

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**SUBJECT ADVISORS AS INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERS: A CASE STUDY OF SIX SUBJECT
ADVISORS IN ILEMBE DISTRICT**

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2015

**SUBJECT ADVISORS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS: A CASE
STUDY OF SIX SUBJECT ADVISORS IN ILEMBE DISTRICT**

BY

SITHEMBISO GOODWILL MTHEMBU

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Education in the discipline
Educational Leadership, Management and Policy, School of
Education.**

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

(EDGEWOOD CAMPUS)

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Date submitted: March 2015

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This dissertation has been submitted with/ without my approval

Dr S.E. Mthiyane (Supervisor)

March 2015

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated firstly, to the omniscient, omnipotent and living God, whose love, grace and blessings have taken me to this level of education. Secondly, my late uncle, Arch Bishop Bethuel B. Ngema, my late mother, Mrs Hlekisile Doris Masuku and my late father, Mr Mzothule David Mthembu for raising me up to be what I am today and my special beloved family: Sinenhlanhla Mthembu (daughter), Sinethemba Mthembu (daughter), Sinekhaya Mthembu (son) and Sinenjabulo Mthembu (daughter) for their understanding and patience when I could not be there for them every time when they needed me as their father and more importantly, their emotional support and undying love during the difficult and stressful times of my life.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANA: Annual National Assessment

ANC: African National Congress

CAPS: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

CASME: Centre for the Advancement of Science and Mathematics Education

CASS: Continuous Assessment

CES: Chief Education Specialist

DoBE: Department of Basic Education

FET: Further Education and Training

GET: General Education and Training

GIMS: Geographic Information Management Systems

GIS: Government Information System

IL- Instructional leadership

IQMS: Integrated Quality Management Systems

KZN: Kwazulu-Natal

LoLT: Language of Learning and Teaching

MEC: Member of Executive Council

MIP: Matric Intervention Programme

MTL- Management of teaching and learning

NDP: National Development Plan

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

NSC: National Senior Certificate

NSLA: National Strategy for Learner Attainment

PDP: Professional Development Portfolio

PLCs: Professional Learning Communities

SACE: South African Council for Educators

SASA: South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996

SEM: Superintendent of Education Management

SES: Senior Education Specialist

SIP: School Improvement Plan

SMT: School Management Team

TIMSS: Trends In International Mathematics and Sciences Study

TLSM: Teaching and Learning Support Materials

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the subject advisors' instructional leadership practices in schools. It sought to establish whether instructional leadership is given a central role it deserves, both inside and outside the classroom or is being overshadowed by other leadership theories and practices. The pre-democratic era was characterised by four different education departments, namely, House of Delegates (for Indians), House of Representatives (for Coloureds), House of Assembly (for Whites) and KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture (for Blacks). In the past, there were no subject advisors that supported teaching and learning in some South African schools, especially the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture. The instructional leadership was a sole responsibility of the school principal. Further, the school principal worked as principal, deputy principal, School Head of Department and a classroom-based educator. That is one of the reasons why they paid too much attention to teaching and office administration at the expense of instructional leadership which was supposed to be the heartbeat of any teaching and learning organisation. Even though, teaching and learning remained the core-business of the school but in the contrary, the management part of it suffered greatly. Leadership was not distributed but it revolved around one person who was projected as a glorified leadership figure and perceived to be a source of all wisdom. The participants raised various concerns about the status of instructional leadership in this education district's schools.

One education district was purposively selected as a research site on the basis of proximity and the consistent unsatisfactory learner performance. A total number of six subject advisors participated in this research study after having satisfied all research ethical requirements. A qualitative research design was utilised to guide this study. The research is located in an interpretivist paradigm because of the nature of the participants and the phenomenon under investigation. It utilised semi-structured interviews and documents review as data generation methods. The findings revealed that subject advisors' instructional leadership was hindered by a number of factors such as lack of resources, School Heads of Department's lack of curriculum management capacity, teacher unions' power struggles and non-availability of well structured training programmes informed by subject advisors' professional and academic

needs. Lastly, various conclusions based on Chapter Four and recommendations were presented in Chapter Five.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1	Introduction and background	1
1.2	The nature of the problem	4
1.3	Purpose and rationale for the study	6
1.4	Aims and key research questions of the study	7
1.5	The significance of the study	8
1.6	Clarification of key concepts	9
1.6.1	Instructional leadership	9
1.6.2	Distributed leadership	9
1.6.3	Education district	10
1.6.4	Subject advisor	10
1.7	Review of literature	10
1.8	Theoretical frameworks	11
1.9	Research design and methodology	12
1.9.1	Research paradigm	12
1.9.2	Research design	12
1.9.3	Methodological approach	12
1.9.4	Sampling	13
1.9.5	Data generation methods	13
1.9.6	Data analysis	14

1.9.7	Ethical issues	14
1.9.8	Trustworthiness	15
1.10	Demarcation of the study	15
1.11	Organisation of the study	15
1.12	Chapter summary	16

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1	Introduction	18
2.2	Literature review	18
2.2.1	Conceptualisation of instructional leadership	18
2.2.2	Importance of instructional leadership	21
2.2.3	Subject advisors' instructional leadership strategies	25
2.2.4	Establishment of professional learning communities	27
2.2.5	Instructional leadership challenges encountered by subject advisors	30
2.3	Theoretical frameworks	33
2.3.1	Instructional leadership theory / model	34
2.3.1.1	Setting school academic goals	34
2.3.1.2	Organising the instructional programme	35
2.3.1.3	Hiring, supervising and evaluating educators	35
2.3.1.4	Protecting instructional time and programmes	36
2.3.1.5	Creating a climate for learning	36

2.3.1.6	Monitoring achievement and evaluating programme	37
2.3.2	Distributed leadership theory	38
2.3.2.1	Leadership tasks and functions	39
2.3.2.2	Enacting leadership tasks	39
2.3.2.3	The social distribution of task enactment	40
2.3.2.4	The situation distribution of leadership practices	40
2.4	Chapter summary	40

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	42
3.2	Research paradigm	42
3.3	Research design and methodology	43
3.3.1	Research design	43
3.3.2	Research methodology	45
3.3.2.1	Sampling	46
3.3.2.2	Data generation methods	47
3.3.2.3	Semi-structured interviews	47
3.3.2.4	Documents review	48
3.3.2.5	Data analysis	49
3.3.2.6	Ethical issues	50
3.3.2.7	Issues of trustworthiness	51

3.3.2.8	Triangulation	53
3.4	Limitations of the study	54
3.5	Chapter summary	55

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1	Introduction	56
4.2	Data presentation and discussion	56
4.2.1	Subject advisors' perceptions of their instructional leadership role	56
4.2.1.1	Monitoring of curriculum policy implementation in schools	57
4.2.1.2	Nurturing the trees that bear fruits	61
4.2.1.3	Grade 12 intervention programmes	65
4.2.1.4	Provision of teaching and learning resources	68
4.2.2	The impact of subject advisors' instructional leadership strategies on the improvement of learner performance	71
4.2.3	Notional / instructional time as a pillar of effective teaching and learning	73
4.2.4	The impact of the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) on learner performance	76
4.2.5	Separating wheat from chaff and levelling the playing field	79
4.2.3	Challenges or barriers that subject advisors experience as they enact their leadership and management practices in their teaching and learning in their education district	83
4.2.3.1	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education falling short	83
4.2.3.2	School Heads of Department's management capacity questioned	86

4.2.3.3 Blunt human capital	89
4.2.3.4 Teacher unions' impact on curriculum delivery	91
4.2.4 Navigating the challenges or barriers that subject advisors encounter when supporting and managing teaching and learning in the education district	95
4.3 Chapter summary	97

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction	99
5.2 Summary of the study	99
5.3 Conclusions	101
5.4 Recommendations	108
5.5 Implications of the study	114
5.6 Chapter summary	116
5.7 References	117

Appendices

APPENDIX ONE: Ethical clearance certificate from UKN

APPENDIX TWO: Request letters

1. To DoBE (PMB)
2. District Director
3. To participants

APPENDIX THREE: Consent forms from participants

APPENDIX FOUR: Consent letter from the education District Office

APPENDIX FIVE: Consent letter from the KZN Department of Basic Education

APPENDIX SIX: Research Instruments

- ❖ Interview Schedule
- ❖ Documents Review Schedule

APPENDIX SEVEN: Turn-It-In Certificate

APPENDIX EIGHT: Language Editor's Certificate

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and background

This is the first chapter of my study intended to provide a synoptic view of the ensuing chapters in the whole research project. In the past, there were no subject advisors in the Department of Basic Education. Even heads of department and deputy principals did not exist (Hallinger, 2003). The tasks of school leadership and management were put squarely on the principal's shoulders (Hallinger, 2003). According to Bhengu and Mkhize (2013), principals are regarded as instructional leaders merely by virtue of being principals of schools without any formal training and that jeopardises their capability to manage teaching and learning effectively. Evans (2002); Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) and Bhengu (2012) argue that in the past, very little attention has been paid to teacher development. This could easily lead to a situation where instructional leadership could remain incomprehensible to some school principals. This created a situation where school leaders found themselves in the middle of the two competing leadership theories like instructional leadership and managerial leadership approaches.

My perception was that the development programmes for principals took the one size fits all approach and to a greater degree down played the importance of the management of teaching and learning. The inadequacy of leadership and management skills leads to dissatisfaction and demotivation and consequently underperformance by principals (Evans, 2002). Sufficient and meaningful support to principals is difficult to mobilise (Clercq & Phiri, 2013). Even teacher unions accept that there is a lack of meaningful hands-on support for principals (Clercq & Phiri, 2013). Therefore, subject advisors as instructional leaders and subject specialists, have a huge role to play in turning schools into learning organisations (DoBE, 2013). Managerial leadership was the order of the day because principals' effectiveness was gauged through managerial tasks like maintaining buildings, ensuring discipline and financial management (Bush, 2007 & Jazzar, 2004). Bush (2007) asserts that "this type of leadership does not include the concept of vision, which is central to most leadership models".

In the past few years, I have observed that the principal was regarded as ‘the master of all’ and the concept of distributed or shared leadership was not popular in educational circles. Hallinger (2003) affirms that the principal was regarded as the centre of expertise, power and authority. It has become clear that instructional leadership was not prioritised by the Department of Basic Education even though principals were expected to produce good matric and annual national assessment (ANA) results (Bhengu, 2012). Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) in their study on instructional leadership in trying contexts, found that schools receive very little support from the Department of Education. Bush (2007, p.400) states that “instructional leadership differs from the other models of leadership because it focuses on the direction of the influence rather than its nature and source”. The reality here is that the individual and the style are not significant but what counts is the impact it makes on the effective management of schools and learner achievement. The absence of subject advisors meant that instructional leadership was not given the prominence that it deserved. Bush (2007) argues that leadership and management should to be given equal significance if schools are to perform effectively and achieve their objectives.

Blasé and Blasé (1999) state that successful principals demonstrate teaching techniques for educators in the classroom. Maybe it is also high time that the subject advisors model this type of instructional leadership with the aim of capacitating teachers and also increasing learner outcomes (Hallinger, 2003). The inconspicuousness of subject advisors especially in the General Education and Training (GET) band is one of the major causes of poor national senior certificate and ANA results. In the past twenty years schools were underperforming and no actions were taken by the Department of Basic Education. It appeared as if the previous apartheid government had accepted mediocrity as a normal picture of teacher performance and learner achievement. What Blasé and Blasé (1999) argue here, is that exemplary leadership is also required on the part of subject advisors. Bush (2013) states that modelling of good practice by leaders is more likely to produce favourable outcomes. The South Africa Constitution, section 29, (1996) states that all children have basic rights to education and that education should not be of inferior quality or standard. This clearly means that any education of inferior standard is against the spirit of our constitution.

The Department of Basic Education together with teacher unions adopted a resolution which states that unqualified teachers and under-qualified teachers who are registered with universities should be given protected status (DoBE, 2011). These teachers require consistent

mentoring, monitoring and appraisal so as to improve their performance. In support of this notion, Czaja, Prouty and Lowe (1998) posit that principals who work with educators and other colleagues help create a professional learning community. The idea of professional learning communities (PLCs) can allow subject advisors and educators to learn new knowledge and skills (Czaja, *et al.*, 1998). It has become evident that the support that they are getting from the School Heads of Department is inadequate because, according to Leithwood and Hallinger, (2002), there has not been enough attention given to the preparation of Heads of Department (HODs) or (head teachers) for their role as instructional leaders. This is contrary to what Smith, Mestry and Bambie (2013) suggest that HODs must keep abreast of the latest schools of thought on monitoring approaches, methods and techniques. In order to address this situation, subject advisors need to become part of the process which seeks to monitor and control quality teaching and learning in the classroom and also develop educators. Some educators and HODs are failing to teach effectively in the classroom because of the content knowledge gaps and pedagogic deficiencies (Smith, *et al.*, 2013). These HODs and educators do not feel comfortable working with higher order levels of assessment because the Department of Education through the Education districts is not doing enough to support them (Smith, *et al.*, 2013). This is also a factor which demotivates learners and at times leads to drop-outs (Mabunda, 2012). This causes a dire need of subject advisors' services to do classroom observations as an endeavour to monitor the standard of teaching and learning in schools (DoBE, 2013).

Education districts must perform their essential function which is to support schools to deliver the curriculum (DoBE, 2013). In order for this objective to be achieved subject advisors must be seen as prime movers in an endeavour to improve the quality of education in South African schools. "The advent of democracy in South Africa provided the impetus for fundamental change in the manner in which schools were led and managed" (Bhengu, 2012). These are the changes which brought about educational transformation from an apartheid education system to a new people's education founded on universally acceptable norms and values. This is the type of educational overhaul which placed more prominence on the need to provide more support to schools. As a consequence, the notion of subject advisors came into being.

1.2 Nature of the problem

According to Bush (2013), the main purpose of schooling is to promote teaching and learning. For learners to achieve improved performance, teaching and learning need to be the central focus of the school (Bhengu & Mkhize, 2013). Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) claim that in South Africa, there are first class schools and there are also dysfunctional schools where teaching and learning is barely existent. This is due to a *laissez-faire* leadership approach that I, as the principal have witnessed in some schools. This presents a gloomy picture about the South African education system. It purports that the reality is that South Africa is a country with dichotomies of schooling models, namely functional and dysfunctional schools (Netshandana, Kutane & Maluleke, 2012; Naicker, et al., 2013). Netshandana, et al., (2012) add that the features of dysfunctional schools have a negative impact on the core work of teaching and learning. Hallinger (1992) argues that instructional leadership appears to be falling from grace. This move has an ability to breed unintended consequences where the focus changes from the core-business of the school which is teaching and learning to managerial and administrative realm. Not with standing this lengthy period of the existence of the education districts, it has not translated into practical programmes because the subject advisory services are hard to find. It appears as if instructional leadership is becoming neglected. “A new leadership style called transformational leadership has already emerged to replace instructional leadership” (Hallinger, 1992, p.40).

The statements made by some of my critical colleagues plainly state that some General Education and Training band (GET) subject advisors are not supporting educators in schools. There are schools that have never been visited by GET subject advisors. Some schools do not have annual teaching programmes, policy statements, continuous assessment (CASS) grids and assessment guidelines. They also claim that some subject advisors issue cluster moderation schedules but never arrive at those moderation meetings. These deficiencies are a recipe for the failure of the education system. Southworth (2002) states that instructional leadership needs to create teaching and learning schools. This is contrary to the policy which states that the subject advisor is a subject specialist (DoBE, 2013). The policy states very clearly that subject advisors must advise educators and principals on curriculum matters (DoBE, 2013). There is a dire need for subject advisors to create capacity for educators to be effective in the classroom. Southworth (2002) asserts that leadership should be designed in such a manner that it allows educators to form part of learning communities. The professional

learning communities (PLCs) can assist educators in terms of professional development like pedagogies, skills and content knowledge.

Some schools and education districts continue to show a steady decline in learner performance even though there is a slight improvement in some subjects (Smith, *et al.*, 2013). This is shown by Annual National Assessments and National Senior Certificate examinations. A study conducted in South Africa by Dempster and Reddy (2007) on item readability and science achievement in Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) found that South Africa performs poorly in Mathematics and Sciences. They further state that South Africa has been a lowest performing country in Mathematics and Sciences in the past few years. Smith, *et al.*, (2013) conducted a study on the experiences and perceptions of HODs as instructional leaders in one of the education districts in South Africa and found that, education district had had a declining matric results pass rate since 2007. Smylie (1997) asserts that it is the responsibility of the education district to set goals and standards for student learning and also to monitor their performance. In light of this assertion, the subject advisors cannot divorce themselves from this central responsibility. Smylie (1997) further argues that it is not clear how instructional leaders are to be developed, who should train them, what-and whose –knowledge base is to be represented by them and to whom and how they should be applied. The policy dictates that the subject advisors must improve the environment and process of teaching and learning in schools (DoBE, 2013). In addition, it states that the education district must assist school principals and educators to improve the quality of teaching and learning through school visits and classroom observations (DoBE, 2013). A study conducted by Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) in South Africa on instructional leadership in trying context, reveals that some education district officials do not know what is happening in schools. This is further confirmed by the circuit managers that participated in their study. These circuit managers warn that this practice is going to be counterproductive (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). This gloomy picture obscures and defeats the attempts by the current government that has declared education a societal issue and also elevated it to its priority number one (ANC, 2007).

In an attempt to intervene, the National Minister of Basic Education passed a policy on the *Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (DoBE, 2013). The education districts have been in existence for more than ten years now but not enough research has been done on this important institution (Fleisch, 2010; Hoadley, Christie & Ward, 2009). School

leaders have always relied on SASA, Section 15 (3), (1996) provision that the professional management of a public school must be undertaken by the principal. This study seeks to investigate and understand the role of subject advisors as instructional leaders. (DoBE, 2013) clearly states that subject advisors are instructional leaders. This is supported by Hallinger (2003, p.335) who argues that “principals occupy a middle management position in which their authority to command is severely limited”. It stands to reason therefore, that when the principals’ authority is limited, they need to be supported by subject advisors. It is therefore important to link instructional leadership with organisational learning and learner performance.

1.3 Purpose and rationale for the study

The love for teaching and learning started when I was a post level one educator. I observed that learner outcomes were nobody’s business. The educators’ and learners’ work was only evaluated by circuit managers when there was a team of panel inspectors from the district. The issues of school vision, mission, staff development, curriculum and performance monitoring were not significant (Finnigan, 2012). I knew that subject advisors existed but I had never seen them visiting my school. The system was a loose coupling where technical core and administrative superstructure functioned loosely (Weber, 1987; Hartley, 2007; Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2004). Bush (2007) and Bush (2013) state that the quality of leadership including instructional leadership makes a difference to school and student outcomes. The gradual and spontaneous shift from the first order namely instructional leadership to the ‘second order’ changes, namely, empowerment, transformational leadership, shared /distributed leadership and organisational learning are a cause for a great concern (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). The reasons are that transformational leadership deals more specifically with increasing organisation’s capacity to innovate thus neglecting curriculum and instruction (Hallinger & Heck, 1989). This trend started in 1990, when the researchers began to shift their attention from instructional leadership to leadership models construed as more consistent with evolving trends in educational reform (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Not with standing this dilution of leadership approaches, the policy is clear that subject advisors must be the custodians and proponents of instructional leadership. The ambiguity and inconsistencies in the manner in which subject advisors employ their instructional leadership

practices puts quality teaching and learning on the verge of an inadvertent collapse. All these together created an interest in the study.

This study is worth doing because instructional leadership is being called into question owing to learner performance which seems to be declining in some schools. The superintendent of education management (SEMs) and Members of Executive Council (MECs) are challenging principals who are not well positioned to be subject specialists. Bush (2013) reports that this problem is compounded by the manner in which South African principals conceive their role. Bush (2013, p.7) further argues that “before SASA, NO.84 of 1996 was passed; principals were seen as part of the education bureaucracy, charged with administering schools as part of the wider system”. As a consequence, this alienated them from the pillars of instructional leadership (IL) which is sometimes referred to as leadership for learning or managing teaching and learning (MTL) (Bush, 2013). This study is also worth doing now because the minister of education has adopted a policy on the *Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of education districts* (DoBE, 2013). This means that subject advisors as instructional leaders are supposed to be at the coalface of curriculum delivery in the classroom. The findings from this study may be useful to researchers who want to conduct further research on this subject.

1.4 Aims and key research questions of the study

The aims of this study are:

- To explore the perceptions and practices of subject advisors as instructional leaders when supporting instructional practices in schools.
- To examine the strategies subject advisors use in supporting curriculum delivery in schools.
- To investigate how subject advisors navigate the challenges they experience when supporting instructional practices in schools.

Therefore, this study is underpinned by the following critical research questions:

- What are subject advisors’ practices and perceptions of their roles as instructional leaders when supporting instructional practices in schools?

- What strategies do subject advisors use to support curriculum delivery in schools?
- How do subject advisors navigate the challenges they experience when supporting instructional practices in schools?

1.5 The significance of the study

Southworth (2002) argues that research on school leadership has not yielded sufficient empirical solutions. As a consequence, it is important that IL is further researched so as to respond to and address the 21st century instructional leadership (IL) challenges. Instructional leadership has always been regarded as the task carried out by the principal (Hallinger, 2009). That monopoly reduced the scope of research on the IL phenomenon. He further states that in the 1980's instructional leadership was never adequately associated with teachers, heads of department and deputy principals. In the same vein, no reference was made to subject advisors as instructional leaders. My study has the potential to show the research community that there is not enough research that has been conducted on the role of subject advisors as instructional leaders both internationally and locally. The inadequacy and silence of the literature on this topic tends to handicap the improvement of teaching and learning in the classroom in schools.

I am convinced that the findings that emanated from this study may serve as a barometer which measures the quality of instructional leadership practices that are taking place in schools. This also indicated that the support that the schools are receiving is not enough. The research gaps will probably be addressed by taking the findings into consideration and also implementing the recommendations. The study will also add to the body of knowledge on the role of subject advisors as instructional leaders in schools.

1.6 Clarification of key concepts

For the purposes of establishing a common comprehension of the key concepts in this study, I have chosen to define them so as to prevent misunderstanding and misrepresentation on the side of the reader.

1.6.1 Instructional leadership

Instructional leadership has to do with the management of teaching and learning including defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive learning climate (Hallinger, 2009 & Weber, 1989). Smith, Mestry and Bombie (2013) add that IL is about leading and managing teaching and learning as a school's core activities. Instructional leadership should be developed to include school governance matters because an ideal school should have strong management and governance capacity. School governance ensures that there are good policies in place and management and administration ensures that such policies are implemented in order to have effective schools and achieve improved learner outcomes. The creation of a positive learning climate that Hallinger (2009) and Weber (1989) are advocating can succeed in an environment where there are strong governance and management structures which promote and support teaching and learning.

1.6.2 Distributed leadership

According to Spillane (2002) distributed leadership is a system of practice comprised of a collection of interacting components like learners, colleagues and situations. Gronn (2002) believes that a solo leader's actions are less significant than the collaborative leadership provided by various educators in the institution. Woods (2004) adds that DL places more prominence on distribution of leadership according to the markets or institutional motivation. Distributed leadership is a theory that introduces democratisation of leadership tasks and decision making in an organisation with the sole aim of promoting teaching and learning as the mission of the school. This also, to a greater extent, promotes educator leadership development and skills transfer to the principals' and subject advisors' colleagues for effective schools and whole school development.

1.6.3 Education district

An education district is an area of a province which is demarcated by an MEC for administration purposes. It is made up of circuit management centres which in turn are made up of circuits, formerly known as wards (DoBE, 2013). The education district is the next level or management structure below the provincial hierarchy of the Department of Basic Education. It coordinates various activities including teaching and learning, examinations and assessment, management and governance, human resource matters, infrastructure, etc.

1.6.4 Subject advisor

A subject advisor is a specialist office-based educator in an education district or circuit office responsible for curriculum implementation and management (DoBE, 2013). The subject advisor is an instructional leader in terms of his or her roles and responsibilities. The main aim of his or her job is to provide professional and academic support to educators and to ensure the improvement of learner attainment.

1.7 Review of literature

This section gives a synoptic view of the body of the international, African and national (South African) literature on instructional leadership that has already been published. This research project deals with the instructional leadership of subject advisors and is informed by the literature that was reviewed in the subsequent chapter. This review did not solely shed light on the tenets of instructional leadership but it also endeavoured to provide a detailed exposition of instructional leadership practices. The body of literature that was reviewed comprised of the work of the successful and erudite research scholars and other valuable literature and focused on:

Conceptualisation of the instructional leadership: this provided an educational and academic synthesis and analysis of what various renowned and learned research scholars comprehend about the instructional leadership as the primary phenomenon under study. The importance of instructional leadership: this focused on the gains or positives of the instructional leadership and the impact it makes in improving teaching and learning and

learner performance in the classroom. Subject advisors' strategies as instructional leaders: this looked at the strategies they employ and what constitutes duties and responsibilities of subject advisors. What is it that is expected of them on a day-to-day basis and how do they do that? Research on instructional leadership: this sought to explore the body of literature that has been conducted on the subject of subject advisors as instructional leaders. Challenges in instructional leadership that are encountered by subject advisors on day-to-day basis when discharging their responsibilities of instructional leadership practices in various schools.

1.8 Theoretical frameworks

This research is underpinned by two educational leadership theories, namely: Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model and Spillane's distributed leadership model (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). Firstly, this study is located in an instructional leadership theory based on Weber's (1987) model. This scholar, as one of the proponent of instructional leadership meticulously presents his synthetic IL model comprising of six interrelated functions: setting academic goals, organising the instructional leadership, hiring, supervising and evaluating educators, protecting instructional time and programmes, creating a climate for learning and monitoring achievement and evaluating programmes. Instructional leadership is the process whereby the leader tries to work with teachers cooperatively with the aim of improving teaching and learning in schools (Wanzare, 2012). I chose this model because it relates well with my critical research question. Hallinger (2009) further states that instructional leadership places a greater focus on the management of teaching and learning including defining the school's mission and promoting a positive learning climate. This theory talks directly to what subject advisors are mandated to do by the policy on *the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (DoBE, 2013).

Secondly, this study is underpinned by distributed theory of leadership (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). This theory was crafted around the belief that leadership should be democratised and shared among educators and managers in schools and education districts (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). This notion of distributed leadership emanated from commercial organisations (Woods, 2004). These researchers assert that it centres around four pillars: leadership tasks and functions, task-enactment, social distribution of task-enactment and situational distribution of task-enactment (Spillane, Halverson &

Diamond, 2004). I chose this theory because it helped to indicate the importance of sharing the responsibilities between school management teams and the subject advisors with the aim of improving teaching and learning in the school (Wanzare, 2012).

1.9 Research design and methodology

The summary of research design and methodology that will be used in this is presented in the following sections:

1.9.1 Paradigm

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.36) refers to it as a “world view, perspective or as a way of breaking down the complexity of the world”. This study is located in an interpretivist paradigm because its objective is to investigate the ontological stance that, there are multiple realities and the epistemological position that, through subject advisors’ narratives, reality can be socially constructed (Maree, 2011; Grix, 2010 & Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). In my study I will be soliciting the views of subject advisors on how they perceive instructional leadership as a phenomenon under study.

1.9.2 Research design

I intended locating my study in a qualitative approach. A qualitative research design is based on the ontological position that there are multiple realities and that realities are socially constructed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This was a loose qualitative research design so as to allow flexibility in terms of methodology (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). It allows data generation on a ‘one-shot’ basis (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Maree (2011, p.50) defines qualitative research design as “an attempt to generate rich descriptive data in respect of a particular subject or context with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed or studied.” This approach is suitable for my study because it provided me with rich information pertaining to the subject advisors’ instructional leadership practices in schools.

1.9.3 Methodological approach

The methodology refers to the strategies or techniques the researcher utilises for sampling, data generation, data documentation and data analysis stages (Maree, 2012). There are three

research paradigms utilised by researchers, namely, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methodological approaches (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). In this study I employed a qualitative research approach because I was dealing with human beings who are at times difficult to understand (Maree, 2012). According to (Maree, 2012) amongst the methodologies used in qualitative studies is a case study.

The methodology that I used is a case study because it recognises and accepts that there are many realities/ truths existing in a single case or phenomenon (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This helped me to get multiple truths or realities about instructional leadership practices of subject advisors. Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) define the case study as an approach that gives a picture of real people in real situations and assists the reader to understand them better. The case is the six subject advisors of Ilembe district. It is a case of instructional leadership practices in schools.

1.9.4 Sampling

Maree (2007) defines sampling as the process used to select a portion of the population for study. In qualitative studies, sampling is done purposively (Maree, 2007 & Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). I also purposively sampled six subject advisors as participants in my study. The sample comprised of three subject advisors in the GET and three in the FET. I chose the experienced subject advisors in order for me to get an in depth knowledge in terms of instructional leadership practices in schools (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Further, I purposively selected documents like subject advisors' monthly reports and minutes of Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) Sub-directorate, based on the life span of three years (2012-2014). The sampling of the education district was also being purposively done based on proximity and unsatisfactory learner performance.

1.9.5 Data generation methods

Methods are specific techniques that the researcher uses to conduct a research (Bogdan & Biklem, 2007). This study utilised semi-structured interviews and documents review/ analysis as ways of knowing the truth about instructional leadership practices for triangulation purposes. Interviews are a one-on-one discussion between the researcher and the research participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The interviews helped me to see the world through the eyes of the subject advisors as participants (Maree, 2007). Semi- structured

interviews were appropriate for this study because they allowed me, as a researcher to probe the participants (Maree, 2007). I used the interview schedule and digital voice recorder as important research instruments which guided the interview process (Rule & John, 2011; Maree, 2007).

1.9.6 Data analysis

Data analysis in qualitative studies has to do with the process of noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This study employed content data analysis for both interviews and documents analysis. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.563) define content analysis as the “the process of summarising and reporting on the written data”. Content analysis is appropriate for any written material e.g. documents and interview transcriptions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). All the interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Rule and John (2011) indicate that the digital voice recorder helps the researcher to use the transcripts and check their accuracy. The content analysis is suitable for written material like documents and interview transcriptions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

1.9.7 Ethical issues

Research ethical issues are measures that are taken in order to enhance the research quality (Rule & John, 2011). The first principle that was observed was autonomy and informed consent, meaning ensuring participants’ anonymity, permission from the gatekeepers and informed consent from participants (Rule & John, 2011). In addressing this principle, I ensured that participants’ identities were protected through pseudonyms. I obtained informed consent and permission from participants, UKZN and DoBE. The second principle that I observed was non-maleficence, meaning that the research should not do harm to the participants (Maree, 2012; Robson, 2007 & Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). I addressed this by adhering to the research parameters and by observing the UKZN code of ethics. The third principle that I observed was the principle of beneficence which means that any research should be of benefit to the participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). In order to address this principle I added the statement of potential benefits when requesting them to participate in the study in writing.

1.9.8 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the way the researcher persuades the reader that the findings of the study are worth paying attention to (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In addressing the issues of trustworthiness I presented and discussed credibility, triangulation, transferability, dependability and conformability in detail in Chapter Three of this study.

1.10 Demarcation of the study

My ontological assumption is that there are multiple realities and that knowledge can be socially constructed from an external point of view (Maree, 2007 & Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This study is based on the epistemological assumption that knowledge is a soft and more subjective truth which can be found through interviewing subject advisors as participants (Maree, 2007 & Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This study involved one Education District in KZN. In that education district, it only accommodated three purposively selected GET subject advisors (SES), and three FET subject advisors (SES). For that reason, it explored the instructional leadership practices of subject advisors only in that education district. The research focuses on subject advisors because the policy states clearly that they are instructional leaders (DoBE, 2013). Notwithstanding the fact that this was a small number, it is also my belief that the sampled participants represented the entire population of subject advisors. “Qualitative research usually involves smaller sample sizes than quantitative research studies” (Maree, 2007, p79). I considered this education district only, and purposively sampled it because it is the one in which my school falls under.

1.11. Organisation of the study

This research project comprises of five different but coherent chapters. Each chapter addresses a specific aspect of the study. Chapter One is an orientation and background to the study. It comprises the problem statement, purpose and rationale for the study, aims and critical questions, significance of the study, key concepts, review of literature including theoretical frameworks, research design and methodology, trustworthiness, research ethical issues, limitations, demarcation of the study, organisation of the study and the chapter

summary. In reality, this chapter shows the sub-topics that are to be discussed in the ensuing chapters.

Chapter Two discusses both the literature review and the theoretical frameworks which underpin the study. This section deals with international, African and national, (South African) literature. It seeks to test the existing body of knowledge that has been produced pertaining to instructional leadership and the role of subject advisors and furthermore, divulges the gaps and silences in the literature.

Chapter Three presents the research design and methodology. This chapter reveals the paradigmatic and methodological approaches that underpin this research study. It further describes the research methods and instruments that were employed in the data generation process. This section concludes by stating the data analysis methods that are employed in the study.

Chapter Four is the one where I, as a researcher do data presentation and discussion of findings. The data that is presented and discussed is the one that has been generated through semi-structured interviews and review of documents. The interviews were conducted with six subject advisors as participants. The generated data was coded, themes were identified and data analysis was done followed by data presentation and discussion.

Chapter Five presents my study's summary, conclusions, recommendations and implications of the study.

1.12. Chapter summary

This chapter adequately introduced and covered the introduction of instructional leadership as a phenomenon under study, which are subject advisors' instructional leadership practices in schools. In this chapter, I presented the orientation and background to the study. This presentation comprised of the problem statement, purpose and rationale for the study, aims and critical questions, significance of the study, key concepts, review of literature, including theoretical frameworks, research design and methodology, trustworthiness, research ethical issues, limitations, demarcation of the study and the organisation of the study. In reality, this chapter shows the sub-topics that are to be expected and discussed in the ensuing chapters. In

the next chapter, I presented the reviewed literature on instructional leadership and also the theoretical frameworks which underpin this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One was an introductory part of my study and it provided a brief background to this research project. Chapter Two specifically deals with the review of the related literature and theoretical frameworks. This section begins with the literature review and followed by the theoretical frameworks within which this study is located. The literature review comprises international, African and South African scholarly works which are related to my study and critical questions. Furthermore, this chapter rests on six broad themes that adequately address my research topic, namely: conceptualisation of instructional leadership, importance of instructional leadership, subject advisors' instructional leadership strategies, creation of professional learning communities and finally, the challenges that are normally encountered by the subject advisors when engaging in their instructional leadership practices. The theoretical frameworks comprise Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model and Spillane's distributed leadership theory which conclude the chapter.

2.2 Literature review

Reviewing literature unveils the results of what is already known in scholastic works and helps to identify gaps and silences in the existing body of knowledge (Morse & Richards, 2002 and Creswell, 2009). Bell (1987) adds that literature review gives relevant literature and it is more than just reporting on a list of what the researcher has read. This scholar furthermore suggests that it must give the reader a clear picture about that existing amount of knowledge around the phenomenon that is being investigated. Below, I am presenting instructional leadership as a concept.

2.2.1 Conceptualisation of instructional leadership

Leadership is a wide and highly debatable concept in the same way like instructional leadership. Sofo, Fitzgerald and Jawas (2012) in their Indonesian study argue that the concept of instructional leadership has been used by different proponents in many different ways. These researchers found that the complex form of leadership indicates various conceptions of

leadership that ordinarily lack concurrence in terms of definition. Hallinger (2003) in his international study of reviewing conceptual and empirical development of instructional leadership models defines instructional leadership as a multifaceted role of leadership whose central focus is teaching and learning and more importantly, improvement of learner outcomes. He is also of the opinion that instructional leadership is one of the oldest leadership paradigms in the field of educational leadership and management which is more than thirty three years old. For that reason, he coins it as a springboard for '*first order*' changes in educational leadership. This conceptualisation of IL is shared by Southworth (2002, p.79); Smith, Mestry and Bambie, 2013; Bhengu and Mthembu (2013) when they further accentuate that "instructional leadership is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth." Sharma (2012) conducted a qualitative study through interviews and open ended questionnaires in India, Thailand, Malaysia and United Emirates and found that instructional leadership encourages effective teaching and learning in the classroom, outside the classroom, values and school culture. Instructional leadership is a complex multi-unit which is characterised by various leadership theories which will be discussed in the theoretical frameworks section.

Moswela (2010) in his qualitative study on 'instructional supervision in Botswana secondary schools, used interviews and questionnaires to explore this phenomenon and concludes that instructional supervision is educator friendly because educators can negotiate terms and conditions. Southworth (2002) in his review of school leadership conducted in United Kingdom on 'instructional leadership in schools' highlights that in the United Kingdom, scholars make reference to it as 'educational leadership' or 'pedagogic leadership'. Bush (2013) also shares the same vein by explaining that instructional leadership is related to pedagogical leadership and curriculum leadership.

A vast amount of research on instructional leadership has been conducted (Neumerski, 2012; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Hallinger & Heck; Southworth, 2002; Horng & Loeb, 2010). Most of these studies focus only on the principal and heads of department (HODs) as instructional leaders. Neumerski (2012) contends that researchers need to reconsider their research on instructional leadership approach, and begin to have an integrated and cohesive literature base that looks at principals; deputy principals; HODs and subject advisors simultaneously. Despite the strides that the various scholars have made, much still remains unanswered (Neumerski, 2012). As a consequence, my study argues that

subject advisors have always been left in the periphery of the instructional leadership research. To my surprise, these are the most significant actors in the field of leadership especially, instructional leadership because the management of teaching and learning is their core-function in the South African context.

According to Hallinger (2003 & 2005), instructional leadership models came into being in the early 1980s from studies on effective schools. Bush (2013, p.6) shares the same vein with Hallinger (2003) when he states that “instructional leadership is the longest established concept linking leadership and learning.” Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013, p.138) assert that “the concept of instructional leadership is an elusive one.” Craig (2012, p.27) adds that “instructional leadership is often elusive and difficult to achieve.” Perhaps the hollow understanding of instructional leadership by both school principals and subject advisors is a contributory factor to the prevalent maladministration and curriculum mismanagement which often impacts negatively on learner attainment. This is further compounded by the reality that not enough training is given to instructional leaders like principals and subject advisors. The lack of adequate training breeds lack of capacity to firstly master instructional leadership and to fulfil the inherent functions of this phenomenon. The notion by Craig (2012) that it is difficult to achieve instructional leadership is not baseless but a real mirage that the Department of Education needs to pay sufficient attention to, in order to have instructional leaders who are well grounded in this theory of leadership. Instructional leadership is never a static phenomenon, but it is characterised by a constant evolution of new structures and systems. An emphasis is further advanced by Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) who posit that there is an obvious conceptualisation of instructional leadership practices because of the contextual realities in schools. Bush (2013) further characterises it as follows, it differs from other leadership approaches because it focuses on the *direction* of influence, rather than its nature and source.

Before the passing of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, principals were mainly administrative leaders, focusing on the smooth running of the school with accountability to the external hierarchy (Bush, 2013). The lack of professional empowerment programmes for the instructional leaders caused a major setback on the instructional leadership strategies of subject advisors. Mukhta, Yahya, Abdullah, Hamdam, Jailani and Abdullah (2009) hold a view that instructional leadership demands skills which are important in the restructuring of the curriculum and methods of teaching and learning in schools. For this reason, the subject

advisors are expected to be developed so that they can also be in a better position to improve their instructional leadership strategies in the classroom. The apartheid education system created an assumption that the principal were solely accountable to the officials of the Department of Education and not the parents and other stakeholders. This shallow apartheid understanding of education tended to alienate parents and other stakeholders from the course of championing free, universal and quality public education as envisaged in the *Freedom Charter of 1955* (Turok, 2012). This conceptualisation of instructional leadership has yielded a clear understanding of what this study is about. The next section explores the significance and necessity of instructional leadership as phenomenon under study.

2.2.2 Importance of instructional leadership

Education is a highly contested commodity or entity therefore it should be properly managed. It is a strategic avenue to the empowerment of not only South African citizens but also the global community in terms improving their quality of life (Bhengu & Mthembu, 2013). Researchers invariably provide divergent expositions about the instruments that can lead to the creation of good schools as Bhengu and Mthembu (2013) explain, but in this section I argue that instructional leadership is the primary source of curriculum improvement, school effectiveness and increased learner attainment. According to Duit and Treagust (2003), the failure to improve scientific literacy has become a matter of great concern in the science of education research and development. Halverson, Grigg, Prichett and Thomas (2005) state that central to the new instructional leadership is the leader's capability to shift the organisation from cultures of internal to external accountability. Even Sofo, Fitzgerald and Jawas (2012) confirm that accountability is shown through the expanding evidence that instructional leadership roles and practices are significant. The new external demands of effective and viable schools put the subject advisors on their toes. The international and national focus on Annual National Assessment (ANA), national senior certificate (NSC) and international standardised tests' results are worrisome (Dempster & Reddy, 2007; Apple, 2005). Halverson, *et al.*, (2005) add that the Department of Basic Education uses tests, standards and policies as accountability tools. In an attempt to respond to these new internal and external demands of accountability, the Department of Basic Education has championed the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC). I fully support Southworth's (2002) contention

that instructional leadership depicts compliance with many dimensions which accommodate various pedagogic practices. As a consequence, subject advisors need to be good instructional leaders, in order for them to be able to turn the situation around and improve learner outcomes.

Pansiri (2008) conducted a quantitative study through questionnaires on 'Instructional leadership for quality learning in Botswana' and wisely put the importance of instructional leadership as "effective professional interactions in a school where the school management and staff work together with an appropriate curriculum for the purpose of improving student learning." The reality is that at the heart of instructional leadership are learner outcomes. Therefore the achievement of quality learner outcomes is dependent on the quality of instructional leadership as an input or critical resource. The indisputable truth is that the school is about improving learner performance; therefore instructional leadership is enacted so as to achieve this mission of the school.

Furthermore, Pansiri's (2008) quantitative research reveals that instructional leadership is good organisational management which is receptive to new leadership developments. He argues that on top of management functions like planning, supervision, coordination, organising, the instructional leader must also pay attention to learner attainment. He also found that more needs to be done to shape the instructional leadership for increased learner performance. On the basis of this observation, he argues that any instructional leadership which is not supported by research cannot address the fundamental day-to-day leadership problems. This is a clear assertion which cannot be easily disputed on baseless grounds because instructional leadership is so crucial in such a way that it forms the technical core of educational leadership. For that reason it is imperative that the instructional leader should be schooled in the theoretical frameworks. This will be an attempt to be proactive rather than reactive. When any instructional leadership problem arises, the pedagogic leader needs to come out of the woodwork and confront it head-on.

According to Webb (2005), leadership and management are usually considered as inseparable concepts. Webb (2005) goes on to state that management makes sure that tasks are completed following good planning whereas leadership is about developing and maintaining common vision, values of the school and giving lucid direction. Horng and Loeb (2010) in their international study on 'New thinking about instructional leadership' found that it is essential

for instructional leaders to set structures and systems so as to improve teaching and learning. Their belief is that effective instructional leadership is significant for the institution to be successful. My observation has shown that in the South African context, subject advisors group educators into clusters for the purposes of information sharing and continuous assessment (SBA) moderation. Turok (2012, p.23) argues that “the education of the African is a matter of national importance requiring state effort for its proper realisation”. For that reason, that role of school leadership is very crucial for the smooth and effective running of the school and consequently the achievement of improved learner outcomes.

Moswela (2010) adds that instructional supervision, as they call in Botswana, is a significant tool which improves teaching and learning and has more benefits for education. The strategic part of it is that it must be biased towards teaching and learning thus Bush (2013) talks about curriculum management and management of teaching and learning (MTL). According to Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013), in reality instructional leadership relates to the core business of the school which is teaching and learning. Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane, (2013) further state that instructional leadership makes teaching and learning a priority on a daily basis. For that reason, it is indispensable in any educational institution especially a school. The significance of instructional leadership is so huge in the sense that almost all the activities of the school revolve around teaching and learning (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). This is further well-articulated by Bush (2013) when he insists that instructional leadership is significant because of increasing recognition that it is one of the most important (if not *the* most important) activities for principals and other school leaders. Bush (2013) also states that it helps to create and support the environment which makes both high quality teaching and learning and highest standards of learner achievement possible. Even though some scholars like Horng and Loeb (2010) dispute the relationship between instructional leadership and learner achievements, Bush (2013) accepts the perception that instructional leadership makes a huge difference to learning outcomes. This suggests that instructional leaders like subject advisors need to put teaching and learning at the centre of their daily focus (Chikoko, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2013). The moment they move their eyes off the ball or else the central focus of their mission, it will consequently cause a gradual decline in learner performance.

According to Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013), the success or failure of instructional leadership depends on the rare ability of principals and subject advisors to bring to the field

different educational elements or stakeholders like learners, including former school learners, teachers and parents to share one vision and mission of effective teaching and learning and the resultant improved learner outcomes. Instructional leadership requires pro-active and innovative strategies. Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) concur with this assertion when they argue that leadership is about challenging the status quo. Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) further state that time is one of the greatest resources in any organisation. Even though instructional leadership cannot be elevated and singled out as the only, if not *the* important leadership strategy, it varies from other leadership strategies because it forms the heartbeat of any effectively and efficiently run organisation. As a result, Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) further assert that strong instructional leadership is essential for successful schools. It works very well with teacher development therefore Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) are correct when they say that leaders and teachers must be able to craft their own ways of addressing matters of teaching and learning. It stands to reason therefore that the absence of a well-established culture of teaching and learning in a school renders it dysfunctional (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013).

Moreover, the South African education system and especially the district under study is a matter of two tales. The urban schools defeat the rural schools in terms of Annual National Assessment results and grade 12 results. The failure of leadership in our schools presents sharp and stark contradictions in terms of what instructional leadership is for in schools. The need to investigate the subject advisors' instructional leadership arises from the school and district leadership shortcomings whose manifestations are lucidly evinced by the quality of instructional leadership that is applicable in schools (DoBE, 2013).

Sharma (2012) in his study in Asia found that on top of the importance of instructional leadership that has been presented above, it also counts for a number of benefits as well. These benefits are "student satisfaction with outcome, student high recognition, self-esteem and self actualisation, teachers' high morale, recognition, self- esteem and actualisation." These benefits are factors which make instructional leadership attractive and more fashionable in the 21st century school leadership. The importance of instructional leadership discussed above has demonstrated leaders' perspectives that instructional leadership is no more a leadership theory of choice but has become a contemporary powerful force that no school or district can do without. It has also shown that subject advisors are central to leadership and management of schools. In the next section, I introduce the strategies that

instructional leaders and in this case, subject advisors may employ in order for the schools to achieve their mission of the creation of effective organisations where improved learner achievements are evident.

2.2.3 Subject advisors' instructional leadership strategies

It is important that subject advisors, like HOD's, principals and deputy principals as leaders and managers assume the responsibility of being instructional leaders (Smith, Mestry & Bambie, 2013). Subject advisors need to be seen being highly instrumental in the provision of leadership and management for the curriculum delivery. Their inconspicuousness causes a void which is dangerous to effective instructional leadership. Timperley (2006) in his qualitative study on 'Leadership challenges involved in developing leading for learning' conducted in New Zealand through semi-structured interviews, notes that a school that is not well managed has no possibility to be a self-improving organisation. Timperley (2006) further asserts that principals need to be educators' "leaders, initiators, encouragers, motivators and at times prodders." This belief dictates that subject advisors should also exercise a lot of patience and also employ invitational leadership as one of their strategies. I say this because I feel that the question of instructional supervision should be de-mystified so that educators can be able to draw a distinction between instructional leadership and instructional policing. This strategy will endeavour to earn or win educators' trust and cooperation.

Moswela (2010) in his qualitative study on 'Instructional supervision in Botswana secondary schools found that instructional leaders need to accept that educators' curricular needs are dynamic and not remaining unchanged. This means that subject advisors are required to support educators in terms of pedagogy so that they can be in line with Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Hallinger (2005) and Sharma (2012) believe that instructional leaders are responsible for developing and entrenching teaching and learning culture. Schools are learning organisations which can only maintain their characteristic if there is an educative environment which is conducive to effective instruction and learning. Subject advisors have an inescapable and concomitant instructional leadership task to level the playing field. This can be achieved through balancing the equation, namely, by motivating educators to become life-long learners too, so as to support their own professional

development (Timperley (2006). Jazzar (2004) and Sharma (2012) add their weight to this discussion and emphasise that continuous professional development for educators is essential so as to build capacity for them to manage the curriculum effectively. It cannot be disputed that subject advisors are catalysts which should make the atmosphere appropriate and conducive for teaching and learning in term of planning, controlling (moderating formal tasks and learner scores) and professionally developing educators to teach effectively and efficiently and also capacitate principals, deputy principals and heads of department to manage the curriculum very well. Due to this critical task of the subject advisors, Archibald (2013) is correct when stating that there is no school that can be effective if run by incompetent instructional leaders. According to Hallinger (2003), many scholars make instructional leadership the principal's baby in terms of power, authority and expertise that are associated with this significant leadership phenomenon. Hallinger (2005) in his international review of literature study on 'instructional leadership and the school principal' further adds that in the 1980s, instructional leadership depicted principals as demonstrating strong hands-on participation in the classroom. This obscures the bigger picture of instructional leadership and alienates other important educational players like subject advisors who are supposed to be strategically placed as indispensable actors in the whole continuum.

Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) in their qualitative study conducted in South Africa on 'instructional leadership practices in challenging school contexts' found that instructional leaders manage instructional programmes which includes controlling, supervising and evaluating teaching and learning and monitoring learner performance. This is an understanding that was earlier advocated by Hallinger (2005) by asserting that instructional leadership has three dimensions, namely, "defining the school's mission, managing instructional programmes and promoting a positive school learning programme." These dimensions are discussed in detail under the theoretical frameworks section. According to Hallinger's (2003) qualitative study conducted in the capital city of Thailand, Bangkok on 'leading educational change', instructional leadership has to do with school effectiveness, school improvement and school programme improvement. He also further advances technical advice that instructional leaders should adjust their instructional leadership work to meet the needs, opportunities and prevailing contexts of the school. Instructional leaders need to devote a considerable amount of time on induction and mentoring of educators especially

the new entrants/ appointees (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). These are the educational actors who are normally neglected but for successful instructional leadership, they should be given special attention. The above sub-topic helped to shed light on the strategies and roles that subject advisors can utilise to make their task of supporting curriculum implementation in schools a success. In the next section, I introduce challenges and barriers to effective and successful instructional leadership.

2.2.4 Establishment of professional learning communities

Professional learning communities is a contemporary theory of leadership which has the ability to forge educator collaboration and distributed leadership thus creating a conducive environment for the instructional leadership to thrive and succeed in improving teaching and learning and learner outcomes (Lunenburg, 2010). It has been noted that schools are not putting enough effort into the creation of a collaborative and invitational environment. Notwithstanding Lunenburg's (2010) argument that the philosophy of the establishment of professional learning communities is for educators to work together. The persistent culture of individualisation of leadership and activities has alienated the values and norms of working together and developing together in order to achieve a common vision and goals. Lunenburg (2010) makes the assertion that "a professional learning community shares a vision." For the purposes of the advancement of the school mission, it is imperative that principals, educators, subject advisors and circuit managers share the commitment and desire to see their vision of an effective school or district being realised. This is a missing link or a leadership chemistry which may inadvertently lead to what Fullan (2001) refers to as 'cruising and sinking schools.'

Schools and education districts are learning organisations in a true sense of the word; therefore, they need to be seen to be developing and entrenching a culture of professional learning communities which will help them to fit the description of a learning organisation. Fullan (2001), reports that all schools and education districts are in the era of continuous innovation, transformation and invention. The high internal and external accountability demands should be serving as the pushing factors for the notion of professional learning communities to be realised. For the creation of professional learning communities to be successful in schools, circuits and education districts, Lunenburg (2010), proposes a four-step

process that school principals, subject advisors and circuit managers can utilise in the formation of professional learning communities, namely creation of a mission statement, developing a school or education district vision, developing value statements and establishing goals. The goals help to enhance commitment, identify delivery standards, give targets and promote motivation for both educators and learners (Lunenburg, 2010). When educators' work is being driven by a shared vision, mission and goals, they tend to develop a unique culture of sharing content knowledge and pedagogies or teaching methods which in turn promotes the culture of teaching and learning. Fullan (2001) contends that PLCs project themselves as an important reform strategy for all stakeholders in education. Furthermore, Fullan (2001) also believes that leadership in professional learning communities should not be narrowly understood as the obligation of the school principal, deputy principal or heads of department. Doolittle, Sudeck and Rattigan (2008) add that the important elements to be used in the school improvement endeavour are located in good organisational professional development partnerships. For the purposes of accomplishing this, circuit managers should establish professional learning communities of school principals so that they can share ideas on leadership and management of schools. The subject advisors should create external or circuit-based professional learning communities comprising subject educators of primary schools and secondary schools separately to discuss and share content knowledge and skills pertaining curriculum delivery like, planning, assessment, recording and reporting processes. Planning and assessment are the two areas where most educators are struggling. The principals need to form internal or school- based professional learning communities in order to move towards a desired goal of what Fullan (2001) calls 'a moving school.' Fullan (2001) is convinced that effective schools often ask themselves what is it that they need to do in order to form professional learning communities with the aim of preparing the learners for an unknown future. This is a right step in the right direction because schools are about teaching and learning and shaping the unknown future of the learners. To concur with this contention, Doolittle, *et al.*, (2008) emphasise that PLCs must aspire to improve teaching and learning and also have one end product in mind, to improve learner performance.

Williams, Brien, Sprague and Sullivan (2008) argue that professional learning communities do not have a universal definition. This suggests that any professional learning community programme and its outlook should be tailored or engineered to meet the needs of that particular school or education district for which it was intended. The PLC plan that works in

education district 'A' can possibly not work successfully in education district 'B' and the PLC programme that works perfectly in school 'A' may not work very well in school 'B'. Williams, *et al.*, (2008) admit that it is difficult for schools to adopt the PLC model of leadership which the education district and provincial Education Department have not done and are still stuck in the traditional bureaucratic system of leadership. To put it plainly, no PLC leadership model will succeed if it is applied with the aim of transforming schools only. This initiative must be owned by the whole Department of Basic Education and it require a tri-level model which will seek to foster organisational improvement at school, education district and provincial levels (Williams, Brian, Sprague & Sullivan 2008). In addition, this research by Williams, *et al.*, (2008) also found that educational transformation and the demands for organisational improvement have become so pressing and fundamental in such a manner that, they can no longer be reversed. Fullan (2001) notes that the establishment of professional learning communities calls for a paradigm shift from the traditional bureaucratic mentality to a more collaborative, democratic school community programme and harmonious interactions among educators and school managers. Williams, *et al.*, (2008) agree with Fullan (2001) that the role of the principal is so important and major in the sense that they need to be exemplary by participating actively in professional learning community programmes not as leaders but learners. The PLCs exist in schools but sporadically as temporary structures. The biggest challenge is the question of sustainability, as Williams, *et al.*, (2008) found that most schools have made PLCs a vehicle to educational reforms. In view of these findings, these scholars suggest that for the professional learning communities to be sustained there is a greater and urgent need for a shift from the traditional bureaucratic leadership model to a professional learning community model.

In addition, the benefits of professional learning communities are that they build school capacity which includes individual capacity like educator skills and content knowledge; collective (interpersonal) capacity like the quality of collaboration among educators and organisational capacity which refers to structural factors which can help or hinder a school's growth as a professional learning community (Williams, *et al.*, (2010). Feiman-Nemser (2003) conducted a study titled 'What new teachers need to learn' and found that in United States of America, many urban education districts provide support to newly appointed educators. This culture of professional development succeeds because of the establishment of professional learning communities. Subject advisors can also make a huge impact on learner

outcomes if they can adopt the same instructional leadership strategies both in schools and at cluster level. Lunenburg (2010) adds that the culture of professional learning communities creates a sense of ownership, confidence and pride because educators begin to own the curriculum delivery structures, they become proud of their institution and they become confident of what they are doing because they share information about school goals, what activities to be taught and how to teach them. The reason behind this is, as Lunenburg (2010) puts it, educators understand the importance of the school priorities. So, it stands to reason that professional learning communities create a culture of contentment and cooperation among educators.

2.2.5 Instructional leadership challenges encountered by subject advisors

Instructional leadership has its own challenges which affect its noble purpose adversely. Neumerski (2012) conducted a qualitative study in USA, based on ‘Rethinking instructional leadership: what do we know about principal, teacher and coach instructional leadership and where should we go from here?’ and found that instructional leadership definition does not provide sufficient explanation as to what the principal’s tasks with regard to instructional leadership entail. This revelation tends to be the mother of all the problems or challenges that this crucial phenomenon has ever faced in its history. Neumerski (2012) further argues that the huge amount of focus that is placed on the principal’s role is one of the causes why we are unable to have a clear understanding of how the principal improves teaching and learning in a school. The mere fact that the Department of Basic Education’s *policy on the organisation, roles and responsibilities of education districts* (DoBE, 2013) sheds some light on the role of the education districts and specifically the subject advisors whose work is highly focused on the core-technology of schools which is teaching and learning. They are expected to visit schools, conduct classroom observations, moderate marks, assessment tasks (question papers and memoranda, annual teaching programmes, assessment plans, lesson plans, pace-setters feedback to learners. On the contrary, the Department of Basic Education does not pay sufficient attention to the process of re-skilling them because most subject advisors are just promoted classroom educators. It has been noted that some educators do not cooperate with subject advisors in terms of putting their work in order and attending cluster meetings. This is also compounded by the Department of Basic Education’s failure to provide them with sufficient transport so that they can access schools easily, frequently and timeously. It has also noted that some subject advisors are responsible for more than one

subjects of which the additional one is not their specialisation and that creates knowledge gaps, poor and inadequate curriculum support to educators. Hallinger (2003 & 2005) further deduces that instructional leadership can be affected by in-built factors such as “school level, school size, gender, training, experience, school mission and goals, expectations, curriculum, teacher, teacher engagement, school effectiveness and student achievement.” These are factors that subject advisors need to pay more attention to so as to meet classroom educators half-way in terms of addressing these challenges. The failure to take these challenges into consideration in terms of planning, teaching and learning resource allocation and curriculum exposition can have a negative impact on the school’s basic functionality and learner outcomes.

According to Sofo, Fitzgerald and Jawas (2012) there is a lack of leadership efficiency in Indonesian schools. This is due to the lack of expertise and experience which depict them as counterproductive in their endeavour to manage schools properly. The principals do not take any step to remedy the situation but they rely on the districts to develop them and their educators. This study also points to a failure by the instructional leaders to show direction in terms of where the schools need to go. This demonstrates that there is a lack of visionary leadership which can take the school forward. That is the reason Hallinger (2005) emphasises that leader must at all material times, frame and communicate the vision to educators, learners and parents. Educators rely heavily on the already designed curriculum and instructional programmes which are imposed on them by the district and which do not respond and address the individual school needs. This professional incompetence and entrenched culture impedes the realization of a quality education. Wanzare (2012) supports this claim and adds that at times problems are caused not only by incompetence but lack of consistency in curriculum decisions that are taken. The second finding was the sporadic change of educational policies. This causes instability in terms of curriculum delivery coherence and it perforates a huge gap in terms of the leader’s knowledge and capacity to implement such policies. This has also been the case in the South African context where the country has moved from NATED 550 to National Curriculum Statement (NCS), from National Curriculum Statement to Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) until the newly introduced Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). (Solo, *et al.*, 2012) argue that these constant curriculum changes create obstacles for the attempts to improve the quality of education. Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) state that novice educators need

to learn from skilled and experienced educators. To my surprise, if we have subject advisors who are not well groomed into the chemistry of curriculum delivery, that goal will remain unachievable.

Moreover, Wanzare (2012), after conducting a mixed methods study through surveys, questionnaires and interviews, claims that in Kenya, educators complain about subjectivity, favouritism and biases where instructional leadership is viewed as a witch-hunt, fault finding mission and a tool to victimise educators. This kind of behaviour defeats the good purpose of instruction supervision. It demoralises educators instead of motivating them to strive for good quality teaching and learning and improved learner performance. The lack of necessary instructional leadership skills and knowledge is a matter of great concern because instructional leaders especially subject advisors are regarded as subject specialists who were always expected to be on top of their game. They need to model good professional practice so as to be exemplary to educators. The issue of written feedback which is not given to supervised educators and follow-ups that are not made was raised sharply in Pansiri's research findings. Educators' negative attitudes are a contributory factor in the souring of professional relationships between educators and instructional leaders. If they see a manager coming to observe the lesson presentation they view that practice in a negative light. It is not surprising and unusual because it is common practice that if an educator lacks confidence and expertise or subject knowledge, he or she resists moving an inch away from the comfort zone. Any attempt to use a professional diagnostic tool in order to determine areas of development is seen as encroaching in someone's territory. This African scholar does not end there but he hastens to suggest that these challenges should be addressed or overcome.

According to Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2013), teacher strikes can have a devastating impact on teaching and learning and instructional leadership in schools. Subject advisors are like fieldworkers and travel from the district office to schools almost every day. This study also found that there are principals who successfully resist the teacher unions' pressure and threats to close schools. Even though this has been proven through this qualitative research but not all instructional leaders can have that peculiar strength and courage to confront the union leaders and refuse to succumb to that perilous situation. I have no doubt that no subject advisor can be able to carry out his or her instructional leadership activities in volatile situations. Similarly, Lieberman (2000) shares the same sentiments that, teacher unions' destructive tendencies that lead to the decline in learner outcomes are points of discussion in

educational circles. Even Bascia (2000) concurs with Lieberman (2000) and Naicker, *et al.*, (2013) that the initiatives that subject advisors as instructional leaders develop are intended to support classroom instruction and improve learner attainment. Cooper and Sureau (2008) are of the view that educators have sold their professionalism and societal trust in exchange for union politics. This makes them place more prominence of unionism at the expense of quality teaching and learning in the classroom. This approach hampers subject advisors' efforts to support educators to deliver quality education in schools. These scholars add that "some teacher unions have a corrosive and debilitating impact on schools (Naicker, *et al.*, 2013, p.145). They also claim that these unions contribute greatly to the sporadic collapse of teaching and learning through their disruptive behaviours. This culture is counter-productive and it makes the protection of instructional or notional time highly impossible.

This section has indicated the challenges that subject advisors as pedagogic leaders may encounter in their execution of instructional leadership practices and how they can go about attempting to minimise them. In the next section, I introduce and discuss the two theoretical frameworks in which this study is grounded.

2.3 Theoretical frameworks

A theory is a set of ideas that endeavours to provide an exposition about a particular phenomenon (Rule & John, 2011). As a consequence, this study seeks to investigate the subject advisors' instructional leadership practices in schools. Therefore, this study is underpinned by instructional leadership and distributed leadership theories. In essence, this study seeks to verify and apply these important theories and locate the research (Rule & John, 2011 and Vithal & Jansen, 2008), in relation to the creation of effective schools by subject advisors as instructional leaders. Gromm (2008, p.285) advances his position that "theoretical sampling entails a classification of phenomenon into a set of types, such that what is observed can be classified as one type or another." Creswell (2009, p.51) defines theory as "an interrelated set of constructs (variables) formed into propositions or hypotheses that specify the relationship among variables." According to Creswell (2009, p.49) in qualitative research theoretical frameworks "provide a lens that shapes what is looked at and the questions asked." Rule and John (2011, p.95) add that "case studies can be used to verify theory or generate theory." These proponents further assert that a good theoretical framework is simple,

fertile, coherent, and falsifiable and it gives account of the phenomenon and concurs with the body of existing evidence.

2.3.1 Instructional leadership theory/model

There is a plethora of instructional leadership models, namely, Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model, Hallinger and Murphy's (1986) instructional leadership model, Horng and Loeb's (2010) instructional leadership model, to name but a few, but I chose Weber's (1987) leadership theoretical model to underpin my study because it links perfectly with the subject advisors' instructional leadership practices under study and my critical questions. In my view, it is presented as an epitome of good instructional leadership tasks because, as Hallinger (2003) and Archibald (2013) correctly argue, it does not suggest that the instructional leadership task can be carried out by the principal alone. Its complex nature allows sharing of responsibilities with educators and as a consequence, subject advisors can also be accommodated in this important leadership model as a form of distributed leadership. The South African education system comprises both school-based and office-based educators who are attached to various education districts and circuits. The subject advisors' main area of focus is to provide professional support to educators, school principals and school management teams (SMTs).

Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model emanated from intensive research on instructional leadership. He developed six major functions of instructional leaders. This scholar maintains that it is not practicably possible for any instructional leader to master and achieve all these instructional leadership facets at once. I fully agree with this position because there is not sufficient consensus on the elements or constituents that form instructional leadership (Neumerski, 2012).

In the next section, I introduce and discuss Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model.

2.3.1.1 Setting school academic goals

According to Weber (1987) the instructional leader should always give guidance and direction based on the organisation's objectives and philosophy. Weber (1987) makes a convincing assertion that for any school or education district to have effective leadership, quality teaching and learning and improved learner attainment, there must be well formulated vision, goals and mission that provide an impetus and direction to all leadership, governance

and curriculum matters. Bush and Jackson (2002) support this argument and state that instructional leaders must articulate their vision, set clear goals in order for schools to demonstrate a culture of shared mission. It stands to reason therefore that the education district, as a support base for all curriculum, examinations and assessment matters cannot achieve this policy mandate without a shared vision and a sense of collaboration in terms of working closely with educators, principals and circuit managers.

2.3.1.2 Organising the instructional programme

According to Weber (1987), the principals have a duty to perform instructional organisation and coordination which comprises of subject groupings, student groupings, teacher organisation, leadership teams and the structure of the curriculum. My argument is that this is a multi-pronged task which needs a multi-pronged strategy and which cannot be achieved by principals alone but it also requires the specialised knowledge and skills of subject advisors. According to Neumerski (2002), in United States, education districts create the curricula and educators only identify and choose the content knowledge to be taught in the classroom. This is contrary to the South African Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statements (CAPS). Educators are only expected to develop annual teaching programmes and annual assessment plans based on the available subject policy statements. In a South African educational context, the content knowledge is determined by the National Department of Basic Education including the number of formal and informal assessment tasks. Archbald (2013); Horng and Loeb (2010) are of the opinion that sound management comprising of various tasks as a prerequisite for effective leadership. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) add that this task is aimed at creating constant routines, structures and systems in schools and district thus giving a platform for change.

2.3.1.3 Hiring, supervising and evaluating educators

According to Weber (1987) curriculum management is very significant in the sense that it involves planning, supervising teaching and learning and monitoring the learner progress and as well as providing support to educators. Weber (1987) needs to develop his concept and include PLCs because they facilitate educator collaboration. It stands to reason that monitoring, supervising and evaluating cannot be divorced from instructional leadership practices. This has become more demanding because the level of accountability at school has been augmented thus accelerating the demand for effective school leadership (Myung, Loeb

& Horng, 2011). Weber (1987) argues that appointing capable educators is a good endeavour to create and maintain a healthy instructional programme. Horng and Loeb (2010) concur with this claim as they state that for the principal to improve instruction he or she must staff the institution with high-quality educators and provide them with necessary support and resources for them to be effective in the classroom. Horng and Loeb (2010) further suggest that effective school managers appropriately recommend the appointment of good educators, support, develop, evaluate them through integrated quality management systems (IQMS) and retain them for continued instructional improvement. The appraisal system of educators has long been contaminated because it is linked to the pay progression, therefore HODs do not do justice when conducting this process for their educators. It is a process which requires an overhaul so that the IQMS scores can be a true reflection of an educator's performance.

For this, to be successful, the subject advisors, circuit managers and principals should be seen to be hands-on as curriculum managers.

2.3.1.4 Protecting instructional time and programmes

It is vital for the instructional leader to protect the instructional time so that educators can teach and learners learn without any problems (Weber, 1987). The instructional time should be treated like a holy cow so that all the available time can be utilised for maximum teaching and learning. The reason is very simple because Horng and Loeb (2010) advocate that teaching and learning forms the heart of a good classroom practice. The considerable amount of the lost time defeats the purpose of the school's existence. Zuma (2009) states that on average most township/ rural schools teach an average of ± 3 hours a day instead of 7 hours. The amount of time dedicated to instruction varies from one school to the other. Educators must be able to create a balance between the actual available academic time and the real time on tasks. The quality of time spent on instructional leadership tasks needs to improve in all schools (Weber, 1987). The disturbance of instructional leadership practices can have detrimental effects on the effective teaching and learning and the principal needs to create a school environment conducive to learning.

2.3.1.5 Creating a climate for learning

School climate serves as a motivating factor for both educators and learners in their academic and professional work (Weber, 1987). The learning climate is associated with norms, values

and attitudes prevailing in a school and which characterise the behaviours of educators and learners (Weber, 1987). He goes further to suggest that teacher expectations determine the amount of time dedicated to teaching and learning and the quality of materials and activities. As a consequence, subject advisors need to improve the learning climate through high expectations as Weber (1987) suggests. These improved expectations should be translated into actions through awards and praises for excellence. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) suggest that the district needs to invest in instructional leadership. This has the ability to create capacity for subject advisors to establish structures and put systems in place so as to foster shared educational goals and professional learning communities where educators can benefit in terms of content knowledge and professional development (Leithwood & Jantzi (2008). Bush and Jackson (2002) add that capacitating instructional leaders like subject advisors is a critical part in systems building. It cannot be disputed that the instructional leader has a critical task of setting the tone in order to salvage the effective and salubrious culture of teaching and learning in schools. Hallinger and Murphy (1986) suggest that principals must promote high expectations among educators and learners. This brings hope that even subject advisors can also increase the value and standards of our educational practices if they can be hands-on in terms of monitoring and evaluation of educators and their instructional programme.

2.3.1.6 Monitoring achievement and evaluating programme

Monitoring and evaluating the school programme is key to successful instructional leadership. It is an integral part of the teaching and learning process (Weber, 1987). The instructional leader or subject advisor has a primary duty to evaluate and revise the instructional programme in an institution (Weber, 1987). Hallinger and Murphy (1986) exert an added emphasis when they say that the principal must monitor and evaluate teaching and learning through assessment data resulting from the test scores and examination scores. According to Horng and Loeb (2010) instructional leaders like subject advisors should mentor educators through lesson observations, providing feedback and modelling the teaching practice. Supervising and assessing educators and their instructional programmes help to identify successes and failures or problems (Weber, 1987). This cannot be overemphasised because management is not a spontaneous task but it requires an active and skilled leader for it to bear the desired fruits. As a consequence, the monitoring and assessment of the instructional programme helps to identify gaps in terms of pacesetters and

provides space for intervention strategies before it is too late. The monitoring and evaluation of educators and the instructional programme enhance the sense of responsibility and accountability on the side of both educators and the middle management (HOD's). The success of the school instructional programme is measured in terms of improved learner outcomes (Weber, 1987). "Districts recognised that some teachers needed to learn how to meet the mandated, more stringent standards for student learning" (Neumerski, 2012). Evaluation comprises three stages, namely, pre-course (diagnostic), midcourse (formative) and final evaluation (summative) (Weber, 1987). This scholar further posits that "monitoring includes all the domains of leadership like academic goals, organisation, supervision, focus on teaching and climate."

2.3.2 Distributed leadership theory

I also utilise Spillane's (2004) distributed leadership theory to complement Weber's (1987) theory in my analysis of instructional leadership and the roles of the subject advisors. Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model and Spillane's (2004) distributed leadership theory perspective complement each other well in terms of their theoretical discourses. I fully support Southworth's (2002) contention that instructional leadership depicts compliance with many dimensions which accommodate various practices including distributed leadership. I chose this model because it does not focus on the leader as a unit of analysis but it looks at a web of leaders, educators and leadership activity (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004 & Harris, 2003). Therefore, I agree with Gronn's (2002) view that the traditional, orthodox notion that portrays the principal as the sole or stand-alone instructional leader is misguided.

My argument is that schools will never be able to improve instructional leadership practices and learner attainment if leadership is not transformed to accommodate distributed or shared leadership. The distributed leadership approach has its theoretical foundations grounded in four central ideas, namely, leadership tasks and functions, task enactment, social distribution of task enactment and situational distribution of task enactment (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004 & Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001).

2.3.2.1 Leadership tasks and functions

According to Gronn (2002) the leadership tasks of one leader are less significant when compared to the collective leadership by different educators in a school. This argument suggests that it is unthinkable that one leader can be the sole causal factor for teaching and learning. The complex nature of the distributed leadership dictates that both the macro-functions (large scale organisational tasks) and micro tasks (day-to-day work) should be distributed among all educators and shared between subject advisors, principals, HOD's and educators (Spillane, *et al.*, 2001; Hallinger & Hack, 1998 and Lunenburg, 2010). As it is my belief that a leader cannot work alone, there must be committees and teams that inform, and guide his or her operations (Spillane, *et al.*, 2004 & Woods, 2004). Leadership is made up of different tasks and functions therefore no one on earth can be the source of all wisdom and knowledge as a result other role players like educators need to come into play and own the curriculum programme of the school. The curriculum is the heart of the school and without it there can be no school that can achieve its goals and mission. Hatcher (2005) emphasises that schools achieve high academic standards of learner outcomes and progressive school goals through shared leadership, in which educators, School Governing Bodies, parents and learners work collaboratively with a shared vision. As a consequence, I further argue that hierarchical management model is likely to become an endangered species. I am under no pressure to dispute Bolden's (2011) assertion that distribution does not guarantee effective and efficient school leadership but my experience and observations show that the winds of change are blowing in schools, circuits and districts. The call that is loud and clear is that leaders must let go of some portion of their authority and control (Harris, 2003). Spillane, *et al.*, (2004) state that leadership tasks comprises of writing a draft school vision, disciplinary processes, holding meetings, monitoring and evaluating the instructional programme. As a consequence, no leader can write a vision, do consultative meetings, adopt and also revise the school vision alone. Visions and goals become static and implementable solely because, at times they are not a product of extensive consultations and rigorous collaborative outcome.

2.3.2.2 Enacting leadership tasks

The analysis of leadership tasks and functions is not sufficient; the researcher needs also to investigate their enactment for instructional innovation (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). Gronn (2002) argues that traditional form of distributed leadership 'describes and not

prescribes' the allocation or distribution of duties. Their effective enactment determines the success and failure of the instructional leadership and instructional programme. It is imperative that subject advisors document their daily practices and have a clear understanding of how to enact them so as to transform instruction successfully. Task enactment is determined by the "leaders' subject matter, pedagogical knowledge and belief about teachers' learning and change" (Spillane, Manion & Morrison, 2004).

2.3.2.3 The social distribution of task enactment

Task enactment requires social distribution because it is an activity of multiple formal and informal leaders (Spillane, *et al.*, 2004; Spillane, 2005 and Hartley, 2007). Subject advisors should work collaboratively with the principal, deputy principals, HOD's and educators because they possess instructional leadership skills. Gronn (2002) adds that the arrangement of duties is a key source of social and institutional power. The big question is how instructional leaders work collaboratively and also individually to carry out their functions. Gronn (2002) is of the opinion that distributed leadership as a numerical action and concertive action suggests that leadership is an entity of multiple members carrying out a jointly planned activity in a school. I have no doubt that if subject advisors can share authority with principals and SMT's that will forge collaboration and impact positively on school effectiveness. The classic example here is when the SMT distribute teaching loads, the timetable committee issues a composite timetable, educators come together to do planning, they go to teach and assess the learners and submit the test scores to the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign Committee (QLTC) to analyse the results and provide their judgment and also suggest intervention strategies which are required by the 'medical instructional model' (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). For this reason, Timperley (2005) adds that the instructional programmes serve as vehicles for achieving the ultimate goal of educator development and improved learner outcomes.

2.3.2.4 The situational distribution of leadership practice

Spillane, *et al.*, (2004) emphasise that "leadership is situated..... and the activity is distributed in the interactive web of actors, artefacts and situation." So, this is the mutualistic combination of elements that bring about a dynamic leadership which leads to instructional innovation. The researchers caution the instructional leaders to adapt their conduct to the features of their educators in order to lead schools effectively (Spillane, Halverson &

Diamond, 2004). The situation or context characterises the instructional leadership and leadership behaviours (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). I also agree that “situation is not external to leadership activity but is one of its core constituting elements” (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). The situation can either assist or hamper leadership activity (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). The school’s existence is normally characterised by situations like “staff size, stability, environmental complexity, task-complexity and task-certainty” (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). Drawing from Spillane, *et al.*, (2004) this study is not concerned with leadership styles and organisational or leadership structures but day-to-day leadership activity” (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004).

2.4 Chapter summary

Both the literature review and theoretical frameworks presented above support the view that the two essential objectives of school leadership are school improvement and school development. For these objectives to be realised, schools and districts need to have strong and visionary leadership whose primary focus is on the improvement of teaching and learning and learner performance as the primary goal of the school’s and district’s existence. The reviewed international, African and South African literature revealed that both instructional leadership and distributed leadership are essential in ensuring the establishment of effective schools and education districts. The PLCs also featured prominently as an avenue to bring about educator professional development, collaboration and the shared decision-making processes.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding Chapter Two dealt with the literature review and theoretical frameworks and sought to report on the scholarly works on instructional leadership as a phenomenon under study. In this chapter, I presented the research design and methodology. In order to achieve that, I confine myself to the discussion of the following sub-headings, namely research paradigm, research design, research methodology, sampling, data generation methods, data analysis, ethical issues, issues of trustworthiness, triangulation, limitations of the study and conclude with a chapter summary.

3.2 Research paradigm

According to Creswell (2007), there are four paradigms that are often used in research, namely post-positivism, social construction (interpretivism), critical theory and post-modernism. Maree (2007) believes that a paradigm is a set of patterns, assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which promote a particular world-view. Maree (2012) also defines the paradigm as a research plan that is at the centre of the research and guides the scholars on how to locate and position their study and also guides the reader to comprehend the ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives of the research project. Creswell (2009); Maree (2007); Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.36) refer to it as a “world view, perspective or a way of breaking down the complexity of the world.” This study is located in an interpretivist paradigm because its objective is to investigate the ontological stance that there are multiple realities and the epistemological and methodological positions that through subject advisors’ narratives, reality can be socially constructed (Maree, 2011; Grix, 2010; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

The case study research can be positivist, interpretive or critical (Maree, 2007). In other words, paradigms are used as lens or tools to interpret and understand the nature of the truth or reality namely, ontology (Maree, 2007). Creswell (2009) argues that in interpretivism the scholar interprets almost all what he or she sees, hears and understands. Epistemologically,

the participants also interpret what they understand about the subject under study. He further adds that the interpretations are linked to their historical backgrounds, contexts and already gained understandings. The undisputed truth is that subject advisors live in their own academic and professional world; therefore they would be in a position to give their own perspectives about the instructional leadership as a phenomenon that was investigated in this study. In my study I solicited the multiple and diverse views of subject advisors on how they perceived instructional leadership as a phenomenon under study. This assertion is supported by Maree (2011) when he states that interpretivist paradigm foregrounds the meaning that the participants assign to their lived experiences. Even Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) add that interpretivism attempts to comprehend and interpret the world on the basis of the participants' (actor's) perspectives. I fully concur with this argument because even Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that the concept of reality is elusive in nature which suggests that instructional leadership as a concept is also elusive, as Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) point out in their study on instructional leadership. In terms of methodology, this paradigm generally uses a qualitative research approach which was discussed in detail under the sub- heading 'research design'.

One of its weaknesses is that it provides subjective information which cannot be scientifically proven, like in the case of positivism (Maree, 2007). Cohen, *et al.*'s justification is that the central focus of interpretivist paradigm is to comprehend the subjective truth of the human experience. I, as a researcher relied on the word of mouth but that would not be a major challenge because documents analysis would also help to enlighten me as a researcher and the reader by triangulating the data generation sources.

3.3 Research design and methodology

3.3.1 Research design

A research design is a plan that guides the researcher through all stages or processes of the research project (Creswell, 2009; Leedy & Ormrod, 2009; Terre Blanche & Durkheim, 1999). This assertion is also confirmed by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) when they state that a design is utilised in a research study to refer to the scholar's or researcher's plan of how to proceed. Maree (2012, p.81) further defines it as "a plan of how one intends to accomplish a particular

task, and in research this plan provides a structure that informs the researcher as to which theories, methods and instruments the study will be based on.” According to Creswell (2009), qualitative inquiry is suitable for multiple sources of data like documents, interviews and observations. This makes it the most preferred research inquiry or approach. The advantage of a qualitative research design was that the data was collected by me and for that reason I was not alienated from the data generation process (Creswell, 2009). Maree (2007) adds that qualitative research as a methodology seeks to understand human behavioural patterns in their natural situations or contexts. Due to these characteristics, the researcher becomes one of the instruments utilised in the research which is an enjoyable experience.

The researcher is at liberty to choose one or more research designs in which to locate the study based on the paradigmatic position or worldview. On the basis that, this study was located in a qualitative paradigm, I intended employing a case study as a design or strategy of this research project. This research design was appropriate because my research involved one case (Maree, 2012) or people who are subject advisors. Maree (2012) asserts that a case can involve human beings, events, organisations or even programmes. This research design was selected because it would serve as a vehicle to respond to all the three of my critical questions that were being investigated. It was also suitable for this research’s sequential structure including the purpose of the study and the paradigm which underpins the study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

According to Rule and John (2011), there are three forms of a case study, namely a “case study as a story (narrative), as word picture (descriptive) and argument (discursive)”. A case study can either be presented in one or a combination of types. This study presented a case study as a word picture. I chose this descriptive form of a case study because it utilises a thematic approach to the arrangement and presenting of data (Rule & John, 2011). It is also appropriate for investigating elements like subject advisors, policies, tasks and structures of the organisation and how they relate to one another (Rule, *et al.*, (2011). Rule and John (2011) assert that case studies can be utilised to explore a general problem or issue within a limited and focused setting. Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2011) define the case study as an approach that gives a picture of real people in real situations and assists the reader to understand them better. Maree (2012) further asserts that a case study normally investigates one case for which multidimensional data are generated and analysed. Robson (2007) and Rule & John (2011) emphasise that a case study is the study of a case. The case is

instructional leadership practices in schools and education districts. It is a case of six subject advisors at Ilembe education district. It is not a case of the whole Department of Basic Education. I used a case study because it allowed me an in-depth study of the instructional leadership as a socially constructed phenomenon. Maree (2007) concurs when he argues that a case study assists the researcher to investigate the contemporary reality within its real-life context.

The case study draws its greatest strength from the fact that it permits the scholar to concentrate on a particular situation and tries to identify interrelated processes at work (Bell, 1987). The shortcomings of the qualitative approach is that it is solely subjected to the human behaviour, understanding and interpretations of the instructional leadership as a subject of study as opposed to a quantitative method whose final judgement is based on the cause and effect of the natural scientific laws. The human behaviour cannot be manipulated like other non-human variables (Maree, 2007; Rule & John, 2011; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The case study has a disadvantage in the sense that it involves a pre-selection or screening process which can at times be time consuming and expensive (Rule & John, 2011).

3.3.2 Research methodology

Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2011) and Maree (2012) posit that qualitative researchers utilise different methodologies such as case studies, participatory action research, narrative inquiry, grounded theory, appreciative inquiry, etc. The methodology refers to the strategies or techniques the researcher utilises for sampling, data generation, data documentation and data analysis stages (Maree, 2012). There are three research approaches used by researchers, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods (Creswell, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2012; Maree, 2007 & Maree, 2012). In this study, I used a qualitative research approach because I would be dealing with human beings who are at times difficult to understand (Maree, 2012). Rule and John (2011) advise the researchers that the choice of methodology should be based on the *'fit for purpose'* principle. To comply with this principle, the methodology that I used is a case study because it recognises and accepts that there are many realities / truths existing in a single case or phenomenon (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This would help me to get multiple truths or realities about instructional leadership practices from subject advisors. I chose a case study design because of its

flexibility, depth, versatility and manageability (Rule & John, 2011). It has an accommodating characteristic because it accommodates multi-methods strategy, and it can be positivist, interpretivist and critical in its paradigmatic position (Maree, 2007). The advantage is that a case study can “verify theory or generate theory” (Rule & John, 2011). As a result, this case study could verify the instructional leadership and distributed leadership theories and establish their relevance to the study findings. The striking characteristic is that an interpretivist case study helped to forge an extensive understanding of how subject advisors worked together harmoniously with one another in their natural environment and how they shaped their understanding of instructional leadership as a phenomenon under investigation (Maree, 2007). He further extols a case study for its ability to respond to both ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions. This gave me confidence that my study’s research questions on instructional leadership would also be answered.

3.3.2.1 Sampling

Maree (2007) and Creswell (2009) define sampling as the process used to select a portion of the population for study. In qualitative studies, sampling is done purposively (Creswell, 2009). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that in purposive sampling, researchers hand-pick the participants (cases) to be included in the sample on the basis of characteristics they are looking for. My study utilised a single-stage sampling design to obtain participants for the study. Creswell (2009) describes a single-stage sampling method as the process where the scholar can get hold of the names of people in that population and select the participants directly. This procedure is different from a multi-stage (clustering) design which is only appropriate when the researcher does not have the list of names of the participants that he or she wants to form part of the research population (Creswell, 2009). The single-stage is more appropriate because the researcher approaches people that he or she is familiar with and who fit the description or characteristics required by the research project (Creswell, 2009). I also purposively sampled six subject advisors as participants in my study (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011; Creswell, 2009). The sample comprised of three subject advisors in the General Education and Training band (GET) and three in the Further Education and Training band (FET). Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) posit that purposive sampling targets knowledgeable people with in-depth knowledge about certain issues like professional role, power, expertise or experience.

For that reason, I chose the experienced subject advisors in order for me to get an in depth knowledge in terms of instructional leadership practices in schools. The sampling adopted a non-probability selection principle because the participants are known to me in terms of experience, seniority and qualifications. I also purposively selected documents like minutes of the subject advisors' meetings and subject advisors' monthly reports based on the life span of three years (2012—2014). The documents shed light on the authenticity of the interview data. Maree (2007) emphasises that the researcher can utilise the documents in order for them to shed light on the phenomenon that is under investigation.

The sampling of the education district was also purposively done based on proximity and unsatisfactory learner performance. The Ilembe Education District is situated in the Durban inner city, in KwaZulu-Natal. It comprises of Stanger Circuit Management Centre, Maphumulo CMC and Ndwedwe CMC. The district has a staff complement of 43 subject advisors in the Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) sub-directorate. It has both General Education and Training (GET) band with 22 subject advisors and Further Education and Training (FET) band with 21 subject advisors. Both sections have acting Chief Education Specialists (CES) as section heads who report to the District Director who is the head of the education district.

3.3.2.2 Data generation methods

Methods are specific techniques that the researcher uses to conduct a research (Bogdan & Biklem, 2007). Case study rests on multiple methods like interviews, documents analysis, observations to name but a few (Maree, 2011). For that reason, this study utilised semi-structured interviews and documents review/ analysis as ways of knowing the truth about instructional leadership practices of subject advisors.

3.3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

According to Maree (2011), there are 3 types of interviews, namely, semi-structured, structured and open-ended interviews. Interviews are a one-on-one or face-to-face discussion between the researcher and the research participants (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This is further justified by Lincoln and Guba (1985) when they state that “the sources that the instruments utilise may be both human and non-human.” Lincoln, *et al.*, (1985) put it

eloquently that a person is the initial and also continuing mainstay in research projects. The semi-structured interviews helped me to see the world through the eyes of the subject advisors as participants (Maree, 2007). The semi-structured interviews also allowed me to obtain rich descriptive data and also helped me to comprehend the participants when constructing knowledge and social reality (Maree, 2007). The choice of the semi-structured interviews was an informed decision based on their appropriateness for this study because they allowed the researcher to probe the participants in order to get in-depth knowledge (ontology) about the instructional leadership as a phenomenon under investigation (Maree, 2007). Semi-structured interviews involve a set of pre-set questions which initiate the discussion (Rule & John, 2011). I used the interview schedule as an important research instrument which guided the interview process (Rule & John, 2011; Maree, 2007). I also intended using a digital recorder for purposes of authenticity and accuracy (Creswell, 2009 & Maree, 2007). Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003, p.3) confirm that “research instruments are simply devices for obtaining information relevant to your research project.” The disadvantage of the interviews is that they need to be digitally-recorded and transcribed verbatim which is also a mammoth task. Transcribing requires time and the highest level of accuracy (Maree, 2011; Rule & John, 2011; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The issue of bias is also a threat in the interview process (Bell, 1987).

3.3.2.4 Documents review

Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasise that the term ‘documents’ refers to non-human sources which are any written communication records or material. Lincoln, *et al.*, (1985) and Maree (2011) further assert that primary documents comprise school or district reports, minutes, letters, agendas, diaries, email messages, speeches, memoranda, newspaper articles, case studies, faxes, television scripts, photographs, medical histories, epitaphs and suicide notes. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) add that a document is a record, event or process. Maree (2011) states that the secondary documents or sources are published books, journal articles, etc. The second research technique (method) utilised was documents analysis/review. Documents can provide rich data because each and every subject advisor, normally reports his or her strategic plans and the activities that have already been carried out in schools and cluster meetings. Lincoln, *et al.*, (1985) suggest that documents are good because they are

non-reactive and they are also a rich source of data because they are inextricably linked to the context which they represent. For the purposes of this study, the important unpublished or primary documents or records that I intended scrutinising and analysing are Teaching and Learning Services Sub-directorate (TLS) minutes of meetings and subject advisors' monthly reports. I made use of documents analysis checklist as an important research instrument. For the purposes of this study, interviews and documents review helped me to obtain rich knowledge about the social reality under investigation, thereby enhancing credibility (Maree, 2007). The disadvantage is that documents require predetermined selection criteria and an accurate process of studying them which may be time-consuming (Maree, 2011).

3.3.2.5 Data analysis

Data analysis in qualitative studies has to do with the process of noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Creswell (2009) contends that qualitative data analysis is not a once off process but it occurs continuously and concurrently with the data generation process. During the data generation process the researcher reflects on the data by asking himself or herself some analytical questions, making pre and unstructured interpretations and writing reports or field notes (Creswell, 2009). Researchers in the interpretivist (naturalistic) paradigm normally employ inductive data analysis (Maree, 2007). Maree (2007) asserts that inductive data analysis assists the scholar to pick up multiple truths applicable in the generated data. This was done with the belief that many scholars hold the view that interpretivism dictates that there is not one truth or reality and those scholars need to conduct research in natural contexts so as to arrive at good understanding of the phenomenon under study (Maree, 2007). Consequently, Maree (2007) concurs with the assertion that inductive data analysis can be trusted to identify multiple truths present in the generated data. Notwithstanding the fact that there is no one single or correct way to analyse and present qualitative data, (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011), this study will employ content data analysis for both interviews and documents review. In thematic (content) analysis the researcher creates categories, code/label the data and identifies themes in the set of interviews and documents review data and makes a framework of them for the purposes of comparing and contrasting the responses from the different participants (Gomm, 2008). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.563) define content analysis as “the process of

summarising and reporting written data –the main contents of data and their messages”. Content analysis is appropriate for any written material eg documents and interview transcriptions (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

The transcripts and documents were read several times before coding and themes were identified and recorded. I highlighted different categories and grouped them into sub-themes and eventually into major themes. Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) posit that coding allows the scholars to identify similar information. All the interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Rule and John (2011) indicate that digital recorder helps the researcher to use the transcripts and check their accuracy. The data for both interviews and documents was analysed through content analysis. The content analysis is suitable for written material like documents and interview transcription (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). The documents were read several times before coding and themes could be identified and recorded. I read the whole transcript and highlighted the points related to different categories and then grouped them into sub-themes and eventually into major themes. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) define content analysis as the stage where the researcher summarises and reports on the data generated. Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) state that an interpretive outlook argues for social subjects such as documents as having been socially constructed. I, then, used quotations from the generated data to support my claims.

3.3.2.6 Ethical issues

The question of research ethics is of paramount significance in all universities, locally and internationally. The University of KwaZulu-Natal is not different from its sister universities. This academic institution’s research is governed by policies, rules and regulations which specify the research code of ethics which need to be adhered to by all its employees, students and researchers. The research codes of ethics are a security measure which protects the participants from unfairness, vulnerability and victimisation; research sites and the university from being sued or put into disrepute. Rule and John (2011) agree that research ethics which are adopted by a community of researchers govern and regulate the research practices.

Research ethical issues are measures that are taken in order to enhance the research’s quality (Rule & John, 2011). Ethical issues have to do with the principles of autonomy and informed

consent, non-maleficence and beneficence (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Rule & John, 2011 & Maree, 2007 & 2012). Guba and Lincoln (1985), state that the researcher has an obligation to consider these important ethical principles. The first principle that I observed was autonomy and informed consent, meaning ensuring participants' privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, permission from the gatekeepers and informed consent from participants (Rule & John, 2011). In addressing this principle, I ensured that participants' identities were protected. The participants' real names were not disclosed and published. All the interviewees remained anonymous and I intended utilising pseudonyms. I obtained informed consent and permission to conduct my study from participants, UKZN and Department of Basic Education (DoBE) in order to comply with the university and DoBE's ethical protocols.

The second principle that I observed was non-maleficence, meaning that the research should not do harm to the participants, organisation (research site) and communities (Maree, 2012; Rule & John, 2011; Robson, 2007 & Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). I addressed this by adhering to the research parameters and by observing the UKZN code of ethics. I made sure that I stuck to the research questions that had been approved by my supervisor. The third principle that I observed was the principle of beneficence which means that any research should be of benefit to the participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). In order to address this principle I added the statement of potential benefits when requesting them to participate in the study in writing. I provided the participants and the gate-keepers with feedback and follow-ups. I also explained that research on the instructional leadership of subject advisors could improve their knowledge base and skills thus addressing curriculum delivery problems in schools and by so doing contribute to public good education (Rule & John, 2011).

3.3.2.7 Issues of trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the way the researcher persuades the reader that the findings of the study are worth paying attention to (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). According Rule and John (2011), this terminology or concept promotes values and norms such as scholarly rigour, transparency and professional ethics within the research society. The measures that are normally taken to ensure the quality of the research and its highest level of trustworthiness are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Rule & John, 2011, Maree, 2007; Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness was enhanced through employing various strategies detailed below:

Credibility means that the inquiry is carried out in such a way that the findings will be found to be credible (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). This means that the findings should be a true reflection of the reality of the phenomenon under study. To address credibility, I had triangulation processes and lengthy interview sessions (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). I, further provided thick descriptions in all chapters of the dissertation (Rule & John, 2011). I also used peer debriefing and member checking (Maree, 2007). I solicited support from my fellow students and colleagues to check my interpretation of the data (critical peer checks) (Rule & John, 2011). The research participants were also requested to verify the accuracy of what had been reported about them (Rule & John, 2011). The interview protocol was very helpful and reduced inconsistency and unintended unfairness. Creswell (2009) states that interview protocol is used in the process of asking questions and recording data or responses and it establishes a standard procedure to be followed by both the researcher (interviewer) and participants (interviewees). Transferability means the findings of the inquiry can apply or transfer to other contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). To address this principle I provided thick descriptions of the case of the instructional leadership (IL) and its clear context in order for the findings, recommendations and conclusions to enhance transferability (Rule & John, 2011). I used paper trail by attaching my research instruments like interview questions and documents review schedule so that the researchers who are interested in the topic can replicate the study and use it in other contexts (Rule & John, 2011).

Dependability is the assurance that the findings are a result of an authentic research (Maree, 2007) it also means that the findings should easily be replicated or repeated in other situations or circumstances (Rule & John, 2011). To address the issue of dependability I did member checking (Maree, 2007). I further, disclosed the “research process, including limitations, researcher’s positionality and ethical requirements” (Rule & John, 2011).

Confirmability is the way the researcher addresses influences or biases in the research (Rule & John, 2011). To address both dependability and confirmability I requested a competent peer reader to do an independent audit of the transcripts and analysed data (Rule & John, 2011). The use of rich, thick description to report the findings helped me as a researcher, in giving the reader an almost clear picture of the natural setting (site) and creating an element

of common understanding of experiences (Creswell, 2009). The desire to indicate my biases as a researcher in terms of issues of personal background like gender, culture, history and socio-economic position would add the element of honesty and openness and also the willingness to provide negative and discrepant details (divergent views) strengthened the credibility of my study (Creswell, 2009). My biases or self influences of the study's interests were very minimal. Firstly, I was gender sensitive in such a way that I had a belief that female research participants would not feel comfortable to respond to many probing questions, as a consequence, I felt cornered and not free enough to go an extra mile in terms of interrogating them. Secondly, on cultural and religious grounds, I was hesitant to probe some of the research participants on issues pertaining to teacher unions because I was trying to be tolerant even though I could see that some were evading such questions. Possibly, these, in my opinion, to some extent, presented some hindrances in an endeavour to achieve effective knowledge production.

3.3.2.8 Triangulation

According to Gomm (2008); Rule and John (2011) and Maxwell (2013) triangulation is one of the methods of validating the data or findings through the use of different (methods) sources about the same phenomenon in order to support claims made by participants in the case study. Rule and John (2011) state that triangulation is often advocated by its proponents like Yin and Stake. Rule and John (2011) also contend that triangulation is done in qualitative research and case studies as a measure of enhancing high quality and rigour in the study. For the purposes of triangulation, I utilised multiple methods of data generation and data analysis. It was my belief that semi-structured interviews together with documents reviews as different methods and sources would help to validate or verify the data generated from different sources, namely, the six participants and documents reviews (Gomm, 2008). My two theories of instructional leadership and distributed leadership were also utilised to triangulate the generated data and to validate the study findings (Rule & John, 2011). A discrepancy can, at times happen during triangulation where there is an emergence of a multi-faceted nature of the truth and additional instruments and sources provide additional information which is not shedding light on what was picked up from the primary generated data (Rule & John, 2011).

3.4 Limitations of the study

Limitations are problems that the researcher encounters while generating and analysing data for the research (Maree, 2007). It is therefore significant for the researcher to state them at the inception so that the reader can better understand how the researcher arrived at his/ her conclusions (Maree, 2007). All researches carry certain limitations (Rule & John, 2011). This study worked within three important limitations. The first limitation was the issue of the distance from my work place to the district office which caused more travelling expenses. The only solution to this problem was to negotiate with the participants to use school holidays for interviews so that I could find accommodation in Durban for convenience purposes. The second limitation was that this research was a small scale study which involved one education district and only six subject advisors who were participants. This aspect of limitations would place a hindrance in the sense that the findings could not be generalised in the whole province of KwaZulu-Natal. The third limitation was that this research study utilised documents analysis as one of its data generation methods or techniques. The challenge with documents was that some documents could be unofficial or not authentic (not signed and stamped), incomplete and inaccurate (Creswell, 2009). As a consequence, no one could claim ownership of an unofficial document and the concomitant danger was that it would affect the study's trustworthiness. To address this, I would request the district officials to sign and stamp all the documents that were going to be purposively sampled so that they could all be authentic and official. The fourth limitation was that unions normally disrupted education district offices through sit-ins which prevented access to offices. In order to address this limitation I needed to incur expenses by booking a venue away from the district office for safety reasons. Flick (2006) emphasises the importance of 'space', the physical place or places. Creswell (2009) argues that the natural setting is significant because it is where data is generated. This may have a negative impact on the participants' state of mind and consequently influence their responses.

3.5 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the research design as a plan or roadmap of the entire study. Firstly, it located the research in the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative approach. Secondly, it presented the choice of a case study as a research methodology, semi-structured interviews and documents analysis as data generation methods, purposive sampling of the six research participants and research site and content or thematic analysis of the generated data. Thirdly, it addressed the important ethical issues like the principle of anonymity and informed consents, non-maleficent and beneficence and issues of trustworthiness like credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability, triangulation, a few limitations and lastly, a chapter summary. The next chapter focuses on analysing, interpreting the qualitative data and reporting on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the research design and methodology within which this study is located. Chapter Four provides the content analysis and presentation of data in the form of themes and sub-themes generated through the utilisation of semi-structured interviews and documents reviews. Verbatim quotations have also been included to strengthen and justify the claims made and also keep track of the participants' voices. The presentation of data and the discussion of findings are driven by the study's critical questions. For the purposes of reminding the reader, I have incorporated my three critical questions below:

- What are subject advisors' practices and perceptions of their roles as instructional leaders when supporting teaching and learning in schools?
- What strategies do subject advisors use to support curriculum delivery in schools?
- How do subject advisors navigate the challenges they experience when supporting instructional practices in schools?

This chapter is guided by the themes that emerged from data which was guided by my research questions and analysis of literature and theoretical frameworks that informed the study.

4.2 Data presentation and discussion

4.2.1 Subject advisors' perceptions of their instructional leadership role

The findings from the data generated through semi-structured interviews and documents review suggested that subject advisors understood their roles and responsibilities to be to monitor curriculum policy implementation, conducting subject content workshops (professional development), doing school visits and classroom observations, coordinating Grade 12 intervention programmes (National Strategy for Learner Attainment- NSLA), provision of teaching and learning resources (learner teacher support material), and the

provision of guidance with regard to notional or instructional time and language of teaching and learning (LoLT). These are discussed below:

4.2.1.1 Monitoring of curriculum policy implementation in schools

The general views of the majority of the participants seemed to suggest that subject advisors drew their mandate or scope of operation from the various Departmental policies. That concurrence in terms of understanding by the majority of subject advisors indicated that these subject advisors were aware of what was expected of them, namely, managing teaching and learning in a manner that was policy compliant. This placed them in a good position to be able to implement curriculum policies thus influencing the learner outcomes in the classroom. The participants responded to the first question which sought to elicit their understanding of their role in supporting teaching and learning in schools in their education district as follows:

Mrs Dlamini stated that:

As a subject advisor, my role is to ensure that all the Departmental policies are implemented in schools.

(Mrs Dlamini- Subject Advisor for Services- Consumer Studies, Hospitality Studies and Travel and Tourism)

Mr Singh, likewise, asserted that:

First of all, my role as a subject advisor is to support the implementation of policies in terms of Technology and Natural Sciences.

(Mr Singh- Subject Advisor for Technology and Natural Sciences)

Mrs Thabethe further confirmed these statements by citing that:

I see my role mainly as somebody who becomes a mediator of the policies. My role is to make sure that I assist teachers with understanding of policies through workshops.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics in the General Education and Training-GET)

When asked to elaborate on this statement, she pointed out that this related to conveying and making policies accessible to educators. From her response, it seemed that the subject advisor did not understand that her role was not to mediate conflict of ideas pertaining to the

interpretation and implementation of policies but to empower educators in terms of the understanding of curriculum policies.

Mr Ndlovu- subject advisor for Geography in Further Education and Training (FET) band responded very plainly by saying that:

To advise, guide and support educators who teach Geography.

(Mr Ndlovu- Subject Advisor for Geography)

Contrary to what Mrs Thabethe clarified above, this seemed to suggest that some subject advisors understood their role to be that of providing advice, guidance and other forms of support. This was very good because it was what most educators needed for them to improve their teaching practice in terms of pedagogy and policy implementation. Even though the other two subject advisors, namely, Mr Dube, Subject Advisor for Mathematics (GET) and Mr Govender, Subject Advisor for Business Studies (FET) did not say anything about policies but they outlined how they assisted schools to improve learner performance. Notwithstanding their consistencies with other participants, it became noticeable that they did not use policy as a foreground or prominent feature for school's daily operations.

The Subject Advisors' Workshop (20---21 April 2012) concurred with the above statements, that subject advisors had to ensure that educators had all the requisite curriculum and assessment documents for the subject. The minutes and monthly reports revealed some evidence that policy implementation is the cornerstone of the appropriate curriculum delivery. In a monthly report that was presented in May 2014, the subject advisor wrote as follows: in most schools there was evidence of records of assessment in the correct Continuous Assessment (CASS) grid except a few schools where the CASS grid was not Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) compliant.

The Departmental policies including subject policies are indispensable in the process of curriculum exposition and in an endeavour to provide quality education in this district and South Africa as a whole. The issue of curriculum policies was an area where most educators struggled to comprehend and follow the requirements to the letter. The attention paid to curriculum policies sought to correct the negative reports that were normally presented to the education district. These reports, among other things, included the unavailability of subject policies in schools. The curriculum policies carried a lot of weight because they prescribed

the content to be taught and assessment components. As a result no educator could achieve effective teaching and learning and improved learner performance without the correct policy implementation.

The fundamentally featuring of curriculum policies in this whole continuum, confirmed what Bhengu and Mthembu (2013) assert that, the scholars provide various discourses in terms of instruments that can be utilised to create good and performing schools. As a consequence, the question of curriculum policies was squarely projected as a matter of centrality by the interviewed subject advisors. Halverson, *et al.*, (2005), accord with these findings when they sponsor an accentuation that the Department of Basic Education uses tests, standards and policies as accountability tools. The perception that policy is not construed as the central pillar in the process of instructional leadership is a confirmation of Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane's (2013, p.138) assertion that "instructional leadership is often elusive and difficult to achieve." The difficult part of it in this instance, was that every subject advisor had to master and also be able to unpack or interpret the policy for subject educators who were, without any hesitation expected to implement it correctly in the classroom.

This indicated that School Based Assessment (SBA) policy and other curriculum policies were national political and educational initiatives which were mandatory for all subject advisors to implement. Turok (2012) contends that the education of the African is an issue of national significance needing government's effort for its success. In essence, subject advisors acted as custodians who gave direction, monitored and evaluated the implementation of these policies in an attempt to achieve good learner performance. Furthermore, Sofo, Fitzgerald and Jawas (2012) emphasise that, accountability is depicted by expanding evidence that instructional leadership roles and practices are significant. Myung, Loeb and Horng (2011), are correct when they contend that the level of accountability at school, has been made more prominent in such a manner that it intensifies the demand for effective school leadership. For this to be achieved, it was imperative that all curriculum policies had to be implemented correctly. This seemed to suggest that these policies were an accountability mechanism by the Department of Basic Education because the entire educator's work quality was measured in terms of successful and effective implementation of curriculum policies. This accountability was a non-negotiable requirement at all bureaucratic levels or offices of the Department of Basic Education, namely, school, circuit, education district, province and national.

Theoretically, Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model under the domain of 'setting academic goals', proposes that instructional leaders should provide direction and guidance in line with the school's objectives and philosophy. These objectives and philosophy are influenced by Departmental curriculum policies because each and every policy must not be in contravention of other educational laws and policies. Consequently, the advice, guidance and support that the subject advisors provided to educators was in agreement with Weber's (1987) theoretical position. Furthermore, Weber (1987), provides a clearly articulated admonition, that for any school to be successful in terms of its management, administration and governance, it must have in place well formulated vision, goals and mission in order to influence fundamental curriculum issues like teaching, learning and learner outcomes. The emphasis on policy kept schools focused on their vision and mission. The reality that the subject advisors attempted to avert was to allow schools to slip into a situation where they could be declared dysfunctional. The normal practice was that a school could be declared dysfunctional on the basis of unavailability of policies, failure to implement policies or decline in learner performance. Therefore, what the subject advisors did, was consistent with Weber's (1987) theory. Spillane, *et al.*, (2004), in their discussion of the distributed leadership theory, share this understanding by Weber (1987) that leadership tasks involve writing school vision and disciplinary processes. It stands to reason therefore, that no organisation could ever claim to be going towards the right direction without a careful implementation of curriculum policies and the availability of vision and mission.

The findings presented in the theme above suggested that most subject advisors took the issue of policy implementation seriously. They did this by monitoring and evaluating educators' and learners' work in order to check whether that evidence complied with policies, especially, School Based Assessment Policy (SBA) and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). This was divulged by a report which stated that in some schools there was no compliance with policy. The following theme looked at the subject advisors as agents of change and prime movers in pursuant of continuing educator development as suggested by the participants.

4.2.1.2 Nurturing the trees that bear fruits

All the subject advisors that were interviewed believed that one of their roles as instructional leaders was to provide curriculum support to subject educators in terms of subject content knowledge. Others even added that they also supported the subject educators by providing them with curriculum related resources. This professional empowerment took the form of subject content workshops where subject advisors dealt with certain problematic topics that subject educators were struggling with. At times subject advisors, as they indicated to me as a researcher, that their role was also to visit schools. Therefore, this curriculum support could either be through school visits or cluster workshops.

Mrs Dlamini put it plainly that she ensured that her educators' content knowledge was augmented in order that they could be able to minimise content knowledge gaps. She said:

My role as a subject advisor is to support teachers in strengthening their subject content through workshops.

(Mrs Dlamini- Subject Advisor for Services)

Mr Dube, further, expatiated and said:

Well, my role as a Subject Advisor is to give support to educators, especially content support which relates to the subject itself and also help educators to understand their role in the classroom.

(Mr Dube- Subject Advisor for Mathematics in the GET band)

This was further confirmed by Mr Ndlovu, when he explained that:

What I always do is to support teachers in understanding their subject content. As you all know that we are teachers. Yes, we teach content.

(Mr Ndlovu- Subject Advisor for Geography)

This seemed to suggest that the subject educators were not supposed to be facing challenges pertaining to some topics in the subjects that they offer in the classroom. The public opinion in some of the quarters in society was that some educators could not answer the whole grade 12 October/ November external question paper correctly. In the past, the Department of Basic Education made it compulsory for all educators who were appointed to mark grade 12

October / November external papers to start by formulating their own memoranda before they left for the marking centres. My experience has taught me that some educators used to go to their colleagues in the neighbouring schools to get memoranda especially in subjects like Mathematics and Physical Sciences. The teacher unions, I was told, were not happy with the DoBE's practice, which required appointed markers to forward memoranda to the education districts before they arrived at the marking centres, as a result, it was discontinued. The choice of words that Mrs Dlamini, Subject Advisor for Consumer Studies, Hospitality Studies and Travel and Tourism used seemed very apt in that, she strengthened their subject content knowledge which suggested that she started by identifying their subject content knowledge deficiency and then addressed that through workshops. There was a dichotomy at play here, because the subject advisors claimed that they organised workshops to capacitate or empower educators in terms of the subject content knowledge but in reality the learner performance in terms of Annual National Assessments (ANA) and National Senior Certificate examinations (NSC) were not showing any justification of this finding. The electronic and print media continued to report that South Africa was ranked at the bottom with regards to Literacy and Mathematics (Numeracy). The education district was also not performing well in the National Senior Certificate examinations. The commitment by Subject Advisors was there, but it had not yet translated into improved learner outcomes. The scenario of the failure by grade 12 educators to answer all the NSC examination question papers pointed to a number of cracks and weaknesses in matters pertaining to subject content knowledge.

The Subject Advisors' Workshop (20-21 April 2012) revealed that the KwaZulu-Natal province obtained a percentage pass of 68.1% in 2012, which was a decline of 3.6% from the 2011 pass rate. This document also highlighted serious concerns about the performance of learners in key subjects like Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Accounting, Geography, History, Business Studies, Economics and Home Languages in the National Senior Certificate Examination. Further to that, it stated that even the quality of passes that the province obtained in 2011 was not good enough. This provincial performance is influenced by the performance of the education districts because the *Policy on the Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (2013) states that education districts are the provincial sphere of government. This manual indicates grey area in History, namely, content knowledge. It reveals that there is a lack of skills with regard to sources, lack of interpretation skills, comparison and referencing. In Mathematical Literacy, there is a lack of basics in

Mathematics. Furthermore, it reveals that some of the schools have been performing below 60% since the inception of the National Senior Certificate in 2008. Possibly, the input in this case outweighs the output because the interview data shows a lot of effort that is being made to improve educator quality and learner performance but the results show a negative graph. The truth is that the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 as amended reviewed, confirms that office based educators in this case, subject advisors support initiatives to improve Mathematics, Language and Information Technology as well as access to the wider curriculum. The literature confirms my assumption that there is still no synergy in terms of input and output. What subject advisors say they are doing is not translated into good learner attainment. I am making this claim because of the minutes of 13 January 2014, which indicate that there are still 37 underperforming schools in this education district. It further reveals that this education district is in the 10th position out of 12 education districts in the KwaZulu-Natal province.

Dempster and Reddy (2007) and Apple (2005) register their concerns with regard to never improving learner performance. They state that the international and national focus on Annual National Assessment and standardised tests is worrisome because schools and education districts fail to reach the national and international benchmark in terms of learner outcomes. The school visits that the subject advisors undertook were of utmost importance. This was also supported by Timperley (2006) when stating that it is imperative that educators are encouraged to become life-long learners in order for them to support their own professional development. This suggested that the subject content workshops that subject advisors conducted both at cluster level and during school visits served to empower educators professionally, for them to be able to have effective teaching and learning in the classroom. The continuous need for this curriculum support was also welcomed by Moswela (2010) who acknowledges that instructional leaders must accept that educators' curricular needs are dynamic and not remaining stable. This was an empirical confirmation that subject advisors were mandated to develop educators professionally while Jazzar (2004) and Sharma (2012) acquiesce in this assertion and add that continuing professional development is indispensable in order to build capacity for educators to manage the curriculum effectively.

Furthermore, Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) concur with subject advisors by arguing that a great amount of time must be utilised on induction and mentoring of educators more especially, the new entrants in the teaching profession. This was a stark corroboration

of the interview data and the well documented literature. Southworth (2002) asserts that instructional leadership has to comply with many dimensions which, among other things, involve various pedagogic practices. Bush (2013) also adds his weight in this debate by positing that instructional leadership has to do with pedagogical leadership and curriculum leadership. Therefore, subject advisors were correct when they supported subject educators in terms of teaching methods, recording, planning, etc. Furthermore, Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) have a firm belief that instructional leaders should place teaching a learning as the core of their daily focus. In addition, Horng and Loeb (2010) suggest that subject advisors should mentor educators by engaging themselves in lesson observations and modelling lesson presentations. This is exactly, what some subject advisors claimed to be doing in schools. To put it plainly, these subject advisors were doing something that was being backed by empirical studies.

Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model under the domain of 'Organising the Instructional Programme' emphasises that instructional leaders should undertake instructional organisation and coordination which among other things include the structure of the curriculum. Therefore, subject advisors had a responsibility to monitor the structure of the curriculum in order to satisfy themselves that there was compliance in the matter. Their failure to pay special attention to this area, resulted in poor learner outcomes where educators failed to produce a sufficient number of bachelor passes in grade 12. Weber (1987) further contends that instructional leaders have a duty to evaluate and revise the instructional programme in schools. The school visits were intended to monitor and evaluate the instructional programme, as Weber (1987) believes that supervising and assessing educators including their curriculum programmes assists in measuring its effectiveness. Even Spillane's (2004) distributed leadership model under the domain of 'Leadership Tasks and Functions' states that leadership tasks involve among other things, monitoring and evaluating the instructional programme. This was exactly what these subject advisors were trying to do when they visited schools and clusters to conduct subject content workshops and to advise educators on curriculum matters on site, as Mr Ndlovu, Subject Advisor for Geography stated that he went to schools to guide and support educators and in some cases through cluster visits. He further added that he organises workshops and meetings to improve the educator capacity. Spillane, *et al.*, (2004) emphasises that task enactment is dependent on the instructional leader's subject matter and teaching methods. This suggested that the subject

advisors needed to be capacitated so that they could be more knowledgeable in terms of subject content knowledge and pedagogy. This could give them confidence in their tasks enactment and also instil that confidence in subject educators who would then inspire learners in the classroom thus creating an environment which was conducive to effective teaching and learning and ultimately, improved learner performance.

The generated data made me deduce that all subject advisors did conduct subject content workshops. The only irony was that their efforts did not bear the desired fruits in the sense that their input did not influence the learner performance remarkably. This was made evident by the Annual National Assessment (ANA) and National Senior Certificate Examination results.

The above theme detailed how subject advisors acted as the trees that nurtured fruits in that they did all in their power to capacitate subject educators to masters both pedagogy and subject content knowledge. They performed this duty through cluster meetings or workshops and school visits with the aim of supporting subject educators and Heads of Department. The following theme looked at the grade 12 intervention programmes as raised by the participants

4.2.1.3 Grade 12 intervention programmes

Three out of six participants reported that they were also responsible for the Grade 12 Intervention Programmes (MIP). The National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) as it was sometimes referred to, was an essential turnaround strategy which was intended to improve grade 12 results. Mrs Dlamini lucidly indicated that:

I coordinate matric intervention programmes and ensure that all these interventions are reported to the district and provincial level.

(Mrs Dlamini- Subject Advisor for Services)

Similarly, Mr Ndlovu plainly put it as follows:

Well, the other one is in case I believe, it is to champion and ensure and monitor all departmental initiatives, for instance matric intervention programmes.

(Mr Ndlovu- Subject Advisor for Geography)

Mr Dube, further added that:

I help the teachers to develop their improvement plans and strategic plans.

(Mr Dube- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

This did not only apply to National Senior Certificate Examination but it had also been extended to accommodate the General Education and Training (GET) band because of poor Annual National Assessment (ANA) results from Grade One to Nine. This was confirmed by the fact that Mr Dube, Subject Advisor for Mathematics (GET) was also instrumental in assisting schools to develop their improvement plans and strategic plans with the aim of improving learner performance from Grade One to Nine. This seemed to suggest that schools were not left alone to fail but they were supported by education district officials like subject advisors to improve learner performance. Furthermore, it sought to postulate that the Department of Basic Education, through education districts, was greatly concerned about poor academic performance in schools. This was a good approach because education was a societal issue which required concerted effort by all relevant stakeholders in education. While responding to the question on their perception or understanding of their role in supporting teaching and learning in schools in their education district, the participants responded by saying that, their understanding was that National Strategy for Learner Attainment was also one of their leadership and management roles.

I therefore deduced that the issue of NSLA was not a schools' brain child, because this participant gave reports both to the education district and provincial level.

The Subject Advisors' Workshop (20-21 April 2012) stipulated that there had to be winter classes and spring classes to try and complete the annual teaching programmes (syllabi) and prepare learners for the examinations. The timetables for these classes had to be drawn by Circuit Managers, subject advisors and principals. At that workshop, it was further stated that the role of the education district, circuit management centre and circuit managers, in the improvement of grade 12 results was critical as these were officials that managed the day to day running of the schools. The subject advisors' minutes of 13 January 2014, revealed that there was only an improvement of 2% in the Grade 12 results in 2013. The education district was also engaged in 'adopt a school programme' according to the subject advisors' minutes of 13 April 2012. The schools that were prioritised in this programme in 2012 were those that

achieved between 4% and 40% pass rate in the NSC examination. The interesting part was that the subject advisors who adopted these underperforming schools were advised to focus on curriculum matters only when visiting schools for this programme. At the subject advisors' meeting of 5 December 2013, the subject advisor for English reported that she had undertaken to set common test papers for schools that performed below 30% in Annual National Assessments (ANA). This showed an attempt to intervene and try to address the decline in learner performance.

The reviewed literature confirms that the issue of results or learner performance is central in the process of teaching and learning. Hallinger's (2003) concurrence is that instructional leadership is a multi-dimensional role of leadership and it focuses on teaching and learning and to a greater extent, the improvement of learner outcomes. It is multi-dimensional in nature in the sense that the subject advisors have to deal with many different tasks in order to satisfy themselves that they executed instructional leadership effectively and efficiently. The matter of learner attainment had long been a hot potato in the South African education system and the world. As a consequence, I support Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane, when they argue that instructional leadership is intended to challenge the status quo. The truth is, that it could not be business as usual if schools and education districts were struggling to improve learner outcomes. It was incumbent upon the subject advisors to arrest the situation and bring about consistency and high academic standards through the National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) or Grade 12 intervention programmes. The decline in learner performance was probably, as a result of the quality of leadership in schools and education districts. Timperley (2006) found that schools that are not well managed stand the risk of not being self-improving institutions. For that reason, instructional leadership had to be strengthened so as to achieve this objective of having self-improving organisations. The difficulty that educators were facing, that necessitated the employment of intervention strategies was not easy to comprehend but Moswela (2010) is of the opinion that educators' curricular needs are dynamic and not remaining unchanged.

Weber's (1987) theory under the domain of 'Monitoring Achievement and Evaluating Programme', states that the success of the curriculum delivery process is measured in terms of improved learner outcomes. Spillane's (2004) argument in favour of distributed leadership posits that the analysis of leadership tasks and functions is not adequate but an instructional leader must investigate their enactment for instructional improvement. This was the kind of

investigation that could provide answers as to what caused a decline in results and subsequently give solutions as to how that situation could be salvaged thus avoiding the continuing culture of NSLA year-in and year-out. Spillane, *et al.*, (2004) add that intervention strategies are fundamental in pursuant to prescribe curriculum solutions with the sole aim of improving learner outcomes. The pertinent emphasis that Spillane, *et al.*, (2004) keep harping on is that leadership is an activity of multiple instructional leaders. It became evident that subject advisors alone could not win this battle of improving the quality of education in this education district but it called for the distributed form of leadership. This had to include lead educators, cluster co-coordinators, Heads of Department, deputy principals and principals. This was the reason why underperforming educators required assistance from subject advisors as stakeholders in education.

The above theme presented the findings on the first question which dealt with subject advisors' perceptions of their role as instructional leaders. The participants explained that they were involved in Grade 12 intervention programmes. These programmes and strategies sought to improve learner outcomes in all grades, especially Grades One to Nine and Twelve. The participants stated that they developed intervention strategies, coordinated them and also reported to the education district and the KwaZulu-Natal province. The following theme dealt with learning and teaching support material as raised by the participants in their response to the first interview question.

4.2.1.4 Provision of teaching and learning resources

Three out of six subject advisors pronounced that it was incumbent upon them to provide additional teaching and learning support materials to their subject educators so as to arm them for the purpose of effective teaching and learning.

Mr Govender included in his presentation that:

My primary task is to support the Business Studies educators within the FET band in Secondary Schools. In providing support, it encompasses providing resources to my educators.

(Mr Govender- Subject Advisor for Business Studies)

Mr Singh shared the same understanding and went further to explain that:

Some of the requirements that we need to look at is that each learner must have a book. They must have an approved textbook, they must have stationery which includes pencil, ruler and erasers.

(Mr Singh- Subject Advisor for Technology and Natural Sciences)

Mr Ndlovu concurred with Mr Govender and Mr Singh when he stated that:

It could be to provide and source relevant teaching and learning materials to my educators, so as to improve teacher and learner performance. This year, I provided relevant pictures that are relevant geographically, which I have been collecting for a number of years ago.

(Mr Ndlovu-Subject Advisor for Geography)

The question of Learner Educator Support Material was one of the areas which needed special attention by the bureaucratic leadership of the KwaZulu- Natal Department of Basic Education. As a result, the subject advisors stated that it was one of their instructional leadership roles to provide resources to educators in an endeavour to achieve effective curriculum delivery in the classroom. On top of providing guidance, they also saw to it that each learner had a textbook, exercise book, pen, ruler, rubber, etc as part of teaching and learning resources. The common practice, in my observation and experience was that not all subject advisors went an extra mile, to develop and provide teaching and learning resources to subject educators. I had no doubt that, that was why some educators had confidence in teaching the subject in the classroom whereas other struggled to produce even 50% pass rate both in Grade 12 and Annual National Assessment (ANA) results.

The Subject Advisors' Workshop (20-21 April 2012) revealed that after the analysis of results in the subjects, content gaps were identified for intervention. Material to address the gaps was developed by subject advisors. At the subject advisors' meeting (GET) of 5 December 2013, one subject advisor reported that he had prepared documents for Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) in order to assist educators on how to teach this subject. The subject advisor for Life Skills / Creative Arts stated in the report for May 2014, that he provided one of the schools that he visited with lesson plan templates which were (Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) compliant. This suggested that in

spite of the fact that subject advisors did not have a subject related budget but they went out of their way and developed their own teaching and learning resources in order to improve the quality of education, including learner attainment in the classroom.

The literature confirms that the teaching and learning resources are indispensable in an endeavour to provide quality instructional leadership for example, Horng and Loeb (2010) argue that the instructional leaders should provide resources to subject educators in order for them to have effective teaching and learning in the classroom. What I also picked up was time as an important resource in the study by Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013). Time was a major factor in management and administration in both schools and the education district. The success of administration and management rested squarely on the amount of time that was devoted on instructional leadership. For that reason time was a critical resource. Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) posit that time is the greatest resource that instructional leaders need to pay sufficient attention to.

Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model under the domain of 'Hiring, Supervising and Evaluating Educators' affirms that curriculum management is quite momentous because it involves monitoring the learner progress and also providing support to educators. The support that was provided was multi-fold because it even included provision of some resources as the subject advisors indicated in the semi-structured interview questions. Even though Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model and Spillane's distributed leadership theory are not addressing this issue of learner educator support material or educational resources. Spillane, *et al.*, (2004), advocate for the distribution of leadership, meaning that the provision of educational resources should be done collectively by principals, subject advisors and Circuit Managers. Hatcher (2005) gives a testimony, by sharing the opinion, that if leadership is distributed among various actors, it is likely that the school can achieve high academic standards of learner outcomes and progressive school goals.

The above theme looked at the role of subject advisors in the provision of teaching and learning resources. The findings suggested that subject advisors were expected to develop and provide some teaching and learning resources to their subject educators. The following theme dealt with the impact of subject advisors' instructional leadership strategies on the improvement of learner performance in the classroom.

4.2.2 The impact of Subject Advisors' instructional leadership strategies on the improvement of learner performance

The findings pointed to the fact that the subject advisors' instructional leadership strategies did bear fruits. This was shown by subject advisors' responses to the question which sought to understand how their strategies helped to improve learner attainment. Mr Dube was convinced that the improvement in results, especially in the Foundation phase and Intermediate phase was noticeable. He confidently mentioned that:

We have noted that there is a lot of improvement in the classroom, especially

At the level of the foundation phase and also at the intermediate phase

Recently.....We have Annual National Assessment (ANA) which is written every year during September.

(Mr Dube- Subject Advisor for Mathematics in the GET band)

In supporting this statement, Mrs Thabethe, another Subject Advisor for Mathematics, asserted that:

It all depends on implementation, so, for those teachers that are implementing correctly, you can see that there is a shift in terms of learner achievement. The most reliable source that we use to check learner performance in standardised Annual National Assessment (ANA).

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

In contrast, Mr Ndlovu put it differently, when he said:

I must say, especially with the help of coordinators who are close. To sites that I am talking about, a lot has been done because I have coordinators who know exactly what they are doing.

(Mr Ndlovu- Subject Advisor for Geography)

The above responses revealed that even though the learner outcomes had not been satisfactory or improving at a high pace, slight improvement was registered. This improvement happened even at the level of the Primary School because Mr Dube, Subject

Advisor for Mathematics in the General Education and Training (GET) band believed that the learner performance was noticed in the Foundation Phase, Grades One to Three and Intermediate Phase, Grades Four to Six. Furthermore, it was reported in the previous theme that the Grade 12 results had improved by 2% in 2013. Mr Ndlovu, Subject Advisor for Geography attributed this slight improvement of learner performance in his subject to the good work of the cluster coordinators. Mrs Thabethe, Subject Advisor for Mathematics' response suggested that, that was dependent on whether the educators implemented the strategies correctly or not, but which showed that there were other educators who were not doing what was expected of them. Some of the strategies that the participants mentioned, included, Olympiads, Statistics South Africa project and Moses Kotane Institute for Mathematics, Analysing Business Related Information for Business Studies, Financial Data Competitions for Accounting, Chief Albert Luthuli Oral Competitions for History, workshops and moderation of learners and educators' work, to name but a few. These projects or learner outcomes improvement strategies were planned and coordinated at the level of the education district but subject educators were expected to buy into the project and implement them for the benefit of the learner in the classroom.

In a meeting of the Further Education and Training sub-directorate of the 13th of January 2014, it transpired that the Grade 12 results had improved by 2% in 2013 National Senior Certificate examination. This set of minutes also revealed that, at that meeting the subject advisors went through a KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education document with schools' comparative performance, from 2008 to 2013 (analysis of NSC results). In the meeting of the General Education and Training sub-directorate (GET) of 27 February 2012, the subject advisors discussed the Matric Improvement Plan (MIP) and alluded to the fact that its purpose was to improve effectiveness through the improvement of teaching and learning in 2014. This suggested that these instructional leadership strategies were not only talked about through participants' responses but there was documentary proof that these strategies yielded results in terms of improvement of learner outcomes in the classroom.

The findings are corroborated by the empirical research, Myung, Loeb and Horng (2010), confirm that it is important for the subject advisors to accelerate their level of curriculum management because of the growing national and international accountability pertaining learner outcomes. The outcry about the declining learner attainment could only be salvaged through, as Myung, Loeb and Horng (2010) put it, effective instructional leadership. Weber's

(1987) theoretical model under the sixth function which is monitoring achievement and evaluating programme, believes that success of any school curriculum programme can only be gauged through learner results. As a consequence, the attempts that the subject advisors were making to improve learner performance provided a grand correlation or harmony with the data. The literature seemed to suggest that no instructional leadership could yield the required results if it was not grounded on a sound theoretical framework. Weber (1987) calls for the evaluation of the teaching and learning programmes and places an emphasis on the Monitoring of the learner achievement. The monitoring of the achievement which creates space for a diagnostic tool, as Weber (1987), suggests, makes it possible to improve quality of teaching and learning in schools.

The above theme looked at the impact of subject advisors' learner performance improvement strategies. The findings revealed that there were strategies that were put in place and these strategies were believed to have brought about some improvement in learner outcomes in the classroom. The following theme dealt with the protection of the notional or instructional time as one of the duties and responsibilities of instructional leaders.

4.2.3 Notional / instructional time as a pillar of effective teaching and learning

Most participants were of the general view that notional time was of great significance in an endeavour to achieve quality teaching and learning and also increased learner attainment in schools. It transpired that the importance of the notional time was normally emphasised at the workshops and was also monitored at school level during site visits. Even though four out of six participants reported that they did ensure that instructional time was protected, they also contradictorily kept on stating that it was the responsibility of the Heads of Department (HODs) deputy principal, principal and Circuit Manager. Mr Dube asserted that:

We workshop educators on how to compile a timetable and monitor whether that timetable is adhered to, during our school visits.

(Mr Dube- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mrs Dlamini further vehemently argued that:

At the workshops I can remind teachers about time on task, but it is a management issue, the principal at school level and his or her HODs and the Circuit Manager are in charge of a number of few schools within his or her own circuit, so that is a management issue.

(Mrs Dlamini- Subject Advisor for Services)

Mrs Thabethe did not budge, but she clearly shifted the responsibility to other instructional leaders in support of Mrs Dlamini's perception when she said:

I think the powers with regard to that one are based mainly on the school management and the Circuit Manager..... those people are in a better position to see that notional time is adhered to.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mr Govender made a surprising revelation where he differed as follows:

Notional time, in my experience as a subject advisor for the past six years leaves much to be desired in Ilembe District..... Clearly, upon my school visits, this is not done.... In 2014, I have assisted approximately 20 secondary schools in preparing the school timetable. I personally drew up the school timetable. It is clear that the stakeholders at school level are not following the notional time.

(Mr Govender- Subject Advisor for Business Studies)

Mr Govender went further to explain that he thought that having a seven-day cycle instead of a five day week cycle was compromising effective teaching and learning.

I respect the decision to have a seven day week cycle, but when questioning the merits of that I do not get very favourable answers. But when I do my conversion, my calculations of the notional time, on a seven day week cycle, the mathematical conversion of the hours is incorrect.

(Mr Govender- Subject Advisor for Business Studies)

The findings revealed that all was not well with this management task which was the protection of the notional time. Although Mrs Dlamini, Subject Advisor for Services, which included Consumer Studies, Hospitality Studies and Travel and Tourism, Mr Dube, Subject Advisor for Mathematics and Mr Ndlovu, Subject Advisor for Geography, maintained that they did sensitise educators about notional time at the workshops but that was not enough.

What Mr Govender, Subject Advisor for Business Studies, showed that educators were calculating the required number of hours per subject incorrectly; as opposed to what was required by the policy, was astonishing.

This statement clearly indicated that schools were struggling to interpret the policy on notional time and to implement it correctly. This suggested that schools could not complete the annual teaching programmes, thereby impacting negatively on effective curriculum delivery and also handicapping learner performance. The assumption was that learners were under-taught because the composite teaching and learning timetables were not Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) compliant. Instructional time was so important because it specified how much time had to be allocated to each and every subject at school.

The person who was supposed to be well versed with policy and subject knowledge was the subject advisor as a specialist; therefore the failure to prioritise notional time was a threat to instructional leadership. Notional time had to be considered as an important input or resource which had the capacity to change any education district's learner outcomes.

The documents reviews, especially subject advisors' monthly reports on their subjects shed light that the timetable was a challenge in schools. In one of the primary schools, the timetable or notional time was short of one hour per week in grade six. In another case, a certain primary school had 30 minutes periods instead of one hour in Creative Arts and that was called 'broken periods'. This corroborated what Mr Govender, Subject Advisor for Business Studies said that schools and instructional leaders were failing education because not sufficient time was utilised for curriculum delivery in the classroom. Any discrepancy in terms of instructional time was likely to cause a great damage in relation to the content knowledge mastered by learners in the classroom and had resultant academic implications like poor learner achievement. This was not entirely surprising considering what Mrs Thabethe, Subject Advisor for Mathematics said that, that instructional management task was left in the hands of school managers and Circuit Managers. Moreover, other participants only emphasised that at the workshops and no follow ups were done to monitor compliance in schools.

The documents reviewed were silent on the importance of protecting the instructional time by subject advisors.

The findings were not consistent with the literature. The participants did not afford enough prominence in the task of protecting the notional time. They reported that, they only reminded educators during the workshops and also branded that as the responsibility of the School Management Teams (SMTs) and Circuit Managers. Hornig and Loeb (2010) are of the opinion that teaching and learning must form a central part of the classroom activities. Weber's (1987) theory under the domain of protecting instructional time and programme emphasises that it is important to devote quality time to the teaching and learning tasks in order for schools to achieve increased learner attainment. I therefore underscore the need for instructional leaders, including subject advisors to protect notional time from any form of external and internal disturbance and more importantly, the miscalculation of hours per subject on the school composite timetable. Weber (1987) even holds a view that if the instructional time is protected by school leaders that can create a conducive environment for educators to perform their duty of teaching and learners can learn without any obstacles.

The above theme dealt with the significance of the protection of the notional time as a subject advisor's management task. The picture that was painted was that some subject advisors did not do enough to protect the notional time but relied heavily on preaching it at the workshops only. It transpired that the composite timetables were policy compliant in some schools. The following theme dealt with the impact of the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) on learner outcomes.

4.2.4 The impact of the language of teaching and learning (LoLT) on learner performance in schools

The majority of participants believed that the language of teaching and learning (LoLT) was important for the learners to master the subject concepts and that subject advisors were relegating their responsibility of ensuring that this management task was given the importance and urgency it deserved. The million dollar question was whether what they were doing was adequate or not because the findings were that they relied more on cascading that

crucial information during the workshops but there was no mention of follow up programmes so as to see whether that was put into practice or not. Mr Dube responded by saying that:

I think the main effective way of monitoring the LoLT implementation by educators is classroom observations. A detailed lesson preparation can also serve to ensure that educators use LoLT as per subject policy. I think to a certain extent, moderation by HODs or subject advisors could also play a vital role in detecting whether the LoLT is used effectively.

(Mr Dube-Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mr Ndlovu also concurred with Mr Dube, when he insisted that:

A national presentation on language across the curriculum was made during CAPS workshops which talks a lot about LoLT.

(Mr Ndlovu- Subject Advisor for Geography)

The subject advisor that went over-board in explaining the significance and implications of not observing LoLT, was Mr Govender, who further narrated a practical experience of what was taking place in the classroom. This was his account of the events:

When I go to schools and have to walk past the classrooms on my way to the principal's office, almost every educator is teaching his subject in the medium of IsiZulu. This is sad, you are teaching Business Studies in IsiZulu, but you are making my child write the paper at the end of the year in English, that is gross unfairness to our learners.

(Mr Govender-Subject Advisor for Business Studies)

Mr Ndlovu and Mrs Thabethe shared the same vein with regards to LoLT by avoiding taking full responsibility but shifting it to principals and Circuit Managers and these were their narratives:

Those people are better positioned to see that they (educators) use the correct language of teaching and learning when teaching.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

In actual fact, this is the prerogative of the principals and circuit managers and I hope they are doing it well.

(Mr Ndlovu-Subject Advisor for Geography)

The above quotations on the non-observance of LoLT in the classroom, seemed to suggest that not enough was done both at the level of the education district and schools to enforce and monitor policy compliance. Mr Govender, Subject Advisor for Business Studies was at pains when sharing his lived experiences with the researcher. He sounded as a greatly concerned educator, subject advisor and a parent. He also told the researcher that he was not afraid of leaving his cell phone number with the learners so that they could call him and report if they were taught in the medium of IsiZulu. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that although Mrs

Thabethe, Subject Advisor for Mathematics and Mr Ndlovu, Subject Advisor for Geography agreed that the LoLT was important in the classroom but they did not change their position that this was supposed to be done by HODs, principals and Circuit Managers. The contradiction is that Circuit Managers were not different from subject advisors because they were not always stationed at school but they spent most of their time at the circuit offices or Circuit Management Centres.

Even though the participants appeared to be having knowledge about the importance of LoLT, nowhere in documents reviews, did they even mention it either in the minutes or monthly reports. This silence denoted that not enough significance and attention was attached to LoLT. In actual fact, this failure to discuss this important point which was one of the underlying causes of poor learner performance was made evident by Mr Ndlovu, Subject Advisor for Geography's and Mrs Thabethe, Subject Advisor for Mathematics' statements that this was entirely the principals' and Circuit Managers' responsibility.

The literature reviewed is consistent with the significance that is attached to instructional leadership, which postulates and lucidly spells out that, the instructional leaders have an obligation to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). This suggested that if the subject advisors could prioritise the policy on the language of teaching and learning, there would no complaints that educators were teaching in the medium of IsiZulu instead of English. Neumerski (2012) insists that the education districts should

identify educators who need assistance in uplifting their teaching and learning standard. It was therefore clear that no standard of teaching and learning could be improved if educators continued to avoid the language of instruction, as one participant, Mr Govender, Subject Advisor for Business Studies alluded to, which is also utilised during the assessments and examinations. Hallinger and Murphy (1986), add their voices to anchor this discourse by asserting that instructional leaders need to promote high expectations among educators and learners. This could only be achieved by raising the bar in terms sticking to the LoLT and high quality curriculum delivery in the classroom. Weber's (1987) theory of instructional leadership under the domain of monitoring achievement and evaluating programme contends that, educators' work should be monitored and evaluated in order to determine the progress and success of teaching and learning. This seemed to suggest that the subject advisors did not satisfy all the Weber's (1987) instructional leadership functions, as stipulated by Weber's (1987) model. The argument by participants that monitoring the use of LoLT is the responsibility of School Management Teams (SMTs) and Circuit Managers is not consistent with Spillane's (2004) contention that instructional leadership comprises of various tasks which cannot be accomplished by one leader, as a result subject advisors had to be accountable for what happened at school.

The above theme dealt with the importance of the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in the classroom. It became evident that not all subject advisors were willing to accept this management task as one of their functions. Some subject advisors viewed it as the duty of principals and Circuit Managers. The following section looked at the initiatives that the subject advisors utilised in order to promote professional learning communities either for professional leadership development or distributed leadership purposes.

4.2.5 Separating wheat from chaff and levelling the playing field

All the subject advisors made it clear that they involved others or collaborated with others in order to ensure that they achieved their goals of effective teaching and learning and improved learner performance. Teaching and learning were viewed as collaborative tasks which could not be achieved by an individual. Mr Dube confirmed the existence of this involvement or professional partnership by saying that:

We employ the services of the teachers in those particular schools to cascade information to other nearby schools so as to deal with Language and Mathematics at the level of the Foundation Phase, hence, the good results as far as Annual National Assessment (ANA) 2012 and 2013 is concerned.

(Mr Dube-Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mrs Thabethe also believed that the involvement of other organisations or experts was necessary. She also added her voice in this discourse by stating that:

We work with Statistics South Africa, we invite people from outside to come and assist us. We also work with CASME, they asked us to identify schools and they train educators and expose learners to Olympiads. We have got lead teacher programmes where we use lead teachers as experts to conduct workshops during weekends and holidays.

(Mrs Thabethe-Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mr Ndlovu agreed with all the participants and said that:

I am lucky to have coordinators who know what they are doing. They help a lot especially in inducting educatorsthey are very close to them on site. I linked them with new educators and they work very closely with these coordinators. I cannot forget NGOs like Tourism South Africa and KZN Tourism. There is GIS in Geography, and it forced us to link with and work in collaboration with other people, to be specific, GIMS.

(Mr Ndlovu- Subject Advisor for Geography)

In addition, Mr Singh supported these findings and gave his version of the story when he said:

We have clusters, where we invite teachers to cluster meetings and capacitate them with the requirements of the curriculum. We know CAPS is new, so there are a lot of teaching problems that are involved.

(Mr Singh- Subject Advisor for Technology and Natural Sciences)

All participants were in agreement that promoting professional learning communities led to educator development. The fact that they identified performing educators to become lead educators and workshop other educators was a good attempt to develop educators' leadership capacity for a future skill base. The involvement of Statistics South, Tourism South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal Tourism was a good networking strategy of mobilizing interested stakeholders and various teaching and learning resources in order to improve curriculum delivery in the classroom. The exposure of learners to Olympiads seemed to suggest that the private sector was willing to deploy their financial and physical teaching and learning resources with a sole aim of achieving increased learner attainment. These assertions implied that subject advisors could stretch their services to various parts of the education district but they failed to be visible at the grassroots level, which are schools in this case. Generally speaking, for me, it was vital for the subject advisors to get a taste or experience of what happens at the level of the school because schools are at the coal face of teaching and learning which is service delivery in educational terms. All the six participants believed that collaboration was the way to go in order to satisfy their job requirements. The best achievement out of this culture of collaboration is that, it impacted well on teaching and learning, as Mr Dube, Subject Advisor for Mathematics indicated.

The documents reviewed indicated that the subject advisory sections or sub-directorates did collaborate with other sections or sub-directorates at the education district like Examinations and Assessment sub-directorate which were responsible for drawing up plans to capacitate schools on matters related to examinations and assessment. The Senior General Manager's report that was presented by one subject advisor mentioned that subject committees needed to be formed very soon and further spelt out that their purpose was to improve curriculum implementation. This data seemed to suggest that subject advisors worked collaboratively with educators in their capacity as cluster coordinators or lead educators at the level of education circuits. The education district did initiate and establish the subject committees but that came as directive from the General Senior Manager at KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Basic Education Head Office.

What the subject advisors did when they created clusters or structures like subject committees was consistent with the educational leadership and management literature. Horng and Loeb (2010) are of the opinion that instructional leaders need to set up structures and systems so as to achieve increased learner outcomes. Pansiri (2008) confirms that, it is advisable that

leaders find time to develop other leaders. His opinion is that instructional leadership allows new members to find space and be developed. He further emphasises the importance of learner results that leaders should have in mind as their central focus. So, I have no doubts that the subject advisors work with educators who were cluster coordinators was with the sole aim of improving results. Similarly, Bush (2013) accepts that professional learning communities make a difference in terms of learner attainment. This sharing of leadership skills with subject educators strengthened the bond between educators and subject advisors and developed mutual understanding and trust. It is what Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) believe when they say that effective instructional leadership is very important for successful schools. Jazzar (2004) and Sharma (2012) accord prominence to the notion of professional learning communities by saying that training educators helps to build their capacity to manage the curriculum effectively. Lunenburg (2010) dismisses the idea of individualism and feels that it robs the educators of the opportunity to develop together and achieve a common vision of having effective curriculum delivery and improved learner attainment. Doolittle, Sudeck and Rattigan (2008) concur with the findings and add their assertion that school improvement cannot be achieved if there is no better organisational professional development of partnership which these subject advisors seek to achieve.

The idea of professional learning communities that the above proponents are advocating for, is shared by Spillane (2004) when outlining his distributed theory of leadership. When the subject advisors entrust some management tasks to lead educators or cluster coordinators, that resonates very well with Spillane's (2004) distributed leadership under the domain of leadership tasks and functions, which propounds that instructional leadership should make use of committees and teams so as to achieve the desired goal of effective teaching and learning in the classroom. This corroborates with the documents reviewed because The General Senior Manager gave a directive that subject advisors had to form subject committees both at school and cluster levels. Theoretically, Spillane's (2004) assertion under his domain of the situational distribution of leadership practice, convincingly insists that effective leadership is situational and involves multiple participants and for that reason it is desirable that the instructional leadership is distributed due to its nature of complexity, namely, staff size, stability and task complexity. This was good professional practice where educators who were selected as cluster coordinators together with subject advisors come together to share information and also develop one another in matters pertaining to

curriculum management like moderation of continuous assessment marks, re-skilling in terms of subject content knowledge and pedagogies.

The above theme dealt with the strategies that subject advisors utilised to encourage collaboration of different educators to learn together under the leadership of lead educators and cluster coordinators. The following theme looked at the challenges or barriers that subject advisors grappled with in their endeavour to improve teaching and learning in schools.

4.2.3 Challenges or barriers that subject advisors experience as they enact their leadership and management practices of teaching and learning in their education district

The subject advisors responded to the question that was posed to them by enumerating a plethora of challenges or barriers that they encountered on a day-to-day basis when performing their instructional leadership practices. The sub-themes that emerged from this theme are: KwaZulu -Natal Department of Basic Education's inadequate support of educational initiatives, school Heads of Department leadership questioned, under and unqualified educators and teacher unions' impact on curriculum delivery.

4.2.3.1 KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education falling short

The subject advisors indicated that the challenges that they normally encountered were both internal and external in nature. They stated that the support that they were getting from the KZN Department of Basic Education was inadequate in many respects. They cited issues like subject advisors' professional development (training), lack of funds to pay for their programmes and a number of schools with only one or two subject advisors for a particular subject. This seemed to suggest that they could not achieve their set targets in terms of quality teaching and learning if the employer failed to provide them with adequate support in terms of working tools and finances. Mr Dube mentioned that:

There are 434 schools that one subject advisor should support. It is impossible

for the advisor to visit and support all these schools in one year. The resources as well such as transport and kilometres.

(Mr Dube- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mr Govender responded in support of this statement and asserted that:

Our challenge is the Department of Basic Education. Everything seems to be financial constraints. The sooner you embark on any programme, the Department is quick to intervene and say, due to financial constraints, due to costs cutting measures, you cannot implement these programmes.

(Mr Govender-Subject Advisor for Business Studies)

Mrs Thabethe had never attended a subject specific workshop dealing with Mathematics but she got invited to generic and one size fits all kind of induction programmes, as a result, she further added that:

I am yet to hear of subject advisors' training or subject advisors' development programme, so that we know what to do and how to do it.....training programme that is based solely on your subject, not a generic induction course.....then resources, there is no computer no printer.....that I have received.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education did not employ a sufficient number of subject advisors in this education district. This meant that the directorate that was responsible for human resource matters was not doing its work satisfactorily. It became evident that not all subject advisors were failing to perform their duties satisfactorily but it was the shortage of manpower that they experienced. Mr Dube, Subject Advisor for Mathematics stated that it was impossible for one subject advisor to support 434 schools in their education district. This also tried to answer the question about the inconspicuousness of subject advisors in some schools. In addition, the number of kilometres allocated to them per month was reduced, thus making accessibility to schools very difficult. This forced them not to visit schools but opted to start clusters in different education circuits and made use of cluster coordinators. The provision of quality teaching and learning was hampered by Education Department's failure to make funds available for the subject advisors' programmes. Mr Govender, Subject Advisor for Business Studies put it plainly that it was the Department of Basic Education that stopped their programmes, citing financial constraints. Mrs Thabethe, Subject Advisor for Mathematics, had never been inducted in her position as a subject advisor. This seemed to suggest that subject advisors were performing their duties as merely 'promoted educators'.

This did not create a striking difference between a classroom based educator and a subject advisor in terms of mastery of instructional leadership and subject content knowledge.

The documents reviewed (minutes of 13 April 2012) helped to shed light that KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education vehicles were insufficient in such a manner that three subject advisors had to share one vehicle. The other set of minutes of 5 December 2013, confirmed that the KZN DoBE had reduced the total number of official kilometres to be travelled by subject advisors on school visits and meetings or workshops to support teaching and learning. That meeting further alluded to the challenge of multi-grade classes in the Foundation Phase and the overloading of subject advisors due to the shortage of man power. In a meeting of 27 March 2013, one subject advisor raised that she only managed to visit 120 schools instead of 430 in 2013. These records further indicated that subject advisors were not provided with even basic working tools or resources like computers (laptops), printers, data projectors, etc. The data generated through semi-structured interviews and documents review was not consistent with the available literature. The participants spoke at length about the DoBE's uninviting leadership environment where they were not appropriately trained and the fact that they were not provided with working tools or resources like laptops, printers and internet modems. The findings revealed a huge outcry about the shortage of subject advisors and the lack of in-service training in that education district. Bhengu and Mthembu (2013) argue that education should be used as a strategy to empower subject advisors and improve the quality of their service. The failure of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education to re-skill subject advisors had a capacity to lead to a brain drain when highly qualified subject advisors could leave their profession and join the private sector. Pansiri (2008) holds a view that effective professional development can lead to improved learner attainment. The fact that subject advisors raised concerns about lack of resources did not augur well for the education of the children. Turok (2012) emphasises that education is an issue of the national importance, therefore it requires sufficient state intervention including the provision of teaching resources at all levels. Weber (1987) under the domain of creating a climate for learning, places importance on the quality of materials and activities that both educators and subject advisors need to engage themselves with. Without the necessary resources and appropriate activities that regulate the day to day teaching and learning tasks, quality education cannot be realised. Output is at times determined by the input, therefore, the failure

by the DoBE to invest in the working tools or teaching and learning resources would make it difficult to realise the National Development Plan (NDP) (2011).

The above sub-theme revealed a lot of deficiencies in terms of the provision of both human and physical teaching and learning resources. Even the professional development of subject advisors was lacking. The following sub-theme dealt with the challenges faced by Heads of Department in schools in their endeavour to enact their instructional leadership practices.

4.2.3.2 School Heads of Department's management capacity questioned

The subject advisors were not happy with the level and quality of school Heads of Department's leadership and management skills. These study participants were of the opinion that school HODs were not equal to the management task regarding managing teaching and learning. Mrs Dlamini implied that HODs did not moderate and approve formal assessment tasks as a consequence; teaching, learning and assessments' quality was compromised. This was how she put it:

Curriculum management is a bigger challenge, hence our learners cannot cope with the standards of tests or questions that are set in the examinations because there is no moderation taking place at school level. Teachers are still using the old methods..... whereas assessment is part of teaching and learning.

(Mrs Dlamini- Subject Advisor for Services)

Mr Dube harped on the same issue stating that:

We have realised that the HOD's level of management at schools is lacking. They are failing to monitor whatever strategies that we are coming up with.

(Mr Dube- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mrs Thabethe, another Subject Advisor for Mathematics shared the same feelings and confirmed that HODs were not playing their role of managing teaching and learning in schools. She said:

I have identified things like, homework is not done, and corrections are not done and things like that are challenges, I can say, in as far as learners are concerned.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mr Ndlovu alluded to his own personal experience as a subject advisor where he discovered that assessment tasks (question papers) were not authentic enough, they were of poor quality and they lacked correct cognitive levels or Bloom's taxonomy of assessment. His voice was captured as follows:

In some cases the management of curriculum in schools, that is, work schedules, lesson plans, homework given leaves much to be desired, but the standard is improving every day.

(Mr Ndlovu-Subject Advisor for Geography)

The researcher's belief was that it could not be easy to separate a person from his knowledge and skills. It became very difficult if the human capital or school HODs in this case were lacking in both knowledge and skills. The HODs were expected to be curriculum specialists like subject advisors and to manage teaching and learning in a manner that enhanced learner performance in the classroom. The subject advisors' complaints about the HOD's poor curriculum management suggested that the quality of school leadership left much to be desired. Some schools did have not annual teaching programmes and lesson plans. This clearly caused those to be characterised as dysfunctional schools. HODs were failing to project themselves as effective instructional leaders. HODs were always expected ensure that both pre- moderation and post-moderation were taking place, but things were happening differently as opposed to the policy dictates.

The subject advisor's monthly report of May 2014, concurred with the data and revealed that some educators found it a challenge to indicate topics and content in their annual teaching programmes (plans) as they appeared in the curriculum assessment policy statement (CAPS) documents. It also became clear that even though educators had lesson plans, they did not understand some aspects of it. Written work was inadequate in May 2014, in some subjects, learners had only written four pages since January 2014. Most of the learners work was not marked and educators claimed that, they had many subjects to teach and School Management Team (SMT) did not control learners' work as there was no evidence to that effect. Results were not analysed for remedial work. In a meeting of 5 December 2013, one subject advisor

proposed that School Management Teams (SMTs) needed to be work-shopped on how to do school based moderation.

According to the data, what the literature demanded of the school Heads of Department was not happening. The participants reported that things were not in order pertaining to curriculum management in schools. This was contrary to what Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) are advocating that management needs to put structures and systems in place for the purpose of bringing about educational changes in schools. These systems could assist in spelling out the significant tasks to be undertaken in management of teaching and learning in schools. Horng and Loeb (2010) insist that school leadership is made up of different management tasks which are intended to forge effective school management. So, the HODs should not be seen to be failing because Weber (1987) under the domain of hiring, supervising and evaluating educators, posits that instructional leadership is very important because it relates to planning, supervising instruction, monitoring learner attainment and also giving curriculum support to educators. The deficiency in curriculum management and leadership skills by HODs created uncertainty in schools and the education system as a whole, because these were pillars that could make planning, monitoring and evaluation possible. This was further corroborated by Hallinger and Murphy (1986) by stating that instructional leaders need to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and also analyse results for remedial purposes. The gloomy picture that was presented here was that the HODs were not equal to the task or they lacked capacity to manage teaching and learning effectively. Without them, teaching and learning would be in disarray and bound to fail. The reports that there was a problem with annual teaching programmes, lesson plans and homework exercises was evidence that HODs were not equal to the task at hand and this was a matter of great concern.

The above section of this dissertation dealt with the role of HODs in the management of teaching and learning in schools. It transpired that some HOD's were not equal to the task. The strategies that were introduced by the subject advisors were not implemented and monitored properly. The following sub-theme looked at the lack of educators' capacity to teach due to be fact that they were not suitably and professional qualified.

4.2.3.3 Blunt working human capital

The subject advisors held a general view that some subject educators were either unqualified or under-qualified. My understanding was that this was a systemic problem which continuously posed a threat to quality teaching and learning. Mr Govender asserted that:

In some cases they have academic qualifications but no professional qualifications, however, they are upgrading themselves. There are some schools in deep rural areas that cannot get a qualified teacher, so they employ from the community, eg ex matric learners.

(Mr Govender-Subject Advisor for Business Studies)

Mrs Dlamini concurred with the above statement and added that due to this education district's rural nature, suitably qualified educators moved from rural schools to cities and township schools. Most of the rural schools were under-resourced as a result, educators looked for better living and working conditions where they could be able to deliver quality education in the classroom. Her voice was recorded verbatim as follows:

In this district, the migration of qualified teachers is a major problem. We have a vast number of unqualified and under-qualified teachers in our district. Good teachers migrate from rural to urban areas.

(Mrs Dlamini- Subject Advisor for Services)

In sharing the same vein, Mrs Thabethe concluded by reporting that:

We have got teachers that are not qualified to teach Mathematics, I will say this is a systemic error more than a teacher problem.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

This seemed to suggest that our education system was clouded by a perception that anyone could teach, hence they forgot to consider teaching as a specialised profession. The outcome of this systemic problem was poor quality education and poor learner performance or results. The appointment of unqualified educators to teach Mathematics as Mrs Thabethe, Subject Advisor for Mathematics indicated was happening, exacerbated the problem of poor quality instruction in the classroom. Mathematics according to the Department of Basic Education

was regarded as a critical subject, which demanded a lot of resources and attention, therefore to give such a subject to an unqualified educator could be viewed as promoting mediocre performance in schools. The findings revealed that there was an exodus of suitably qualified educators from rural areas to urban areas in search of better working conditions and adequate teaching and learning resources.

The documents reviewed indicated that one subject advisor reported at the meeting held on 5 December 2013, that many educators were new and had no knowledge of the subjects. The other subject advisor cited that the quality of educators' work was below the standard. It was also emphasised that the appointment of unqualified and under-qualified educators was an added challenge in the mission of achieving quality education in schools. It also became clear at that meeting that some schools thought that subject advisors were meant to teach and finish the syllabi (annual teaching programmes) for educators. The other most striking challenge or barrier to effective teaching and learning was that, some educators were not comfortable with what they were teaching or certain sections of what they were teaching.

With regard to the appointment of educators, the data generated through semi-structured interviews and literature, are in agreement that no school could be able to deliver quality education in the classroom without suitably qualified educators as curriculum practitioners. Horng and Loeb (2010) confirm that for any school to improve teaching and learning, it must employ high quality educators. It stands to reason, therefore, that the provision of good education and improved learner outcomes would remain a pipe dream if the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) did not review its recruitment strategy. It was unthinkable that unqualified and under-qualified educators could assist the school and the DoBE to achieve the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP) (2011).

The reviewed literature, spelt out that employability skills were very important in the restructuring of the curriculum and methods of teaching and learning in the classroom (Mukhta, Yahya, Abdullah, Hamdan, Jailani& Abdullah, 2009). Horng and Loeb (2010) add that the instructional leaders should appoint high-quality educators and provide them with necessary support. In this case, the support that was provided to educators was that of implementing the turn-around plans in order to improve learner performance. In view of the perpetual decline in learner results, that is, Annual National Assessment (ANA) and National Senior Certificate (NSC), it was evident that the new curriculum, namely, Curriculum and

Assessment Policy (CAPS) was not suitable for unqualified and under qualified educators. Mukhta, *et al.*, (2009) argue that employability is dictated by new service economy which needs a new set of competences. This assertion is quite relevant because the curriculum is not static but it keeps on changing all the time, therefore, educators had to be abreast of the new content knowledge and methodology. For this reason, unqualified and under qualified could not be suitably qualified to teach in such challenging circumstances. What the subject advisors claimed to be doing was consistent with the literature as Feiman-Nemser (2003) warns the instructional leaders not to regard new educators, unqualified and under qualified educators finished products because they still need to sharpen their existing teaching skills.

Weber's (1987) instructional leadership theory under the domain of hiring, supervising and evaluating educators, suggests that employing capable educators should be the starting point because it is a good attempt to create and maintain a healthy instructional programme. It appeared as if the appointment of educators who were not suitably qualified was compounding the already persisting problem of poor learner performance. This theory of instructional leadership by Weber (1987) does not affirm this practice by the DoBE.

The above sub-theme dealt with educators' suitability to teach in terms of professional qualifications. The data revealed that some educators were not suitably or professional qualified to be appointed as classroom educators. The following sub-theme looked at the impact of teacher unions on quality effective teaching and learning in schools.

4.2.3.4 Teacher unions' impact on curriculum delivery

The participants considered teacher unions as a stumbling block in their mission to support teaching and learning in schools. They had turned the education sector into a lawless enterprise. Mrs Dlamini was hurt, when she explained the difficulty that they encountered when holding cluster meetings and workshops as follows:

Unions make our work difficult sometimes. You will find that, you have organised a workshop, when you get there to the venue teachers are going to tell you that they are going to attend a union meeting.

(Mrs Dlamini- Subject Advisor for Services)

Mr Govender clearly shared the same experience about teacher unions and he commented that:

The challenge lies especially when we call teachers to conduct vacation classes. Our social partners are not very happy about that scenario because they believe that if that is outside the school time, then our educators need to be justly rewarded financially after school hours or during vacations.

(Mr Govender- Subject Advisor for Business Studies)

In support of Mrs Dlamini and Mr Govender' statements, Mrs Thabethe shared the same vein, by stating that:

With social partners, I have not had many challenges, there was just one incident last year, while we were conducting CAPS workshops during holidays where we were stopped.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mr Singh added his voice and alluded to his scepticism and misgivings about genuiness of the teacher union-Education Department's relationship and the union's moral leadership. His response was captured in the following voice:

I think unions and the Department of Education are collaborating closely. Last year, the unions were allocated money for CAPS training and we do not know the success of this.

(Mr Singh-Subject Advisor for Technology and Natural Sciences)

The responses from the participants seemed to suggest that the teacher unions were not acting in good faith because on one hand they expressed their willingness to improve learner outcomes but on the other hand their actions contradicted them. Mr Singh, Subject Advisor for Technology reported that teacher unions were given money to train educators on Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) but that did not yield any results. The subject advisors had a responsibility to support teaching and learning but teacher unions became obstacles in an endeavour to improve curriculum delivery. Mrs Dlamini, Subject advisor for Services stated that "*unions make our work difficult at times*". This seemed to suggest that there was no cooperation between teacher unions and the Department of Basic

Education. The education district did not have control over educators and teacher unions used their political power and support to defy the Department's directives.

This was an implication that teacher unions did not plan their activities properly in such a manner that they did not clash or interfere with the Education Department's programmes. Their circulars were not endorsed by the Education Department through counter signing the notices of meeting as a way of granting approval. There were a number of attempts by unions to disrupt education and make the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education ungovernable, and one of those revolutions was a so called '*Operation Gudluka Singene*' which meant that some senior managers in various offices of the DoBE had to be chased away and replaced by loyalists. Mr Ndlovu confirmed this clandestine plot to oust certain targeted DoBE officials and indicated that he once saw that action at his education district. This was an intensified project to remove those institutional leaders or managers who were not loyal to the camp of the current union leadership or did not succumb to the pressure of the current union leadership.

The data generated through documents reviews confirmed what the subject advisors had reported during the semi-structured interviews. In the documents that were reviewed especially, minutes of 5 December 2013, it was reported that poor attendance at workshops and cluster meetings was an on-going problem and it had not yet been dealt with. In that same meeting, one subject advisor reported that the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) workshops for intermediate phase were disrupted by a teacher union. In another meeting of 26 April 2013, it was presented that, the two Continuous Assessment moderation meetings for Physical Sciences and History were stopped by teacher union branch leaders in what they called 'work to rule'.

When drawing from the empirical research, it was noted that, teacher unions appeared to be more powerful and in the process of exercising their powers, they, as the literature clearly puts it, destroyed the work ethics or professionalism. Cooper and Sureau (2008), admit that some educators felt that they had sold their professionalism and community trust in exchange for unionisation. Cooper and Sureau (2008) further confirm that some educators no more take their professional character seriously, but they are worried about strengthening their political status and securing political positions in government. The public understanding was that teacher unions were not formed to create anarchy in schools and education districts but they

were existing for a good course, as Cooper and Sureau (2008), insist that educators do not choose teaching for money but in order to make a meaningful contribution to the community. As a consequence, subject advisors had to be given a space to capacitate educators. Bascia (2000) emphasises that most of those initiatives by the Department of Basic Education are intended to improve classroom instruction. The intimidation coupled with '*Operation Gudluka Singene*' did not benefit the learner in the classroom but clearly undermined the efforts by committed educators and subject advisors to deliver quality education in the classroom. Lieberman (2000) concedes that teacher unions' negative contribution to the decline of learner outcomes is much talked about in educational circles. Practically, in terms of applicable legislation, teacher unions are not responsible for appointing and firing educators or for evaluating them (Lieberman (2000)). In addition, Lieberman (2000) is of the opinion that no research is necessary so as to make the determination that these dynamics impact negatively on learner achievement. Consequently, the reviewed literature was consistent with the generated data of this study.

What the teacher unions did, to disrupt cluster meetings and workshops was against Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model. His theory of leadership, under the domain of 'monitoring achievement and evaluating programme' attaches significance to the role of instructional leaders whose tasks among others are monitoring and evaluating the school programme. The million dollar question was that, if teacher unions' attempts to render KZN DoBE ungovernable, it suggested that they had abandoned their responsibility of being the vanguard of the working class whose children were attending public schools where the instructional programmes were disrupted time and again. This kind of behaviour was void of what Weber (1987) under the domain of 'creating a climate for learning' refers to as learning climate with appropriate norms, values and attitudes applicable in the teaching profession, championed and regulated by the South African Council for Educators (SACE). Weber (1987) under the domain of 'protecting instructional time and programmes' sounds a word of caution that instructional leaders must improve the quality of time spent on instructional leadership but to the contrary, the people who were supposed to be helping subject advisors to maximise their contact time with learners and educators respectively were selling them out.

4.2.4 Navigating the challenges or barriers that subject advisors encounter when supporting and managing teaching and learning in the education district

The realm of overcoming challenges was a critical strategic area in instructional leadership. Problem solving was a skill on its own which gave capacity to subject advisors as instructional leaders to navigate challenges pertaining to teaching and learning both in schools and education districts. All the participants conceded that they did encounter challenges as they executed their responsibilities of supporting teaching and learning on a day-to-day basis. They further accentuated how they tried to rise above challenges and forged ahead against all odds so as to accomplish their duties. Mrs Thabethe commented that:

We do self- development in most cases. When you see that there is a gap or you hear about some training programmes provided by certain companies, so that we can be effective in our jobs..... In terms of manpower, we train lead teachers to assist with teacher training.

(Mrs Thabethe-Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

She also alluded to a challenge of the reduced total number of travelling kilometres by the Department of Basic Education and explained the strategy that they resorted to employing in order for them to be able to visit schools and save on the number of kilometres travelled per month. Her voice was captured in this fashion:

With regard to kilometres, we sometimes go in clubs, like, we would go with another advisor to save, so that you are able to see more schools.

(Mrs Thabethe- Subject Advisor for Mathematics)

Mrs Dlamini shared the same ground with Mrs Thabethe and confirmed that:

We conduct workshops for HODs so that they know what they are expected to do when they manage the curriculum. Due to the shortage of advisors, we are making use of lead educators.

(Mr Dlamini- Subject Advisor for services)

In an attempt to address the question of unqualified and under-qualified educators who found curriculum delivery more challenging due to the lack of adequate teaching skills, she had this to say:

We conduct workshops for our newly appointed educators and those educators that did not perform well, because they did not perform due to the lack of content knowledge.

(Mrs Dlamini, Subject Advisor for Services)

Mr Singh reported that he also used his own creative management strategies in order to deal with the shortage of subject advisors and to lessen the workload. This is how he put it:

I, as a subject advisor use creative ways, I try to use many cluster workshops.

(Mr Singh-Subject Advisor for Technology and Natural Sciences)

Mr Ndlovu's intervention strategy was also worth registering here. He went an extra mile to make his hands dirty through the use of chalk, board and duster in an endeavour to improve learner results in his subject. This became evident when he stated that:

Tapping on my experience as a Geography lecturer, I visit schools or sometimes I cluster them and then teach learners myself.

(Mr Ndlovu-Subject Advisor for Geography)

The generated data revealed that the education district did not have a well documented subject advisors' professional development programme. This undoubtedly complicated the academic and professional life of the education district-based instructional leaders. In reality, every coin has two different sides; as a consequence, the positive side of this story was that the subject advisors managed to navigate those huge and persistent barriers. The fact that they attended other workshops than they own tailor made workshops tended to weaken the strong pillars of instructional leadership. The Department of Education's cars were insufficient and to compound the problem, the DoBE reduce the total number of kilometres to be travelled per month when visiting schools. Subject advisors chose to improvise and attend other workshops not intended for them. They also travelled in groups so as to save costs and kilometres. HOD's workshops were organised as one of the measures to overcome the leadership challenges at school level. The data confirmed that even though subject advisors were

operating under very difficult conditions, some of them tried to execute their responsibilities satisfactorily.

The records of subject advisors' meeting of 21 February 2012, confirmed that workshops would be conducted by subject advisors and lead educators. In a meeting that was held on 27 June 2012, it was agreed that the lead educators would be identified at the following meeting. The other set of minutes surprisingly revealed that some lead educators had been taken from underperforming schools. The documents reviewed corroborated the findings because the subject advisors worked with lead educators, which was a good professional investment.

Furthermore, Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) confirm that the districts need to invest in instructional leadership. According to them (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2008), this would help to develop capacity for educators to be able to become leaders themselves and empower them in terms of subject content knowledge as part of their professional development. Weber's instructional leadership model under the domain of creating a climate for learning, presents school climate as a factor that can motivate both educators and learners. Even Mr Ndlovu, Subject Advisor for Geography indicated that he combined learners and taught them using his experience as a college lecturer. His passion and commitment was confirmed by Horng and Loeb (2010) when saying that, instructional leaders need to model the teaching practice. When Mr Ndlovu, Subject Advisor for Geography, at times, taught in the classroom, both the learners and subject educators benefited from that exercise. This created a unique environment which provided extrinsic motivation to both learners and educators. What the subject advisors did had become an organisational climate which consisted of norms, values and attitudes that characterised the education district and the schools operations.

4.3 Chapter summary

In this Chapter Four, I analysed, presented and discussed the findings which emanated from the data which was generated through semi-structured interviews and documents review. These findings were presented in the form of themes and sub-themes. The analysis, presentation and discussions were undergird by the three critical questions and also linked to the reviewed literature and the theoretical frameworks which underpinned the study. The findings seemed to suggest that the instructional leadership is inextricably linked to the

monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum policy implementation in the classroom. Furthermore, this study revealed that the level of the Heads of Department's management capacity was a grey area which required immediate intervention in order to salvage the decline in learner performance. It became evident that, there was a myriad of challenges that the subject advisors encountered in their endeavour to enact their instructional leadership practices. In the midst of all these challenges, the subject advisors explained how they employed creative management strategies so as to navigate these challenges.

In Chapter Five, I focus on the logical and systematic presentation of the summary of the entire study, derive some conclusions or findings and meticulously make appropriate recommendations based on the conclusions and implications of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter comprised of data presentation, discussion / analysis and interpretation of findings made through semi-structured interviews and documents review. The generated data was analysed through content analysis, systematically presented and discussed based on the reviewed literature and linked to the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the study. The three research questions were also considered in the presentation and discussion of the research findings. Chapter Five seeks to provide a summary of the whole study, the conclusions informed by the findings of the study that were presented in the previous chapter; makes appropriate recommendations and implications of the study, based on the findings and conclusions of the study. A chapter summary has also been presented in form of a culmination of a long journey that has been undertaken to conduct this research project successfully.

5.2 Summary of the study

Chapter One comprised of a synoptic view of the entire research study. This chapter reported that there is a noticeable, gradual and spontaneous shift from the '*first order*', namely, instructional leadership to a '*second order*' changes, namely, transformational and shared or distributed leadership. This seemed to pose a huge challenge in the sense that it invariably resulted in the shift from the centrality of teaching and learning as strictly embedded in instructional leadership. This tradition that inadvertently emerged impacted negatively on learner outcomes (there has been a decline). This chapter, further, lucidly spelt out that subject advisors are instructional leaders and subject specialists in terms of the '*Policy on Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*' (2013) and have a huge role to play in transforming schools into effective learning organisations. In an attempt to foreground the entire research study, in Chapter One I also presented the background to the study, nature of the problem, purpose and rationale for the study, aims and critical questions, significance of the study, clarification of key concepts, methodology, limitations, demarcation and organisation of the study.

Chapter Two provided a review of literature which related to the instructional leadership as a phenomenon under study. This presentation detailed peer-reviewed literature from diverse backgrounds or contexts, like international, African and South African (national) empirical researches. Theoretical frameworks which have direct bearing on the research topic being investigated were also properly selected to underpin the study and a concise motivation was outlined for each of the frameworks used. These scholarly works tended to be more biased towards the School Heads of Department, deputy principals and school principals thus neglected the most important instructional leaders or practitioners, namely, subject advisors. It also transpired through reviewed literature that instructional leadership is more significant because it brings about effectiveness in terms of academic and professional interactions in different schools intended to increase learner attainment in the classroom.

Chapter Three presented in detail the research design and methodology of the study. Further, this research study registered a case study as a methodology or strategy adopted to be utilised for purposive sampling, data generation, data documentation and content data analysis processes, as advocated by Maree (2012). Chapter Three also revealed that there are four paradigms in research as reported by Creswell (2007), namely, post positivism, social construction (interpretivism), critical theory and post-modernism. Consequently, the researcher strategically located the research project in an interpretivist research paradigm as a view of social science or lens through which instructional leadership as a phenomenon under investigation was examined (Maree, 2007). Six subject advisors at Ilembe Education District were purposively selected to participate in the study. The data generation techniques employed in conducting this study were semi-structured interviews and documents review and the choice of these methods was explicitly explained and supported by scholarly works. Significant research elements, such as ethical issues, trustworthiness, triangulation and limitations of the study were also carefully considered and appropriately addressed.

Chapter Four presented a detailed discussion of findings which emanated from the six subject advisors as research participants. This section also recorded verbatim voices of the subject advisors as participants, based on their practically lived experiences as instructional leaders who are at the coal face of curriculum delivery in the classroom. Their identities were protected through the utilisation of pseudonyms in compliance with strict research ethical rules. The presentation of data from both semi-structured interviews and documents reviews was premised by the three key research questions as stated in Chapters One and Four. The

researcher's claims in a form of findings were subjected to a rigorous critique and subsequently mirrored in the reviewed literature and the underpinning theoretical frameworks. The findings were presented and discussed in a form of themes and sub-themes and ultimately, a chapter summary ensued to conclude the chapter.

Chapter Five provided a résumé of each and every chapter of my research study. Effective and striking conclusions based on the salient points or findings that emanated in Chapter Four, were presented in this Chapter Five, on the basis that it was the concluding chapter for the entire research project. Recommendations and implications resulting from the above stated conclusions were carefully made. Finally, a chapter summary highlighting essential modalities or facets of this Chapter Five were recapitulated in order to re-enforce the significant points of the previously recorded findings.

5.3 Conclusions

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), conclusions serve to summarise and bring together the main areas covered in the writing. Conclusions also serve to give a final comment or judgement about a particular study. As its key research aim, this study sought to explore the role of subject advisors in leading, managing and supporting instructional leadership practices in their education district. It also sought to elicit the subject advisors' views on the challenges they experienced as well as how they navigated those challenges as they support instructional leadership practices in schools. After the researcher had investigated the subject advisors' instructional leadership practices as a phenomenon under study, a critical analysis, presentation and discussion of findings were undertaken and that resulted in the following conclusions being arrived at:

5.3.1 Subject advisors' perceptions of their instructional leadership role

The first theme to emerge from the data was the subject advisors' perceptions on their instructional leadership role. The subject advisors saw their role as monitoring the curriculum policy implementation so as to ensure that there was effective teaching and learning in schools. This seemed to suggest that these subject advisors, as instructional leaders, needed to monitor the correct implementation of the curriculum policies and guide subject educators and school Heads of Department on how teaching and learning should be delivered in the

classroom in a policy compliant manner. Further, the researcher also established that some subject advisors lacked a clear understanding of the role they had to play as quality controllers or quality assurers who were also expected to empower educators and train them to understand their roles perfectly. It can thus be concluded that subject advisors understood that empowering subject educators to master the curriculum policies could develop them and help them to deliver quality teaching and learning in the classroom. Further, the Department of Basic Education is not doing enough to develop subject advisors to meet their policy requirements of being subject specialists.

5.3.2 Nurturing the trees that bear fruits

The second theme that emerged was that subject advisors developed and supported subject educators professionally both in schools and at cluster level. This seemed to suggest that subject advisors were instrumental in providing curriculum support through subject content workshops at the level of the cluster. This ensured that subject educators and HODs were kept abreast of the continuous curriculum changes in terms of subject content knowledge and pedagogy. Even though this took place, it never emerged as a panacea because educators continued to encounter challenges in terms of content knowledge and pedagogic approaches in the classroom. It is therefore concluded that subject advisors believed that developing subject educators could increase their capacity to have effective teaching and learning and thus translating it into improved learner outcomes.

5.3.3 Grade 12 intervention programmes

The study also revealed that subject advisors as instructional leaders were also responsible for seeing to it that National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) was implemented not only in grade 12 (FET) to improve National Senior Certificate (NSC) but across all the grades including Grades One to Nine in the General Education and Training (GET) band for the purposes of Annual National Assessment (ANA). It can then be concluded that the learner performance was not up to the required standard or did not meet the expectations of the DoBE. As a consequence, that necessitated the development of turnaround strategies in order to improve learner attainment.

5.3.4 Provision of teaching and learning resources

It also transpired that subject advisors made provisions for some teaching and learning resources in schools. This was intended to increase learner attainment but their magnitude and impact was not clear. Even though they monitored the availability of such teaching and learning resources, no recourse was spelt out clearly in terms of non-compliance. It can then be concluded that subject advisors supported schools with some teaching and learning resources but this function was not well coordinated both at school and education district.

5.3.5 The impact of subject advisors' instructional leadership strategies on the improvement of learner performance

There was a general belief that the teaching and learning improvement strategies or initiatives were yielding positive results. Even though registered improvement of Grade 12 results by 2% was commendable and celebrated, this was a very small margin that could not lead to any complacency. This translated into a 2% improvement because other educators were not implementing these strategies with honesty and commitment. One subject advisor reported that it depended on educators whether they implemented them correctly or not. As a result, it can be concluded that, the implementation of these strategies was not compulsory and there was no recourse for non-compliance.

5.3.6 Instructional time as a pillar of effective teaching and learning

It emerged from the subject advisors' responses that instructional/ notional time was accorded the significance it deserved. The contradictions subsequently played themselves out here, in that the manner in which the notional time was handled was not sufficiently convincing that it substantially differed from any other petty issues pertaining to teaching and learning. This matter was, to a greater degree, emphasised at the workshops.

It is therefore, concluded that, there was only lip service paid to this area of instructional leadership because some subject advisors clearly stated that this was entirely a management issue which called for the attention of school based leaders and Circuit Managers.

5.3.7 The impact of the language of learning and teaching on learner performance

The effort put by the subject advisors to safeguard the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) was not sufficient. The mere fact that some subject advisors talked about it at the

workshops only denigrated its use and importance in schools. Some subject educators presented lessons in the medium of IsiZulu. This was wrong because it becomes difficult for the learner to master subject concepts in IsiZulu and translate them into English during the examinations. This was clearly a highest degree of undermining a language policy on instruction. This would undoubtedly impact negatively on the learner outcomes because of the fact that almost all assessment tasks and examination question papers were written in the medium of English, therefore learners struggled to comprehend and answer questions sufficiently and correctly. Consequently, it is concluded that the failure by subject advisors to use the LoLT as one of their strategies to improve learner attainment was one of the contributory factors to a decline in both Grade 12 and ANA results.

5.3.8 Separating wheat from chaff and levelling the playing field

This study demonstrated that instructional leadership could not succeed if it were to be a one man's show. Shared or distributed leadership seemed to work very well with instructional leadership in supporting teaching and learning in schools. These two theories of leadership complemented each other. A good instructional leader opts for distributed leadership, taking into account various leaders' and educators' expertise and experience, hence, no one subject advisor could be the source of all knowledge and wisdom. It can then be concluded that, this encouraged them to promote professional learning communities in different education circuits, where excelling educators were identified and utilised to develop those who were underperforming so that educators could almost be on a par with each other in terms of subject content knowledge and pedagogic approaches. A culture of stakeholderism, namely, the involvement of other sister departments like Statistics South Africa, Tourism South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal Tourism was a clear attempt to embrace the national call that education should be treated as a societal issue at all levels of the Department of Basic Education (DoBE).

5.3.9 KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education falling short

The KwaZulu- Natal Department of Basic Education did not provide the subject advisors with adequate teaching and learning resources in this education district. The subject advisors

faced an untold number of challenges that emanated; both internally and externally. For any instructional leadership to succeed, the principle is that ‘the quality input invariably influences the quality of the output’ (Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2013). The KZN DoBE Human Resource Directorate was engulfed in major problems in the sense that very few subject advisors were in the employ of this education district. Some subject advisors were responsible for two or more subjects. Mrs Dlamini, Subject Advisor for Services, was a good example, with three subjects, namely, Consumer Studies, Hospitality Studies and Travel and Tourism. Effective and efficient management of teaching and learning would always remain a mystery if the staffing matters were not addressed urgently and appropriately. The *‘Policy on Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts’* (2013), dictates that subject advisors must be subject specialists, therefore, how could one person be responsible for three subjects and perform very well? No labour saving devices were purchased for them but they had to buy their own laptops, data projectors and modem for internet. In view of a multiplicity of challenges, it is therefore concluded that these challenges, undoubtedly, had a negative impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) sub-directorate.

5.3.10 School Heads of Department’ management capacity questioned

The School Heads of Department’s instructional leadership capacity left much to be desired. Curriculum management was not prioritised; no pre and post moderation was undertaken by HODs in some schools. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education did not have an approved and appropriate leadership training programmes for the HODs. This seemed to suggest that instructional leadership at the level of HODs was not prioritised, which was contrary to the South African Government’s plan of making education one of its top priorities. It is therefore concluded that both subject advisors and the DoBE did not do enough to support HODs in schools, so that they could become good managers in their own departments.

5.3.11 Blunt human capital

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education's work force included unqualified and under-qualified educators in schools. This could also be one of the causes of a decline in learner performance because these educators lacked subject content knowledge and teaching methods which are key in successful curriculum delivery. There was also an exodus of suitably qualified educators from rural schools to city and township schools in search of good working conditions and adequate teaching and learning resources. This posed a grave threat to the delivery of quality education in the classroom. The reality was that any poor and uncoordinated recruitment strategy was a silent celebration of mediocrity. In the light of this finding, it can be concluded that the KZN DoBE did not have a well-researched and coordinated recruitment strategy in line with the demands of Chapter Nine of the National Development Plan (2011). Further, this tradition is contrary to the NDP's (2011) envisaged education system, where educators are central to education and teaching is considered to be a highly valued profession.

5.3.12 Teacher unions' impact on curriculum delivery

This study suggested that teacher unions were not playing a positive role as social partners in education. Their actions were destructive and hindered the provision of effective quality teaching and learning in schools. The fact that subject advisors' cluster meetings and workshops were disrupted by people who claimed to be teacher union leaders and that they represented interests of their members who were educators and also parents at the same time in their own right, was flawed, disingenuous and a mere rhetoric. It is incomprehensible that leaders who projected themselves as the vanguard for the working class and the poor; could destroy the very future of the children of the working class and the poor in the name of labour rights. Further, this research demonstrated that there was a concerted campaign (*Operation Gudluka Singene- meaning 'remove and deploy politically connected union leaders'*) to remove top departmental officials and replace them with other union leaders who belonged to the same political or union camp like deployment masterminds. Based on this finding, it can therefore be concluded that the employer and employee relationship was not regulated in terms of the applicable pieces of legislation. Further, the departmental officials and principals

were not safe when executing their legal duties of leading and supporting instructional leadership practices in schools.

5.3.13 Navigating the challenges or barriers that subject advisors encounter when supporting teaching and learning in their education district

The subject advisors seemed to have employed innovative or creative management strategies in order to overcome the challenges that they encountered in their line of duty, supporting teaching and learning in schools. Moreover, this study revealed that there were no professional development programmes that were informed by individual subject advisors' professional needs but, the education district only had a one size fits all approach to professional development. To address this challenge, some subject advisors chose to attend other generic workshops that were conducted by the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The non-availability of a clearly defined professional development programme in the education district was both a weakness and a threat to a secured quality curriculum delivery. Further, to address the challenge of the shortage of transport, subject advisors used common transport or club cars so as to navigate the transport challenges which have made it difficult to visit schools for curriculum support. The incapacity of school Heads of Department was also addressed by organising and facilitating workshops in order to bridge the leadership and management gaps. Similarly, the unqualified and under-qualified educators were also capacitated in terms of methodology and content knowledge so as to meet the classroom curriculum demands. As a result of this finding, it is therefore concluded that the KZN DoBE should share the blame for the decline in learner performance. Further, the challenges that have been listed above do not auger well for this Department of Basic Education. It is also worth mentioning that these challenges are beyond the control of the education district. As a result, the solution falls outside the score of the education district because they emanated from the signed collective agreements between the KZN DoBE as an employer and the organised labour as employees and the financial constraints imposed by the KZN Provincial Treasury.

5.4 Recommendations

The preceding discussion centred on the findings and conclusions that emerged from the data generated through semi-structured interviews and documents reviews. Although the subject advisors in this study displayed traits of instructional leadership, there exist a number of challenges which are both internal and external in education. The recommendations set out below are grounded in the aims of the research.

5.4.1 Recommendation One

Due to the complexities that come with the continuous development of instructional leadership as a theory, the saying that ‘an iron whets or sharpens iron’ finds resonance in this context. The leadership of subject advisors centred on curriculum policy implementation in schools. It transpired that subject advisors needed to monitor the curriculum policies and guide subject educators and School Heads of Department on how teaching and learning should be delivered in a policy compliant manner. The researcher established that some subject advisors lacked a clear understanding of the role they had to play as quality controllers or quality assurers who were also expected to empower educators and train them to understand their roles perfectly. Therefore, this study recommends that Subject Advisors must have a well-designed and properly coordinated professional development programme to empower them with curriculum policy interpretation tools. This will make them gain more confidence and knowledge when interacting with subject educators and School Heads of Department. This will negate a traditional notion that Subject Advisors are just promoted educators with no additional specialised knowledge and skills to perform instructional leadership tasks.

5.4.2 Recommendation Two

The subject advisors had a responsibility of ensuring that subject educators were provided with teaching skills through workshops. Similarly, they were also expected to take educators’ hands and expose them to different teaching and learning strategies in order to improve learner performance in the classroom. On the contrary, the workshops that were conducted for subject educators at cluster level did not yield the desired results in the sense that these professional development programmes did not translate into improved learner outcomes in

the classroom. Consequently, the amount of input out-weighed the curriculum delivery output; therefore, this study recommends that, the education district must take the school improvement plan (SIP) emanating from the integrated quality management system (IQMS) into consideration when developing educator professional development programmes. These programmes should be implemented quarterly so as to form part of the continuing professional development activities. This will make the professional development programmes to be informed by individual educators' professional needs, rather than a top down approach which, eventually, becomes a 'one size fits all approach.' In addition, this will undoubtedly, nurture their teaching skills and augment their subject content knowledge and pedagogy. Educators must be encouraged to have professional development portfolios (PDP) so as to track the progress made by each educators.

5.4.3 Recommendation Three

Implementing the National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) across all grades is a good step in the right direction. This has a capacity to build a strong curriculum foundation especially in Mathematics and Languages, even at the elementary level of schooling. The National Development Plan (2011) demands that, it is important that sufficient and appropriate capacity is built to support schools that are performing poorly. Concerning this finding, this research recommends that the DoBE must stop bringing programmes or strategies in smaller instalments but must have well documented and carefully implemented programmes which are monitored and evaluated on quarterly basis.

5.4.4 Recommendation Four

The Subject Advisors' role in providing teaching and learning resources is dubious. Therefore, this research recommends that this role must be clearly defined in terms of its policy parameters. The KZN Department of Basic Education must consider the more practical way of doing it, like ensuring that Subject Advisors develop Annual Teaching Programmes and subject assessment plans to be provided to all subject educators in order create uniformity in terms of the sequence of topics and facilitate the ability to track pace setters.

5.4.5 Recommendation Five

The non-compliance in implementing some of the initiatives of the Department of Basic Education to improve learner outcomes is a matter of great concern. This study revealed that some educators did not implement the subject advisors' strategies intended to bring about effective teaching and learning and improved learner outcomes. In order to enforce 100% compliance, this study recommends that Subject Advisors and School Management Teams (SMTs) must submit quarterly reports on the progress and achievements of these initiatives to their immediate supervisors.

5.4.6 Recommendation Six

It transpired during the semi-structured interviews and documents review that, not enough is being done to ensure that notional / instructional time is protected in schools. This is contrary to Weber's (1987) view on this matter, under the domain of 'Protecting Instructional Time and Programme' that the instructional time should be treated like a 'holy cow' so that teachers can teach and learners learn without any disturbances. Weber (1987) further accentuates that the time spent on instructional leadership tasks must also improve in schools and education districts. Therefore, this study recommends that Subject Advisors should visit schools to scrutinise the composite timetables so as to monitor compliance and timeously, address all the challenges emanating from the miscalculations of the teaching hours per subject and per week.

5.4.7 Recommendation Seven

The language of teaching and learning which is English in most schools in this education district is like a bone marrow that gives life to the bones and flesh. For that reason, the LoLT deserves to be accorded the significance that it deserves. The widespread deviations that were reported, such as presenting lessons in IsiZulu at a secondary school do not auger well for quality teaching and learning in schools. The reality is that most subjects are written and assessed in English, therefore the National Development Plan (2011, p.266) states that languages are important because they do "not only carry knowledge but also create and better knowledge." As a consequence, this research recommends that Subject Advisors must begin to own this management task of ensuring that the language policy is implemented through lesson observations and demonstrations in the classroom.

5.4.8 Recommendation Eight

The ability of Subject Advisors to empower other educators by making them cluster coordinators and lead educators was a good strategy to promote leadership development in schools. Further, this programme promoted professional learning communities (PLCs) in the education district in question. This creates a good environment for team work and distributed leadership. Lunenburg (2010) believes that establishing professional learning communities for educators results in the spirit of working together as a team. Even Southworth (2002) confirms that instructional leadership depicts compliance with a number of dimensions which accommodate different practices including distributed leadership. Based on the above mentioned reality, this study recommends that more educators should be exposed to this form of leadership development. In addition, those educators who have been adequately empowered through this programme should be considered for new subject advisory posts in the education district.

5.4.9 Recommendation Nine

Teaching and learning resources are tools that assist the instructional leaders to achieve the goals that they have set for themselves. As a consequence, the non-availability or inadequacy of learning and teaching material (LTSM), both human and physical resources, creates a dichotomy in the endeavour to provide quality education in the classroom. This demoralises and de-motivates Subject Advisors in the process of enacting their instructional leadership responsibilities. In view of this assertion, this research recommends that the KZN DoBE must advertise all the subject advisory posts and appoint a sufficient number of Subject Advisors, being guided by the number of approved subjects in the new CAPS documents. Bhengu, Naicker and Mthiyane (2014), in their study on 'Chronicling the Barriers to Translating Instructional leadership Learning in Practice' found that Subject Advisors' support was biased towards secondary schools thus neglecting primary schools that are supposed to be assisting to build a strong curriculum foundation. Further, the KZN DoBE must provide Subject Advisors with adequate teaching and learning resources including labour saving devices like laptops, printers, data projectors and internet connectivity modem. In addition,

Subject Advisors must be given a sufficient budget in order to travel easily to schools and clusters to perform their functions as dictated by their job description and *'Policy on Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of education districts (DoBE, 2013)*.

5.4.10 Recommendation Ten

The School Heads of Department are also instructional leaders and quality assurers in their own right. They are better placed to complement the work of the Subject Advisors. For this reason, this research recommends that the education district or KZN DoBE should prioritise the School HOD's induction programmes. Furthermore, the South African Council of Educators (SACE) must also prioritise the continuing professional development of school Heads of Department and Post Level One educators. Feiman-Nemser (2003), agrees that new educators should be exposed to a professional culture that enhances teacher learning. In addition, Mihans (2008) found that educators were not supported by the management of their organisations.

5.4.11 Recommendation Eleven

The appointment of unqualified and under-qualified educators can jeopardise the learners' academic and professional future ambitions. This tradition has developed wrong perceptions that a teaching task can be performed by anyone in society. This is contrary to Weber's (1987) instructional leadership model, under the domain of 'Hiring, Supervising and Evaluating Educators', that appointing capable educators is a good attempt to create and maintain a healthy instructional programme. As a result, this study recommends that the KZN DoBE appoints suitably qualified educators who are well grounded in the subject content knowledge and pedagogic approaches. Those educators who are already in the system should be awarded KZN DoBE and Funza Lushaka bursaries attached to a time frame of completing a teaching qualification. Feiman-Nemser (2003) shares the same view that education districts must empower educators through mentoring programmes.

5.4.12 Recommendation Twelve

Teacher unions are important stakeholders in education and have a significant role to play in safeguarding the interest of both educators and learners. Myron and Lieberman (2000) agree that there is a controversy pertaining to the manner in which teacher unions influence productivity of educators in the classroom. They further argue that learner performance began to decline when teacher unions' existence was legalised in the world. Hence, this research recommends that teacher unions' activities must be within the parameters of the law that guides and regulates the relationship between the educators and union members as employees and the KZN DoBE as the employer. Furthermore, the DoBE and the Department of Labour must workshop both educators and teacher union leaders on various pieces of legislation, especially, Employment of Educators Act, no. 78 of 1998, Conditions of Employment Act, no. 75 of 1997 and Labour Relations Act, no. 66 of 1995. This will help to arrest the situation, as there is a general agreement that things are getting out of hand. Cooper and Sureau (2008) argue that the relationship between the teacher unions and the employer is characterised by fear. Similarly, Bhengu, Naicker and Mthiyane (2014) confirm that teacher unions pose a negative impact on the smooth running of schools, education circuits and education districts.

5.4.13 Recommendation Thirteen

It is commendable that most Subject Advisors managed to perform their professional duties against all odd or in spite of all the challenges or barriers listed in Chapter Four that sought to hinder their progress and productivity in terms of effective teaching and learning and increased learner outcomes. This study, further recommends that the KZN DoBE develop a turnaround strategy in consultation with teacher unions to be implemented with a sole purpose of intervening to address the Education Department's persistent challenges of inadequate teaching and learning resources, poor working conditions, unpalatable teacher unions' relationship with the KZN DoBE as the employer, '*Operation Gudluka Singene*' (purging of some senior officials of the KZN DoBE) and more importantly, the stagnation or decline in learner outcomes.

5.5 Implications for the study

5.5.1 The perpetual decline in learner outcomes has both financial and legal implications. The National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996, Section 3, sub-section (4) paragraph (e) gives powers to the National Minister of Basic Education to determine national policy on, amongst other things, the ratio between educators and learners. Therefore, if the learner performance declines, there is a possibility for the school to lose some of its educators through the deployment or Compulsory Temporarily Transfer (CTT) according to this Act. This Act further makes provision for the schools' norms and standards allocations to be adjusted down or reduced due to the decrease in school enrolment. The decline in learner attainment is at times, considered to be a misconduct, in terms of the Employment of Educators Act, No. 76 of 1998, Chapter 5, Section 16, sub-sections (1) to (10), which deals with incapacity, which among other things includes, the educators' or subject advisors' failure to execute duties attached to the posts. The subject advisor or educator concerned can be subjected to a disciplinary hearing and charged. On the basis of these Acts, the KZN DoBE can use the findings from this study to inform their planning in order for their vision of a literate and highly skilled citizenry to be realised. To ensure that subject advisors perform their curriculum management tasks effectively, the KZN DoBE needs to develop the subject advisors to meet the 21st century demands of a quality instructional leadership and curriculum delivery. In addition, the KZN DoBE needs to introduce a performance-based bonus as an incentive to salvage the decline in learner performance which eventually leads to a decline in learner enrolments through learner migration.

5.5.2 This study suggests that the legislative framework that guides the relationship between the KZN DoBE as the employer and teacher unions as employees, was not followed or adhered to by organised labour. Further, the disruption of meetings and workshops undermined the spirit of the Labour Relations Act, No. 66 of 1995. Finnemore (2009) agrees that labour relations are good but at times they are destructive and disorderly because of the conflict caused by power struggles. '*Operation gudluka singene*' meaning 'purging of some senior officials of the DoBE' undermines or violates the National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996, Section (4), paragraph (a) (1), which guarantees everyone's right to be protected against any unfair discrimination or treatment. On the basis of this behaviour by some teacher unions, it must be noted that quality education can only be achieved in an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning. As a consequence, the applicable pieces of

legislation should be allowed to take precedence to any individual or collective that tries to pursue selfish interests. In addition, the KZN DoBE must take legal actions against any person or teacher union that undermines the spirit of the South African Constitution, Act No. 108 of 1996 and the above mentioned labour laws in order to restore an orderly environment which is conducive to effective teaching and learning in schools. Further, the non-adherence to the labour laws that govern the relationship between the KZN DoBE and organised labour can lead to an anarchical education system which also has a capacity to destroy quality education in the classroom.

5.5.3 The failure of the KZN DoBE to provide relevant and appropriate professional development to Subject Advisors is a travesty of justice in the sense that it violates the National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996, Section 4, paragraphs (f) and (g), which dictates that every person has a right to be trained and to be provided with skills and capacities needed by his or her profession in order to advance and achieve the goals of South Africa as a country. There is a general belief that, the quality of input determines the quality of output, therefore, for subject advisors to achieve their goal of improved quality learner performance, they need adequate support from the KZN DoBE as their employer. On the basis of this conclusion, this study suggests that more teaching and learning resources need to be invested in education. The Teaching and Learning Services Sub-directorate (TLS) should be given sufficient budgetary allocation so that subject advisors can be able to provide sufficient necessary teaching and learning resources to improve learner achievement in schools.

5.5.4 This was a small scale study which involved only six Subject Advisors as research participants and it investigated the instructional leadership practices of Subject Advisors at the education district in relation to their role when supporting teaching and learning in schools. I, as a researcher propose that a large scale study should be conducted to investigate the instructional leadership practices of the subject advisors and School Management Teams (SMTs) at the level of the school where teaching and learning actually takes place so that, perhaps, there may be congruence in what they do.

5.6 Chapter summary

This chapter provided a full reflection of the whole research study. Firstly, this Chapter Five outlined a concise overview of the summary of all the chapters, from Chapter One to Chapter Five. Secondly, it presented the conclusions or findings of the study emanating from the data presentation and discussion in Chapter Four. Arising from various conclusions, the appropriate recommendations were made with the sole aim of providing suggested solutions and also to comply with the ethical principle of beneficence, meaning that the research findings must benefit the participants and the entire research community. This section of the study reflected on the literature and the theoretical frameworks presented in Chapters One and Two respectively. A few implications of the study were also outlined so as to highlight some legislative gaps and silences which require attention by the Department of Basic Education and the provincial and national legislatures. A chapter summary then concluded Chapter Five.

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Appendices

APPENDIX ONE : Ethical clearance certificate from UKN

APPENDIX TWO : Request letters

4. To DoBE (PMB)
5. District Director
6. To participants

APPENDIX THREE: Content forms from participants

APPENDIX FOUR : Consent letter from the education District office

APPENDIX FIVE : Consent letter from the KZN Department of Basic Education

APPENDIX SIX : Research Instruments

- ❖ Interview Schedule
- ❖ Documents Review Schedule

APPENDIX SEVEN : Turn It In Certificate

APPENDIX EIGHT : Language Editor's Certificate

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance Certificate from UKZN Research Office



25 April 2014

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu 212559916
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Mthembu

Protocol reference number: HSS/0110/014M

Project title: Subject Advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Ilembe District

Full Approval – Expedited

This letter serves to notify you that your application in connection with the above has now been granted **Full Approval**

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project; Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Science Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor/Project Leader: Mr Siphwe Eric Mthiyane
cc Academic Leader: Professor Pholoho Morojele
cc School Admin: Mr Thoba Mthembu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

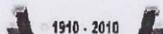
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymnm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

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Appendix 2: Letters of request to conduct research

P. O. Box
SUNDUMBILI
4491
22 October 2013

The Director-General (Dr N. S. P. Sishi)

Department of Basic Education

KwaZulu - Natal

Republic of South Africa

Private Bag X 9137

PIETERMARITZBURG

3200

Dear Sir

Request To Conduct A Research Project At Ilembe Education District

I am Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu, a Masters student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirement, I am conducting research on the phenomenon of instructional leadership. In this regard, I request permission to conduct research at Ilembe Education District. The title of my research project is: '*Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors at Ilembe District*'

This study aims to explore the instructional leadership at the level of the Education District in KwaZulu-Natal and will focus on the views and experiences of subject advisors on the phenomenon of instructional leadership. This study will use semi-structured interviews and document review to generate data. The subject advisors will be interviewed for approximately 20 to 35 minutes at the time and place convenient to them.

Plases Take Note That:

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project.

Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s during and after the reporting process.

All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Fictitious names (pseudonyms) will be used to represent your names.

Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time should you so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequence/s penalty on your part.

The interviews will be voice-recorded to assist me as the researcher in concentrating on the actual interview rather than focusing on writing voluminous notes.

You will be contacted on time about the interviews.

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me using the following details:

Cell. No.: 0711227071 or 076 6060 759

E-mail: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Or

My UKZN supervisor, Dr S. E. Mthiyane:

Tel: 031-2601870

Cell. No.: 073 3774 672

E-mail: mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za

Or

The HSSREC Office (Ms P. Ximba, Tel. 031-2603 587

E-mail: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

The interview and document review schedules are attached herewith for your perusal.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

**REQUEST LETTER TO THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR TO CONDUCT RESEARCH
AT ILEMBE EDUCATION DISTRICT**

P. O. Box
SUNDUMBILI
4491
22 October 2013

The Director
Ilembe Education District
Private Bag X
DURBAN
4000

Dear Madam

Request For The Permission To Conduct A Study At Ilembe Education District Office

I am Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu, a Masters student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirement, I am conducting research on the phenomenon of instructional leadership. In this regard, I request permission to conduct research in the Ilembe District. Please be informed that I have already sought and awaiting the necessary permission from the Research Office of the Kwazulu-Natal Department of Basic Education to conduct this research. **(NB. See the copy of the letter attached).**

The title of my research project is: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Ilembe District*

This study aims to explore the instructional leadership at the level of the Education District in KwaZulu-Natal and will focus on the views and experiences of subject advisors on the phenomenon of instructional leadership. This study will use semi-structured interviews and document review to generate data. The subject advisors will be interviewed for approximately 20 to 35 minutes at the time and place convenient to them. I therefore request the Director to respond in writing so that I can send that letter to the University of KwaZulu – Natal Research Office timeously

Plases Take Note That:

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project.

Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s during and after the reporting process.

All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Fictitious names (pseudonyms) will be used to represent your names.

Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time should you so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequence/s penalty on your part.

The interviews will be voice-recorded to assist me as the researcher in concentrating on the actual interview rather than focusing on writing voluminous notes.

You will be contacted on time about the interviews.

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me using the following details:

Cell. No.: 0711227071 or 076 6060 759

E-mail: mthembusg1@gmail.com

Or

My UKZN supervisor, Dr S. E. Mthiyane:

Tel: 031-2601870

Cell. No.: 073 3774 672

E-mail: mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za

Or

The HSSREC Office (Ms P. Ximba, Tel. 031-2603 587

E-mail: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

The interview and document review schedules are attached herewith for your perusal.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

P. O. Box
SUNDUMBILI
4491
22 October 2013

The Subject Advisor
Teaching And Learning Services (TLS) Sub-directorate
Ilembe Education District
Private Bag X
DURBAN
4000

Dear Madam

Request For Your Participation In My Research Project

I am Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu, a Masters student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirement, I am conducting research on the phenomenon of instructional leadership. In this regard, I request permission to conduct research in the Ilembe District. Please be informed that I have already sought and awaiting the necessary permission from the Research Office of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education to conduct this research. **(NB.** See the copy of the letter attached).

The title of my research project is: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Ilembe District*

This study aims to explore the instructional leadership at the level of the Education District in KwaZulu-Natal and will focus on the views and experiences of subject advisors on the phenomenon of instructional leadership. This study will use semi-structured interviews and document review to generate data. The subject advisors will be interviewed for approximately 20 to 35 minutes at the time and place convenient to them.

Please Take Note That:

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project.

Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s during and after the reporting process.

All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Fictitious names (pseudonyms) will be used to represent your names.

Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time should you so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequence/s penalty on your part.

The interviews will be voice-recorded to assist me as the researcher in concentrating on the actual interview rather than focusing on writing voluminous notes.

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Or

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Or

The HSSREC Office (Ms P. Ximba, Tel. 031-2603 587

E-mail: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

The interview and document review schedules are attached herewith for your perusal.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Declaration/ Consent Form

I,(Full names & surname of participant)

Hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for this study: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Hembe District*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I also understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time, should I so desire.

Finally, I consent / do not consent to this interview being voice recorded.

Signature of Participant: Date:

Signature of Witness / Research Assistant: Date:

Tel. No. :

Cell. No. :

E-mail :

Thanking you in advance is:

Yours faithfully

.....

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Appendix Three: Consent forms from subject advisors

Declaration/ Consent Form

I,(Full names & surname of participant)
Hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for this study: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Ilembe District*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I also understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time, should I so desire.

Finally, I consent / ~~do not consent~~ to this interview being voice recorded.

Signature of Participant: *[Signature]* Date: *17/12/13*

Signature of Witness / Research Assistant: *[Signature]* Date: *17-12-13*

Tel. No. :.....
Cell. No. :.....
E-mail :.....

Thanking you in advance is:
Yours faithfully
.....
Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

| [] [] |

Declaration/ Consent Form

I,(Full names & surname of participant)

Hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for this study: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Hembe District*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I also understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time, should I so desire.

Finally, I consent / ~~do not consent~~ to this interview being voice recorded.

Signature of Participant: Date: 19.12.2013

Signature of Witness / Research Assistant: Date: 19/12/2013

Tel. No.

Cell. No.

E-mail@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance is:

Yours faithfully

.....

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

Declaration/ Consent Form

I,(Full names & surname of participant)
Hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for
this study: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in
Ilembe District*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I
understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in
the study.

I also understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time, should I
so desire.

Finally, I consent / do not consent to this interview being voice recorded.

Signature of Participant:  Date: 12/12/13

Signature of Witness / Research Assistant:  Date: 12-12-13

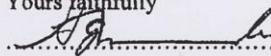
Tel. No. :

Cell. No. :

E-mail :

Thanking you in advance is:

Yours faithfully

..... 

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu



Declaration/ Consent Form

I,(Full names & surname of participant)

Hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for this study: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Ilembe District*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I also understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time, should I so desire.

Finally, I consent / ~~do not consent~~ to this interview being voice recorded.

Signature of Participant: *Mogale* Date: *2013-12-12*

Signature of Witness / Research Assistant: *(Signature)* Date: *2013-12-12*

Tel. No. :
Cell. No. :
E-mail : *@webmail.co.za*

Thanking you in advance is:

Yours faithfully

..... *(Signature)*

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu



Declaration/ Consent Form

I,(Full names & surname of participant)

Hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for this study: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Ilembe District*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I also understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time, should I so desire.

Finally, I consent / do not consent to this interview being voice recorded.

Signature of Participant: Date: 13-12-2013

Signature of Witness / Research Assistant: Date: 13/12/2013

Tel. No.

Cell. No.

E-mail@yahoo.com.

Thanking you in advance is:

Yours faithfully

.....

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu



Declaration/ Consent Form

I, (Full names & surname of participant)

Hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for this study: *Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisors in Ilembe District*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I also understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time, should I so desire.

Finally, I consent / ~~do not consent~~ to this interview being voice recorded.

Signature of Participant: Date: 12/12/13

Signature of Witness / Research Assistant: Date: 12/12/13

Tel. No.

Cell. No.

E-mail:

Thanking you in advance is:

Yours faithfully
.....

Mr Sithembiso Goodwill Mthembu

APPENDIX FOUR: PERMISSION FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Ms
Imbuzo:
Navrae:

Reference: 2/4/8/63
Inkomba:
Verwysing:

Date: 23.04.2014
Usuku:
Datum:

TO: Mr. S.G. Mthembu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ILEMBE DISTRICT: TLS GET /FETADVISORS

1. Your application to conduct research entitled "Subject Advisors as Instructional Leaders: A case study of Six subject Advisors of Ilembe District" has been approved.
2. You are therefore requested to follow the conditions of approval as stipulated by the KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education.

Thank You

Ms.
Manager: Ilembe District

... dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ILEMBE DISTRICT

Postal Address: Private Bag X54330 • Durban • 4000 • KwaZulu-Natal • Republic of South Africa

Physical Address: 72 Stalwart Simelane Street • Malgate Building • Durban • 4000

Tel.: +27 31 3270911 | Help Desk; +27 31 327 0243 | Fax: +27 31 327 888 | Email: @kzndoe.gov.za • | Web: www.kzndoe.gov.za

APPENDIX FIVE: PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM UKZN DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

Tel: 033 341 8610

Ref.:2/4/8/63

Mr SG Mthembu
P O Box 3940
Sundumbili
4491

Dear Mr Mthembu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "Subject advisors as instructional leaders: A case study of six subject advisor of Ilembe District", 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 ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations 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 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 from 01 February to 30 June 2014.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental 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 Mr. Alwar 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. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (Ilembe District)

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 06 March 2014

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 Fax: 033 392 4009
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehlogile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za; CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363;
WEBSITE: www.kzndoe.gov.za

Appendix Six : Research instruments

Interview guide for GET and subject advisors

(NB. These questions would assist me to guide my discussion with the subject advisors. There would be a need to pose follow-up questions in instances where I would be seeking clarity on some responses that the participants had provided. Probes could also be utilised where elaboration was deemed necessary).

1. As a subject advisor, what do you understand to be your role in supporting teaching and learning in schools in your district?
2. What do you actually do, to support and manage teaching and learning in your district? Please elaborate.
3. How do these strategies improve learner performance in the classroom?
4. How do you involve others or collaborate with others as you support teaching and learning in schools in your district?
5. How do you overcome these challenges or barriers as you support and manage teaching and learning in your district?
 - 5.1.**Probe:** How does that collaboration impact on the quality of teaching and learning in classroom?
 - 5.2.**Probe:** I want to check, do unions make your work easier or difficult because that is part of the challenges that we are looking at here.
6. As the subject advisor how do you ensure that notional time is protected as well as the language of teaching and learning LoLT is observed?
 - 6.1.**Probe:** There is a perception that, the high failure rate in some of the subjects is caused by the fact that some of the educators do not stick to the language of teaching and learning. So what is it that you normally do to encourage them, to make sure that they stick to the language of teaching and learning so that they can be able to assist learners to master the content?
7. Do you think that the support that is provided to schools in your District is adequate? Yes or No. Substantiate your answer.
 - 7.1.**Probe:** What is being done to address that shortage? (e.g. inadequacy of the support by the department)
 - 7.2.**Probe:** Is there anything that you would like to share with me as a researcher on the management of teaching and learning which I have not asked you but you feel that it is important to share with me? Please feel free to share that with me.

Document analysis/ review schedule

This study involved document analysis/ review as an attempt to do triangulation in order to enhance trustworthiness. The documents that were sampled were based on a life span of three years (2012 –2014). Those documents ranged from minutes of the Teaching and Learning Services Sub-directorate (TLS) and subject advisors' monthly reports. The areas of interest included the following:

- Did subject advisors report on their visits to schools including challenges that schools faced with regard to curriculum delivery in the classroom and curriculum management at the TLS meeting?
- Did those meetings come up with recommendations or solutions as to how those raised challenges would be overcome?
- Were minutes reflecting that the instructional leadership formed the centre of those meetings?
- Did those meetings discuss issues pertaining to learner performance (results), if they did, what strategies were put in place to solve poor learner outcomes?

Appendix Seven: Turn it In Certificate

The screenshot displays a Turnitin submission interface within a Windows Internet Explorer browser. The browser address bar shows the URL: <http://learning.ukzn.ac.za/mod/turnitintool/view.php?id=160968&do=allsubmissions>. The page title is "M.Ed Dissertation (S. Mthembu) 2014" by SITHEMBISO MTHEMBU. The Turnitin logo is visible, along with a similarity score of 3% (SIMILAR) out of 100. The interface includes tabs for "Originality", "GradeMark", and "PeerMark".

The main content area shows the beginning of a dissertation chapter:

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and background

This is the first chapter of my study intended to provide a synoptic view of the ensuing chapters in the whole research project. In the past, there were no subject advisors in the Department of Basic Education. Even heads of department and deputy principals did not exist (Hallinger, 2003). School leadership and management were put squarely on the principal's shoulders (Hallinger, 2003). According to Bhengu and Mkhize (2013), principals are regarded as instructional leaders merely by virtue of being principals of schools without any formal training and that jeopardises their capability to manage teaching and learning effectively. Evans (2002); Naicker, Chikoko and Mthiyane (2013) and Bhengu (2012) argue that in the past, very little attention has been paid to teacher development. This could easily lead to a situation where instructional leadership could remain incomprehensible to some school principals. This created a situation where school leaders found themselves in the middle of the two competing leadership theories like instructional leadership and managerial leadership approaches.

My perception was that the development programmes for principals took the one size fits all approach and to a greater degree down played the importance of the management of teaching and learning. The inadequacy of leadership and management skills leads to dissatisfaction and demotivation and consequently underperformance by principals (Evans, 2002). Sufficient and

The right-hand side of the interface features a "Match Overview" panel with a list of sources and their similarity percentages:

Match ID	Source	Similarity
47	www.ijsrp.org Internet source	<1%
48	Submitted to Midlands... Student paper	<1%
49	scholarworks.uno.edu Internet source	<1%
50	Hallinger. "Leadership... Publication	<1%
51	JAMES SPILLANE. "To... Publication	<1%
52	Harris, A., and M. Jone... Publication	<1%
53	Submitted to University... Student paper	<1%
54	International Journal of... Publication	<1%

The bottom of the screenshot shows the Windows taskbar with various application icons and the system tray.

Appendix Eight: Language editor's Certificate

25 Maple Crescent
Circle Park
KLOOF
3610

Phone 031 – 7075912
0823757722
Fax 031 - 7110458
E-mail:
wyebanksec@telkomsa.net
sathsgovender4@gmail.com

Dr Saths Govender

21 NOVEMBER 2014

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the dissertation titled:

SUBJECT ADVISORS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS: A CASE STUDY OF SIX
SUBJECT ADVISORS AT ILEMBE DISTRICT, by S.G. Mthembu, student no.
212559916.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used meets generally accepted academic standards.

Yours faithfully



DR S. GOVENDER
B Paed. (Arts), B.A. (Hons), B Ed.
Cambridge Certificate for English Medium Teachers
MPA, D Admin.