (2010) maintain that the delegation of responsibilities empowers and encourages broad participation in decision making, and fosters shared accountability in respect of curriculum management in schools

## **2.5 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THREE COUNTRIES**

### **2.5.1 United States of America (USA)**

In the USA, before 1920, supervision in both elementary and secondary schools consisted of inspection (Rajendra, 1999:53). The visit was unannounced, and in the ensuing conference, the “expert” principal advised the teachers what to do. For another 15 years, supervision was thought to be a form of direction. The supervisor knew what was to be taught, when and how. Since 1935, the concept has altered to one of coordination and service, which was in line with the concept of democratic leadership.

Specialised training programmes have been provided for instructional leaders in the USA from as early as 1940, and evidence is there that in 1957 46 states required a school principal certificate or a certificate of general administration and supervision from those who applied for promotional posts. Furthermore, in the 1970s, 324 programmes for secondary school principals and 329 programmes for primary school principals were considered as state-accredited programmes for instructional leaders (Van der Westhuizen, 1995:3).

It is noteworthy to realise that in 1950 the Kellogg Foundation made funds available for the Co-operative Programme in Education (CPEA) to promote a project which included instructional leadership in certain regions. The main focus was on the compilation of programmes for the training of school principals. The formation of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) in 1959, articles published in various journals such as *Educational Quarterly* and the formation of the Research Development Division (RDD) promoted the value of leadership skills. This formed part of the central concern of the educational policy of Oregon. It has formed the cornerstone in the development of educational leadership (Van der Westhuizen, 1995).

The other development in the USA included the social management approach, which left its mark on educational leadership by means of approaches from the behavioural sciences.

There is enough evidence that the USA has contributed towards the development of training programmes for educational management and instructional leadership, of which the simulated computer programmes were the most important. In the period 1969 to 1970 more than 40 institutions were involved in these. In addition, during this period the ERIC clearing house was established, and computer printouts on educational management research might be requested (Van der Wasthuizen, 1995).

Historically, when operating administration, supervisors were often charged with seeing to the implementation of certain decisions made at a distance from the site of teaching and learning. These detracted from the dynamics between the supervisor and teacher. However, today conditions have changed in the USA to the extent of teachers asking to come to informed decisions affecting pedagogical, curricular and policy issues. After a long history of suspicion, teachers are now able to overcome their inhibitions enough to engage in free discussion with principals and higher authorities (Waite, 1995).

Hallinger et al. (2012) assess three dimensions of instructional leadership, namely, defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive learning climate. They assert that the principal cannot manage the instructional programme alone, and suggest that instructional leadership should centre on a distributive leadership paradigm.

A distributive leadership model recognises that there are multiple leaders and that leadership activities are shared within and between organisations (Harris, 2007; Spillane et al., 2004). Lambert (2007:37) asserts that “the days of the lone instructional leader are over”. A distributed leadership paradigm focuses on how leadership influences organisational and instructional improvement (Spillane, 2006). The theoretical framework of this study draws partly on this model because the researcher believes that the principal needs to share the responsibility of managing teaching and learning with the deputy principals, HoDs, and educators.

## 2.5.2 Nigeria

Leadership skills in particular have been lacking in Nigeria, specifically in educational institutions. A lack of strong leadership skills among educational professionals could be the reason for not achieving even the basic goals. A lack of leadership is not limited to educational professionals, but has spread like an epidemic through graduates of most Nigerian schools.

In Nigeria, transactional leaders are concerned with processes rather than forward-thinking ideas. These types of leader focus on contingent reward or contingent punishments. Contingent rewards (such as praise) are given when the set goals are accomplished on time or ahead of time, or to keep subordinates working at a good pace at different times until completion. Contingent punishments are administered by school administrators when the performance quality or quantity of students or staff in educational institutions is poor, or goals and tasks are not met. Often, contingent punishments are handed down on a management-by-exception basis, in which the exception is something going wrong. Within management-by-exception, there are active and passive routes. Active management-by-exception means that the leaders continually view each subordinate's performance and make changes to the subordinate's work to make corrections throughout the process. Passive management-by-exception leaders resort to waiting for issues to come up before fixing the problems. With transactional leadership being applied to the lower level needs and being more managerial in style, it serves as a foundation for transformational leadership, which applies to higher level needs.

In fact, transactional leadership not only recognises the needs of group members or employees, but also the need to achieve the goals of the school. This type of leadership development has been found to be mostly adopted by school heads in Nigeria, since studies carried out show that it has led to an increase in staff task performance. In Nigeria, experience also shows that no style basically could be said to be the panacea for all organisational problems, since a closer look will show an interplay of other types like the democratic style, where the leader (school administrator) has achieved some success. This After all, we live in a dynamic world where no two human beings are the same, and neither are the problems in Nigerian schools.

Transformational leaders are leaders who engage with followers, focus on higher order intrinsic needs, and raise consciousness about the significance of specific outcomes, and new ways in which those outcomes might be achieved. The leader here is proactive and works to change the organisational culture by implementing new ideals (Bernard, 2000). Adegbemile (2011) opines that leadership skills needed by school administrators for effective school management include the following:

- identifying what motivates the staff;
- recognising the effort of the staff; and
- motivating and involving staff in decision making on matters concerning them, delegating duties to capable staff, and encouraging appropriate skills for professional development.

Leadership is a chief tool and a part of management which deals and directs the supervision of subordinates. It is a one-way process of mutual influence that obtains compliance. Effective leadership skills involve decision making, communication, self-awareness, the ability to motivate others and a management group dynamic. It should be recognised, however, that leadership in practice is often complex and fluid, demanding both a strong set of skills and enormous flexibility. Therefore a leader needs to have the ability to influence others, and exercise power constructively and responsively (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2009).

Elechi (1982) points out that the interest of the people in leadership development implies that Nigerian leaders are in a position to cater for the good of the Nigerian people. The value of the country does not lie in the vegetation in Nigerian communities, but in the people. Families, villages and towns, cities and states constitute the people. Other important groups are associations, institutions, religious groups and others. Any group that wishes to succeed certainly needs leadership.

In most Nigerian educational institutions today few students learn leadership skills to serve the community. Schools and colleges need to rethink their policies on student leadership development. Students need to rethink their understanding of college and skills they want to acquire from college education. Nothing of real worth can ever be bought. Honour, respect, valour and knowledge all have to be earned. Similarly leadership skills too have to be developed. Leadership development is a lifelong process, but the college years are a critical period.



However, for most students, learning leadership skills in the schools is not easy, because they need to do this in addition to their academic work. Moreover, not all students in college understand the importance of leadership development. They consider student groups as some clubs or groups with a narrowly defined function. Students need to attend classes that can offer leadership development, especially if classes in their majors do not cover such opportunities. Similarly, within their existing classes, students need to see certain assignments, such as group projects, as opportunities to work on leadership skills. On a big scale, students need to see participation in student organisations during their college years not as something extracurricular but as something essential for their work following graduation.

Often, most educational institutions and faculties ask students to get involved in group assignments and group discussions in their classrooms without explaining to their students the importance of such work. If each faculty would consider a group assignment focusing on the importance of leadership skills and how these benefit them to serve their communities, and also in their future job prospects, then the students would gain a new appreciation for group work in classes.

There is no doubt that now that management has come to be regarded as a “science” and a “technique”, and accepted as a profession, the need for training leaders has been universally recognised. It is true that traditionally, managers and executive leaders have been “born” rather than “made”. It is also true that “coaching” in experience by top leaders and schools has been the norm when considering training, and indeed they will never cease to play their part (Avasthi, 2006). However, the complex and technical nature of administrative processes has made a more systematic and better planned training programme imperative in the training and development of leadership, as urged by Barnard in his work *Education for Executives*. His book presents a penetrating analysis of the needs of executives, and proposes methods to develop them, such as: a need for a broad, imaginative interest in and understanding of human affairs (particularly of human relationships, and the importance of persuasion), and superior intellectual capacities.

### **2.5.3 South Africa**

Bush et al. (2006:14) argue that “there is very limited material on the management of teaching and learning in South African schools”, and most importantly, “there are no

accounts of how school principals and other school managers exercise ‘instructional leadership’ in their schools and seek to develop an effective culture of teaching and learning.”

Similarly, Christie (2008:283) states that:

The research and theory on school leadership and theory on school leadership and management has burgeoned in western countries such as the United Kingdom, USA, and Australia. Research in these countries has informed leadership studies in South Africa and the post-Apartheid policies introduced to reform the schooling system, including its leadership, management and governance.

*South African Standards for School Leadership (SASSL)* (DoE, 2007) emphasises the central role that needs to be played by the principal in driving the instructional programme of the school. The SASSL document states that “the principal working with the School Management Team (SMT) and others has a primary responsibility to promote a successful learning culture within the school”. This document emphasises that there is a great need for principals in South Africa to lead instruction in clearly defined ways in order to improve teaching and learning.

The need for the principal to promote effective teaching and learning and to influence learner achievement is emphasised by Bush and Glover (2009) when they propose that a principal who focuses on managing teaching and learning would undertake the following activities to influence learner achievement:

- Oversee the curriculum across the school;
- Ensure that the lessons take place;
- Evaluate the learners’ performance through scrutiny of examination results and internal assessment;
- Monitor the work of the HoDs through scrutiny of their work plans and portfolios;
- Ensure that HoDs monitor the work of educators within their learning areas;
- Arrange a programme of class visits followed up by feedback to educators; and

- Ensure the availability of appropriate learning and teaching support materials

The duties mentioned above assign core duties for principals to undertake in managing teaching and learning. They highlight the need for principals to prioritise teaching and learning on a consistent basis.

Interest in educational administration is found in South Africa at present in courses in educational management which are being provided at universities such as Wits, Potchefstroom and North-West. Others are also conducted through management of school training programmes (MSTP) (Rajendra, 1999). The Transvaal Education Department (TED) provided courses in management skills to practising teachers as early as 1982 (Van der Westhuizen, 1995). The same author believes that as far as cooperation on national and international levels is concerned, South Africa has a tremendous backlog in education, and there is an immediate necessity to bridge the gap.

However, some educational experts (Kruger, 2003; Van der Westhuizen, 1995) contend that one problem which is hampering educational administration and management in RSA is the apparent fear that greater recognition of educational administration would result in too many sub-disciplines, which are inclined to develop into disciplines.

According to Legotlo (1994), management development in education is still in its infancy in most African countries, including South Africa. There is no comprehensive, well-structured in-service programme, and this is attributed to the apartheid policies which prevailed for many years. The shortfall in educational administration could be attributed to the fact that there is no national policy to develop it in South Africa.

However, at present the educational system in South Africa is undergoing a transition. Curriculum 2005 was introduced at the Grade 1 level in all the schools, and it was hoped that by 2005 it would have been implemented up to Grade 12 (Rajendra, 1999). This means that there has been a paradigm shift from the traditional teacher-centred teaching to learner-centred teaching. Principals in high schools provide the necessary teaching skills, with curriculum improvement and optimum use of resources (Lubisi, Wedekind, Parker, & Gultig, 1997).

Sehlare (1994) has reported on organisation and management with respect to communication with parents and the effectiveness of formal meetings. Rajendra (1999) has clearly brought out a distinction between instructional leadership and educational leadership. South African schooling involves a devolved management system whereby the management of the school is vested not just in the principal but in the broader- based SMT (and to some extent in the SGB).

Clarke (2007), in his book *The Handbook of School Management*, which is about how to manage a South African school, says there are four strategies managers use to ensure operational effectiveness, namely:

- Planning and budgeting: creating structures for operational efficiency;
- Organising and staffing: making sure that everyone is informed about what is expected;
- Controlling and problem-solving: taking action and making it happen;
- Predictability and order: stability from everything working perfectly so that teaching and learning happens with maximum impact.

The strategies he mentions apply to all contexts, and can be used by principals to make poor, underresourced schools become more affluent. The four strategies, when applied to a school, can cover a wide ground. Operating the school efficiently through having the right management procedures and policies is what underpins the school operations, and when these are in place they allow the principal of the school to lead his/her staff more effectively.

Despite a range of challenges some schools are able to make a difference and create conditions in which children succeed against the odds. Rosenholtz (1989) contends that in general there are two types of school: stuck and moving. The stuck schools are schools with lower levels of learner achievement where educators work in isolation (seldom asking for help), and where there is little to no evidence of leadership. In a moving school, there is evidence that educators work more collaboratively, and this embraces the principal of the school, who helps educators achieve goals and improve learner achievement. Moving schools do not necessarily have all the equipment and resources they want, but with a teaching force that works together to solve problems, many obstacles can be overcome. Moving schools have principals who lead and

educators who also lead in terms of their classrooms or departments. There is a collaborative approach to leading, evident in all parts of the school. Leithwood et al. (2006:27) says that successful school leaders are open-minded and ready to learn from others. They are also flexible rather than dogmatic in their thinking within a system of core values, persistent (e.g. in pursuit of high expectations of staff motivation, commitment, learning and achievement for all), resilient and optimistic. Such traits help to explain why successful leaders facing daunting conditions are often able to push forward when there is little reason to expect progress.

What is certain is that school leadership is an evolving and changing function, which is influenced by people, the context and broad economic circumstances. The change in the way schools operated in the 1970s to their functions today reflects this very clearly. There has been a move away from autocratic leadership to a more inclusive and collaborative approach. Wilson et al. (1994), in *School Leadership for the 21st Century* (Davies & Ellison, 1997), illustrate this clearly. They show how a plethora of leadership styles and approaches has evolved over the years, and identify five levels of leadership that are apparent in our schools today. Each one of these levels have a parallel management style and approach to running the day-to-day activities of the school.

## **2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter comprises a review of local and international literature on instructional leadership. The literature review emphasised the role of the principal as a leader, and highlighted the need for the principal to be involved in curricular and instructional issues that directly affect learner achievement. The next chapter will present the research design and research methods used in the collection and analysis of data.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 a literature review was conducted on the role of the principal as instructional leader. The review lays a foundation for an evaluative analysis of the role of the principal as instructional leader in schools. This chapter explains the methodology used to conduct the study. It describes the research instruments used in the data collection, and the steps taken to ensure their validity and reliability. The aim of the investigation is to determine the role of principals as instructional leaders.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Schumacher and McMillan (2010), a research design refers to the plan and structure of investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions. The current study was based on a qualitative approach. This is because the researcher intended to collect participants' figures. This focus on participants' utterances is one of the features that distinguish qualitative research case study from quantitative ones (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Simply put, within a qualitative paradigm, data collection techniques are used to capture the richness and complexity of behaviour that occurs in a natural setting. Once collected, data can be analysed inductively to generate findings (Creswell, 2010).

#### 3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A sample is a group of individuals who participate in the research. It is selected from a population (a larger group in a particular environment). The purpose of the sample is to get participants who can give you a good insight into that which is being examined (Henning et al., 2004).

Interviews were conducted with a sample that was purposive. According to Marshall (1996), many qualitative researchers use purposive sampling because they recognise that some participants are "richer" than others, and they are more likely to provide insight and understanding for the researcher. In other words, these samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

De Vos (1998) indicates that a sample comprises the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which we are interested. We study the sample in an effort to understand the population from which it was drawn. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) point out that, in purposive sampling, people are chosen, as the name implies, for a particular purpose. For instance, we might choose people whom we have decided are “typical” of a group, or those who represent diverse perspectives on an issue.

The main criterion is to gather data where the source is rich. Silverman (2000) adds that purposive sampling allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested. However, this does not provide a simple approval of any case we happen to choose. Purposive sampling demands that we think critically about the parameters of the population we are interested in, and choose our sample case carefully on this basis.

In this study the sample was 195 respondents in the Umlalazi Circuit, as indicated in the table below.

**Table 3.1 Number of Participants**

Schools	No. of respondents	%
Mafunda	16	8
Mavumengwane	29	15
Nokhalela	23	12
Hhashi	20	10
Gqokinsimbi	29	15
Ndluyesilo	23	12
Ntabantuzuma	23	12
Eshowe High	16	8
Sunnydale	16	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

### **3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

In this empirical study, questionnaires and interview questions were employed as the research instruments to collect data. Wellman and Kruger (1999) state that questionnaires and individual interviews are the most common instruments to collect data in survey research. The questionnaire is the most convenient technique to collect information from respondents on opinions, beliefs, attitudes and convictions about a particular topic.

Henning et al. (2004) very succinctly describe interviews as communicative events aimed at finding what participants think, know and feel. "This would imply that interviews are conducted with the express aim of finding out what participants think, feel, do and what they have to say about the topic or issue on hand." Henning et al. (2004) aptly summarise it as the participants giving the interview "their subjective reality in a formatted discussion." In addition to this, interviews also enable the researcher to check, verify or refute information gained through other research methods such as literature review and observation.

In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with scheduled, standardised, open-ended questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). In the semi-structured interview, a schedule is used as a guideline for the interviewer and contains a set of open-ended questions relevant to the research. In the standardised open-ended interview, participants are asked the questions in the same order (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

The aims and objectives of the research, as stated in Chapter 1, guided the structure of the interviews. Reassurance was given to the participants that the aim of the research was not to judge or evaluate their management skills, but to determine their perceptions in respect of instructional leadership. The interviews were conducted in a mutually agreed location. According to Lichtman (2009), a considerable amount of information can be obtained by observing participants in their physical settings.

#### **3.4.1 The Interview guide**

In this study the researcher used questionnaires and open-ended interview questions as research instruments. One of the ways of collecting data is by asking questions. The questionnaire method using open-ended questions was less time-consuming, as much the same information could be written by a large number of people at the same



time. The open-ended questions were then supplemented by information gathered during additional semi-structured interviews. Interview questions were used to add to the depth of the data collected through questionnaires.

Sibiya (1992) asserts that a written questionnaire is more efficient and practical than interviews, and allows for the use of a larger sample. It is widely employed in educational research. He stresses the importance of using a questionnaire in research, claiming that it is not just a list of questions or a form to be filled out, but is essentially a scientific instrument for measurement and collection of particular kinds of data.

Sibaya states that the questionnaire serves two major purposes:

- Firstly, it translates the research objectives into specific questions, the answer to which will provide the data necessary to test the hypotheses or to explore the area set by the research objectives; and
- Secondly, the purpose of the questionnaire is to motivate the respondent to communicate the required information.

### **3.4.2 Importance of using the Questionnaire as Instrument**

The questionnaire method was considered to be more appropriate for collecting data for this particular study as it included open-ended questions to provide rich data. It thus served the purpose of a written interview. It was chosen because it reached a large number of respondents at the same time for the data collected to have the highest level of validity.

### **3.4.3 Construction of the Questionnaire**

Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) point out that the purpose of the questionnaire is to translate the research objectives into specific questions or statements. For the purposes of this study a questionnaire was compiled with the aim of establishing the principals', deputy principals' and HoDs' understanding of the instructional leadership role and the responsibilities of the principal. The questionnaire design has the greatest influence on the reliability of the data collected. It is important that great care be taken when designing a questionnaire because, if improperly constructed, it can lead respondents to miss the target, and confuse them about the designed nature of information required by the researcher. Schuman and Presser (1981) conducted valuable research on the formulation of questions in a questionnaire. He concluded that a good questionnaire construction is seen as a difficult and time-consuming task,

but it is more likely to elicit a good response than that from a poorly constructed questionnaire. In this study, the questionnaire was divided into three sections.

**Section A** consisted of questions 1-6, which aimed at gathering information about the biographical and demographical background of respondents.

**Section B** consisted of eight subsections, and was used to determine the views of educators on the role of principals as instructional leaders in secondary schools. For each item, the respondents were asked to express their opinions on a three- or four-point Likert scale. Section C included an open-ended question in which respondents were required to give their own opinions on how principals should perform their roles as instructional leaders so as to improve the quality of education in secondary schools.

#### **3.4.4 The Type of Questionnaire Used**

Two types of questionnaire were considered for this study, namely, a structured questionnaire and an unstructured questionnaire. The researcher asked most questions in the structured form, and very few unstructured questions. To indicate their answer, the respondents put a cross in the relevant item from the list provided. Gall and Borg (1991) point out that the advantages of using the structured questionnaire are that it facilitates response, and also make analysis very efficient and objective.

A four-point scale was used to rate and answer questions. The essence of the Likert scale is to increase the variations in the possible scores by coding from “fully agree” to “fully disagree”, instead of merely “agree” and “disagree” (Dougherty, 2002; Bailey, 1987). The rating scale was organised as follows:

<b>Response</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neutral	3
Agree	4
Strongly agree	5

The researcher considered that this study also required unstructured questions in order to allow the respondents to go beyond simple responses to the questions asked, and to express their views in any way they desired. The use of open-ended questionnaires was meant to enable respondents to express their opinions about how they view the

role of principal as instructional leader. The questionnaires used were then followed up by semi-structured interviews.

### **3.4.5 Validity of the Questionnaire**

Validity in a qualitative perspective questions whether the researcher, by using certain methods, is investigating what he says he is investigating (Henning et al., 2004; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). McMillan and Schumacher (2006) maintain that claims of validity rest on data collection and analysis techniques. Prolonged engagement, triangulation, member checks and peer debriefing were used to promote confidence that the researcher had accurately recorded the phenomena under investigation – i.e. the researcher's credibility. Before the initial interviews took place the researcher made contact with each participant telephonically to establish a relationship of trust, via prolonged engagement, between them. The interviewer also knew, and had at times interacted with, some of the participants on a professional level.

Participants were given the opportunity to refuse to participate in the project so as to ensure that data collection sessions involved only those who were genuinely willing to take part (Creswell, 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Mouton, O'Leary, 2004; Mouton, 2001). In this study, interviews and documents were used to support themes that emerged from the study. Regular checks (member checks) were done with the participants to ensure the accuracy of data collection; i.e. transcription of interviews were given to each participant to verify (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Shenton, 2004). Peers and colleagues were given the opportunity to comment on the research project so that the project could be refined and strengthened.

This section was intended to report on the extent to which the procedures used to implement the questionnaire in the study succeeded in gathering the responses. The validity of the questionnaire was determined on the basis of its "construct validity". According to Wellman and Kruger (1999:138), when a research instrument is used to measure a variable, it must measure what it is supposed to measure. If it measures something else, it will lead to incorrect conclusions. The construct validity was used, because it refers to the degree to which a research instrument measures the intended construct rather than an irrelevant construct. The questionnaire was proven valid, because there were no instances of the following being encountered during the study:

- Acquiescence – the phenomenon where respondents tend to answer in the affirmative to items irrespective of the content of the question.
- Socially desirable responses – the phenomenon where respondents deliberately provide answers which they believe are socially acceptable.
- Faking – the phenomenon where respondents distort their response in order to create the desired expression. This was particularly avoided by multiple-choice questions.

### **3.4.6 Reliability of the Questionnaire**

Reliability in qualitative research refers to the consistency and dependability of the researcher's findings. Dependability and confirmability will be obtained through triangulation as well as a detailed report on the processes followed in the study so that a future researcher may repeat the work as well as determine how far the data and the constructs that emerge from them may be accepted (Shenton, 2004). The taped interviews, transcriptions of the interviews, and all documentation collected were stored and kept safely for verification purposes.

The questionnaire was reliable because generalisations could be made from the responses: for instance, the majority of the respondents gave the same answers to particular questions. This made interpretations and analysis easier. The reliability of the questionnaire was estimated based on the "internal consistency reliability source", which states that "a high degree of generalizability across the items implies a high internal consistency" (Babbie, 1998:154). In this context, if the respondents perform well on the items of the questionnaire, the chances are that all educators will do well on the same items. According to Wellman and Krueger (1999:214), "to determine the reliability of a research instrument using the internal consistency method, measurement can be administered only once to a representative sample."

### **3.4.7 Characteristics of a Good Questionnaire**

The researcher took into account the characteristics of a good questionnaire when constructing hers. This served as a ground for formulating a valid and reliable research instrument for this study. Cohen and Manion (1989) give the following as some of the characteristics of a good questionnaire:

- It should be as short as possible;
- It must be unambiguous and uniformly workable;
- It must avoid putting threatening questions to the respondent;

- It must seek information which is not available from other sources;
- Its design must minimise errors from respondents;
- The questions should not be leading to avoid predictable responses;
- The questions should deal with a single, simple concept, and be straightforward; and
- Since people take part voluntarily, a questionnaire must arouse their interest and encourage them to give truthful answers.

### **3.4.8 Limitations of the Questionnaire**

Ary et al. (1972:87) outlined these as limitations of a questionnaire:

- Respondents may misinterpret the questions owing to poor wording;
- It may seem less adaptable if not flexible;
- The questionnaire may not elicit a high completion rate as respondents may put questions aside and simply forget to complete and return them; and
- Restrictions that are put on this type of interview increase its reliability, but decrease its depth. In an attempt to overcome limitations, the researcher asked both closed- and open-ended questions to get in-depth information. The researcher also edited questions to ensure clarity.

## **3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

This section explains how data for the study were collected. As mentioned earlier, data were collected by means of interviews and questionnaires.

### **3.5.1 The Pilot Study**

According to Fogelman and Comber (2007), undertaking a pilot study before the main study is sensible for the sake of the clarity and validity of the instrument to be used. McMillan and Schumacher suggest that it is best to locate a sample of subjects with characteristics that are similar to those that will be used in the study, and that the administration of the pilot study instruments should be the same as that to be used in the study. Turner (2010) asserts that the piloting phase is important because it helps the researcher avoid vague questions that may appear in the instruments. He asserts, with McMillan and Schumacher that the pilot study tests the research instruments on a small number of persons with similar characteristics to the research population. In this study, the pilot study was conducted using five principals, five deputy principals and five HoDs.

For the pilot study, the researcher first contacted each of the respondents and explained the objectives of the study, then agreed on arrangements for the interviews and administration of the questionnaire. The interviews took place in their respective schools. The pilot was of great significance in that it helped the researcher to test the interview protocol's wording and relevance for the main study. Based on the comments made in the pilot study, the questionnaire and the interview questions were modified to be more useful in the data collection. The main purpose of the pilot study was to detect the suitability of the interview questions and the questionnaire in the actual study; i.e. to find out whether the questionnaire would be reliable and could be used to provide the desired information on the research topic. The investigations conducted in the pilot run provided an opportunity to avoid difficulties and disappointments in the research, as modifications were made at this stage. The pilot run also gave clear ideas about when and where to collect information for the research.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

According to Henning et al. (2004:101), "The true test of a competent qualitative researcher comes in the analysis of data, a process that requires analytical craftsmanship and the ability to capture understanding of the data in writing."

#### **3.6.1 Analysis of Data from the Interviews**

Data analysis is making sense of the data that were collected. The researcher took notes during the interviews, and transcribed the interviews as soon as possible after they had taken place. Analysis was done throughout as well as after data collection. Data were closely examined to search for themes and patterns that illustrated similarities and differences, and to uncover the meaning of particular perceptions focusing on the aim of the study (Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 1998).

For the purposes of this study, Tesch's (1990) approach to data analysis, as cited by Creswell (2009) and Henning et al. (2004), was used. The researcher carefully read and reread all the transcripts to get a sense of the whole. One participant's responses were randomly selected to find the underlying meanings and thoughts of that interview. Thoughts regarding what the respondent actually contributed on a certain theme that came up were written in the margin. The same procedure was followed for each interview transcript. Similar topics were then clustered together and arranged into

themes and subthemes. Themes were reduced by grouping related topics that showed interrelationships.

Henning et al. (2004) emphasise that the analyses should be a true reflection of the participants' views and perceptions.

### 3.6.2 Data Analysis from Questionnaires

The first step that the researcher took was to give each response an identification number. The second step was the scoring of the questionnaires. Each response to an item was assigned a number of points; for example:

#### Scoring

1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

After scoring was done and checked by a qualified test user who conducts psychometric and edumetric tests for respondents in the Umlalazi Circuit, the results were transferred to a summary data sheet. The scores were systematically recorded. Each item was assigned its column. Since the data analysis involved item analysis, the scores for each item were tabulated.

After the statistical analyses had been completed, all the data were rechecked. The original scores were rechecked together with the data sheets. Presented below are statistical tables drawn up from the replies to the questionnaires, together with brief analyses and interpretation of the data.

### 3.6.3 Follow-up

Since non-response is a major disadvantage of a questionnaire, follow-ups were very important in maximising response level. Follow-ups were made personally with principals of the selected schools. The researcher repeatedly visited the respective respondents to check and assist in the problem areas in completing the questionnaire.

### **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Researchers are unconditionally responsible for the integrity of the research process (Mouton, 2001; O' Leary, 2004:50). Ethics is the foundation for all research. According to Janse Van Rensburg (2001:28), "Research ethics refers to the moral dimensions of researching, our decision – technical and otherwise – about what is right and wrong while we engage in research." To this effect, this research was carried out within an ethical perspective taking into consideration respect for persons, knowledge, democratic values, and the quality of educational research.

Ethics dictates the importance of obtaining informed consent from the participants, and ensuring that the participants understand fully what participation in the research project entails (Creswell, 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Mouton, 2001; O' Leary, 2004). In order to get the participants' informed consent and voluntary participation, the purpose and goal of the research were explained to them. They were made aware that they might withdraw from the research at any time. At the end of each interview participants were asked to give permission to the interviewer to use the contents of the interview for research purposes, and this was recorded.

Another ethical priority is ensuring the confidentiality of the participants (Creswell, 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Mouton, 2001; O' Leary, 2004). O' Leary (2004) outlines the following conditions for the protection of participants' identities: secure storage of data; restricting access to raw data; obtaining permission for subsequent use of data; publication of research findings in a manner that does not allow for ready identification of subjects; and eventual destruction of raw data. To ensure confidentiality, no personal information has been or will be revealed without the participant's consent. All information obtained was kept safe during the duration of the study, and will be accessible to the participants upon request.

#### **3.7.1 Permission for Conducting Research**

Permission was sought from and granted by the King Cetshwayo District Director. The researcher wrote to the circuit manager and ward managers to ask permission to conduct research in the circuit and in the two wards targeted. A request to conduct the survey was sent to all principals of the nine schools where questionnaires were administered.



### **3.7.2 Covering Letter**

A covering letter was used to introduce the questionnaire to the respondents. The purpose was to indicate the aim and importance of the study, and to assure respondents of their confidentiality so as to encourage their participation. The covering letter guaranteed the anonymity of the respondents, and gave them the directions to complete the questionnaire (Borg & Gall 1989; Trew, 2002).

### **3.7.3 Administration Procedures**

Permission for access to schools was secured from the circuit manager and the school principals. The researcher distributed the questionnaire personally to respondents in the selected schools.

### **3.7.4 Distribution of Questionnaires to Schools**

The researcher personally visited the principals of the targeted schools to distribute letters of request as well as questionnaires. The request to conduct research was accepted by principals. A time was scheduled for them to return the questionnaires after one week, as prearranged with principals.

## **3.8 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE'S RETURN**

After a week following the distribution of questionnaires, not all principals had returned their responses. The researcher then decided to follow them up, visiting schools to collect the responses. Some respondents who had not yet completed their questionnaires asked for more time, which was granted. In spite of these problems, the data collected represented 90% of the target schools. This return was sufficient to enable the researcher to continue with data analysis and make reasonable conclusions about the research findings.

## **3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter has given a detailed description of the methods, tools and procedures used in the research. Interviews and questionnaires for educators were used for data collection. The rationale for the research tools used was explained. The chapter also discussed the sampling procedures followed in the study. The following chapter discusses the reliability and the methods of analysis of the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, the focus was on research design. This chapter focuses on analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the empirical data that were elicited from the respondents by means of the items that were part of the questionnaires and interviews. Data were collected by using information accumulated from the open-ended questions emailed to the respondents, and the follow-up semi-structured interviews conducted with nine secondary school principals in the Umlalazi Circuit. The literature review conducted was used as a point of departure in informing the findings as well. Findings from the open-ended questions and interviews were integrated into the discussion.

#### 4.2 INTERVIEWS

##### 4.2.1 Background of Selected Schools

The following observations and information were gleaned from the interviews and documents of the schools sampled. Table 4.1 provides a summarised profile of the schools; thereafter a brief overview of each school is given.

**Table 4.1: Profile of the Schools**

School	Quintile grouping of the school	Socio economic status of majority of the learners	Language of Instruction	No of learners	No of management members	No of SGB employed educators
A	4	Below to average	English	1034	5	5
B	5	Above average	English	998	6	8
C	5	Average	English	685	5	4
D	2	Average	English	860	4	5

E	3	Below average	English & Zulu	340	4	0
F	2	Average	English& Zulu	1483	6	0

### **School A**

School A has an enrolment of 1 034 learners, 24 permanently employed Department of Education educators, five management members (including the principal), five SGB-employed teachers, and four SGB-employed assistant teachers. It is situated in a well-developed suburban area, and caters for learners within the area as well as learners from other areas close to the schools and townships. The socio-economic status of the majority of the learners varies from below average to average. There are learners who come from the above average bracket, but they comprise a small minority. The language of learning and teaching is English. The school is a solid brick structure, and the buildings and gardens are well maintained.

The school's management team is very capable. The principal has been there for 12 years, and places a lot of trust in her deputy principal, who manages the curriculum and teaching and learning at the school. The results of the annual national assessment (ANA) that was conducted at the beginning of 2011 indicate that the learners in Grade 8 are performing at acceptable levels in maths and English, with an average percentage of 68% and 66% respectively. The Grade 9 results indicate an acceptable level (50% average) in English, but a below average one (48%) in maths. The school is performing well in Grade 12.

### **School B**

School B has a solid brick structure, which is well maintained. The office and reception area is very welcoming. It has an enrolment of 998 learners, five SMT members (including the principal), 25 permanently employed teachers, two permanently employed SGB teachers, and two part-time SGB teachers. It is an English-medium school. Learners fall within the above average socio-economic bracket. Learners that attend the school come from the immediate area as well as from the surrounding and outlying areas and township.

The principal has served at the school for 33 years, and has been principal for 12 years. The school is a well-established one in the Umlalazi Circuit, and is known for its high academic and extra-curricular achievements. The principal supplied the

researchers with the 2011 ANA results, which showed that the school performed at an acceptable level in both English and mathematics.

### ***School C***

School C has an enrolment of 685 learners, six SMT members (including the principal), 16 permanently employed teachers and eight SGB-employed teachers. It is situated in a well-developed area, and the majority of the learners come from an average socio-economic background. Like School A, this school caters for learners within the area as well as from outlying areas and townships. The principal has approximately 12 years of experience as an SMT member, and has been principal for approximately four years. From the interview, it would seem that the deputy principal is “old-school”, and that the educators face a major challenge in terms of transformation. The principal took over a school that has a history of good academic achievement, and she is striving to maintain and improve the standards of the school.

The principal provided the researcher with some of the documentation, but was not willing to give the ANA results. However, since the school was not identified as one that needed support, it can be assumed that the results were at an acceptable level. The performance in Grade 12 is at an average level.

### ***School D***

School D is situated in a suburban area; it is well maintained, and has a solid structure. It has an enrolment of 860 learners, with four SMT members, including the principal, 16 permanently employed teachers and five SGB-employed teachers. The reception area has been done up to provide a warm atmosphere. The language of learning and teaching of the school was previously Afrikaans, but has since changed to English.

Most of the learners come from an average socio-economic background. Learners who attend are from both the immediate area and from the surrounding outlying areas and townships. The ANA results indicate that Grade 8 and Grade 9 both performed poorly in English and mathematics. Average percentages cannot be given as the analysis of the results did not include them.

The principal has served for at least 12 years as a senior phase facilitator in the district office, and has been principal of the school for only 17 months. She has set her mind

on improving the academic standards at the school. There has been good performance in Grade 12.

### ***School E***

School E is situated in a township, and is relatively small. The grounds are well maintained, but the reception area looks a bit spartan. The receptionist was, however, very friendly and welcoming. The school has an enrolment of 340 learners, four SMT members (including the principal), and 12 permanently employed teachers. The learners all come from low socio-economic groups. The language of learning and teaching in Grades 8 and 9 is isiZulu, and from Grades 10 to 12 it is English.

The SMT is relatively small. The principal has been in his position for 12 years. Results from the ANA 2011 indicate that the school is performing poorly in both English and mathematics. Grade 8 learners had an average mark of 43% in mathematics and 48% in English. Grade 9 learners had an average of 24% in English and 27% in mathematics. Grade 12 learners are not performing well.

### ***School F***

School F is a fairly big school that caters for 1 483 learners, has six SMT members (including the principal) and permanently employed educators. The learners all come from average socio-economic groups. The language of learning and teaching in Grades 8 and 9 is isiZulu, and from Grades 10 to 12 it is English. The school is situated a short distance from School E, but is in a more well-developed area. It has a solid structure.

The principal has been in this position for approximately 14 years. The SMT of the school is doing very well in terms of monitoring and supervision. Grade 9 ANA results for 2011 indicate that the learners are underperforming in both English and mathematics. Grade 8 learners had an average of 36% in English and 38% in mathematics, and the Grade 9 learners had an average of 23% in English and 16% in mathematics.

#### **4.2.2 Themes**

Data were closely examined to search for themes and patterns that illustrate similarities and differences, and the researcher made an effort to uncover the meaning of particular perceptions, focusing on the aim of the study (Creswell, 2009:98-99;

Mertens, 1998:350-351). For the purpose of this study, Tesch's (1990) approach to data analysis, as cited by Creswell (2009:186) and Henning et al. (2004:127-128), was used.

The researcher first listened to the recordings of each interview. Verbatim transcripts were then read and reread to get a global understanding of the interviews, and to familiarise the researcher with the data. Thereafter the researcher randomly picked out each verbatim transcript, and started analysing them one by one until all had been analysed, and similar topics or ideas had been coded. Similar topics were then grouped together and arranged into themes and sub-themes.

For processing interview data, the researcher formulated themes from interviewees' responses to codify the data. She used P1 to P10 in order to identify respondents with whom interviews were held. In analysing interview data, she used thematic analysis, which involved reading verbatim transcripts, identifying possible themes, comparing and contrasting themes, and building theoretical models. Themes were reduced by grouping related topics that showed interrelationships. Most of the themes that emerged from the interviews corresponded with the literature.

The themes and sub-themes represented in Table 4.2 will be discussed and supported with relevant questions from the interviews. The findings will be analysed and interpreted within the framework of literature control.

**Table 4.2: Research Themes**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
1. Duties of the Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership role</li> <li>• Management functions</li> </ul>
2. Balancing the Administrative and Instructional Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overload of administrative tasks</li> <li>• Curriculum changes</li> <li>• Day-to-day school management</li> </ul>
3. The Manager's Instructional Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum management model</li> <li>• A lack of active involvement by principals</li> <li>• A lack of extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Formal supervision versus informal supervision</li> <li>• Monitoring learner progress</li> </ul>
4. A Positive School Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of the principal as a teacher</li> <li>• Time management</li> <li>• Incentives for teacher</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives for learning</li> <li>• Promotion of professional development</li> <li>• Visibility: maintaining high visibility</li> </ul>
5. Vision and Mission of the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frames to communicate the school's goals</li> </ul>

The themes and sub-themes indicated in Table 4.2 will now be discussed in detail.

#### 4.2.2.1 Themes and sub-themes

Table 4.2 presents the first theme, namely the duties of the principal. The literature review reveals that previously principals were seen mainly as managers in that their primary function was to manage the school and the personnel. However, in recent years, the role of the principal has become more complex and demanding, as in addition to management functions the principal is now seen as a learning leader whose main focus should be on improving teaching and learning. It is, therefore, not surprising that the two sub-themes that emerged from this theme were that of management functions and the leadership role. Each sub-theme will be discussed.

**Table 4.3: The Duties of the Principal**

Themes	Sub-themes
Duties of the Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership role</li> <li>• Management functions</li> </ul>

### 4.3 THE DUTIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

#### 4.3.1 Instructional Leadership Role

Literature on instructional leadership indicates that most researchers and educationists define instructional leadership in terms of the influence the principal has on the teaching and learning process, and ultimately on learner achievement. When studying the responses five of the 10 principals indicated that they felt that an important part of their duty as principals was to promote teaching and learning in their school.

Principal C felt that although there were many responsibilities that a principal had, the most important task was ensuring that the learners received a holistic education: *“If you are making sure that the children are getting a holistic education, the other things will fall into place.”*

Principal E stated that: *“The core business of the school is teaching and learning, definitely. The other aspects are just supporting teaching and learning.”*

Principal F said: *“I would say our time is consumed largely in trying to see to it that the curriculum is delivered and there is improvement in terms of our learner achievement, because I think that is the core of our business.”*

In the theoretical framework adopted for this study, supervising and evaluating instruction, providing a safe school environment, motivating teachers and getting parental involvement are all tasks characteristic of an instructional leader. The following responses by the interviewees confirm this perspective.

Principal D maintained that her most important duties as a principal were to make sure that the school was functional, that there was good quality teaching on a daily basis, that the resources required by both teachers and learners were made available, and that parents felt happy that their children were with the principal of that specific school.

Principal B: *“To motivate them (teachers) all the time, I think that’s the biggest role for me as a principal. And then it is important to get parents also to support their children continuously.”*

Only one principal thought that curriculum management was the terrain of the deputy principal. Principal A asserted: *“At this school the deputy is in charge of the academic side of the school, to check that, you know, like with curriculum management....The most important thing, in my opinion, for a principal is you need to ensure that your management team is competent, and that they are responsible for the department.”*

Instructional leadership differs from that of a school manager in that the role of the instructional leader involves setting clear goals, managing the curriculum, and monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. In other words, leadership embraces those actions that principals take to promote teaching and learning in their schools (Yu, 2009:715; van Deventer & Kruger, 2008:245; Bush, 2007:391; Copeland, 2003:2).

#### **4.3.1.1 Management Functions**

When studying the data there is evidence that principals consider management functions to be an important part of their job. However, only one principal stated clearly that he considered his core duties to be that of managing finances,



administration and maintaining the grounds and buildings. Principal A responded: “...*basically management, the financial department, your administration side, grounds, and that the place is maintained and kept right. That is the duty of the principal.*”

Three of the principals viewed management duties to be part of their core duties as their responses indicate below:

*Principal B: “Most important duties, I think, are – okay, yes, the administrative part.”*

*Principal D: “For me the most important duty is to make sure that school is functional.”*

*Principal F: “The duties of the principal involve planning for the school day, I think, to run smoothly, and also check whether whatever is put in as our plan is followed; and then if things don’t go as per plan you then have to try and assist or intervene, depending on how the situation is.”*

Literature reveals that the traditional role of the principal involves mainly management duties such as attending to administrative duties, scheduling, reporting, handling relations with parents, finance management, ground and building maintenance, and so on. Those duties as mentioned as crucial responsibilities by the participant above are also referred to by critics on the tasks of the principal (Goslin, 2009; Bush & Heysteck, 2006).

Theme 2 brings us to a discussion of how principals balance the two roles discussed in Theme 1.

#### **4.3.2 Balancing Administrative and Instructional Roles**

**Table 4.4: Challenges Faced by Principals**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
Delegation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of mentorship</li></ul>

#### 4.3.2.1 Lack of Mentorship

According to Hallinger and Heck (2010), the delegation of responsibilities empowers and encourages broad participation in decision making, and fosters shared accountability in respect of curriculum management in schools. Principal B said: “I have to delegate some instructional duties because of the multiplicity of tasks that I have to perform.” Regarding the sub-theme on the lack of mentorship for new principals, Principal D said: “In my first year I wished I had a mentor to hold my hand.”

**Table 4.5: Balancing Administrative and Instructional Roles**

Themes	Sub-themes
Balancing the administrative and instructional roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administrative overload</li><li>• Curriculum changes</li><li>• Day-to-day school management</li></ul>

Bush and Heystek (2006) indicate that many principals neglect their instructional leadership role and tasks, because too many interruptions and a seemingly endless stream of administrative and managerial issues divert their attention (Blasé et al., 2010:4; Goslin, 2009:15; McNeil et al., 2003:87; Fink & Resnick, 2001:1; MacNeill et al., 2003:40; Sybouts & Wendell, 1994:2). When asked to narrate the challenges and successes in this regard, it was disturbing to note that some principals had a very limited understanding of the term “instructional duties”, particularly as it relates to leadership. The responses by certain principals revealed that they thought that instructional duties referred specifically to their personal roles as teachers.

The principals interviewed all agreed that it was difficult to balance their administrative and instructional leadership roles, and the following sub-themes emerged in this regard, viz.: administrative overload, curriculum changes, and day-to-day school management.

#### 4.3.2.2 Administration Overload

Five of the respondents indicated that too many administrative tasks made it difficult to cope:

Principal D admitted: *“It is very difficult. Let me tell you it is not always easy. Administratively, everybody demands a massive load of paperwork that must be done in a certain way, policy way, and it must be done in a meticulous manner and*

*lucky for me, I am a very good administrator. I can do that, and I like neat things, and I'm very computer-skilled as well, so that's not a problem. But from time to time you have to leave some of the things on a daily basis. You have to keep a vigilant eye on everything on a daily basis to make sure that you have every document they want, and when they want it."*

Principal F said: *"No, I would say one copes, but you know, the paper trail, it's something one would say, like, it's seasonal, its occasional... you even have to delegate.... But largely the rest of the work, it's done by the members of the SMT, we cope through putting in extra hours in order to do whatever is needed."*

Principal A also felt that the amount of paperwork and the changing of documents' formats took up a lot of time.

He said: *"Sometimes we get stuck with paperwork, and then I don't get to the classes as often as I would like."*

*"There's lots of paper and it keeps on changing, and this\*\*\*\*\*form, and then there's this format and that format."*

Principal B said: *"The administrative part is very demanding"*

Principal C felt that the key to balancing her instructional and management duties were to manage her time efficiently; hence, she started her school day early in the morning, and ended it late in the afternoon.

*"You have to make sure about the manner that you manage your time, as the one shouldn't compromise the other. So I start work at half-past-six in the morning...and that is so that before I go in to do my instructional work I have done quite a bit of the administrative work for the day; and then I wrap up in the afternoon. So I think you have to marry the two, but I think that the key issue here is time management."*

#### **4.3.2.3 Curriculum Changes**

Both Principals E and B felt that the number of changes in respect of curriculum poses a challenge to balancing the administrative and instructional leadership role of the principal. Principal E complained that *"Changes are coming in a radical manner. They are coming up with a lot of programmes at the same time. Like 2010, 2009/2010 they introduced the Foundation for Learning, and just as we are starting to adjust and are in a position to apply to correct the situation we move to CAPS."*

Principal B agreed with Principal E, and admitted that a serious challenge was with the current situation and the changes in curriculum, with so-called training that was supposed to take place.

#### **4.3.2.4 Day-to-day School Management**

The principals who were interviewed indicated that certain interruptions during the school day sometimes took them away from their instructional leadership duties.

Principal B tried to balance the two roles by prioritising and developing a “to do” list, but admitted that attending to difficult parents in the district demanded discipline, and day-to-day problems of the school interfered with the completion of tasks. *“In most cases it is a difficult parent coming in... and then it is with district demands. You know, they will phone and tell you they want something now, and being a new principal you don’t want to be defiant.... And then also sometimes the discipline of the children poses problems.”*

She went on to say that she tried to counter this by allocating set times to see parents. She said: *“I have made a certain time only where I can see parents or any stakeholders, because, you know, they just pitch up there and say: ““Oh, I want to see the principal.””*

Principal D talked of unexpected emergencies that “pop up” which kept him occupied and caused him to divert from what he planned: *“For instance now, five minutes ago, I discovered five leaks in the school, you understand? Water leaks all over the school! My pipes all over the school are giving me problems.”*

From the above responses it was clear that many of the respondents found it challenging to balance their administrative duties with their instructional leadership roles. This finding was consistent with those in the literature review. The following challenges were identified as interfering with the principals’ duties, viz.:

- Instructional leadership duties;
- Too much paperwork;
- The frequent changing of documents’ format by the district office;
- Too many changes in curriculum too quickly;

- Unplanned-for day-to-day concerns such as parents demanding to see the principal;
- Burst water pipes;
- District office requiring information without giving prior notice and
- Formats for submitting assessment statistics to be examined.

These documents corroborated what the principals said. Some positive suggestions were also forthcoming, such as to how to cope with these challenges: namely, prioritising, planning, delegating and managing time efficiently.

Both Principals D and F said that it was important to delegate certain duties to other SMT members as well as teachers but, at the same time monitoring was important. Principal D admitted: *“I want to do everything, want to take charge of all. You can’t do it. As a principal you have to delegate, but you have to monitor, and that makes balancing slightly better. In the end you remain the responsible officer.”* Theme 3 is discussed next.

### 4.3.3 Management of the Instructional Programme

**Table 4.6: Management of the Instructional Programme**

Themes	Sub-themes
Management of the Instructional Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum management model</li> <li>• A lack of active involvement by principals</li> <li>• A lack of extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Formal supervision versus informal supervision</li> <li>• Monitoring learner progress</li> </ul>

#### 4.3.3.1 Managing the Curriculum

With regard to curriculum management it was found that the curriculum management model which the Umlalazi Circuit required their schools to follow when reporting on content coverage had to be adhered to. The principals’ management had to reflect an awareness of pertinently managing the academic curriculum. It was reported that it gave more direction to principals and SMT members in that it provided guidelines as to what, how, and when to monitor. They said it also assisted with setting and evaluating targets in respect of covering curriculum content,

identifying areas of weakness, and suggested measures for improvement in respect of learner performance, teacher performance and management of members. A principal said: *“Performance is also catered for in the model. However, the model is still in its ‘teething’ stages, hence problems such as an abundance of paperwork and the lack of proper training and cascading of information from district officials to school management teams and teachers are being encountered.”*

Five of the principals interviewed indicated that they were following the model, and although there was no consensus on its merits, their responses indicated that they were engaging with it.

Principals A confirmed: *“Yes, we’re following that (curriculum management model). We don’t have a choice. I have written to Adv. Bengston Mali to raise my concerns about the paperwork .... I told the teachers: please get back to the HoDs and let us create a year plan for every learning area.”*

Principal B asserted that: *“You know the curriculum management model, they want two reports. So what I do is take files for one, and for the second one I go for a quality class visit.”*

Principal D remarked: *“I do class visits. We’ve got the curriculum management model.”*

Principal E said: *“I also do the new curriculum management model that was introduced by our department, our district. I think that also makes it easy.”*

Principal F argued that: *“Last year, when this (curriculum management model) was introduced it was working; this year they’ve thrown it into confusion.”*

According to Glanz (2006:33), instructional leaders need to familiarise themselves with basic concepts pertaining to curriculum development. Hallinger and Murphy (1986) cite coordinating the curriculum as one of the job functions of an instructional leader. To do this, the leader would have to be kept informed of changes that take place.

#### **4.3.3.2 A Lack of Active Involvement by Principals in Curriculum Management**

The principals interviewed delegate curriculum management to their SMTs. However, the three female principals played a very active role in researching and presenting workshops to their teachers in this regard. The three male principals did what was required of them, but relied on their SMTs to workshop the teachers and run the process.

Principal B said: *“Although I do most of the admin, and the deputy is supposed to be in charge of the curriculum, right, I oversee the curriculum.”*

Principal C’s response indicated that she was trying to facilitate best practice in curriculum management by researching and giving workshops to teachers even before the district did so.

*“I have done a lot of curriculum work with them. I am busy at the moment with CAPS.”*

Principal D also became involved with the training, and tried her best to provide her teachers with the resources they required. She said:

*“We’ve got processes in place where my deputies and my HODs do training. I do training from time to time myself.... I make sure that all my teachers have got the best handbooks and teachers’ resources. I bought reading series for all grades.”*

According to Glanz (2006:33), instructional leaders need not be experts in curriculum, but it is necessary that they should have some knowledge of basic concepts that are related to curriculum development. Naidu et al. (2008:190-191) indicate that the role of the curriculum leader, in different learning areas in schools, is often delegated to members of staff who have the relevant knowledge.

#### **4.3.2.3 A Lack of Extra-curricular Activities**

According to Van Deventer (2003:249), effective instructional leaders would also have well-rounded extra-curricular programmes in place for their learners. Schools A, B, C and D seemed to have these. Although school E catered for a sports period and school F for athletics, there was no evidence of much emphasis being put on this aspect of the curriculum. The interview responses were corroborated by the relevant schools’ “year plans”.

Principal A remarked: *“Our soccer team won the league the one year; they won every match and went to the play-offs.”* The school’s year plan made provision for internal school athletics, soccer and netball events on a regular basis.

The principal of school B endeavoured to develop a more comprehensive extra-curricular programme, but the fact that many of the learners travelled made it difficult to involve them in sports after school. She indicated that learners took part in Olympiads, eisteddfods, athletics, soccer and netball: however, this could not be supported by the year plan as she did not supply the interviewer with a copy of it. She said:

*“We’ve had quite a few children who had actually excelled in the Olympiad, you know, receiving 80% and above. One or two children have gone further for district awards for athletics. When it comes to soccer and netball, we have it internally.”*

School C had a well- balanced academic as well as extramural programme in place. They offered 12 sporting codes, and the school’s year plan bore testimony to this. Besides sporting codes leadership camps were also catered for. The principal said: *“The policy tells us that we need to afford all learners opportunities. Then we must endeavour to do so to the best of our ability.”*

School D offered athletics, soccer, netball, chess, rugby, and had a musical planned. This was reflected in the school’s year plan. Principal D, in her responses, was very aware of the achievements of the teams, and attended matches on a regular basis. She asserted: *“I believe that the child must be balanced. Every child must do at least athletics as part of sport involvement; at least one winter sport and at least one cultural activity, plus their academics.”*

Principal E did not mention extra-curricular events at all, whilst principal F mentioned an athletics meeting in passing. School E’s year plan indicated that the school had a sports period every Wednesday, and school F’s year plan indicated two internal athletics meetings.

#### **4.3.3.4 Formal Supervision versus Informal Supervision**

Principals A and C preferred to do informal supervision because they felt that formal class visits might not be a true reflection of what was happening daily in the classroom. Principal A did informal supervision, and left the formal supervision to the other SMT members. He said: *“Quite often, when I have the time, I do unannounced*



*class visits... I stand in the back of the class. I check the books, just three or four books, (to see) if (they are) marked.*" He said he did that because he wanted to see what the teacher was really doing every day; he wanted to avoid window-dressing of lessons.

Principal C believed that teachers should be evaluated on a continuous basis as learners were. Therefore, she did informal supervision.

*"Yes, yes, yes. I supervise them. I visit regularly. I pop in ....I'm checking homework diaries. I'm looking at them; I am doing corrective teaching. That is what I do every day. So that is how you should be assessed, isn't it, on what I do every day? That's how children are assessed."* Principal C also believed in sharing of information, and was open to suggestions. She said: *"Also ask them. Isn't it important? Is it a two-way thing? These are my suggestions. What do you suggest? Because you get to know what goes on inside a person's head, you see. That's how you get to know each other. And if you get to know each other you can work together."*

Principals B and D did formal supervision. Principal B stated that: *"I go for class visits .... I take the kids' books and I monitor ... you ensure ... that the person ... is in line with the requirements of the policy of the school and the district."* Principals E and F also did formal visits for IQMS purposes, but they usually followed the curriculum management model, and only sampled if they needed to.

Principal F: *"You see, by the time the work gets to my office as a principal you'll find that the work load has been minimised, because my focus is just to check what the deputy principal is recommending in terms of whatever findings that were there when they actually verified the learner's books."* Principal F carried out information class visits, especially when invited to do so by the teachers.

The literature study reveals that supervision of educators' performance was more effective when it was carried out for support purposes rather than for evaluative purposes (Bush et al., 2009:4; Gupton, 2003:109-112). Some educationists felt that formal supervision places unnecessary stress, fear and anxiety on the educator, and thus impeded the development process.

#### 4.3.3.5 Monitoring Student Progress

Taking into account the low English and mathematics rates in South Africa, all the principals interviewed have set aside time or specific programmes to address these problems.

Principal A said: *“Yes, we have specific periods set aside for foundations for learning where they do the reading. It is alternating with reading and with maths....So every lesson, be it science or be it technology, part of that is a reading lesson with reading comprehension.”*

Principal C asserted: *“The problem starts with language acumen. If the child doesn’t understand it’s going to impact on English and mathematics. So you have to start with language and that is what I did ....It’s been a process....but I can see a distinct change in our children where English is not the home language.”*

Principal E admitted: *“Reading and writing is a challenge to some of the learners, but now strategically they allocate 30 minutes extra during the second term.”* Principal F set aside time at the beginning of the school day for learners to read. He said, *“Our first bell goes off at 7:40.”*

Principal B analysed results and set high standards: *“I’ve told them nothing must be below 70%....because....the main aim is that we want academic excellence at the school itself... if you set a lower standard...the standard of education is actually going to go down.”*

Principal C had a proactive attitude and believed in looking forward: *“I analyse everything. I have a moderation thing. I look at the work done, and when I have a look at the statistics, I look at how we can improve instead of displaying a negative, dissatisfied attitude. What strategies can we put in place to make it better? I avoid telling them they did not do their job.”*

Principal D said: *“I put systems in place. I give them goals and I say you don’t go on holiday without having a destination. So you plan your route. This is my destination, 60%....I make sure that all my teachers have got the best handbooks, teachers resources.”*

Principal E set targets when it came to content coverage, but was not very clear about setting targets for learner achievement.

Although all the principals set aside extra periods for English and mathematics, not all engaged in extensive analysis of results and setting of targets. It was clear that Principals C, D and E (the female principals) were more proactive in this regard.

Effective principals collect and review relevant assessment data with the intention of using their findings to improve the school instructional programme, as well as inform their leadership practices (Blasé et al., 2010:24; Glanz, 2006:8). Gupton (2003:176) maintains that it is important for instructional leaders to collect and use a wide variety of data as well as research to enable them to make informed decisions and plan strategies for improving learner achievement. Literature reveals that it is also important for instructional leaders to set high standards for learners to work towards.

#### 4.3.4 Promotion of a positive school climate

**Table 4.7: Promotion of a positive school climate**

Themes	Sub-themes
A positive school climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of principal as a teacher</li> <li>• Time management</li> <li>• Incentives for teachers and learners</li> <li>• Promotion of professional development</li> <li>• Maintaining high visibility</li> </ul>

##### 4.3.4.1 The role of the principal as a teacher

There is a general consensus amongst the principals interviewed that they would be in a better position to support and communicate good teaching practices if they engaged in teaching learners themselves.

Principal A said: *“It is nice to teach from time to time just to be hands-on; to know what is still happening and face discipline challenges that the teachers experience.”*

Principal A used his teaching experience to inform practices in school – flash cards.

He proudly stated: *“Those flash cards I implemented this year, because of my own teaching experience – [they] came in handy.”*

Principal B taught for personal satisfaction, but also admitted that she felt it was necessary to teach so that she did not get stuck in a rut doing administrative work. She wished to keep abreast with the latest developments, as she was concerned that she might fail to keep in touch with what was going on with teaching and learning at her school if she did not communicate with the teachers and stay in the teaching mode herself.

*She confidently stated: "I'm teaching ... for personal satisfaction (and) ...because we've got to be in touch with what's happening on the ground level, especially with the children ... and the teachers .... Now that I am teaching myself I realise that my expectations must also be realistic when it comes to the teachers."* Principal C also taught for personal satisfaction, but also admitted that it helped when managing teachers. She said: *"I think it is important that you keep your feet on the ground so that you experience what the post-level 1 teacher is experiencing, and you can relate because, you know, what I always say, and it's something my father taught me: don't expect somebody to do something that you cannot do. That's a simple philosophy in life, isn't it?"*

*"My educators see me there, going wild, teaching and doing what they do daily, and I think it is important, because you know what, it creates the sense of teamwork. I'm not sitting up there not knowing what the teachers experience daily. I'm with them in the field. You know, I think that is so important."*

Principal C said she taught because she did not have enough staff, but she said that it had many benefits: *"Number one, it gives me excellent insight into what is going on in my class ... I endure the frustrations that my teachers experience with regard to planning, preparation and assessment .... It gives you a good idea of how stressful it is to teach .... It also gives you an idea of how difficult discipline in classes sometimes can be. Teachers have much more respect for you if you're also a teacher, because now you talk with them and understand their problems better."* She continued: *"It's not recommendable for a principal to teach. It makes your administrative duties in your office sometimes difficult, because you have a lot of work; but for staff development, for team spirit, for understating your teachers, for understanding the curriculum, understanding the processes that are going around, new developments, all those things... It's the best thing for a principal to teach."*

Principal E said: *“It is so imperative that you at least have one class in your school so that you can understand the complaints and behaviour and the teachers’ frustrations, so that you can be in their shoes so that when you address some other frustrations you can also be hands-on, because you have personally experienced it not from a hearsay point of view. You also understand what their frustrations are and what the trends are as well as the commitment level of the learners.”*

Principal F said: *“So you tend to be always clued-up in terms of the curriculum issues and when there are changes you tend to read them with interest, because you are not only managing, but you are also implementing that in the class. So it makes you current. It makes you a very resourceful person, because you can cite things that are real, things that you saw, and things that you also dealt with.”*

Literature on instructional leadership strongly supports the notion that the principal should be a practising teacher. Effective instructional leaders maintain that being a practising teacher gives credibility to the principal as learning leader. Educators will respect the word of a person who can identify with what they experience. Also, being a practising teacher gives instructional leaders an idea of what is going on in the classroom, and this helps them to appreciate some of the challenges that teachers and learners face.

#### **4.3.4.2 Instructional Time**

Both Principal A and D felt that teaching time should not be wasted. Principal A co-taught with an SGB-employed teacher. This teacher did all the administration while the principal taught. However, if the principal was required elsewhere the SGB teacher took over his classes.

Principal A had programmes whereby learners who had matriculated and wanted to become teachers were apprenticed. Whilst they were being trained, they also assisted and stepped in if teachers were absent by being placed in the absent teachers’ classrooms. Hence no teaching time was lost.

Principal D exclaimed: *“I make sure that as little as possible contact time is infringed on. One day a term we jump in and we have fun, but for the rest of term we focus on teaching and learning.”*

Time is an important resource for effective instruction. Hallinger and Murphy (1985:223) identify protection of instructional time as one of the job functions that instructional leaders have to pay attention to.

#### **4.3.4.3 Incentives for Teachers and Learners**

The responses of Principals A, B and C indicated that they were aware of how important it was to keep staff members motivated. Principal A displayed a democratic leadership style as he allowed teachers the opportunity to have a say in what they wanted to teach: *He said: "You know a happy person works much harder, so to try to accommodate them as much as we can, we say: 'Where would you like to teach, and what extramural activities would you like to be involved in?'"*

Principal B found it challenging to keep teachers, especially the older ones, motivated. Despite these challenges, she persevered, and said: *"We have had our own internal teachers' awards with the teachers' acknowledgements .... We acknowledge effort by each one of them, even if it is for catering, or if it is for organising the sports; you know, give them individual accolades for that."* She added: *"Then we get like sponsorships ....maybe a T-shirt from Cell C, or KFC gives you something....Even the ones that are not performing we keep motivated by saying 'Okay, we acknowledge you for doing this here at a certain time of the year.'"*

Principal C talked about being sensitive and empathetic towards staff members. *"There must be an element of humility also in the leader of the institution because initially you are a family ....so you need to try and create an understanding of what and whom you are dealing with, because if you don't have that how do you work with them?"*

With regard to motivating learners, Principal D went the extra mile. She asserted: *"I reward children with a merit system. We've also got academic awards, but on a weekly basis. We've got a merit system where we reward children for making progress. Most of the merits (learners who achieved merits) I see on a weekly basis, so that they give me the statistics. I check the homework books every week. I go into six different classes, check whether they've written their homework down, whether the parent signed. I scold them if they haven't."*

Together with parents, Principal D was trying to build a relationship of trust, and put in an effort to instil confidence in her learners so that they learnt to believe in

themselves, which in turn would help them to achieve. Principal D said: *“I also launched a project called Project Awesomeness where parents are working towards guaranteed awesomeness ... One of the children came up with the title and we gave the parents key things to do at home, and it is working. Examples of key things are: ‘Encourage your children to express themselves and show enthusiasm for your child’s interests’.”*

It is a common notion that a person who is contented with his work and the atmosphere in which he works will perform optimally. Murphy and Hallinger (1985) indicate in their conceptual framework that effective instructional leaders acknowledge and reward teachers’ and learners’ efforts. Hallinger and Murphy (1985:223) contend that: “Principals can influence the students’ and teachers’ attitudes through the creation of a reward structure that reinforces academic achievements and productive efforts.”

#### **4.3.4.4 Promotes Professional Development**

The responses of Principals B, C and D (the female principals) indicated that they were very enthusiastic about staff development, and they were all proactive and involved in the implementation thereof.

In school B the SMT, including the principal, conducted workshops. They encouraged teachers to attend workshops conducted by the district, the unions and other professional institutions. Principal B went to workshops with her teachers to set an example. Principal C said: *“To me that (staff development) is a passion because if you develop your staff they grow, and the learners grow because I believe if you don’t grow you die.”*

Principal C said: *“I always say a ship is as good as its captain. That’s the bottom line, but you have to lead by example, and you have to show the people that they are working with you, not for you –with you. They must know that you mean what you say, and that there must be support. There must be growth and development in any institution, and that applies to you as well. Because let me tell you something ... I learn something from these people every day, and that enriches your life, you know.”*

Principal C also did a lot of research, and conducted workshops with her staff herself:

*“Oh! I have done quite a number of things: for example, effective classroom discipline (refers to a working document on her desk on discipline) ... I have done a lot of curriculum work with them. I am busy at the moment with CAPS because we are implementing it next year in the foundation phase.”* She encouraged her teachers to attend district workshops. They would go to their workshops (held by district) as usual, and use IQMS as a development tool. She said: *“If you have a look at IQMS, all those things that they refer to make us a holistic person in terms of our teaching and learning.”* Principal C, like Principal B, embraced the notion of being a lifelong learner.

She said: *“I am busy now with a thing for IQMS, and I called the SMT, and I said, ‘Well, Saturday we are working, because now we must engage with this thing, because now we need to learn from each other how to implement’.”*

Principal D said: *“I personally feel that developing teaching and learning is one of the key roles that you, as principal, must focus on, because this is what the school is about. It is about teaching and learning, making progress, meeting the mark.”* Principal D added: *“We’ve got processes in place where my deputies and my HoDs do training. I do training from time to time myself. I get skilled people in to train my teachers. I send my teachers on courses from the various unions as well. I pay for people to come in and develop and train my teachers.”* This principal was currently looking for a way to help Afrikaans-speaking teachers to master the English language as the LOLT of the school had changed from Afrikaans to English.

Principal F’s responses indicated that he played a somewhat active role in development by attending professional development courses, and ensuring that his teachers were informed of current trends and educational issues. *“We encourage dialogue in terms of new trends that come up in terms of your curriculum and delivery In our principal’s forum we’ve got a committee that is referred to as curriculum, so we also organise information sessions.... We invite people from outside ... invite District officials to come and assist.* He also involved experienced teachers within the school to share their expertise. Principal A had a particularly innovative programme in place for aspiring teachers, but relied heavily on the SMT to do internal development in their learning area meetings. He said: *“They (assistant teachers) have two separate contracts. We pay them for work, and there’s another*



*one, almost a loan contract, where we pay for their studies on the condition that when they're qualified we can appoint them at the school; so we invest in them."*

Principal E was quite forthcoming about his own development, which seemed quite impressive, but related mainly to administrative and management capabilities rather than as an instructional leader. He talked about his contributions to the school in terms of financial management systems, involvement of the community and securing of sponsors. However, when it came to the development of his teaching staff, he was vague, and it seemed as though SMT members did it on a one-to-one basis, as the need arose.

Principal D made an interesting and very valid point when she highlighted that newly-appointed principals received very little support, and she strongly believed that new principals needed to be mentored for at least two years. She asked: *"Where is the support for a manager? Those are the things that a person must look at. I'm telling you its falling flat. There must be support for eighteen months or two years. There must be somebody that is monitoring on a weekly basis a newly appointed principal. Our biggest problem in our system is poor managers and poor teacher development. If we want to realise the dream of good education in South Africa, we must stand up and say no to poor quality. That's it. The school is a learning organisation, and therefore one would assume that learning would be dynamic and affect every role player in the institution."*

Research shows that effective principals are lifelong learners and models of learning who engage in professional development opportunities both inside and outside the organisation (Blasé *et al.*, 2010:6; Gupton, 2003:81; Du Four, 2002:13; Fink & Resnick, 2001:4), encourage peer collaboration (Blasé & Blasé, 2010:135, Gupton, 2003:81; Fink & Resnick, 2001:4), make every effort to develop their teachers, and encourage them to engage in educational opportunities within and outside the school (Glanz, 2006:8; Gupton, 2003:81; Fink & Resnick, 2001:4).

#### **4.3.4.5 Maintaining High Visibility**

The responses of Principals C and D indicated that they felt that being visible could make a significant difference. Principal C said: *"I like to be visible. I like the children to see that I am there. I can coach, not very well, but I can. If I have to I will because I believe you must lead by example."*

Principal D said: *“I am very hands-on, very visible, and I walk into classes any minute of any day.... I’m not there to inspect or to check on a person.... I walk in to greet a teacher or I just walk in for the children to see that I am around.... I’ve seen it with my own eyes how my presence affects the boys. The moment I stand on the soccer field, everyone’s attitude changes. They probably think ‘Now I’m going for that ball. I don’t even have to go for the ball, but I want the principal to see me,’ and tomorrow in the class they will ask, ‘Did you see me Ma’am?’”*

It is interesting to note that both Principals C and D succeeded in getting much more parental support, involvement and attendance at school events than their colleagues. Principal C said that it might have something to do with her “open door” policy. Principal D attributed it to her massive communication campaign as well as a positive attitude.

Principal C said: *“If you were here last night – we had a parents’ evening last night. Ma’am, it was crazy! Last week we had an information evening here, and I had 400 parents in my hall – 400! So I’m privileged and I am blessed in that sense that my parents and my community support what we are trying to do because, you know, if you don’t have the support you’re not going to achieve anything, you see.”* She had difficulty explaining why she had the support, but many of the principals complained of a lack of parental support. *“No parent must ever feel that they can’t walk to the office. The same applies to a teacher, and the same applies to a learner, and I’m hoping that maybe it’s that the norms that we were trying to exude were felt by all.”*

Principal D said: *“Serious problems. Zero parental involvement. When they came here on the night of the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009 they said to me: ‘When you have parents’ evening you will have 10 or 15 parents.’ The first parents’ evening that I had, and I will tell you what: I went out with a massive campaign of informing parents, sending letters, notices everywhere around, 455 parents pitched for the parents’ evening, okay? My last parents’ evening which I had this year, 392 parents attended. It can be done.... But it depends on you as a manager. It depends on your attitude towards your parents.”*

Principals A, E and F all listed getting parental support as a serious challenge. Principal A said: *“They don’t read at home, there is not a culture of reading among*

*the parents. The parents don't encourage that, and they don't support that.*" Principal A said: *"Our soccer team won the league the one year. They won every match, and went to the play-offs. To try and get the parents there, I wrote a personal letter, you know ... not one parent showed up."*

Principal E exclaimed: *"Parents use schools as a dumping zone...."*

Principal F said: *"In terms of parents supporting the learners academically, you will be asking far too much from those parents because a lot of them, they are quite illiterate."*

It was found that many principals thought it was important for them to promote positive attitudes towards literacy and reading. She communicated well and effectively by adopting an "open door" policy, a strategy suggested by critics (Blasé et al., 2010:19; Gupton, 2003:78). Gupton (2003:78-79) asserts that sound communication can be promoted by informal class visits, by attending community based events, and by using multiple ways of communicating. Murphy (1990:174) maintains that "The principal fosters the development of a school learning climate conducive to teaching and learning by establishing positive expectations and standards, by maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and students, and promoting professional development."

#### **4.3.5 The Vision and Mission of the School**

**Table 4.8: Theme 5 – The vision and mission of the school**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>
Vision and mission of the school	Frameworks to communicate the school's goals

##### **4.3.5.1 Framework to communicate the school's goals**

The respective vision and mission statement of each school was examined to determine its focus as part of the framework of reference. The responses of the principals during the interviews were then examined to ascertain whether the principals were actually working toward achieving the goals documented in their vision and mission statements. They were striving towards "quality education" and developing "responsible citizens" who had a good work ethic and "good values".

The mission statement of school A was broad in that it contained two goals:

- to promote the culture of learning and training; and
- to provide opportunities for learners to achieve and excel.

It was difficult to ascertain whether Principal A was in fact putting his mission into practice as the goals were not specific and concrete. The mission statement of schools B, C, D, E and F were more specific and concerted. Responses of the respective principals during the interviews indicated that Principals B, C, and D reflected that their actions and perceptions were directed to a large extent by their mission statements. Compare the mission statements covered next.

- School B: *“We strive for: educator excellence by conducting in-service training and attending relevant courses; [we want a] school that will always prosper and grow to become the best English-medium school.”*
- School C: *“Educators are encouraged to keep abreast with new trends in education.”*
- School D: *“Encourage parental involvement. Motivate learners to constantly think for themselves.”*

Principal E’s responses reflected the school’s mission statement to a limited extent, and Principal F’s reflected it to a lesser extent. School E focused on holistic developmental educational activities. School F said their mission was to be an outstanding teaching and learning institution. The mission statement encapsulates the fundamental purpose of the school (Zepeda, 2004:89; Gupton, 2003:37). A mission and its statements serve to focus the school on the beliefs and values of the school community. The mission helps to guide the principal in focusing on development and coordinating the school’s improvement process. In addition to ensuring that the vision and mission are shared with all stakeholders, the leader has to communicate the mission and vision to them, and, more importantly, see to it that the vision is put into practice.

#### **4.4 QUESTIONNAIRE**

The first step that the researcher took was to give each response an identification number. The second step was the scoring of the questionnaires. Each response to an item was assigned a number of points, for example:

## Scoring

1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

After scoring was done and checked by a qualified test-user who conducts psychometric and edumetric tests for respondents in the Umlalazi Circuit, the results were transferred to a summary data sheet. The scores were systematically recorded. Each item was assigned its column. Since the data analysis involved item analysis, the scores for each item were tabulated.

After the statistical analyses had been completed, all the data were rechecked. The original scores were rechecked together with the data sheets. Presented below are statistical tables drawn up from the replies to the questionnaires, together with brief analyses and interpretation of the data.

### 4.4.1 General and biographical profile of the respondents

When the questionnaires were scrutinised, it was realised that all the respondents had fully completed the information regarding general and biographical data.

#### 4.4.1.1 Number of the respondents

Table 4.9 reflects the number of respondents per school.

**Table 4.9: Number of respondents per school**

Schools	No of respondents	%
Mafunda	16	8
Mavumengwane	29	15
Nokhalela	23	12
Hhashi	20	10
Gqokinsimbi	29	15
Ndluyesilo	23	12
Ntabantuzuma	23	12
Eshowe High	16	8

Sunnydale	16	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.9 revealed that 8% of the teachers that responded were from Mafunda High School, 15% from Mavumengwane High School, 12% from Nokhalela High School, 10% from Hhashi High School, 15% from Gqokinsimbi High School, 12% from Nduyesilo High School, 12% from Ntabantuzuma High School, 8% from Eshowe High School, and 8% from Sunnydale high School.

#### 4.4.1.2 Gender of respondents

Table 4.10 reflects the gender of respondents.

**Table 4.10: Gender of Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	60	31
Female	135	69
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.10 presents the gender of the respondents. A total of 195 questionnaires were collected; 31% of the respondents were male and 69% were female.

#### 4.4.1.3 Age Groups

Table 4.11 reflects the age group of the respondents

**Table 4.11: Age group**

<b>Age</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Under 30	53	27
30-40	105	54
Above 40	37	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.11 presents the ages of the respondents. A total of 195 questionnaires were collected; 27% of the respondents were people under the age of 30, 54% ranged from 30 to 40 years of age, and 19% were above the age of 40.

Table 4.12 reflects the academic qualifications of the respondents.

**Table 4.12: Academic Qualifications**

<b>Academic Qualification</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Secondary Teacher`s Diploma / Primary Teacher`s Diploma	21	11
National Professional Diploma in Education	18	9
Senior Secondary Teacher`s Diploma / HED / UED / PGCE	37	19
National Technical Diploma	47	24
Bachelor`s degree and above	72	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.13 presents the professional qualifications of the respondents. A total of 195 questionnaires were collected; the study revealed that 11% of principals had a Secondary and Primary Teacher's Diploma, 9% of the respondents had the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE), 19% had the Senior Secondary Teacher's Diploma, or the Higher Education Diploma (HED), the University Educational Diploma (UED), and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). 24% of the participants had the National Technical Diploma as their qualification, and 37% had a Bachelor's degree or higher.

#### **4.4.2 Teachers' views on the role of principals as instructional leaders**

In Table 4.13, respondents were required to indicate their views on the role of principals as instructional leaders. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree, Agree, Disagree* and *Fully Disagree*.

**Table 4.13: Teachers' views on the role of principals as instructional leaders**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. Schools need to pay attention to instructional leadership.	N	40	60	28	52	195
	%	21	31	14	37	100
2. School leaders need to re-orientate their priorities and concentrate on key aspects of instructional leadership.	N	40	55	40	60	195
	%	21	22	21	31	100
3. Principals in the exceptional schools choose to be instructional leaders first and administrative leaders second.	N	48	58	39	50	195
	%	25	30	20	36	
4. The principal should be principally engaged in operational rather than strategic planning issues relating to curriculum.	N	50	46	28	71	195
	%	26	24	14	36	100
5. Strong instructional leadership is closely associated with effective schools.	N	72	37	41	45	195
	%	37	19	21	23	100
6. The principal delegates some of his instructional leadership tasks to his staff.	N	69	72	48	6	195
	%	35	37	25	3	100
7. The principal and staff work out a plan of school activities at the beginning of the year.	N	64	78	40	13	195
	%	33	40	21	7	100



1. *Schools need to pay attention to instructional leadership.* In Table 4.13 it was revealed that the majority of the respondents (52%) agreed with the statement that the principal should pay attention to instructional leadership. The data confirms what South African researchers (Bush & Glover, 2009; Christie, 2008; Bush, 2007, 2006; Botha; 2004) have reported about what principals and educators think about the principal's role as instructional leader.
2. *School leaders need to reorientate their priorities and concentrate on key aspects of instructional leadership.* Table 4.13 showed that less than half of the respondents (43%) agreed that school leaders need to reorientate their priorities and concentrate on key aspects of instructional leadership. This is somewhat worrying because teaching and learning activities should be highly prioritised if a school is to function effectively. Instructional leaders need to understand the important role that they play towards the success of the school. According to Bush and Glover (2009), managing teaching and learning is one of the most important activities for principals
3. *Principals in the exceptionally good schools choose to be instructional leader's first and administrative leaders second.* Table 4.13 indicated that the majority of the respondents (55%) agreed that the principals in the exceptionally good schools choose to be instructional leaders. This finding is in line with Leithwood et al. (2006) who argue that principals can have an impact on classroom teaching by becoming instructional leaders. The authors state that there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its student achievement trajectory in the absence of instructional leadership.

4. *The principal should be principally engaged in operational rather than strategic planning issues relating to curriculum.* Table 4.13 revealed that the majority of the respondents (51%) agreed that the principal should be principally engaged in operational rather than strategic planning issues relating to curriculum. This finding is related to what Robinson (2007) has to say about the principal's involvement in instructional leadership issues. She points out that the impact on student outcomes is likely to be greater where there is direct leader involvement in the oversight of, and participation in, curriculum planning and coordination.
5. *Strong instructional leadership is closely associated with effective schools.* Table 4.13 showed that the majority of the respondents (56%) agreed that strong instructional leadership is closely associated with effective schools. This finding relates to what Bush and Glover (2009) have to say when they claim that a principal with a strong focus on managing teaching and learning would undertake the following activities:
- Oversee the curriculum across the school.
  - Ensure that lessons take place.
  - Evaluate student performance through scrutiny of examination results and internal assessments.
  - Monitor the work of HoDs through scrutiny of their work plans and portfolios.
  - Ensure that HoDs monitor the work of teachers within their learning areas.
  - Arrange a programme of class visits followed by feedback to teachers.

6. *The principal delegates some of his instructional leadership tasks to his staff.* Table 4.13 also indicated that the majority of the respondents (72%) agreed that the principal delegates some of his instructional leadership tasks to his staff. This finding confirms what researchers (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002; Hallinger et al., 2006) have said about the need for the principal to influence his/her colleagues so that learner achievement may be increased.
7. *The principal and staff work out a plan of school activities at the beginning of the year.* Table 4.13 revealed that a large majority of respondents (73%) agreed that the principal and staff work out a plan of school activities at the beginning of the year. This finding confirms what researchers on instructional leadership have said regarding the principal's need to work together with his/her team in the planning and execution of instructional activities (Leithwood, et al. 2009; Fullan, 2008; Lumby, 2003).

**Table 4.14: Teachers' views on the role of principals in offering strong instructional leadership**

In Table 4.14, respondents were required to indicate their views on the role of principals in offering strong instructional leadership. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree, Agree, Disagree* and *Fully Disagree*.

**Table 4.14: Teachers' views on the role of principals in offering strong instructional leadership**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. Our principal provides instructional leadership for his staff.	N	51	59	44	41	195
	%	26	30	23	21	100
2. Effective schools focus on learning and teaching.	N	70	54	32	39	195
	%	36	28	16	20	100

3. The ability of the school leader to offer strong instructional leadership is a key factor in ensuring academic effectiveness.	N	45	65	72	13	195
	%	23	33	37	7	100
4. Leader development programmes should focus on developing instructional leaders.	N	38	74	48	35	195
	%	19	38	25	18	100
5. Leader development programmes should reflect a concern with establishing an instructional climate through vision, teacher support and empowerment.	N	52	46	35	62	195
	%	27	24	18	32	100
6. Teacher monitoring and evaluation emphasises quality through facilitating learning and teaching.	N	60	42	25	68	195
	%	31	22	13	35	100
7. The principal and staff define the school's educational goals	N	43	38	49	65	195
	%	22	19	25	33	100

1. *Our Principal provides instructional leadership for his staff.*

The table above revealed that the majority of the respondents (56%) agreed with the statement that their principal provides instructional leadership for the staff. This data confirms what South African researchers (Bush & Glover, 2009; Christie, 2008; Bush, 2006, 2007; Botha, 2004) have reported about what principals and educators think about the principal's role as instructional leader.

2. *Effective schools focus on learning and teaching.*

Table 4.14 indicated that the majority of the respondents (64%) agreed that the effective schools focus on learning and teaching.

3. *The ability of the school leader to offer strong instructional leadership is a key factor in ensuring academic effectiveness.*

4. *Leader development programmes are to focus on developing instructional leaders*

5. *Leader development programmes should reflect a concern with establishing an instructional climate through vision, teacher support and empowerment.*

6. *Teacher monitoring and evaluation emphasises quality*

Teaching and learning are the core purpose of the school, which principals are required to achieve, as Bush and Glover (2009) emphasise.

In Table 4.14, it was revealed that the majority of the respondents (55%) agreed that the ability of the school leader to offer strong instructional leadership is a key factor in ensuring academic effectiveness. This finding is in line with what authors (Bush & Heystek; Leithwood et al. 2003) have said regarding the need for the principal to offer strong instructional leadership.

Table 4.14 showed that the majority of the respondents (57%) agreed that the leader development programmes should focus on developing instructional leaders. Researchers (Bush & Heystek, 2006; Bush, 2003) point out that one of the major challenges in educational leadership is that there is no educational qualification for principalship in South Africa. There is a great need for development programmes that focus on developing instructional leaders.

Table 4.14 showed that the majority of the respondents (51%) agreed that leader development programmes should reflect a concern with establishing an instructional climate through vision, teacher support and empowerment. This finding is in line with what Lazarus and Lolwana (2002) say when they point out that: "An effective school is one in which both leadership and management capabilities are developed in all members of the school community through ongoing personal and professional development and support."

Table 4.14 revealed that the majority of the respondents (53%) agreed that teacher

*through facilitating learning and teaching.*

monitoring and evaluation emphasises quality through facilitating learning and teaching. Teaching monitoring and evaluation impact on teaching and learning. Some of the duties of the instructional leader outlined by Bush and Glover (2009) include the following:

- Evaluate student performance through scrutiny of examination results and internal assessments.
- Monitor the work of HoDs through scrutiny of their work plans and portfolios.
- Ensure that HoDs monitor the work of teachers within their learning areas.
- Arrange a programme of class visits followed by feedback to teachers.

7. *The principal and staff define the school's educational objectives.*

Table 4.14 also revealed that less than half of the respondents (41%) agreed that the principal and staff define the school's educational objectives. This finding is worrying because the principal should plan and perform instructional activities in collaboration with his/her staff. Researchers (Leithwood, 2009; Harris & Chapman, 2002) have emphasised the need for principals to adopt a people-centred approach in their instructional leadership.

**Table 4.15: Teachers' views on the role of principals in implementing the vision and the mission of a coherent learning philosophy.**

In Table 4.15, respondents were required to indicate their views on the role of principals in implementing the vision and the mission of a coherent learning philosophy. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree, Agree, Disagree and Fully Disagree.*

**Table 4.15: Teachers' views on the role of principals in implementing the vision and the mission of a coherent learning philosophy.**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. The school leader has to ensure that there is a coherent learning philosophy for the school.	N	32	47	50	66	195
	%	16	24	26	34	100
2. The mission statement of the school should be the driving force for pupil learning.	N	64	72	32	27	195
	%	33	37	16	14	100
3. The vision should reflect the teaching programmes and learning goals of the school.	N	45	58	62	30	195
	%	23	30	32	15	100
4. A major part of a school's vision must be implemented through the curriculum and learning processes.	N	76	69	42	8	195
	%	39	35	22	4	100
5. The principal recognises good teaching among educators.	N	70	64	29	32	195
	%	36	33	15	16	100
6. High levels of skills are required in curriculum analysis and in understanding learning theory.	N	46	56	38	55	195
	%	24	29	19	28	100
7. The principal keeps his staff informed about department policies and regulations.	N	63	45	28	59	195
	%	32	23	14	30	100

- The school leader has to ensure that there is a coherent learning philosophy for the school.*

In Table 4.14, it was revealed that less than half of the respondents (40%) agreed that the school leader has to ensure that there is a coherent learning philosophy for the school. This finding is rather disturbing because visionary leadership is important for a school to function effectively. This view is endorsed by Sterling and Davidoff (2002), who point out that leaders need to dream, to imagine different solutions to problems and different possibilities for the school's future. Bush (2003) also states that a vision is increasingly regarded as a necessary component of effective leadership.
- The mission statement of the school should be the driving force for pupil learning.*

Table 4.15 indicated that the majority of respondents (70%) agreed that the mission statement should be the driving force for people's

learning. This finding is in line with what researchers on instructional leadership have said regarding the importance of a mission statement as a means to provide a clear vision and direction for the school's instructional programme (Leithwood, 2009; Mark & Louis, 1999).

3. *The vision should reflect the teaching programmes and learning goals of the school.* Table 4.15 revealed that the majority of the respondents (53%) agreed that the vision should reflect the teaching programmes and learning goals of the school. Harris (2009) believes that lack of direction or common purpose can contribute to the school's underperformance. The principal as an instructional leader should create a vision, mission and strategies which he/she should share with all stakeholders.
4. *A major part of a school's vision must be implemented through the curriculum and learning processes.* Table 4.15 showed that a large majority of the respondents (74%) agreed that a major part of a school's vision must be implemented through the curriculum and learning processes. Instructional leaders understand that they are responsible for their school's achievements. Fullan (2002) and Sergiovanni (2001) point out that instructional leaders need to ensure that they promote a vision that is aimed at both improving the teacher's ability to teach and motivating learners to learn.
5. *The principal recognises good teaching among educators.* Table 4.15 indicated that the majority of the respondents (69%) agreed that the principal recognises good teaching among educators. Harris (2009) asserts that instructional leadership determines the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom, and that there is a need for instructional leadership to recognise instances of good practice.
6. *High levels of skill are required in curriculum analysis and in* In Table 4.15 it was revealed that the majority of the respondents (53%) agreed that high levels of skill are required in curriculum analysis and in



*understanding theory.*      *learning* understanding learning theory. As mentioned earlier, researchers (Bush et al., 2006; Christie et al. 2005) have pointed out that it is unfortunate that the appointment of principals in South Africa is based on their experience as teachers, and not because they possess an educational qualification for principalship.

7. *The principal keeps his staff informed about department policies and regulations.* Table 4.15 also revealed that the majority of respondents (55%) agreed that the principal keeps his/her staff informed about department policies and regulations. The data in the table above confirm what Leithwood et al. (2003) suggest when they state that instructional leaders should facilitate a redefinition of peoples' mission and vision, a renewal of their commitment and recruitment of their systems for goal accomplishment.

**Table 4.16: Teachers' views on the duty of the principals to act professionally**

In Table 4.16, respondents were required to indicate their views on the duty of principals to act professionally. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree, Agree, Disagree* and *Fully Disagree*.

**Table 4.16: Teachers' views on the duty of principals to act professionally.**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. The principal and staff have established procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional leadership process.	N	48	52	50	45	195
	%	25	27	26	23	100
2. The effective school leader will be unable to create a coherent learning philosophy unless he/she is aware of the latest thinking on curriculum.	N	48	60	22	65	195
	%	25	31	11	33	100
3. The skills of the classroom teacher are very important in interpreting and implementing the curriculum.	N	54	48	35	58	195
	%	28	25	18	30	100
4. Instructional leadership is most effective in a school where collaborative planning and collegiality take place.	N	44	61	34	56	195
	%	23	31	17	29	100
5. The principal encourages leadership to emerge from educators.	N	32	48	46	69	195
	%	16	25	24	35	100
6. Instructional leadership inspires others to work.	N	52	44	32	67	195
	%	27	23	16	34	100
7. Instructional leaders manage and lead their schools through proper guidance.	N	54	62	31	48	195
	%	28	32	16	25	100

1. *The principal and staff have established procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional leadership process.*

In Table 4.16 it was indicated that the majority of the respondents (52%) agreed that the principal and staff should establish procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional leadership process. Chi-Kin, Lee and Dimmock (1999) argue that one of the tasks of the principal and his/her staff is to establish procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional leadership process.

2. *The effective school leader will be unable to create a coherent*

Table 4.16 revealed that the majority of the respondents (56%) agreed that the effective

*learning philosophy unless he/she is aware of the latest thinking on curriculum.*

3. *The skills of the classroom teacher are very important in interpreting and implementing the curriculum.*

4. *Instructional leadership is most effective in a school where collaborative planning and collegiality take place.*

5. *The principal encourages leadership to emerge from educators.*

school leader will be unable to create a coherent learning philosophy unless he/she is aware of the latest thinking on curriculum. Instructional leadership is based on the premise that principals are in the driving seat of the curriculum programme in the school. According to Blasé & Blasé (1999), the principal is to be involved in all curriculum issues of the school, including creating a learning philosophy, assessment, mentoring and monitoring.

Table 4.16 showed that the majority of the respondents (53%) agreed that the skills of the classroom teacher are very important in interpreting and implementing the curriculum, because teachers are the ones who do the actual teaching in the classrooms. That is why Harris and Chapman (2002) believe that poor relations between the principal and the classroom teachers could result in the underachievement of the learners.

In Table 4.16 it was also indicated that the majority of the respondents (54%) agreed that instructional leadership is most effective in a school where collaborative planning and collegiality take place. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) highlight the importance of human resources in school effectiveness. They further state that instructional leaders should acknowledge the important role of teachers in the effectiveness of the school, and that there is a need for instructional leaders to collaborate with other stakeholders in the planning and execution of instructional activities.

Table 4.16 revealed that less than half of the respondents (41%) agreed that the principal should encourage leadership to emerge from

educators. This finding is worrying, because the principal influences the instructional programme of his/her school through the educators who have to do the actual teaching in the classrooms. Lumby (2003) asserts that when motivation and morale are low, teaching and learning suffer. He further states that an effective leader disperses leadership and delegates tasks.

6. *Instructional leadership inspires others to work.*

In Table 4.16 it was shown that half of the respondents (50%) agreed that instructional leadership inspires others to work. This is also a worrying factor because a leader has to create enabling relations and collaboration with staff. McNeil and McClannahan (2005) argue that a school will not flourish for long on the actions of the top leaders alone, and that single individuals cannot lead schools to success if other members do not take on the responsibility for leadership.

7. *Instructional leaders manage and lead their schools through proper guidance.*

Table 4.16 indicated that the majority of the respondents (60%) agreed that instructional leaders manage and lead their schools through proper guidance. The data presented above confirm findings by other researchers on instructional leadership. For instance, Leithwood et al. (2006) refer to Ross and Gary's (2006) large-scale study in two districts of Ontario, Canada. This study focused on how principals contributed to increased student achievement by building teachers' professional commitment and beliefs, and their collective capacity.

**Table 4.17: Teachers' views on the role of principals on implementing curriculum**

In Table 4.17, respondents were required to indicate their views on the role of principals in implementing curriculum. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree, Agree, Disagree* and *Fully Disagree*.

**Table 4.17: Teachers' views on the role of principals in implementing curriculum**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. The principal discusses curricular policies with staff.	N	47	54	38	56	195
	%	24	28	19	29	100
2. In our school the principal modifies the school curriculum when this is essential to facilitate the teaching/ learning process.	N	56	59	33	27	195
	%	29	30	17	14	100
3. Delivering the curriculum is a major area where direct support is required from the school leader in helping staff to clarify the philosophy of the curriculum.	N	59	48	55	33	195
	%	30	25	28	17	100
4. The school leader should install a formal curriculum under close scrutiny.	N	48	48	43	56	195
	%	25	25	22	29	100
5. The school leader should keep talking to key people in curriculum development such as curriculum co-ordinators.	N	50	46	52	47	195
	%	26	24	27	24	100
6. The school leader must attend curriculum meetings as helper and supporter.	N	44	55	32	64	195
	%	23	28	16	33	100
7. The school leader must visit classrooms, look at pupils' books and check homework schedules.	N	42	54	51	48	195
	%	22	28	26	25	100

1. *The principal discusses curricular policies with staff.* Table 4.17 revealed that the majority of the respondents (52%) agreed that the principal should discuss curricular policies with the staff to assist curriculum implementation. This finding confirms Botha's (2004) assertion that the principal's major responsibility should be the creation of conditions that enable effective teaching and learning.
2. *In our school the principal modifies the school curriculum when this is essential to facilitate the teaching/learning process.* Table 4.17 indicated that the majority of the respondents (59%) agreed that in school the principal modifies the school curriculum when this is essential to facilitate the teaching/learning process. This is in line with what has been pointed out by researchers, that the principal needs to work with his/her staff in the planning and execution of instructional activities (Leithwood, 2009).
3. *Delivering the curriculum is a major area where direct support is required from the school leader in helping staff to clarify the philosophy of the curriculum.* In Table 4.17 it was revealed that the majority of the respondents (55%) agreed that delivering the curriculum is a major area where direct support is required from the school leader in helping staff to clarify the philosophy of the curriculum. Sergiovanni (2001) asserts that school leaders are held responsible for how well teachers teach and how much students learn, that instructional leaders hold high expectations for both teachers and learners, and that they will ensure that the learners' progress is monitored, while supporting, mentoring and modelling staff.

4. *The school leader should install a formal curriculum under close scrutiny.* Table 4.17 indicated that half of the respondents (50%) agreed that the school leader should install a formal curriculum under close scrutiny. This finding is worrying because the principal should carefully monitor the instructional programme of his/her school (Bush & Glover, 2009). The same authors state that principals should have adequate systems of control. Control in a school is the “principal’s means of checking whether the work is done.”
5. *The school leader should keep talking to key people in curriculum development such as curriculum coordinators.* Table 4.17 revealed that half of the respondents (50%) agreed that the school leader should keep talking to key people in curriculum development such as curriculum co-ordinators. This finding is worrying because the principal has to communicate with all stakeholders regarding curriculum issues. Botha (2002) points out that this is not an easy task, but that an effective principal could turn this challenge into an opportunity.
6. *The school leader must attend curriculum meetings as helper and supporter.* Table 4.17 showed that the majority of the respondents (51%) agreed that the school leader must attend curriculum meetings as helper and supporter. This finding relates to what Hallinger (2009) says regarding the need for the principal to work collaboratively with his/her colleagues. This finding suggests that even if the principal does not personally attend curriculum meetings, he/she can still do so by sending one of his colleagues such as the deputy principal to attend on his/her behalf.

7. *The school leader must visit classrooms, look at pupils' books and check homework schedules.* Table 4.17 reflected that half of the respondents (50%) agreed that the school leader must visit classrooms, look at pupils' books and check homework schedules. This finding is somewhat worrying in that monitoring the work of the teachers is important if the principal wants to know whether the instructional programme is going well. Bush and Glover (2009) say that "Arranging a programme of class visits followed up by feedback" should be one of the ways in which the principal checks if the work is done.

**Table 4.18: Teachers' views on the role of principals in creating an orderly and disciplined environment**

In Table 4.18, respondents were required to indicate their views on the role of principals in creating an orderly and disciplined environment. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree* and *Fully Disagree*.

**Table 4.18: Teachers' views on the role of principals in creating an orderly and disciplined environment**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. The instructional leader should create an orderly and disciplined environment.	N	48	52	30	65	195
	%	25	27	15	33	100
2. It is the principal's function to develop and maintain a positive school climate where teachers can work and students can learn.	N	60	54	28	53	195
	%	31	28	14	27	100
3. The working conditions of teachers contribute to the creation of a positive school climate created by the instructional leadership.	N	55	48	39	53	195
	%	28	25	20	27	100



4. The school leader needs to be a positive force through counselling and support to staff members.	N	54	48	32	61	195
	%	28	25	16	31	100
5. Educators who encounter teaching-related problems feel free to seek assistance from the principal.	N	37	52	42	64	195
	%	19	27	22	33	100
6. Our principal has established a school climate that is conducive to effective teaching.	N	61	54	37	43	195
	%	31	28	19	22	100
7. The school leader should solve problems through an authoritarian style of leadership.	N	10	21	25	139	195
	%	5	11	13	71	100

- The instructional leader should create an orderly and disciplined environment.*

Table 4.18 revealed that the majority of the respondents (52%) said that the principal should be involved in curriculum implementation and the creation of an orderly and disciplined environment. This confirms Botha's (2004) assertion that the principal's major responsibility should be the creation of conditions that enable effective teaching and learning. Whitaker (1997) also asserts that the instructional leadership role of the principal involves the provision of educational resources and support to the teachers and learners to improve teaching and learning. He proposes four areas of interaction for effective instructional leadership: an instructional leader is an instructional resource, a resource provider, a communicator and a visible presence.
- It is the principal's function to develop and maintain a positive school climate where teachers can work and students can learn.*

In Table 4.18 it was shown that the majority of the respondents (59%) agreed that it is the principal's function to develop and maintain a positive school climate where teachers can work and students can learn. This finding indicates that teachers realise that the principal's role is to create an enabling

environment where teaching and learning can take place (Harris & Muijs, 2005).

3. *The working conditions of teachers contribute to the creation of a positive school climate created by the instructional leadership.* Table 4.18 indicated that the majority of the respondents (53%) agreed that the working conditions of teachers contribute to the creation of a positive school climate created by the instructional leadership. This finding confirms what researchers (Bush, 2003; Hallinger, 2009), have said regarding the need for the principal to take a leading role in creating a positive school climate.
4. *The school leader needs to be a positive force through counselling and support to staff members.* In Table 4.18 it was revealed that the majority of the respondents (53%) agreed that the school leader needs to be a positive force through counselling and support to staff members. This finding relates to Blasé and Blasé's view that instructional leadership is a blend of tasks such as shaping and communicating goals, supervising and evaluating instructional practices, developing staff and evaluating progress in learner achievement.
5. *Educators who encounter teaching-related problems feel free to seek assistance from the principal.* Table 4.18 indicated that less than half of the respondents (46%) agreed that educators who encounter teaching-related problems feel free to seek assistance from the principal. This finding is worrisome because the principal as an instructional leader should be resourceful (Bush & Glover, 2009).
6. *Our principal has established a school climate that is conducive to effective teaching.* Table 4.18 showed that the majority of the respondents (59%) agreed that the principal has established a school climate that is conducive to effective teaching. This finding is in line with what Daresh (1989) says about the need for the principal to cultivate positive

relationships with individual teachers so as to create such a conducive climate.

7. *The school leader should solve problems through an authoritarian style of leadership.* Table 4.18 further revealed only 16% agreed and 84% disagreed that the school leader should solve problems through an authoritarian style of leadership. The style of leadership adopted by the principal could have a major impact on the instructional programme. Researchers (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Louis, 1999) have suggested the use of transformational or distributive leadership styles to ensure that the principal plans and executes his leadership duties together with his/her colleagues. Leithwood and Louis (1999) point out that transformational leadership has to do with increasing the capacity of others in the school to produce first-order effects on learning. For example, transformational leaders create a climate in which teachers engage in continuous learning, and in which they routinely share their learning with others.

**Table: 4.19 Teachers' views on the role of principals in organising, controlling and using the available sources of expertise**

In table 4.19, respondents were required to indicate their views on the role of principals in organising, controlling and using the available sources of expertise. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree, Agree, Disagree* and *Fully Disagree*.

**Table 4.19: Teachers' views on the need for principals in organising, controlling and using the available sources of expertise**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. The school leader should organise, control and use effectively all appropriate and available sources of expertise.	N	54	56	37	48	195
	%	28	29	19	25	100
2. Teachers must maintain control at all times, but at the same time create the related atmosphere that leads to effective learning.	N	64	72	31	28	195
	%	33	37	16	14	100
3. Instructional leaders should spend more time monitoring activities of teachers and learners.	N	48	51	29	67	195
	%	25	26	15	34	100
4. Principals as instructional leaders expect to see teachers teaching.	N	41	59	47	48	195
	%	21	30	24	25	100
5. The school leader should communicate the goals of the school to all members, so that teachers become committed and feel empowered.	N	52	45	32	63	195
	%	27	23	16	32	100
6. Our principal encourages the use of innovate teaching methods.	N	48	50	36	61	195
	%	25	26	18	31	100
7. The principal is actively involved in facilitating the teaching and learning process.	N	46	53	34	74	195
	%	24	27	17	38	100

1. *The school leader should* Table 4.19 indicated that the majority of the *organise, control and use* respondents (57%) believed that the principal *effectively all appropriate and* should use available resources and evaluate the *available sources of expertise.* effectiveness of the instructional programme. This finding confirms what Heneveld and Craig (1996) say about the need for instructional leaders to see to it that resources are available to provide sufficient support to teachers.

2. *Teachers must maintain control at all times, but at the same time create the related atmosphere that leads to effective learning.* Table 4.19 revealed that the majority of the respondents (70%) agreed that teachers must maintain control at all times, but at the same time create the related atmosphere that leads to effective learning. This finding indicates that it is important for leaders to consider the culture of the school. Foskett and Lumby (2008) point out that principals and teachers should be flexible, and use the culture of the school to enhance effectiveness.
3. *Instructional leaders should spend more time monitoring activities of teachers and learners.* In Table 4.19 it was indicated that the majority of the respondents (51%) agreed that instructional leaders should spend more time monitoring activities of teachers and learners. This finding is worrying because monitoring of the instructional programme should be one of the priorities of instructional leaders. Bush and Glover (2009) emphasise that it is important for instructional leaders to monitor the activities of the teachers and learners.
4. *Principals as instructional leaders expect to see teachers teaching.* Table 4.19 showed the majority of the respondents (51%) agreed that principals as instructional leaders expect to see teachers teaching. This finding is worrying because the core function of a school is teaching and learning. Bush and Glover (2004) assert that “the core purpose of principalship is to provide leadership and management in all areas of the school and enable the creation of support conditions under which high quality teaching and learning takes place and which promotes the highest possible standards of learner achievement.”
5. *The school leader should communicate the goals of the school to all members, so that teachers become committed and feel empowered.* In Table 4.19 it was indicated that half of the respondents (50%) agreed that the school leader should communicate the goals of the school to all members, so that teachers become committed and feel empowered. This is a worrying finding

because the principal should communicate with his/her staff and involve them in issues to do with instruction. Blasé & Blasé's (1998) study of 800 principals indicates that effective instructional leadership should value the need for communicating the goals of the school to all stakeholders.

6. *Our principal encourages the use of innovate teaching methods.* Table 4.19 revealed that the majority of the respondents (51%) agreed that the principal encourages the use of innovate teaching methods. This finding is worrying because the principal should take a leading role in promoting their use. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) point out that technical support is one aspect of school life which is often ignored. To ensure effective teaching and learning, it is the principal's responsibility to make sure that the school has resources, and that both teachers and learners have access to these resources.
7. *The principal is actively involved in facilitating the teaching and learning process.* Table 4.19 indicated that the majority of the respondents (51%) agreed that the principal is actively involved in facilitating the teaching and learning process.

**Table 4.20: Teachers' views on the role of principals in evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional programme**

In Table 4.20, respondents were required to indicate their views on the role of principals in evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional programme. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *Fully Agree, Agree, Disagree* and *Fully Disagree*.

**Table 4.20: Teachers' views on the role of principals in evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional programme**

		Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	Total
1. The main activity of the instructional leader should be to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional programme.	N	38	42	38	77	195
	%	19	22	19	39	100
2. The instructional programme should be adopted by all staff members after they have contributed to its formulation.	N	42	54	37	62	195
	%	22	28	19	32	100
3. An important objective of any administrator is to try to improve instructional supervision.	N	38	49	51	57	195
	%	19	25	26	29	100
4. Careful and well-planned evaluation is a prerequisite for the development and improvement of the instructional programme.	N	37	54	29	75	195
	%	19	28	15	38	100
5. Our principal promotes a sense of belonging among staff members.	N	48	53	29	65	195
	%	25	27	15	33	100
6. Our principal supports us in managing changes in teaching-related areas.	N	46	51	31	67	195
	%	24	26	16	34	100
7. The Instructional leader must study the instructional programme so as to develop and implement ways in which it can be improved.	N	54	48	27	66	195
	%	28	25	14	34	100

1. *The main activity of the instructional leader should be to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional programme.*

Table 4.20 indicated that less than half of the respondents (41%) believed that the main activity of the instructional leader should be to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional programme. This finding is worrying because the instructional leader will not be able to tell if the instructional programme is effective if he/she does not evaluate it. Bush and Glover (2009) emphasise the need for the principal to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional programme.

2. *The instructional programme should be adopted by all staff members after they have contributed to its formulation.* In Table 4.20 it was shown that half of the respondents (50%) agreed that the instructional programme should be adopted by all staff members after they have contributed to its formulation. This finding indicates that there is still a need to make principals and teachers aware that working collaboratively leads to a school functioning more effectively. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) point out that principals need to involve their staff in planning instructional activities.
  
3. *An important objective of any administrator is to try to improve instructional supervision.* Table 4.20 revealed that less than half of the respondents (44%) agreed that an important objective of any administrator is to try to improve instructional supervision. This finding is worrying because it indicates that some respondents did not realise that the most important role of the principal is that of instructional leadership. Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and Van Rooyen (2008) assert that the principals in highly productive schools are not only educational managers, but also instructional leaders. This is because these principals spend more time in direct classroom supervision
  
4. *Careful and well-planned evaluation is a prerequisite for the development and improvement of the instructional programme.* Table 4.20 indicated that the majority of the respondents (57%) agreed that careful and well-planned evaluation is a prerequisite for the development and improvement of the instructional programme. Bush and Glover (2009) point out that principals as instructional leaders should give greater attention to working with teachers to coordinate the school's instructional programme, and solving instructional problems.
  
5. *Our principal promotes a sense of belonging among staff members.* In Table 4.20 it was revealed that the majority of the respondents (52%) agreed that the principal promotes a sense of belonging among staff members. This finding is worrying because having staff pull together as one unit is crucial to staff effectiveness. Fullan (2000) suggests that positive relationships promote collaboration and a sense of belonging together.
  
6. *Our principal supports us in managing changes in teaching- related areas.* Table 4.20 showed that half of the respondents (50%) agreed that the principal supports them in managing changes in teaching-related areas. This finding is worrying in that the role of the principal as an instructional leader is "directly related to the processes of instruction where teachers, students and the curricula interact" (McEwan, 1998:45).



7. *The Instructional leader must study the instructional programme so as to develop and implement ways in which it can be improved.*
- In Table 4.20 it was further indicated that the majority of the respondents (53%) agreed that the instructional leader must study the instructional programme so as to develop and implement ways in which it can be improved. Blasé et al. (2010) and Gupton, (2003) have pointed out that principals should collect and review relevant data with the intention of using their findings to improve the school instructional programme.

#### 4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis and interpretation. These themes showed the participants' understanding of the instructional leadership roles and responsibilities of principals. The themes included the need for the principal to:

- Pay attention to instructional leadership
- Implement the vision and the mission of a coherent learning philosophy
- Exercise professionalism
- Implement curriculum
- Create an orderly and disciplined environment
- Organise, control and use the available sources of expertise
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional programme.

The data revealed that the participants understood the role of the principal in managing teaching and learning. This corroborated what Bush and Glover (2009) say about the role of the principal in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place: "The main purpose of schooling is to promote learning and teaching." However, the statistics revealed that participants did not clearly understand that instructional leadership is "a paramount dimension of leadership" which affects the school's core activities of teaching and learning. This confirms Bush and Heystek's (2006) findings that South African principals do not clearly conceptualise their role as instructional leaders. The data further revealed that leading teaching and learning is not the sole responsibility of the principal. The participants understood the need for the principal to work collaboratively with his/her staff in managing teaching and learning issues. This confirms Grant's (2006) assertion that schools can no longer be led by a lone figure at the top of the hierarchy. The

following chapter focuses on giving the reader an overview of the research conducted, outlines the findings, makes recommendations, and suggests further topics for research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, data collected from interviews and questionnaires were presented and analysed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A discussion of the statistics of the data was presented, and themes that emerged from interviews were identified and discussed. This chapter outlines the most significant aspects of the study. A summary of the study will be provided, followed by a discussion of the important findings from the literature review and the study. Thereafter recommendations will be made, and suggestions for future research proposed. The research questions, and to what extent they were answered, will be reviewed

#### 5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study was aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- To understand the roles of principals as instructional leaders in schools.
- To ascertain whether principals in the Umlalazi Circuit perform their roles effectively as instructional leaders.
- To ensure that principals fulfil their task as instructional leaders.
- To apprehend challenges which principals face when endeavouring to be instructional leaders.

In the researcher's opinion, the above objectives were accomplished as follows:

- The first objective of the study related to the duties of the principal. This objective was fulfilled through conducting research on instructional leadership. The literature (Hallinger, 2010; Bush & Glover, 2009; Bush, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2006; Botha, 2004) emphasises that the primary role of the principal should be leading the instructional programme of his or her school.
- The second objective had to do with whether principals in the Umlalazi Circuit performed their duties as instructional leaders. The objective was accomplished through the analysis and interpretation of the empirical data which indicated that the great majority of principals in the Umlalazi Circuit performed their instructional leadership role effectively. This was illustrated in

Tables 4.11-4.19, where participants stated that principals in the Umlalazi Circuit performed their duties as instructional leaders.

- Through the interviews used in the gathering of the data, the study accomplished Objective 3 by asking questions which emphasised the need for principals to perform their instructional leadership roles. According to the findings of this study, the primary role of the principal is to manage teaching and learning (cf 4.2.2.1-4.3.5.1).
- The fourth objective was accomplished through the analysis of the data which showed that there were many challenges facing principals in their attempts to be instructional leaders, such as the lack of teaching, learning and support materials. This was clearly shown in Table 4.18.

As mentioned in the introductory section, this study is divided into five chapters. The gist of each chapter is briefly presented below.

Chapter 1 includes the introduction, background to the study, clarification of concepts, the aims and objectives of the research, a description of the methodology, the delimitation of the field of study, and the summary of the chapter. The research problem is indicated in the title of the thesis.

In Chapter 2, the researcher examines the literature on instructional leadership. The aim of this chapter was to establish what other researchers have done on the topic. The chapter reviewed literature from South Africa and three other countries.

In concluding this chapter, the author states that the literature on instructional leadership emphasises the role of the principals as instructional leaders, and highlights the need for principals to make teaching and learning activities their primary responsibilities.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology that the researcher employed in order to obtain data from respondents concerning the roles and responsibilities of principals as instructional leaders. This chapter also discusses the research design, which includes the delimitation of the field of survey, the acquiring of permission from the Department of Education to conduct research, the selection of respondents (size of the sample, the sampling procedures), the research instrument (questionnaires and

interview schedule), the pilot study, administration of the questionnaires, the processing of data and ethical considerations (cf. 3.1).

Lastly, this chapter discusses the sampling procedures and methods of data analysis. Through a mixed method approach, this study analyses the qualitative data from interviews in terms of the themes that emerged from the data. The quantitative data collected through the questionnaire were analysed using a five-point scale which required the participants to indicate their preferences.

Chapter 4 focuses on analysis, presentation and interpretation of empirical data that were elicited from the respondents by means of questionnaire items and interviews. Scoring was carried out and checked by a qualified A-test user. Each item was assigned its column. Since the data involved item analysis, the scores for each item were tabulated. The statistical tables were drawn up from the replies to the questionnaires, and were presented together with brief reports based on analyses and interpretation of data. For processing interview data, the researcher formulated themes from interviewees' responses in order to codify the data, and thematic analysis was used to analyse interview data.

The empirical survey reveals that the majority of participants understood that the principal's main role and responsibility should be related to teaching and learning. This supports McEwan's (2003) assertion that effective schools do not just develop by themselves, but are developed by the instructional leadership of principals who create a school climate that is conducive to teaching and learning and who are excellent visionary communicators.

Findings also revealed that principals as instructional leaders need to balance their instructional duties and their administrative tasks. It was indicated that some principals believed that their administrative duties, which include the management of finances, buildings and staff are far more important than their instructional leadership duties.

It was also revealed in both questionnaires and interviews that the principal should play a significant role in monitoring learner progress. It was shown that the principal as an instructional leader should collect and review relevant assessment data with the intention of using their findings to improve the school instructional programme.

According to the findings of this study as illustrated in Table 4.19, one of the main functions of the principal is to evaluate the instructional programme of his/her school.

Chapter 5 reviews the entire study project. It also provides a summary of the findings (conclusions) from the literature, an empirical survey, and a set of recommendations, which it is hoped may help to solve the problems identified.

Research findings indicate that most principals were approachable and were always available whenever their educators sought assistance when they encountered teaching-related problems. It appears that participating principals adopted the “open-door” policy in their schools and thus put in an effort to keep effective communication with educators. It augurs well for education, because communication is an important function of any competent instructional leader in a learning institution.

The principal is expected to manage the school in terms of day-to-day functionality, buildings and grounds maintenance, managing of finance, human resource and so on. On the other hand the principal is also expected to be an instructional leader, which involves setting clear goals, allocating resources for instruction, managing the curriculum, monitoring teaching and learning, and creating a climate conducive to learning. The researcher found that principals tended to concentrate on management at the expense of instructional leadership, managing the instructional programme, focusing on aspects such as curriculum management, a lack of active involvement of the principal, a lack of extra-curricular activities, supervision and evaluation, and monitoring learner progress. The final theme examined the importance of the vision and mission, and of having clearly defined and strategic goals.

Taking the above into consideration, various recommendations were made. For schools to be effective the role of the principal has to change from manager to that of instructional leader. It is anticipated that this study will make them aware of the importance of instructional leadership. This summary conveys some of the salient aspects of the research, and procedures that were undertaken during the course of the research. Important findings emerging from the data are presented and recommendations are proposed.

### **5.3 Summary**

This section deals with several important findings with regard to the role of the role of principals as instructional leaders. The summary of findings is not exhaustive, but deals only with salient issues that emerged from the study, as discussed below:

#### **5.3.1 Summary of findings from the qualitative data collected**

##### **Finding 1**

The duties of the principal emerged as one of the themes from the qualitative phase of the study. It was found that in the 10 secondary schools in the Umlalazi Circuit principals were aware that they had both management and instructional leadership duties to perform. The findings of the study point out that principals need to make instructional leadership their primary responsibility. Most of them listed promoting teaching and learning as being their main job function. This is in keeping with Hallinger and Murphy's instructional leadership model (1995), and is encapsulated in the dimensions of managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school climate.

It is also interesting to note that some of the core duties that were identified were based on their unique situations, and on what the community and other stakeholders expected of them. An example of this would be motivating teachers as priority, because at that particular school there was a need to motivate the teachers. Another example would be to maintain and improve the high academic standards of the school because that was expected by the community as the school had always delivered good results.

##### **Finding 2**

Another theme that was identified was that of principals balancing their administrative and instructional leadership duties. It was found that many of the respondents find it difficult to do this. This finding is consistent with the findings in the literature review. The following challenges were identified as interfering with the principals' instructional leadership duties.

- too much paperwork;
- the frequent changing of the format of documents by the district office;
- too many changes in the curriculum too quickly;

- unplanned day-to-day concerns such as parents demanding to see the principal;
- burst water pipes; and
- the district office requiring information without giving prior notice.

Some positive suggestions were also forwarded as to how to cope with these challenges: namely prioritising planning, and managing time and delegation effectively.

### **Finding 3**

With regard to curriculum management, it was found that the curriculum management model implemented had to a certain extent directed principals to focus more directly on managing the academic curriculum. It gave more direction to SMT members in that it provided guidelines as to what to monitor, how to monitor and when to monitor. Curriculum management was listed as an essential function of instructional leadership which was covered as part of managing the instructional programme in Hallinger and Murphy's instructional leadership model (1985). Principals interviewed indicated that they were following the curriculum management model, and although there was no consensus on its merits, their responses indicated that they were engaged with it. However a matter of concern was that district officials did not give effective training on its implementation.

It was discovered that the principal modified the school curriculum when necessary to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Research findings indicated that most principals engaged in curriculum matters. These included planning, implementation, development and evaluation of the curriculum. This is encouraging for the education of this country. However, it was disappointing to learn that there was a substantial number of principals who were not involved in curriculum management in their schools.

### **Finding 4**

There was general consensus amongst the principals interviewed that they would be in a better position to support and communicate good teaching practices if they were engaged in teaching the learners. Most of them confirmed, as evident from the research findings, that involvement in teaching gave principals fresh perspectives on what teachers experience in classes, because they were then experiencing the same



problems, which provided insight into daily challenges. Teachers also tended to respect principals more, because they realised that the principal faced the same problems, and would then be more understanding towards them. In addition to this, all the principals indicated that staff development was very important, and they subscribed to the notion that principals and teachers should be lifelong learners. The above-mentioned aspects are linked with the notion of promoting a healthy school climate as proposed by Hallinger and Murphy's instructional leadership model (1985). An interesting observation was that the three female principals were more personally and actively involved in the actual process of staff development in that they conducted research and presented workshops themselves. This tendency could possibly point to the nurturing role they played as compared to the males, who focused more on the male role of protecting and managing discipline.

### **Finding 5**

Collecting, analysing and using data to make informed decisions and plan strategies to promote learner achievement are other essential functions that are listed under the dimension of managing the instructional programme in Hallinger and Murphy's Framework of Instructional Management (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Although the principals interviewed indicated that they set targets for their learners to achieve, they did not point out overtly how they went about analysing their results. Looking at the analysis of the ANA 2011 results that were made available by certain schools, it seemed that most of the principals interviewed had only a faint idea of how to actually go about analysing the results, and how to use them to devise strategic plans to improve learner achievement.

The main aim of this research was to determine the role of principals as instructional leaders. In order to realise this aim a literature survey was undertaken, and this served as the foundation on which the research could be based. The findings of this research are now incorporated in the following recommendations.

#### **5.3.2 Summary of findings from the quantitative data collected**

The findings of the quantitative data collected from interviews revealed that the role of the principal as an instructional leader was viewed by respondents as very important. The role involves promoting a culture of teaching and learning by supporting, monitoring and creating a positive climate.

### **Finding 1**

The principal should offer strong instructional leadership. This finding was related to statements 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. In response to these statements most respondents agreed that the main function of the principal should be with instructional issues. This confirms what writers (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Bush, 2003; Leithwood, et al., 2006) have said about the need for principals to prioritise instructional leadership roles.

### **Finding 2**

The principal is responsible for establishing and implementing the vision and mission of a coherent learning philosophy. Data collected revealed that the principal should play a leading role in establishing the vision and mission of a coherent learning philosophy. This is in line with what most authors have said about the role (Bush, 2007; Leithwood et al. 2006; Murphy & Hallinger, 1985, 2003).

### **Finding 3**

The principal should create an orderly and disciplined environment for the implementation of the curriculum. The data revealed that in order for the school to perform effectively, the principal should create an enabling environment for teaching and learning activities. This finding supports Blasé & Blasé's (1999) identical finding.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

### **5.4.1 The Department of Basic Education should provide training for principals so that they can effectively perform their instructional leadership duties.**

#### **Recommendation 1**

It is recommended that the job description of principals in current legislation and as outlined in the Employment of Educators Act of 1998 (South Africa, 1998) should be reviewed to include a detailed description of what is expected from the principal in terms of instructional leadership. While the management role is clearly outlined, the leadership role is general and vague. Aspects such as providing mentorship, creating a school climate conducive to learning, and providing professional development opportunities should be included in the job description.

In order to improve the instructional climate of the school, a principal must create a sustainable and humane environment for educators and learners. Such an environment will lead to increased self-esteem on the part of both educators and learners, and to greater achievement.

For the improvement of instruction and development of curricular materials, the principal's leadership must be democratic. The principal must allow active participation of the educators in planning instructional improvements.

## **Recommendation 2**

It is recommended that the Department of Education revise their post-provisioning norm and make provision for each school to have two deputy principals to address the problem that principals are experiencing with regard to balancing their administrative and instructional duties. One deputy should be in charge of the management and administration of the school, while the other should handle the curriculum. This would leave the principal with ample time to concentrate on promoting effective teaching and learning in the school.

The education authorities should consider equipping young educators with leadership skills by encouraging them to participate actively in school leadership roles, and by providing leadership workshops. Democratic analysis indicates that the majority of educators are 30-49 years of age. At these ages people are active, energetic and productive. It would therefore be easy to train them. The department must plan leadership training programmes for serving principals at district, circuit and ward levels to empower them to become effective instructional leaders in their schools.

It is recommended that advocacy workshops should be conducted for school principals whenever there are changes in curricular policies. This will help principals to be informed about the improved curriculum to enable them to take appropriate decisions on curricular matters. Interaction among principals can also strengthen relationships and help build a support structure for principals. Problems can be discussed together and practical solutions can be arrived at. A support group can benefit the instructional leaders to function optimally, learning from each other.

### **Recommendation 3**

Research findings indicate that most principals encourage their teaching colleagues to use innovative teaching methods. The new approach to teaching which came with the Curriculum Assessment and Programme Statements (CAPS) encourage educators to be innovative in their teaching practices. It is therefore encouraging to note that most principals support their educators in managing changes that are taking place in the education system of the country. The participating principals and staff should establish procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional leadership process.

#### **5.4.2 The principal is involved in facilitating teaching and learning processes**

The study revealed that most principals are actively involved in facilitating teaching and learning processes in their schools. It augurs well for the improvement of the school and its development if the principal is directly involved.

### **Recommendation 4**

It is recommended that the Department of Education create opportunities to ensure that principals become lifelong learners. They can do this by training principals on leadership styles, of which instructional leadership is one component. It should be mandatory for newly appointed principals to take the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) leadership courses. This course emphasises the role of principals as instructional leaders. They should also be informed of the merits of teaching while at the same time leading. Principal forums or discussion groups should be set up, where principals can share ideas and best practice. They can also discuss concerns as they apply to their particular institutions. Recent trends and developments can also be explored.

### **Recommendation 5**

It is recommended that principals should be given guidance and training on how to conduct research in their own schools on assessment, curriculum delivery and teaching strategies with the aim of development and improvement. Training on data collection and analysis can be beneficial to all principals. It will enable principals to turn their schools into true learning organisations where learning takes place at every level.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

This study, like any other study, has certain limitations that have to be acknowledged. One of them is that the study covered interviews with only a small number of principals, and it might be interesting to see if a larger sample would reveal similar findings. Another aspect is that this thesis provided a one-sided perspective, providing only principals' views; but a principal is involved in relationships with staff. The opinion of staff members on how to improve leadership might also be illuminating. Parental views on instructional leadership were excluded, but they might improve relationships with parents and learners. Interviews with parents might also provide interesting perspectives. The other shortcoming was that the study was limited to only one circuit. However, even though the scope of this study had of necessity to be limited, the results might well be valid for all rural secondary schools in the country.

Additional studies that would address the following areas may be considered for future research into instructional leadership:

- An investigation to determine to what extent deputy principals and heads of department display instructional leadership, and what effects this has for developing schools as learning communities; and
- A comparative study to examine the role of the education districts in promoting instructional leadership in schools, and the effects this has on schools with regard to learner achievement.

## **5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The empirical findings showed that for principals to influence learner achievement, they need to pay more attention to their instructional leadership duties. These duties include, amongst others, monitoring teaching and learning activities in their schools, establishing and sharing a vision and a mission with colleagues, and mentoring colleagues that need it.

## **5.7 CONCLUSIONS**

The main aim of this research was to investigate the instructional leadership roles and responsibilities of principals in the Eshowe Circuit. It was indicated in both the literature reviewed and the empirical study that the performance of the school depended on the way the principal performed his or her instructional leadership roles and responsibilities. The findings led the researcher to formulate the recommendations on

how principals could improve their performance of instructional roles and responsibilities.

This chapter has presented a review of the entire study project, a summary of the findings and a set of observations and recommendations that include the following:

- The instructional roles of principals are not clearly defined by the Department of Basic Education.
- Principals are torn between performing administrative tasks and instructional leadership tasks.
- Principals should play a leading role in establishing the vision and mission of the school, and in monitoring its teaching and learning activities.

The literature study showed that some principals neglect their instructional leadership duties because they are too busy attending to administrative duties such as managing the buildings, finances and human resources. The literature also indicated that the instructional leadership behaviour of the principal plays a significant role in influencing learner achievement.

- The Department of Basic Education needs to clearly define the instructional roles of principals.
- Principals should have two deputies so that they can be freed from some of the administrative tasks and focus more on instructional leadership.
- Principals should play a leading role in assisting their colleagues in finding innovative ways of teaching and learning.
- The Department of Basic Education should provide training for principals and aspiring principals so that they understand their instructional leadership roles.
- Principals should provide guidance and training to their colleagues on how to conduct research in their own schools on assessment and curriculum delivery, with the aim of improving teaching and learning.

The role of the principal as the leader of the school has become complex and multifaceted. The traditional role of principal as manager has been expanded to that of the principal as leader. It has been established that in order to promote their core duty of promoting effective teaching and learning in their schools, principals need to concentrate more on their instructional leadership roles.

This research has shown that the very essence of instructional leadership is to transform the school organisation into an environment where teachers and learners may reach their full potential. Although it is important for principals to balance their administrative and instructional leadership roles, this study has shown that many principals neglect to do this. The current study has revealed that there should be a paradigm shift where principals who give too much attention to administrative duties should focus on instructional leadership.

This study provides principals with several suggestions for improving instructional leadership and cultivating a climate in which teachers and learners can strive to achieve their full potential. It also emphasises the need for continued professional development so that the principal can set the example as the leader in learning.

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## APPENDIX A

### APPROVAL LETTER FROM KZN DOE



Enquiries: Dr. M.S Mpungose

Tel: 035 474 1438

Mrs LT Magwaza

34 Cycad Street

Mpushini Park

Eshowe, 3815

Dear Mrs Magwaza

#### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DOE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct entitled: The role of Principal as instructional leader, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must insure that the Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the examination times in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to the District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period of 01 May 2008 to August 2009.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools that you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Department officials and learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Dr SM Mpungose at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department.

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Dr. M.S Mpungose

Date 2008/06/11

CSEM Eshowe Circuit

Contact Numbers 035 474 1438/ 082 045 1129



## APPENDIX B

### Letter to the Participants

P.O. Box 1113  
Eshowe, 3815  
20 June 2014

Phone: 082 425 4428

Email: [lungilemagwaza73@gmail.com](mailto:lungilemagwaza73@gmail.com)

The Principal

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Dear Principal

#### **REQUEST FOR PRINCIPAL PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT**

I am a Doctoral student at the University of Zululand in the department of Social Sciences Education. One of the fundamental requirements of this degree is to conduct research and write a dissertation. The topic of my research is: **THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS AS A INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS: THE CASE OF UMLALAZI INSPECTION CIRCUIT**

To complete my research project I need to get information from principals. The research project intends to find out whether principals in the Umlalazi Circuit perform their roles effectively as instructional leaders. I therefore request you to participate in this project **by completing a questionnaire.**

It is important to understand that the researcher adheres to the ethics of the research. Therefore the information gathered in this regard will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. Furthermore note that your participation is voluntary, which means that no educator will be forced to complete the questionnaire.

I will appreciate your co-operation in this regard.

Yours Faithful

Mrs LT Magwaza (Researcher)

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Questionnaire

#### Interview questions

No.	Aspect	Responses
1.	Name of School	
2.	Number of learners at the school	
3.	Language of instruction	
4.	Quintile grouping of the School	
5.	How many principals did the school have during the past ten years?	
6.	No. of Management Members. Pleas indicate position.	
7.	No. of SGB employed educators	
8.	Socio-economic status of the majority of learners in your school	<input type="radio"/> Above <input type="radio"/> Average <input type="radio"/> Below
9.	Interviewee	<input type="radio"/> <i>Secondary School Principals</i>
10.	Gender	
11.	Age in completed years	
12.	Highest Education qualification	<input type="radio"/> Grade 12 <input type="radio"/> Post school diploma /certificate <input type="radio"/> Teachers diploma/certificate plus further educational diploma/certificate <input type="radio"/> Bachelor degree <input type="radio"/> Honours or higher qualification
13.	Home language	
14.	Do you speak any other language? If so please indicate.	
15.	Number of years of experience as principal	

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What would you say are the most important duties that a principal has to perform?
2. What challenges and successes have you encountered in trying to perform your duties as an instructional leader especially in respect of:
  - 2.1 Balancing your administrative and instructional roles;
  - 2.2 Challenges regarding instructional leadership;
  - 2.3 Monitoring and developing teaching and learning at your school;
  - 2.4 Promoting staff development in respect of curriculum issues?
3. What formal steps have you taken to improve the academic standards in your school especially in respect to English and Mathematics?

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**Mrs. L.T. Magwaza**  
Student interviewer

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**Dr M.A.N Duma**  
Supervisor

**APPENDIX D**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS.**

**SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**PLEASE PLACE AN X IN THE BLOCK THAT IS MOST APPLICABLE TO YOU**

(Do not write your name on this questionnaire)

<b>1. Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>		
2. Age	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
3. Highest Qualification	Grade 12 or Lower	Teaching Certificate	Diploma	FDE.ACE/H DE	Bed
	Honours	Med	PhD/ DEd	Other (specify):	
4. Current post level	Teacher	HOD	Deputy Principal	Principal	Other (specify):
5. Years of teaching experience	0-2	3-4	5-9	10-19	20+
6. Type of employment	Permanent		Temporary	Other (Specify)	

**SECTION B**

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE BELOW BY PUTTING A CROSS (X)  
NEXT TO THE ANSWER THAT PRESENTS YOUR OPINION**

**PAY ATTENTION TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. School leaders need to pay attention to instructional leadership	1	2	3	4	5
2. School leaders need to re-orientate their priorities and concentrate on key aspects of instructional leadership	1	2	3	4	5
3. Principals in the exceptionally good schools choose to be instructional leaders first and administrative leaders second	1	2	3	4	5
4. The role of the principal should be principally engaged in operational rather than strategic and planning issues relating to curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
5. Strong instructional leadership is closely associated with effective schools	1	2	3	4	5
6. The principal delegates some of his instructional leadership tasks to his staff	1	2	3	4	5
7. The principal and staff work out of plan of school activities at the beginning of the year	1	2	3	4	5

## OFFER STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Our principal provides instructional leadership for his staff	1	2	3	4	5
2. Effective schools have a focus on learning and teaching	1	2	3	4	5
3. The ability of the school leader to offer strong instructional leadership is a key factor in ensuring academic effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5
4. Leader development programmes are to focus on developing instructional leaders	1	2	3	4	5
5. Leader development programmes should reflect a concern with establishing an instructional climate through vision, teacher support and empowerment	1	2	3	4	5
6. Teacher monitoring and evaluation emphasizes quality through facilitating learning and teaching	1	2	3	4	5
7. The principal and staff define school's educational goals objectives	1	2	3	4	5

## IMPLEMENT THE VISION AND THE MISSION OF A COHERENT LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. The school leader has to ensure that there is a coherent learning philosophy for the school	1	2	3	4	5
2. The mission statement of the school should be the driving force for pupil learning	1	2	3	4	5
3. The vision should reflect the teaching programmes and learning goals of the school	1	2	3	4	5
4. A major part of a school's vision must be implemented through the curriculum and learning processes	1	2	3	4	5
5. The principal recognizes the good teaching among educators	1	2	3	4	5
6. High levels of skills are required in curriculum analysis and in understanding learning theory	1	2	3	4	5
7. The principal keeps his staff informed about department policies and regulations	1	2	3	4	5

## AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SHOULD EXERCISE PROFESSIONALISM

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. The principal and staff have established procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional leadership process	1	2	3	4	5
2. The effective school leader will be unable to create a coherent learning philosophy unless he/she is aware of the latest thinking on curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
3. The skills of the classroom teacher are very important in interpreting and implementing the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
4. Instructional leadership is most effective in a school where collaborative planning and collegiality take place	1	2	3	4	5
5. The principal encourages leadership to emerge from educators	1	2	3	4	5
6. Instructional leadership inspires others to work	1	2	3	4	5
7. Instructional leadership manage and lead their schools through proper guidance	1	2	3	4	5



## IMPLEMENT CURRICULUM

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. The principal discusses curricular related policies with staff	1	2	3	4	5
2. In our school the principal modifies school curriculum when this is essential to facilitate the teaching – learning process	1	2	3	4	5
3. Delivering the curriculum is a major area where direct support is required from the school leader in helping staff to clarify the philosophy of the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
4. The school leader should install a formal curriculum under close scrutiny	1	2	3	4	5
5. The school leader should keep talking to key people in curriculum development such as curriculum co-ordinators	1	2	3	4	5
6. The school leader must attend curriculum meetings as helper and supporter	1	2	3	4	5
7. The school leader must visit classrooms, look at pupils 'books and check homework schedules	1	2	3	4	5

## CREATE AN ORDERLY AND DISCIPLINED ENVIRONMENT

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. The instructional leader should create an orderly and disciplined environment	1	2	3	4	5
2. It is principal's function to develop and maintain a positive school climate where teachers can work and students can learn	1	2	3	4	5
3. The working conditions of teachers contribute to the creation of a positive school climate created by the instructional leadership	1	2	3	4	5
4. The school leader needs to be a positive force through counseling and support to staff members	1	2	3	4	5
5. Educators who encounter teaching related problems feel free to seek assistance from the principal.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our principal has established a school climate that is conducive to effective teaching	1	2	3	4	5
7. The school leader should solve problems through an authoritarian style of leadership	1	2	3	4	5

**ORGANIZE, CONTROL AND UTILIZE THE AVAILABLE SOURCES OF EXPERTISE**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. The school leader should organize, control and utilize effectively all appropriate and available sources of expertise	1	2	3	4	5
2. Teachers must maintain control at all times, but at the same time create the related atmosphere that leads to effective learning	1	2	3	4	5
3. Instructional leaders should spend more time monitoring activities of teachers and learners.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Principals as instructional leaders expert to see teachers teaching	1	2	3	4	5
5. The school leader should communicate the goals of the school to all members, so that teachers become committed and feel empowered	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our principal encourages the use of innovate teaching methods	1	2	3	4	5
7. The principal is actively involved in facilitating teaching and learning processes	1	2	3	4	5

## EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. The main activities of the instructional leader should be to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional programme	1	2	3	4	5
2. The instructional programme should be adopted by all staff members after they have contributed in its formulation	1	2	3	4	5
3. An important objective of any administrator is to try to improve instructional supervision	1	2	3	4	5
4. Careful and well- planned evaluation is a prerequisite for the development and improvement of the instructional programme	1	2	3	4	5
5. Our principal promotes a sense of belonging among staff members	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our principal supports us to manage changes in teaching- related areas	1	2	3	4	5
7. Instructional leader must study instructional programme, so as to develop and implement ways in which it can be improved	1	2	3	4	5

## OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Kindly give your views openly on the following questions:

1. Identify and discuss three [3] things you like about your principals instructional leadership practices

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Identify three [3] things that you think can be improved in your principal's instructional leadership practices

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_