

**Exploring instructional leadership practices of school principals: A
case study of three secondary schools in Umbumbulu Circuit**

By

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Abstract

There are substantive external demands for improved learner achievement, particularly in secondary schools, and increasingly, principals have to bear the pressures that accompany these demands. Instructional leadership concept is being advocated one of the approaches that school leaders may consider in order to promote a culture of teaching and learning within their schools. Therefore a qualitative case study was undertaken to explore instructional leadership practices of three secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit. The focus of the study was based on the assumption that principals were instructional leaders as it was the expectation of government policy. The study therefore, did not seek to find out if principals in the study were indeed instructional leaders, but it sought to understand the manner in which they practicalised this expectation. In short, the study sought to gain an insight into how secondary school principals in this area enacted instructional leadership and why they enacted it the way they did.

Three schools were selected among those schools that had experienced drastic improvement in their matric results in the past five years or so. The research design employed was qualitative and semi-structured interviews with three principals and three educators. These interviews were audio taped and transcribed for analysis. The results indicated that principals enacted instructional leadership practices by (a) sharing vision among members of the school (b) monitoring instructions (c) encouraging professional development of their teaching staff (d) ensuring that instructional time was not interrupted (e) furnishing professional materials and resources to the teachers (f) monitoring and discussion assessment issues with the teachers (g) recognising and rewarding good performance and (h) preparing and sustaining learning environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. The main aim was to enhance teaching and learning in the schools as these principals strongly believed that it was their responsibility to do so.

Declaration

I, Bongani Nhlanhla Mkhize, declare that

- i. The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.
- ii. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- iii. This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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Signed:

Date:

Statement by Supervisor

This dissertation is submitted with/without my approval.

Signed:

Date:

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



17 July 2012

Mr Bongani Nhlanhla Mkhize 991240104
School of Education

Dear Mr Mkhize

Protocol reference number: HSS/0499/012M

Project title: Exploring instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals: A case study of three secondary schools in Umbumbulu Circuit.

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Nomawonga (MaMsingapantsi) Mkhize, and my father, u-Julius, kaNkasa, kaTilongo, kaNgunezi, kaSingele, kaZihlandlo Mkhize, for your passion about education and inspiration you instilled in me to achieve in the field of education. I also extend my gratitude to my wife, Lungi, and my daughter, Mpilenhle, for giving me the time to complete this study and giving me encouragement when I needed it most. Without your support and love I would never have succeeded.

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- To the Department of Education for allowing me to conduct research in the schools I selected for my study.
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- Special thanks to my colleagues for understanding and support.

ABBREVIATIONS

HOD	Head of Department
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MEC	Member of Executive Council
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSLA	National Strategy for Learner Attainment
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SMT	School Management Team

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In many ways the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school (Lyons, 2010). It is the principal's leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for teaching, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers, and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become (Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005). Research has consistently highlighted the role of the principals' instructional leadership in achieving desired student outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Hence, principals' leadership is often viewed as a major focus of efforts to pursue and achieve excellence in education (Sim, 2011). In view of this, the study that is reported in this dissertation, explored instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit. The focus of the study was based on the assumption that principals, in one way or another, were instructional leaders as this was the expectation of government policy. The study therefore, did not seek to find out if principals that participated in this study were indeed instructional leaders, but it sought to understand the manner in which they practicalised this policy expectation. Furthermore, the study sought to gain an insight into how these secondary school principals enacted instructional leadership and why they enacted it the way they did.

This chapter is an orientation to study, and therefore setting the scene for the discussion of key issues pertinent to the study. It provides the background and the rationale for the study. The two research questions, that guided the study, are also provided. Furthermore, this chapter provides the significance of the study; an explanation of how instructional leadership can be understood; the literature that was reviewed in the process of conducting it, as well as the underpinning theoretical framework. It also provides a brief review of research design and methodology that was used. Lastly, the layout of the study, which spells out what each chapter of the dissertation entails, is given.

1.2 Background to the study

There are a myriad of day-to-day activities that take principals away from the important work of instructional leadership because these activities need administrative detail and attention to ensure the overall effective management of the school (Zepeda, 2007). These activities range from attending to issues of learner discipline, intervening with angry parents and completing paperwork and reports that are needed by the district office, to complying with special education rules and regulations, administering examinations, and also to seeing to the maintenance of the physical environment. However, no matter how important this “other” work is, Hoy and Hoy (2006, p. 1) assert that, “Schools are about teaching and learning; all other activities are secondary to these basic goals”. The principals therefore, need to spend significantly more time facilitating the teaching and learning process, and providing leadership and direction to their schools’ instructional programmes and policies (Tirozzi, 2001).

The principal does not need to walk alone (Zepeda, 2007). Many principals have the assistance of deputy principals, heads of departments (HODs), subject heads, master teachers and senior teachers. However, schools vary in their staff establishment. Some principals do not have these personnel to assist them. Regardless of the configuration of personnel who assist the principal, the final responsibility for the success of the instructional programme and learner achievement, rests squarely on the shoulders of the principal.

There is an outcry nationally for an improved learner achievement. School principals are held accountable for learner achievement, especially in the National Senior Certificate (NSC). Schools that are under-performing are put on a National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) programme. Principals of these schools are put under pressure to improve the academic achievement of their learners. Principals’ leadership practices, especially instructional leadership, are one of the means through which improved learner achievement can be realised. Kruger (2003) asserts that principals should become leaders of instruction. He further avers that they should have a dynamic and inspirational focus on raising the teaching and learning practices in

schools. In line with this thinking, the MEC for Education in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the Honourable Mr E.S. Mchunu committed the KZN Department of Education to ensuring that school principals take responsibility for ensuring that teaching takes place as it should, that is, according to the national curriculum requirements as one of the yardsticks for measuring the progress of the education progress (School Report: NSC, 2011).

For the past three years, Umlazi District has consistently come first in the National Senior Certificate examination results in the KwaZulu-Natal province (School Report: NSC, 2011). Umlazi District results analysis, however, show that the majority of Umbumbulu Circuit secondary schools are under-performing. There are many reasons for this problem, and principals' leadership practices are among them. This study focuses on this problem. It explores how principals who are deemed to be instructional leaders in this area enacted instructional leadership concept and why they enact it the way they did.

1.3 Rationale of the study

I have been teaching for the past eighteen years in four different secondary schools in the south of Durban, South Africa. In one of them, I served as the HOD while in another school I served as the deputy principal. During that period I have observed that some principals do not engage themselves in planning and evaluating curricular activities, supervising teaching, and holding discussions with the teachers regarding teaching and learning. These principals tend to delegate the duties and responsibilities of instructional leadership to their deputies and HODs. They focus more on administrative and school management duties which, in many instances, do not seem to have direct influence on teaching and learning. Sections 16(3) of the South African Schools Act, (No. 84 of 1996), and 4(2) of the Educators Employment Act, (No. 76 of 1998), stipulate that professional leadership and management in the process of evolving conditions for improved teaching and learning, is the task of the principal. Contrary to the expectation of these sections, some principals seem to be moving away from the heart of the existence of the school, that is, teaching and learning.

It is not surprising that some principals do not conceptualise their roles as leaders of teaching and learning and hence, do not carry out their instructional leadership tasks (Bush, 2007; Hallinger, 2008). This occurs against the backdrop of various studies (Taylor, 2007; Robinson, Lloyd & Rowe, 2008; Sim, 2011) which have found that instructional leadership by principals is vital in producing better academic achievement in schools. The responsibility of the principals to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in the school is therefore crucial in an endeavour to improve learner academic achievement in the schools.

It needs to be pointed out that instructional leadership is by no means, a new concept. Throughout the 1980s, instructional leadership was a central focus in educational administration (Ruffin, 2007). Focus on instructional leadership has however, “waned over the years” due to researchers’ turning their interest to “other” components of the principal’s role (Mitchell & Castle, 2005, p.410). This view is echoed by Hallinger (2008) who posits that between 1992 and 2002, interest in the instructional leadership lens appeared to have waned somewhat, as interest in transformational leadership, teacher leadership, and distributed leadership increased. Consequently, as Hoadley, Christie and Ward (2009, p. 375) in their review of South African studies on leadership assert, there is very limited South African leadership research base. Hence knowledge of how principals manage teaching and learning in schools in South Africa is limited. Given the efficacy of instructional leadership in schools, my observations and the limited literature that is relevant to the South African context, as well as, an increased focus on effectiveness of the schools by the Department of Education and the general public, it is worth exploring the instructional leadership practices of principals in secondary schools.

1.4 Research questions

In exploring the instructional leadership practices of principals in secondary schools in Umbumbulu Circuit, this study used the following research questions:

1. How do secondary school principals enact instructional leadership in Umbumbulu Circuit?

2. Why do secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit enact instructional leadership the way they do?

1.5 Significance of the study

Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) argue that there is an expansive literature on school structures, programmes, and processes that are necessary for instructional change. However, there is less literature on how these changes are undertaken or enacted by school leaders in their daily work. Hence, an in-depth analysis of the practice of principals as instructional leaders is necessary in order to render an account of how school leadership works. Knowing what leaders do is one thing, but without a rich understanding of how and why they do it, our understanding of leadership is incomplete (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001).

There is therefore, a necessity to identify and prioritise leadership practices that can be associated with effective schools. By so doing, present and future leaders can target their efforts on aspects of the job that are likely to be most effective and efficient in improving learner achievement. It is hence anticipated that the insight gained through this study may contribute to the expansion of an understanding of an issue of growing prominence in policy and research, particularly, with regards to how instructional leadership practices might contribute to improved learner achievement.

1.6 Understanding instructional leadership

Instructional leadership refers to leadership that is directly related to the teaching process, where principals provide guidance to teachers on curriculum and pedagogy, encourage students to analyse weaknesses and guide teachers and students (Sim, 2011, p. 1786). Budhal (2000, p.3) asserts that instructional leadership is the process by which principals in effective schools immerse themselves in the actual teaching and learning programmes of the school. This is done in order to identify the instructional and general problems the educators and learners may be experiencing at school. Keefe and Jenkins (2002) refer to instructional leadership as the role of

the principal in providing directions, resources and supports to teachers and students in order to improve the teaching and learning in schools. These definitions are in concord in that they all stress the direct involvement of the principal in the teaching and learning activity of the school. Sim (2011) and Budhal (2000) emphasise guidance that is provided by the principal in identifying and analysing instructional problems, whilst Keefe and Jenkins (2002) emphasise actions that the principal takes in order to improve the teaching and learning in schools.

Instructional leadership therefore, can be seen as encompassing all the efforts and actions that the principal takes in order to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place at school. These actions entail, amongst other things, the principal providing direction, guidance, resources and support to the teachers and learners in order to improve teaching and learning at school. The principal is involved in the identification of teaching and learning weaknesses, and assists in solving instructional and general problems at school. In short, instructional leadership is the responsibility of the principal, hence the focus of this study.

1.7 Literature review

International and national literature will be reviewed in the next chapter. The main purpose of that chapter is to provide some insights about major trends and critical issues relating to instructional leadership roles that are played by school principals. The review does not only describe the tenets of instructional leadership, but it also discusses the instructional leadership roles of principals. Collaborative leadership practice is discussed and used as the theoretical framework that guided this study.

1.8 Research design and methodology

The research that is reported here adopted a qualitative research approach which is located in interpretivist research paradigm. This approach was deemed suitable for this study because the aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of instructional leadership practices of principals in

secondary schools. Henning, van Rensburg and Smith (2004) define qualitative approach as a research form, approach or strategy that allows for a different view of the theme that is studied and in which the participants have a more open-ended way of giving their views and demonstrating their actions. The interpretivist framework, which is in concord with qualitative research methodology as the theory that underpins qualitative inquiry was used. It promotes the generation of thick descriptive data on the unique experiences of participating participants through a personal interactive process with them (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). In the context of this study, it allowed me to arrive at an understanding and interpretations of how the principals applied the principles of instructional leadership in their schools, and why. The focus was on the meanings and different views that principals had socially constructed about their instructional leadership roles.

1.9 Demarcation of the problem

According to Horberg (1999, p.190), demarcating the problem means establishing the boundaries of the problem area within which the research progresses. Demarcating the problem helps to make it manageable. In the context of this study, the research focused on instructional leadership practices of three secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit, noting also that they did not represent the whole population of secondary school principals. The research was only confined to secondary school principals who were deemed to be practicing instructional leadership. The research was limited to Umbumbulu Circuit schools because the researcher is familiar with the locality as he lives and works in the area. Three principals and three educators were interviewed and this is consistent with qualitative research.

1.10 The structure of the study

This section outlines the structure of the report about the study on how principals enacted their instructional leadership roles. This report is divided into five chapters and these are summarised below.

Chapter One

This chapter is the overview of the study. It provides the background and purpose of the study. The two research questions that guided the study are also provided. Furthermore, this chapter provides the significance of the study, an explanation of what instructional leadership can be understood to be. It also provides an overview of the literature that was reviewed in the process of conducting the study, as well as the underpinning theoretical framework. It also provides a brief review of research design and methodology that was used and the demarcation of the problem.

Chapter Two

This chapter reviews literature on instructional leadership and how such approaches to leadership facilitate teaching and learning. In addition, a critical review of national and international literature that is relevant to the research topic was done.

Chapter Three

This chapter presents a detailed explanation of research design, methods and procedures that were followed in carrying out the study, and research instrument that were used for generating data for this research.

Chapter Four

This chapter presents and discusses data that was generated through semi-structured interviews with the participants. Firstly, the profiles of the three case study schools are discussed. Secondly, the themes that emerged from analysing data generated are presented and discussed.

Chapter Five

This chapter presents a synthesis of the key findings of the research on the basis of which recommendations were made.

1.11 Summary

This chapter introduced the theme of the research project namely, the instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals. It presented the background and rationale of the study, research questions and significance of the study. Brief descriptions of the concept of instructional leadership, research design and methodology as well as the demarcation of the problem were presented. The next chapter offers a review of the literature on the instructional leadership roles of principals in the secondary schooling context.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This section reviews both national and international literature on the topic. The main purpose is to gain insights into major trends and critical issues relating to instructional leadership roles that are played by school principals. The review does not only describe the tenets of instructional leadership, but it also discusses the instructional leadership roles of principals.

The literature review is organised into five major components: Firstly, the discussion focuses on conceptualising instructional leadership; the research findings on instructional leadership with the aim of contextualising the study and to uncover what the main scholars in the field have uncovered; Secondly, it discusses the landscapes instructional leadership by amongst others, pointing to the shifts that may have occurred over years. Thirdly, dominant models of instructional leadership are discussed. Fourthly, the discussion turns to the tasks around which instructional leaders organise their practice; and finally, international and national empirical studies and their implication for the current study are discussed.

2.2 Conceptualising instructional leadership

The theoretical framework of this study is informed mainly by Instructional leadership theory. While various models of Instructional leadership are also discussed with the view of illuminating the phenomenon of instructional leadership, a collaborative model is focused upon. The theory surrounding instructional leadership is depicted from a model which involves active collaboration of the principal and educators on curriculum, instruction and assessment. Within this model, the principal seeks out the ideas, insights, and expertise of educators in these areas and works with them in order to enhance improved learner achievement. The principal and the educators share responsibility for staff development, curricular development and supervision of

instructional tasks. This approach encourages active participation and collaboration among educators in the school improvement process, facilitated by the principal. Mitchell and Castle (2005) support the view that the educational role of the principal is more appropriately configured as a facilitator of the teaching and learning process. In this regard, Glickman (1989) asserts that the principal is not the sole instructional leader but the leader of instructional leaders.

My contention in this study is that principals need to work collaboratively with the educators and other classroom related factors to influence teaching and learning practices in order to achieve improved learner outcomes. Spillane, Hallet and Diamond (2003) assert that interaction among teaching professionals working collaboratively is central to attaining optimal leadership that improves learning. These collective interactions among school members, and taking on leadership responsibilities, are viewed as distributed leadership, also referred to as shared leadership (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006; Lee, Hallinger, & Walker, 2012). Spillane (2006) asserts that instructional leadership becomes stretched over multiple individuals and tools through the collective interactions among leaders, followers, and their situations. The task of making sure that there is effective teaching and learning in schools is stretched over deputy principals, HODs and educators.

To explore leadership practices, it is necessary to move beyond an analysis of the micro tasks and to explore their enactment (Spillane, *et al.*, 2001). Analysing leadership practices involves understanding how school leaders define, present, and carry out these micro tasks, exploring how they interact with others in a process. It has to do with what school leaders do and the moves they make as they execute micro tasks in their daily work (Spillane, *et al.*, 2001). Equipped with the collaborative perspective of instructional leadership, the research design and methodology was chosen to generate data that would illuminate the instructional leadership practices that were enacted by secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit.

2.3 Landscaping Instructional Leadership

This section outlines the evolution of the concept from direct instruction to distributed instructional leadership.

2.3.1 Early perspectives of Instructional Leadership

Over the decades, considerable empirical research has been conducted on instructional leadership that has shaped the understanding of the concept in the current context. Beck and Murphy (1992) traced the changes in the metaphors from the principal as ‘values broker’ in the 1920s and ‘scientific manager’ in the 1930s, to the principal as ‘bureaucratic executive’ in the 1960s and ‘humanistic facilitator’ in the 1970s. Beck and Murphy (1992) concluded their analysis with the literature from the 1980s, which metaphorically characterises principals as ‘instructional leaders’. Since its inception, a plethora of articles and books have been written, making the conceptual and operational definition of instructional leadership a complex one, as scholars viewed it using different perspectives (Zepeda, 2007). For example, considerable empirical research has been conducted on instructional leadership, with reviewers concluding that the construct captures a central facet of the school leadership role (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Hallinger, 2011).

Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conducted a study for the purpose of developing a research-based definition of the principal’s role as an instructional leader. The researchers recognised instructional leadership role as a collection of three general dimensions. These broad dimensions were described as: defining the school’s mission; managing the instructional programme; and promoting a positive school-learning climate. These 3 dimensions were further divided into 10 categories that were used to study the instructional leadership behaviours of 10 elementary principals in a working class suburban community near San Jose, California. A detailed description of this model is provided later on in this report, as it is the most frequently used conceptualisation of instructional leadership.

Another illustration of the early understanding of instructional leadership was depicted in a paper that was presented by Marsh (1997). Although the paper was written in 1997, he referred to instructional leadership as it was described during the 1980s. He wrote that, “The ideal instructional leader of the 1980s was an instructional leader who focused on four key elements of reform” (Marsh, 1997, p.3). He described instructional leaders as being responsible for: defining the mission of the school; management of the coordination of curriculum, promoting quality instruction, aligning instructional materials with curriculum goals, allocating and protecting instructional time, and monitoring student progress; promoting “an academic climate” through the establishment of high expectations for student learning and behaviour, visibility, providing incentives for teachers and students, and promoting professional development efforts; and developing a safe orderly work environment that welcomed student involvement, staff collaboration and cohesion, links to outside resources and between home and school (Marsh, 1997, p.3).

Another description of instructional leadership was provided by Krug (1993). He offers a “five factor taxonomy” that organises all the activities in which an instructional leader should engage. The five categories identified are, “defining a mission; managing curriculum and instruction; supervising teaching; monitoring student progress; and promoting instructional climate” (Krug, 1993, pp.431-433). The early descriptions of instructional leadership, gleaned from studies cited above, highlight the centrality of the principal’s role concerning instruction. Critiques of this conceptualisation, like Marsh (2002), state that studies from around the world show that “school principals did not actually carry out this role” thereby providing reason for the need to redefine the role. He further posits that the role of instructional leader may no longer be appropriate for contemporary schools where leadership is expected to be shared. This is as a result of dramatic changes in the work environment in schools, including the changes in policies, a new view of teacher involvement and expertise, and the pressure for improved learner achievement as contributing factors to changes in principal-ship (Marsh, 2002; Mitchell & Castle, 2005).

Most recently, the notion of instructional leadership has adopted transformational qualities focusing on both forms and effects of instructional leadership (Robinson *et al.*, 2008; Hallinger, 2011). For example, a meta-analysis of the school leadership effects conducted by Robinson *et al.* (2008) indicated that instructional leadership appeared to offer the greatest leverage for understanding the contributions that leadership makes to learning when compared to competing constructs such as, transformational, transactional, and strategic leadership respectively. The meta-analysis reconfirmed that instructional leadership should be conceptualised as producing effects on learning indirectly by shaping structures and norms of the school in response to the needs of the school and its environment.

Even more recently, studies by Mulford and Silins (2009) and Hallinger and Heck (2010), have further elaborated on the notion of indirect instructional leadership by proposing that school leadership is a process of mutual influence. Mulford and Silins (2009, p.2) for instance, assert that successful school principalship is an interactive, reciprocal and revolving process involving many players, which is influenced by, and in turn, influences the context in which it occurs. Mitchell and Castle (2005) posit that the focus should not be whether a principal is doing instructional leadership correctly, effectively, or efficiently, but rather, how aware the principal is of what he or she is doing as an instructional leader. In the broad view of instructional leadership, they assert that all actions of the principal fall under the instructional leadership umbrella. These actions are more meaningful and fruitful if the principal understands how to align his or her actions and leadership in ways that build structures to support leadership in others and influence instruction in ways that will result in increased student achievement (Mitchell & Castle, 2005).

Instructional leadership is a framework by which school leaders provide direction, resources and support to educators and learners, with the objective of bringing about improvement in teaching and learning in the school environment. The process embraces those activities engaged in by the school leadership with the objective of improving teaching and learning. Instructional leadership, according to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (2002, p.40), is “a process of striving

towards the goal of effective teaching and learning”. The purpose and goal of instructional leadership, in this regard, is to support, improve and enhance teaching and learning.

Instructional leadership, according to Sim (2011), is the premeditated process to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Bush and Glover’s (2003, p.10) definition of instructional leadership, stresses the direction of the influence process; instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students. Leaders’ influence is targeted at student learning via teachers. The emphasis is on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself.

2.3.2 From direct instructional leadership to distributed instructional leadership

In the literature on educational leadership, the terms distributed leadership; collective leadership and shared leadership are used interchangeable. For example, Lambert (2002) and Marks and Printy (2003) used the term ‘shared leadership’; Hallinger and Heck (2010) use the term ‘collaborative leadership’ and Spillane (2006) and Gronn (2002) use distributed leadership to conceptualise leadership that is spread over multiple individuals. For the purpose of this study, these terms will be used interchangeable.

The notion of distributed leadership has become prominent in the instructional leadership literature (Scribner, Sawyer, Watson, & Myers, 2007). The move from direct instructional leadership to models that feature indirect or distributed leadership is partially inspired by the reforms in the private industry toward the new organisation, characterised by a flat hierarchical structure, filled with skilled and motivated professionals who work as teams (Scribner, *et al.*, 2007). Distributed instructional leadership lends itself to transformational qualities and involves the practices of multiple individuals working within a complex network of relationships and interactions toward a vision or goal (Scribner *et al.*, 2007). The expectation is that the instructional leader must act in collaboration with others rather than the lone instructional expert in the school. The notion of shared leadership recognises that tapping into the ideas, creativity,

skills, and initiative of the majority in an organisation “unleashes a greater capacity for organisational change, responsiveness, and improvement” (Woods cited in Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006). Furthermore, Spillane (2006) asserts that instructional leadership becomes stretched over multiple individuals and tools through the collective interactions among leaders, followers, and their situations.

According to Harris (2004), distributed instructional leadership is receiving increased support because of its potential to build capacity of knowledge and to promote collective agency needed to sustain school improvement. The strength of distributed leadership, combined with relational trust, rests in its power to stimulate the human potential within the school (Carreau, 2008). It capitalises on collectively involving teachers to shape and guide the instructional and institutional development of the school (Harris, 2004).

Another perspective is provided by Lambert (2003). She asserts that the major undertaking of the principal is working with and through the adult community in the school because teachers, not principals, are directly responsible for instruction. She advocates for the recognition and building leadership capacity across the learning community. To support this view of school leadership, Lambert (2003, p.4) assumes that “everyone has the responsibility, right and capability to be a leader” and that the most crucial factor driving out leadership acts in others, is the adult environment. Put another way, Lambert (2003, p.5) states that if schools organise themselves so, “the principal, a vast majority of the teachers and large numbers of parents and students are involved in the work of leadership, then the school will most likely, have leadership capacity that achieves high student performance”.

Furthermore, Leithwood (1994) strongly advocates the employment of distributed or indirect instructional leadership in high school level. He contends that the size of secondary schools, complexity of curriculum, and the amount of pedagogical content knowledge required for expert teaching and its development, challenges the feasibility of principals exercising the sort of direct

influence on classroom practice envisioned in the early views of instructional leadership. There is quite an array of studies that substantiate the failure of principals in performing their role as direct instructional leaders (McEwan, 1998; Blase, 2001; Bush & Joubert, 2004; Hoadley, Christie, & Ward, 2009).

Hallinger and Heck (2010) envision the secondary school principal who is clarifying and confirming staff commitment to the school's mission, and participating in activities that create a school culture that is characterised by effective learning and teaching. These characteristics of leadership promote the role of leadership as being strategic and bringing coherence to change initiatives for teachers, thereby reducing stress and frustration. It also puts the principal in the role of resource provider to maximise teaching and learning whilst working collaboratively with others. Whilst recognising and acknowledging that instructional leadership is a property of a number of actors at the school level, and is not invested in the principal solely, this study focuses on the instructional leadership practices of the principal. This study contends that instructional leadership is the responsibility of the principal whether he or she performs it directly or indirectly. Hence, the study did not seek to determine whether principals are instructional leaders but sought to understand how they enacted their responsibility of instructional leadership. Dimensions that I used to orient the study therefore worked from the assumption that instructional leadership is a key aspect of the school principals' role.

2.4 Dominant models of Instructional Leadership

Prior to the 1980s, there were neither coherent models nor validated instruments available for the purpose of studying instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). This began to change during the early 1980s when several conceptualisations of instructional leadership emerged. Consequently, different models of instructional leadership are postulated by different authors (for example, Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Weber, 1996; Kruger, 2003). A model, according to Cohen and Manion (1995, p.16), is a broad framework or guideline which is used to give a more visual representation of a particular phenomenon. In the current study, the models discussed are not by any means, regarded as the only models available but are evidently, dominant in the literature.

They provide guidelines on what one should do when one wants to practice instructional leadership in order to improve the academic achievement of learners.

2.4.1 Hallinger and Murphy's model (1985)

The most widely applied instructional leadership model was developed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) in the United States of America during the early 1980s. Hallinger and Murphy developed their model of instructional management by examining the instructional leadership behaviours of ten elementary principals in one school district and by reviewing school effectiveness literature. They collected information from principals, school staffs and central administration supervisors, via a common questionnaire on instructional leadership behaviours. They supplemented this data with organisational information that was extracted from school documents, such as observations of principals during clinical assessments, narratives that describe activities the principal engaged in, in order to support the curriculum and instruction in their schools, and faculty meeting minutes and agendas.

From the synthesis of the questionnaire and organisational information, Hallinger and Murphy (1985) created a framework of instructional leadership with three dimensions and ten job descriptors as illustrated in figure 2.1 below.

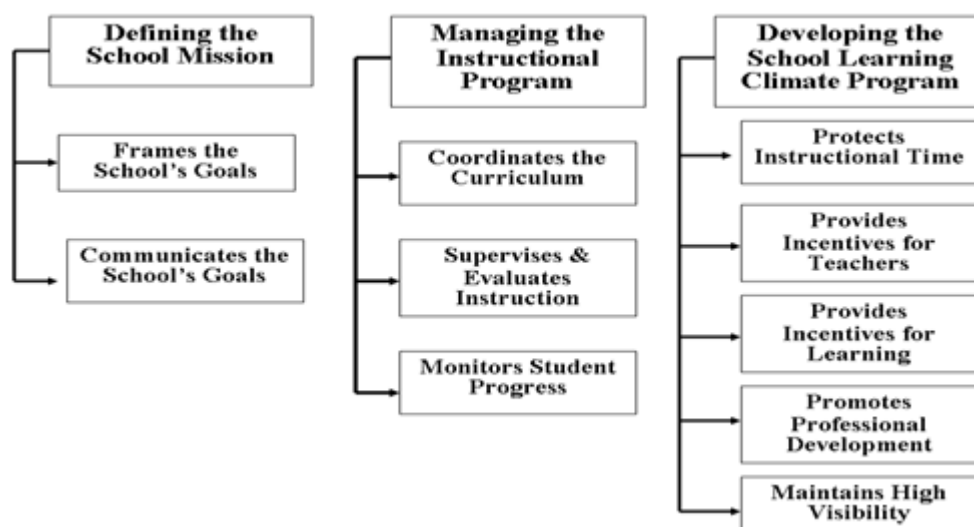


Figure 2.1 Framework of Instructional Leadership: Adapted from Hallinger and Murphy (1985).

The dimension of defining the school mission includes the principal job descriptors of framing school goals and communicating school goals. Principals demonstrate framing school goals by working with parents and staff to identify the areas of improvement within the school and developing performance goals on these areas (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The function of communicating school goals refers to the ways in which the principal expresses the importance of the school goals to staff, parents, and students. This can be achieved through the use of formal or informal communication (e.g., handbooks, staff meetings, school assemblies, conversations with staff or students, bulletin boards, and teacher and parent conferences).

The second dimension is, *Managing the Instructional Programme*. This incorporates three leadership functions: supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress. This dimension focuses on the role of the principal in managing the technical core of the school (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Supervising and evaluating instruction comprise activities that provide instructional support to teachers, monitor classroom instruction through informal classroom visits, and aligning classroom practice with school goals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Coordinating the curriculum refers to principal activities that provide opportunities for staff collaboration on alignment of curriculum to standards and achievement tests. The instructional management job function of monitoring student progress refers to the principal's use of test results for setting goals, assessing the curriculum, evaluating instruction, and measuring progress toward school goals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

Hallinger and Murphy (1985) identified developing and promoting a positive school learning climate as a third dimension of their theoretical framework for instructional leadership. According to Hallinger and Murphy (1985), this dimension includes several leadership functions, and these include protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, and providing incentives for learning. This dimension is broader in scope and intent. It embodies the activities that are necessary to influence the promotion of a positive learning climate through indirect activities. It conforms to the notion that successful schools create an academic press through the development

of high standards and expectations and a culture of continuous improvement (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

2.4.2 Weber's Model of instructional leadership (1996)

Weber (1996) addressed the need for instructional leadership regardless of the school's organisational structure. Weber (1996, p.254) concludes, "The research suggests that even if an instructional leader were not pegged as a principal, it would still be necessary to designate such a leader. The leaderless-team approach to a school's instructional program has powerful appeal, but a large group of professionals still needs a single point of contact and an active advocate for teaching and learning." Weber's point is especially poignant in today's educational arena of shared leadership and site-based management. Attention to instructional leadership will need to continue regardless of the hierarchical nature of a school organisation. Weber (1996) identified five essential domains of instructional leadership: defining the school's mission, managing curriculum and instruction, promoting a positive learning climate, observing and improving instruction, and assessing the instructional program.

Weber (1996) describes defining the school's mission as a dynamic process of cooperation and reflective thinking to create a mission that is clear and honest. The mission of the school should bind the staff, students and parents to common vision. The instructional leader offers the stakeholders the opportunity to discuss values and expectations for the school. Together they work to create a shared mission for the school. Managing the curriculum and instruction must be consistent with the mission of the school (Weber, 1996). The instructional leader's repertoire of instructional practices and classroom supervision offers teachers the needed resources to provide students with opportunities to succeed. The leader helps the teachers use research in terms of best practices and strategies to reach school goals for student achievement.

Promoting a positive learning climate comprises the expectations and attitudes of the whole school community. "Indeed, of all the important factors that appear to affect students' learning,

perhaps having the greatest influence is the set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that administration, teachers, and students hold about learning” Weber, 1996, p.263). Leaders promote a positive learning climate by communicating instructional goals, establishing high expectations for performance, establishing an orderly learning environment with clear discipline expectations, and working to increase teacher commitment to the school (Weber, 1996).

Observing and improving instruction starts with the principal establishing trusting and respectful relationships with the school staff. Weber (1996) proposes that observations provide opportunities for professional interactions. These interactions provide professional development opportunities for both the observer and the one being observed. In other words, a reciprocal relationship develops where both people involved gain valuable information for professional growth. Principals enhance the experience by emphasising research as the foundation for initiating teaching strategies, remediation, and differentiation of the lessons. Weber’s last domain of instructional leadership, assessing the instructional program, is essential for improvement of the instructional programme (Weber, 1996). The instructional leader initiates and contributes to the planning, designing, administration, and analysis of assessments that evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. This continuous scrutiny of the instructional programme enables teachers to effectively meet students’ needs through constant revision and refinement.

Weber’s (1996) model of instructional leadership incorporates research about shared leadership and empowerment of informal leaders to create a school that underscores the emphasis of academics and student achievement for all students. However, this model has not been empirically tested. It is not clear that if the principal demonstrates behaviours from Weber’s model, high levels of student achievement will result. The models described above show an overlap and different emphasis in tasks and roles the principal as an instructional leader performs. The results of the study conducted by Mitchell and Castle (2005) imply that there is not a single one-size fits all model for instructional leadership. Likewise, in this study, the models were adapted and used to conceptualise the tasks around which instructional leaders organise their practice.

2.5 Tasks around which instructional leaders organise their practice

This section begins with a consideration of the tasks around which school leaders organise their practice, considering both the large-scale organisational tasks (macro functions) as well as the day-to-day work (micro-functions or tasks). Spillane *et al.*, (2001) assert that macro functions limit access to the practice of leadership because of their relatively large grain size. According to Spillane, *et al.* (2001), to access leadership practices, it is essential to identify and analyse the tasks that contribute to macro functions. Furthermore, they assert that it is essential to identify these micro tasks because it is through studying the execution of these tasks that we can begin to analyse the ‘*how*’ as distinct from the ‘*what*’ of school leadership.

Leadership functions and micro tasks provide a framework for analysing the practices that enabled me to attend to the daily work of school principals without losing sight of the bigger picture. Although there are different views about the precise nature of the instructional leadership roles of the principal, there are four themes that have been drawn from the instructional leadership literature that offer useful pointers for consideration of the leadership of teaching and learning. These include defining the school’s mission; managing the instructional program; promoting instructional climate; and promoting a positive school learning climate. These themes encapsulate some of the critical issues in the literature. Understanding how to construct and work through them to create optimal learning environments and experiences for students is deemed to be the work of today’s instructional leaders (Ruffin, 2007). Hence, they will be discussed further to explore the tasks around which instructional leaders organise their practices.

2.5.1 Conceptualising schools’ mission

Hallinger, Bickman and Davis (1996) find that stronger instructional leadership is associated with clearer school mission, and this in turn influences teachers’ expectations and students’ academic success. This means that school’s academic mission constitutes an important business of the school. In other words, the school’s academic mission is the statement that clearly defines the purpose for its existence. The school’s academic mission must be clearly understood and

supported by the educators, the parents and the learners if it is to have a positive impact on the school's academic achievement (Mbatha, 2004). Zimmerman (2006, p. 244) cautions that, unless staff understand the vision and effective measures that are used to implement it, vision statements will only "gather dust on walls and shelves". Once the collective vision is established, it serves as a value that defines how teachers intend to operate on a daily basis, and fosters a shared responsibility for student learning, while foregoing the responsibility of being all things to all people (Gruenert, 2005).

A successful principal must have a clear vision and goals of where his or her school needs to go. This enables them to convey that vision to all constituencies, and have the abilities necessary to assist the organisation in achieving their goals (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Harris, 2007; Stronge, Richard & Catano, 2008). A well-defined vision provides direction for teacher's improvement efforts; it allows principals to measure implementation of instructional reforms, and can serve as a foundation for the discussion about the school's instructional programme (Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001). Establishing a collective vision in which the student is the focus, builds trust among an otherwise autonomous teaching staff, as every decision and conversation centres on what is best for the student learning, and not what is best for the egos of the individuals (Carreau, 2008).

Research shows the association between clear goals and improved instruction (e.g. Hallinger & Heck, 1998 Robinson, 2007; Robinson, *et al.*, 2008). Robinson's (2007) comparative study of transformational and instructional leadership identified establishing school goals and expectations as one of the five leadership dimensions that had a significant impact on students. Robinson (2007, p.14) define establishing goals as "the setting, communicating and monitoring of learning goals, standards, and expectations, and the involvement of staff and others in the process so that there is clarity and consensus about goals". Further, in their review of social psychology research, Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008, p. 661) find that goals allow the individuals to prioritise when "a multitude of tasks can seem equally important and

overwhelming”. From this perspective, vision may help the teachers see reforms as a purposeful set of changes instead of a confusing set of unconnected tasks.

Hallinger and Heck’s (1998) meta-analysis of the associations between principal leadership and student achievement, finds that the principal’s work in setting, communicating, and sustaining the school’s mission and goals, has the most consistent influence on student outcomes. They describe this area of the principal’s work as influencing the faculty’s academic expectations for student and influencing the school’s mission and vision; they find that this work has an indirect effect on school outcomes. Leithwood *et al.*, (2004) cited two essential objectives for organisational effectiveness: helping the organisation establish a defensible set of objectives and influencing members to move in that direction. Those leadership practices that are involved in setting directions account for the largest proportion of a leader’s impact. These specific leadership practices include identifying and articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and creating high performance expectations.

According to Katterfeld (2011), research has emphasised that, as important as school-wide goals are, their existence is not enough as the content of the goals is also critical. As Leithwood and Jantzi (2006, p. 223) note, “the potency of leadership for increasing student learning hinges on the specific classroom practices that leaders stimulate, encourage and promote”. An important role of the principal, as an instructional leader, is to assist or train educators to incorporate the objective statements of the school’s academic mission into the objectives of their subjects (Mbatha, 2004). The principal also has the responsibility of ensuring that the school’s instructional programmes procedures, budget and monitoring system support the achievement of the school’s academic mission. In other words, the principal should, at all cost, minimise the factors or activities that take the school away from its academic mission.

The study by Sim (2011) which examined the instructional leadership role and the preference domain practised by Malaysian principals, found that Malaysian principals were more focused

on scheduling detailed school calendar to guide teachers in explaining the school mission, vision and goals. These findings concur with the views held by Duke (1987), Ubben and Hughes (1997). They maintain that every good planning starts from the vision and goals. They proposed that the vision of effective teaching is essential for the improvement of teaching and teacher development.

Sense-making theory suggests that school-wide vision influences the way that organisational members understand the facts of their work by giving them a vision for what the end results could be. This perspective holds that an effective leader, more than simply prioritising tasks, allows the organisation members to envision the completed task as it may be in the future (Katterfeld, 2011).

2.5.2 Managing the instructional programme

Managing curriculum and instruction

In terms of the Employment of Educators Act, (No.76 of 1998), (Terms and Conditions of Employment of Educators) as well as Section 4 of the Personnel measures (PAM) document, contained in the Education Law and Policy Handbook (1999), and also in the Policy Handbook for Educators (2003), curriculum implementation and management are core duties of the heads of departments in schools. The principal as a professional and an instructional leader has to provide direction, guidance, resources and support to heads of departments in performing their core duties. The principal remains accountable for the management of curriculum and instruction in the school.

Sim's (2011) perspective of the principals as instructional leaders is that they are to provide guidance to teachers on curriculum and pedagogy, encourage students to analyse weaknesses and guide teachers and students. In addition, instructional leaders work with the limitations of existing school resources and improve the quality of teaching. The literature on effective schools shows that effective principals are more powerful over making decisions regarding curriculum and instruction than those in ineffective schools. Studies conducted in the United States of

America show that strong district involvement in curriculum and instruction that supports principals' instructional goals is yet another aspect of an effective school (Leithwood, Strauss & Anderson, 2007).

Effective instructional leaders focus attention on instruction, creating an academic press to ensure each student's educational experiences are aligned with the school's vision (Katterfeld, 2011). The principal does not necessarily have to teach and may not have an in-depth knowledge of various subjects offered in his/her school (Zulu, 2004). However, as the chief administrator of the individual school, the principal has the authority and responsibility for the decisions within the autonomous sphere of the school. A principal plays a prominent role as an expert consultant in pedagogy that facilitates teachers' improvement in teaching, understanding the formal curriculum and ensuring that the curriculum is taught as expected (Cuban, 1985). In terms of grounded practice, principals should incline themselves to instructional leadership in order to enthuse and inspire teachers to plan and carry out the tasks of teaching (Sim, 2011).

The study that was conducted by Marzano *et al.*, (2005) identified several principal responsibilities that fell under the function of managing the instructional programme. The first responsibility, involvement in curriculum, instruction and assessment was characterised by being directly involved in curricular design activity and assisting teachers in addressing assessment and instructional issues. The concept of involvement in these instructional areas is also noted as a crucial instructional leadership dimension by Robinson (2007). The second responsibility, knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment is described as possessing knowledge of instructional, curricular, assessment, and classroom practices (Marzano *et al.*, 2005). The meta-analysis by Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008, p.663) finds that when "leaders work directly with teachers to plan, coordinate, and evaluate teachers and teaching," student outcomes are significantly higher. Furthermore, effective instructional leaders tend to discuss instructional strategies with teachers, provide evaluations that help teachers improve their practice, encourage the use of different instructional strategies, and observe classroom instruction frequently. This

demands that principals, as instructional leaders, arrange their schedules to allow themselves time to focus on instructional matters and also to visit classrooms.

A study that was conducted by Spillane, Hallett, and Diamond (2003) focused on instructional leadership of the principal as an influence relationship, supporting the efforts of teachers to change their teaching practice and recognition of others as leaders based on different capital. Findings from this study indicate that the interaction between the principal and the teachers is an important component in focusing on instruction and student learning. The study further highlighted that the way in which a principal interacts with teachers does influence change in the teacher's practices.

Monitoring learner progress

The principal directly or indirectly monitors and evaluates learner's progress. According to Taylor and Prinsloo (2005), the quality assurance of tests and the monitoring of results have been shown to be significant in terms of management variables in relation to improved student outcomes. These results are used to provide support to both the teachers and the learners to improve, as well as, to help the parents understand where and why improvement is needed (Kruger, 2003). It is a common practice that principals would know and give incentives to the best performing learners and ignore to give support to learners who encounter problems in education. The findings of Sim (2011) showed that Malaysian principals performed two roles excellently, namely, identifying outstanding students who excel in academic issues by awarding incentives or certificates and making use of the assembly time to motivate students in their studies. However, this study also found that they were less focussed on the role to meet with individual students who encountered problems in education. Instructional leaders focus on student work and student explanations to ascertain students' level of understanding, and they build systems for teacher accountability (Katterfeld, 2011, p. 10). Instructional principals give support and guidance to the learners who are not achieving as well so as to meet schools' academic goals. The assumption here is that the core mission of formal education is not simply to ensure that students are taught, but to ensure that all learners are progressing.

According to Van der Westhuizen (1996, p. 221), the principal evaluates the work of the teachers and the learners in order to determine progress made towards the school's goals and to take corrective actions against deviation from the school's academic goals. For Caldwell and Spinks (1993, p. 39), the principal evaluates the teaching and learning process in order to determine the extent to which progress towards academic goals has been made; academic needs have been satisfied; the school's academic priorities have been met; school's academic policies have been implemented.

For Kruger and Badenhorst (1996, p.100), monitoring academic progress constitutes an important part of the principal's task of instructional leadership. It is through following the school's monitoring system faithfully that the principal may hope to see the achievement of the school's set academic goals (Mbatha, 2004). In other words, the effective school's monitoring system becomes part of the school's strategies by which the school's academic goals can be achieved.

2.5.3 Promoting instructional climate

The responsibility for creating the climate in a school that is conducive to effective teaching and learning rests with the principal (Zulu, 2004). According to Kruger (2003), the principal as an instructional leader, has to create a positive school climate in which teaching and learning can take place. Such a climate is characterised by learner and parental involvement, positive learner behaviour and recognition of achievements (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge, and Ngcobo, 2008). The principal promotes instructional climate by harnessing and emphasising the positive aspects and inhibits the hindrances (Naidu, *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, Owens (2001) asserts that principals, as instructional leaders, have to foster the creation of school environments that support creativity, team-building and participation in problem-solving.

Literature, according to Sindhvad (2009), suggests that principals of effective schools are those who devote more time to the coordination and control of instruction, perform more observations

of teacher's work; discuss work problems with teachers; are more supportive of teachers' efforts to improve; and are more active in setting up teacher evaluation procedures. The literature also suggests that principals of effective schools show a higher quality of human relations. They recognise the needs of teachers and help them achieve their own performance goals. They encourage and acknowledge teachers' good work. They have positive impact on teacher morale, leading to increased teacher effort, which has a positive impact on student performance (Sindhvad, 2009).

Chapman *et al.*, (1993) posit that the provision of instructional materials is one of the most important ways of supporting the teacher and enhancing student achievement. The availability of instructional materials is posited to operate as an incentive in both direct and indirect ways. As a direct incentive, good instructional materials serve to select, organise, sequence, and pace the presentation of content, thereby reducing the complexity of the teachers' preparation and presentation. Good materials can help compensate for weak or uneven teacher preparation, providing students with effective presentation of content even when the teacher is unable to do so. Instructional materials operate as an indirect incentive to the extent that systematic and well-targeted presentation of the content, results in increased student achievement, which, in turn, reflects positively on the teacher, enhancing their sense of professional efficacy and job satisfaction (Sindhvad, 2009). Through his leadership, the principal can improve the instructional climate of the school by creating a humane environment for both teachers and learners.

2.5.4 Promoting a positive school learning climate

Hallinger (2008) suggests that successful schools create an atmosphere of academic press by establishing high standards and expectations, and a culture that promotes continuous improvement. Although principals may not have direct influence over student achievement, their leadership contributes to factors such as collective efficacy, which has been shown to have a more direct impact (Hoy, Tarter & Hoy, 2006). They define collective efficacy as the belief by teachers that the faculty as a whole can organise and execute the actions necessary to promote

student achievement. Cotton (2003, p.14) asserts that “the principal’s contribution to the quality of the school climate is arguable a composite of all the things he or she says or does”.

Protecting instructional time

The instructional time is defined by Anderson (1991, p. 177) and Murphy (1992, p. 19) as the amount of time that teachers spend teaching and providing learning experiences for their students. Murphy (1992, p.10) further maintains that instructional time is a direct correlate to student achievement and is of the opinion that where principals encourage teachers to make maximum use of subject allocated time for teaching and engaging students in learning, higher student academic achievement can be realised.

Principals must not ignore their time in focusing on teaching and learning because teaching and learning is the linchpin of the existence of a school (Sim, 2011). According to Blase and Kirby (2000, p.75), “effective principals understand that the key to improving their schools’ effectiveness lies not with the persons skilled in compliance with bureaucratic rules and procedures or in discussions about those rules, but in effective use of time allocated for instruction.”

Promoting professional development

In South Africa, along with many African countries, many interventions that focus on improving teachers’ knowledge, skills and practice, are organised through professional development activities. The provision of teacher professional development aims at leading to changes in professional learning and changes in professional practice, which ultimately would impact on student achievement (Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001).

When talking about professional development, different authors emphasise different aspects of professional development. For example, Sullivan and Glanz (2005) focus on deeper understanding of key concepts. He states that professional development is basically based on

providing teachers with "opportunities to become intellectually engaged with their subject matter, thus ensuring deeper understanding of key concepts and having the chance to try new approaches in environments that support diversity" (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005, p.5). Bellanca (1995) considers staff development as "the effort to correct teaching deficiencies by providing opportunities for teachers to learn new methods of classroom management and instruction or to 'spray paint' the district with hoped-for classroom innovations" (Bellanca, 1995, p.6). Griffin (1983) has a wider focus and argues that professional development programmes are designed to "alter the professional practices, beliefs, and understanding of school persons towards an articulated end" (Griffin, 1983, p.2). Joyce and Showers (1980) focus on the dual purpose of professional development arguing that "teacher either (1) fine tunes his or her skills, or (2) learns skills new to him or her. In fine-tuning one's skills, a teacher becomes "more affirmative, involves students more, manages logistics more efficiently, asks more penetrating questions, induces students to be more productive, increases the clarity and vividness of his courses and illustrations, and understands better the subject matter to be taught" (Joyce & Showers, 1980, p. 380).

Coleman (2003) studied many issues related to leadership and strategic management. She explained the role of management in enabling continuing professional development, arguing that management is not just an "adjunct but an integral part of the whole process" (Coleman, 2003, p.233). The School Management Team (SMT) should promote professional development. One way to promote professional development is to make teachers feel wanted and thus ensure that a balance between organisational objectives and personal development plans is maintained. School management also has a duty to create a culture and climate that is conducive to lifelong learning. To promote this culture further, management also has to be "leading the learning" by participating fully in any training that takes place (Coleman, 2003, p. 233). Finally, Coleman (2003) argues that the SMT need to understand the training and development cycle. This cycle, according to Coleman (2003), has six stages, which are: identifying training needs, planning development programmes, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Steyn (2000) acknowledges the need for teachers to keep renewing their knowledge for the betterment of their facilitation of teaching and learning. The SMT can succeed in doing this by

practising supportive leadership style. Monitoring of teacher professional development should therefore not be punitive and professional development programmes should be collaborative. Henley's study (2003) focused on the management of professional development. His study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. Henley (2003) stipulates that professional development is not the same as in-service training, as the latter is a component of the former. However she used professional development and staff development interchangeably. She argued that an SMT can manage professional development well if it can identify its aims and purposes. They should also support the teachers at three levels: as a person, as a professional and as a member of the community. In addition, Henley (2003) points out that school managers who view teachers as the most valuable asset will provide all the necessary support for professional development. They also monitor and evaluate the staff development in order to make it better in the future. One of the main findings from Henley's (2003) study is that, if not planned well, school professional development programmes will turn out to be as dull and uninspiring as was perceived of the ones run by the Department of Education.

For purposes of this study, professional development will be viewed as those purposeful, well planned, expanded over the whole career and systemic activities, aiming at providing opportunities with the teachers to explore new roles, to develop new instructional techniques and methodologies, to refine their practice and to broaden themselves both as educators and as individuals within the context of improving learners' achievement. According to McEvoy (1987) and Purcell (1987), school leaders must show initiative and support in providing greater priority to professional development among staff. These empirical studies are in accordance with the views of Davis and Nicklos (1986), that principal's role is important in promoting staff development programme to achieve success for the school. In addition, Hall (1986), revealed that 82% of the teachers showed an increase in knowledge, communication skills and involvement in decision-making due to the support of the principals in staff development programmes. In other words, principals' support towards the success of staff development programmes can influence the effectiveness of the school organisation. Similarly, Duke (1993) also found that staff development programmes were able to improve academic programme.

Strategic professional development also entailed using student achievement data to identify areas of weakness within teaching and learning in the school, and aligning professional development of staff to address these weaknesses. Bottoms and Fry (2009, p.5) assert that “principals can profoundly influence student achievement by working with teachers to shape a school environment conducive to learning.” The core purpose of principalship, according to the Department of Education, (May, 2005, p. 10), is to provide leadership and management in the school to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning takes place and which promote the highest possible standards of learner achievement in any context. To ensure that principals find time for instructional leadership, the school management team would assist the principal to share his/her managerial responsibilities with his/her team. Hence, the move from direct instructional leadership to models that feature indirect, distributed, or shared instructional leadership.

2.6 Empirical studies on instructional leadership

This section focuses on the research that has been conducted in the area of instructional leadership. There is a wealth of findings concerning antecedents of instructional leadership behaviour (school level, school size), the effects of the school context on instructional leadership (e.g., gender, training, experience), as well as the effects of school leadership on the organisation (e.g., school mission and goals, expectations, curriculum, teaching, teacher engagement) and school outcomes (e.g., school effectiveness, student achievement). Findings and conclusions of a few of them that have implication for the current study, and are discussed by first presenting an international perspective, followed by the South African perspective and then discussing the implication for the current study.

2.6.1 International perspective

Marks and Printy (2003) conducted a study which investigated the mutual relationship between the principals and the teachers. This was done by specifying an integrated form of leadership that highlights the transformational influence of principals as critical groundwork for authentically

sharing the work of instructional leadership with the teachers. Transformational leadership, measured through teacher survey responses, tapped the extent to which the principals challenged the teachers intellectually, invited them to innovate, led change, supported teachers, and shared power with them. The study found that instructional leadership shared by principals and teachers did not develop unless the principals intentionally sought and fostered teachers' engagement and innovation through transformational behaviours. Strong collaborative relationships oriented to improvement appear to be a necessary requisite for quality teaching (Marks & Printy, 2003).

Research by Printy (2008) offers further insight into how principals and teachers interact in ways that are consequential for quality instruction. Based on survey data from high school Science and Mathematics teachers, she concluded that principals provide formal leadership that encourages teachers to collaborate in their communities of practice: as agenda setters, leaders establish direction and ensure that goals and expectations are met; as knowledge brokers leaders allow teachers to focus on their core responsibilities of teaching and learning, encourage innovation, scaffold teacher learning, and provide adequate resources for their work; as learning motivators, school leaders develop strong personal relationships with teachers, acknowledge their contributions, and seek their input before making decisions (Printy, 2008). Instructional influence is evident in these leadership roles for principals. The study findings of Supovitz, Sirinides, and May (2010) affirm that principals who develop compelling missions and goals, establish cultures of collaboration and trust and encourage instructional improvement draw teachers together to engage in joint work to improve teaching and learning. Such joint work productively entails rich conversation, collaborative planning, and advice giving and receiving (Supovitz, Sirinides, & May, 2010).

The most recent study was conducted by Lee, Hallinger and Walker (2012) on a distributed perspective of instructional leadership in International Baccalaureate Schools. Using case studies in five international schools located in Thailand, Vietnam, Hong Kong, and China, the study found that distributed instructional leadership forged and sustained professional interactions among staff across programmes and organisational units. The findings reinforce the importance

of acting intentionally to distribute responsibilities for instructional leadership widely throughout the school.

2.6.2 South African perspective

In the South African context, a study by Roberts and Roach (2006), on five effective schools, found that principals in these schools maintained what they termed a ‘connection to the classroom’. In these schools all principals carried a significant load with respect to teaching. They all taught examinable subjects, and at the Grade 12 level. Principals’ own pedagogic expertise – how and whether it is deployed – is therefore raised as the key consideration of the management of teaching and learning. Southworth (2002) and Hill (2001) also stress the importance of leaders’ understanding of learning.

The empirical study of the management of curriculum and instruction in South African secondary schools done by Hoadley, Christie and Ward (2009, p.381), revealed that ‘instructional leadership’, as read through ‘overseeing teaching and learning’ and ‘supervising teachers’, was not a function that took up the majority of many principals’ time. It also revealed that only 17% of sampled principals identified overseeing curriculum and instruction as their main task. Bush and Joubert (2004) also showed in their research study that a large sample of principals in Gauteng did not regard management of curriculum and instruction as their main task.

2.6.3 Implications for the current study

The studies that have been briefly discussed here, though not exhaustive, do offer a convincing case for regarding principals as central figures in school efforts to improve instructional quality. Another important theme, that emerges from these reviews, is that principals do influence student learning by working with (or through) teachers or other classroom-related factors. That is, the school principals contribute to school effectiveness and student achievement

directly or indirectly through actions they take to influence what happens in the school and in the classrooms. Evidence from the studies reviewed also show that the majority of principals did not take instructional leadership as their main task. Yet, the review of literature shows that instructional leadership plays a crucial role in shifting the emphasis of school activity more directly onto instructional improvements that lead to enhanced student learning and performance.

This study therefore, conceptualises principal involvement in instructional activities as the fundamental tasks through which the principal may increase the academic press in the school, building the expectations for student learning and ensuring that all staff strive to meet those expectations. How school leaders appropriate these primary functions in order to achieve success in terms of the educative function of the school, is the concern of this study. The collaboration and the active involvement of other SMT members and educators, seems to be a suitable strategy in addressing these paradoxical functions of the principals.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter an overview was provided of local and international literature on instructional leadership as well as the theoretical framework that was employed in this study. From the literature study, it became evident that instructional leadership practice involves a complex web of activities and behaviours which can be perceived as characteristics and tasks of instructional leadership. It also became evident that instructional leadership is essential for any school in order to achieve the main purpose of the school's existence. The models of instructional leadership can be used as guidelines by principals who want to practice sound instructional leadership in their schools. In the following chapter the approach and technique used in this study will be described, and the rationale for the methodology used given.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, literature review on instructional leadership was presented. This chapter presents and explains the methodological processes that were followed in generating and analysing the data. Numerous researchers refer to methodology as a description and analysis of methods chosen to generate data. Henning, van Rensburg and Smith (2004, p. 36) refer to methodology as the coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the “goodness of fit” to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the research purpose. In the same vein Naidoo (2006), mentions that “methods” are a range of approaches and techniques that are used to gather data, to be the basis of description, inference, interpretation, explanation and prediction. According to Henning *et al.* (2004), if methods have been blended together well, they are able to render a thick description of the theme of the study and thick description of the methodology itself.

I start this chapter by explaining in details the research design and methodology used. Secondly the data generation instruments used to explore how principals enact instructional leadership the way they did is discussed. Thirdly, the data analysis procedures, ethical issues and trustworthiness are discussed.

3.2 Research design

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. Henning *et al.* (2004) define the qualitative approach as a research form, an approach or strategy that allows for different views of the theme that is studied, and in which the participants have a more open-ended way of giving their views and demonstrating their actions. Furthermore, Cohen, Morrison and Manion (2011) assert that qualitative research provides an in-depth, intricate and detailed understanding of meanings, actions, non-observable as well as observable phenomena, attitudes, intentions and behaviours. This approach was deemed suitable for this study because the aim was to gain an in-depth

understanding of how principals in secondary schools enacted instructional leadership and why. The main task of this study was to explicate the ways the selected secondary school principals come to understand, account for action and otherwise manage their day to day situations. It attempted to uncover real life settings and to understand the infinite complexity of leading and managing teaching and learning.

This study was conducted from an interpretivist paradigm perspective, allowing me as a researcher, to interact closely with the participants in order to gain insight and form a clear understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny. Radnor (2002, p. 90), is of the view that qualitative research is the essence of interpretivist traditions because data is collected through talking to participants and observation of events as they occur. Mertens (2007) refers to interpretivist paradigm as a way of looking at the world where the researcher and the participants are interlocked in an interactive process prescribing a more personal interaction mode of answering three fundamental questions, namely: what is the nature of reality and what is there to know about it (ontological), what is the nature of knowledge and the relation between the researcher and the participants (epistemological) and, how can the researcher obtain the desired knowledge and understanding (methodological)? Henning *et al.* (2004) assert that an interpretivist research paradigm is primarily concerned with meanings and seeks to understand social members' definitions and understanding of situations. It accentuates the importance of experience and interpretation (Henning *et al.*, 2004, p.21). Davey (2006, p. 36), in her work, expresses similar sentiments that this paradigm describes meaningful social action through direct interaction of people in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social world. Interpretive research therefore, assumes that there are multiple realities and that reality is socially constructed.

In this qualitative, interpretive study, I interacted with the principals and educators in order to try to understand meanings, concepts, interpretations, context and descriptions that they have socially constructed about instructional leadership practices in their schools. The interest was not in numerical statistics for generalisation as in quantitative approaches, but on meanings,

explanations and experiences of instructional leadership as enacted by principals in their unique contexts or cases.

3.3 Methodology

A case study methodology, focusing on three secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit, Umlazi District was followed. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007, p. 75), a case study research is a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest.” It provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than by simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p.289). Furthermore, Cohen *et al* (2011) assert that case studies investigate and report the real-life, complex, dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance as contexts are unique and dynamic. Picciano (2004) points out that a case study can be used to explore, describe, and to explain a phenomenon. This is in accord with Yin (2005) who distinguishes between three forms of case studies in terms of their outcomes, namely: exploratory; explanatory and descriptive. I chose a descriptive case study design because it would help me probe deep into the understanding of how secondary school principals practicalised instructional leadership in their schools and why. It provided me with a wealth of descriptive materials about the principals in their unique, natural environments which assisted me to explore their interactions, attitudes and characteristics regarding instructional leadership practices.

Stake (2003) shows that in a case study, the assumption is that a phenomenon is investigated as a “bounded system”. Henning *et al.* (2004) argue that the unit of the system depends on what the researcher wants to find out and the unit of analysis directs the boundaries of the case. In this study the case was secondary schools and the unit of analysis was the practice of instructional leadership by the principals.

3.4 The context of the study

The context of the study supported the issue being researched; an interpretive perspective was deemed relevant in order to engage with participants in their natural settings. Babbie and Mouton (2001) also point out that in order for researchers to interpret case studies, the context needs to be well understood as various cases are embedded in their contexts. This means that context does have a role to play in understanding cases. For this reason, details of the contexts relevant to this study are discussed.

3.4.1 Selection of participants

The research problem, the purpose and the design of the research have served to guide me in the selection of the sample for this study. I sought information-rich key participants in order to obtain relevant data for the research process through purposive sampling. According to Cohen *et al* (2011), purposive sampling is the process of selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Cohen *et al* (2011) further suggest that the researcher has to decide on people who display the issue or set of characteristics in their entirety or in a way that is highly significant for their behaviour for which the research questions were appropriate in terms of the contexts which are important for the research, the time periods that would be needed, and the possible artefacts of interest to the investigator. Neuman (1997) is of the opinion that purposeful sampling is appropriate if the researcher wants to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study. From this source, meaningful conclusions would eventually be drawn.

Through purposive sampling, three secondary school principals were handpicked to be included in the sample on the basis of their schools' matric performances in the last three years. The schools were in Umbumbulu Circuit under Umlazi District for convenience as I knew the area very well and were closer to my home. This afforded me cheaper and easier access to do fieldwork in my study. One of the schools was located in a deep rural area and the other two were in the townships. The principals had more than five years of experience as principals. Since they were appointed principals, the schools improved drastically in terms of matric performances

and infrastructure. The principals were hands-on in many school activities and managed to create a climate of teaching and learning. One educator from each school was selected with the help of the principal to participate and to be interviewed in order to supplement self-reported information by principals. This was done for convenience as the principals knew the educators who would be able to assist me in getting information. The disadvantage was however that the principals would give me participants that would give biased information. Using open ended interview questions and probing reduced biases. The stratified post levels of educators, though not planned, gave me opportunity to get perspectives from different post levels about the instructional leadership practices of the principals.

The sample size was appropriate to my study. According to Cohen *et al.* (2011), sample size is determined by the style of the research, and in qualitative research it is more likely that the sample size is small., Teddlie and Yu (2007) aver that purposive sampling involves a trade-off: on the one hand it provides greater depth to the study than does probability sampling; on the other hand it provides lesser breadth to the study than does probability sampling. The purpose of the study was not to generalise but to get a greater depth of how principals practicalised instructional leadership in their schools.

3.4.2 Venue for interviews and atmosphere

The interviews were conducted in the respective school principals' offices to allow for privacy. This could be considered as a comfortable environment, allowing principals to operate in their natural setting which formed part of their daily lives and work context. The interviews were conducted after school hours to minimise the disruption of teaching and learning in the school. However, I always came early to observe and familiarise myself with the activities of the school. The educators were interviewed in physical spaces where they felt comfortable. Invariably, these spaces were not principals' offices, and that assisted in creating a relaxed atmosphere. The deputy principal and the HODs were interviewed in their offices, and the educators were interviewed in the school library.

3.5 Methods of data generation

Qualitative research has a variety of methods that can be used to generate data. These data generation methods encompass observation, interviewing, documents and artefacts, life story, questionnaires and many others. However, in the context of this study, semi-structured interviews were employed. According to Cohen *et al* (2011), semi-structured interviews can be regarded as a guide that is prepared, that is sufficiently open-ended to enable the contents to be reordered, digressions and expansions made, where new avenues to be included, and further probing can be undertaken. This method suited the interpretivist theoretical framework which guided this study.

The aim of employing interviews as a data generation method was to get principals' and educators' perspective about the roles principals played in enacting instructional leadership. Cohen *et al* (2011, p. 349) define interviews as "an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, which sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production". They further point out that the use of interviews in research represents a move towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversation. It is the same rationale my study employed in adopting interviews. It allowed for greater depth in that contact with the interviewee occurred in an interpersonal environment. I was free to modify the sequence of questions, change the wording, explain them or add to them. I had more latitude to explore instructional leadership in detail.

The interviews were held at the school after hours, meaning from 14h30 onwards. All interviews were semi-structured, allowing the participants to express their views. I used a digital audio recorder to record each interview. The digital recorder afforded me time to listen to the interviewee attentively so as to be able to probe their responses. Moreover it enabled me to engage fully with the interviewee because I did not have to write everything down. More than that, after each interview, all the data captured was transferred to the computer system during the data transcription process. Nevertheless, interviews as a data generation method do not go without any criticism levelled against them. It has been further pointed-out that they are expensive in time, they are open to interviewer bias, inconvenient to participants and anonymity

may be difficult. Cohen *et al* (2011) go on to mention that an interview is a constructed rather than a naturally occurring situation. This was so in my research. I had to consciously plan and set up the interviews and construct the interview schedule.

3.6 Data analysis

Cohen *et al* (2011) describe data analysis as a process consisting of organising, accounting for and explaining the data. The actual process of analysis underlies the whole process as the raw data is broken down by simplifying and abstracting key parts of the text. This data is then reduced and organised into a more accessible and compact form in order to be able to draw clear conclusions in relation to the data (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). The process of converting “raw” data to final patterns of meaning began by transferring all data collected from interview digital voice recorder to the computer system for manual transcription. From the computer system, I printed and read across all questions and interviews, logging similarities and differences, identifying patterns, constructing thematic statements and writing grounded descriptions of participants. The digital voice recorder was replayed and replayed to try to capture the precise words used by the participants.

I used thematic analysis in order to identify core themes from the recorded and transcribed interviews. Thematic analysis describes the process by which the researcher identifies codes from qualitative information (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These codes can be gathered together into different themes or patterns identified either from the available information or from a more underlying level where the researcher considers the raw material in the light of relevant theory or existing research (Boyatzis, 1998). Braun and Clarke (2006) comment that thematic analysis should be seen as foundational method for qualitative analysis, providing a flexible and useful research tool which can potentially provide a rich detailed, yet complex amount of data.

The data was then analysed by, first identifying areas of the transcript relating specifically to interview questions. Secondly, emerging themes and patterns in relation to these areas were identified and colour coded for identification and separation. A table of emerging themes and

patterns was then drawn up, allocating the identified areas of text to each heading. From this table a second table was created labelling the key recurring themes from the identified text and these were clarified by drawing up a diagram of overarching themes which were used as a basis for discussion. Lastly, conclusions were drawn from this analysis with the aim of clearly communicating the findings in relation to the original research questions.

3.7 Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that trustworthiness of a research study is important to evaluating its worth. To attain this, they propose four criteria to be considered by qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy study: credibility; transferability; dependability and confirmability.

3.7.1 Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness where the researcher ensures that what has been reported is truthful and correct. As such, to promote confidence that I have accurately recorded the phenomena under scrutiny, I adopted research method well established in qualitative study. I had a preliminary visit to sampled schools to familiarise myself with the culture of participating schools before the first data generation dialogues took place and to establish a relationship of trust with the principals. I interviewed educators to corroborate information self-reported by the principals on their roles as instructional leaders.

Participants were encouraged to be frank and it was indicated that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions that were asked. Participants were encouraged to contribute ideas and talk without fear of losing credibility. Probes to elicit data and iterative questioning were incorporated. Furthermore, credibility was enhanced by member-checking where transcripts, field notes, data analysis and findings were returned to the participants for checking. Mutch (2005) asserts that member-checking allows the participants to check that what they have said is

true and accurate account, and allows them to change anything they deem to be incorrect in an effort to ensure the reader that the study is valid and reliable.

3.7.2 Transferability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability refers to the extent to which the results of the research can be applied in similar contexts. Shenton (2004) argues that since the findings of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other situations and populations. However, Bassey (1981), Firestone (1993) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that it is important that sufficient thick description of the phenomenon under investigation is provided to allow readers to have a proper understanding of it, thereby enabling them to compare the instances of the phenomenon described in the research report with those that they have seen emerge in their situations. In this study, transferability was ensured by giving detail information regarding the number of schools taking part in this study and where they are based; the number of participants involved; the data generation methods employed and; the number and length of the data generation sessions. If readers believe their situations to be similar to the one described in this study, they may relate the findings to their own positions.

3.7.3 Dependability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there are close ties between credibility and dependability, arguing that, in practice, a demonstration of the former goes some distance in ensuring the latter. In order to address the dependability issue more directly, they argue that the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results. For the purpose of this study, the research design and its implementation, the operational detail of data generation addressing what was done in the field, were detailed so as to enable readers of this research report to develop a thorough understanding of the methods and their effectiveness.

3.7.4 Confirmability

The concept of confirmability is qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Here, steps must be taken to help ensure as far as possible, that the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). Miles and Huberman (1994) consider that a key criterion for confirmability is the extent to which the researcher admits his or her own predispositions. My main predisposition was that I knew the principals. Another issue of concern was that the educator participants were chosen by the principals. This could compromise objectivity.

3.8 Ethical issues

Cohen *et al* (2011) assert that, in conducting research, it is important to observe ethical principles in order to pre-empt problems that may arise during fieldwork and also to protect the rights and autonomy of the participants. Ethical standards such as the respondents' rights, confidentiality, mutual respect and anonymity are imperative in the qualitative research method (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). In observance of these principles, I applied for and was granted permission by the provincial DoE to conduct research in the selected schools. I negotiated access to conduct research in the school with the principals.

The participants were informed about the content of the questions posed, the recording during the interviews, that it would be treated with strictest confidentiality and that their responses would be anonymous. However, Cohen *et al* (2011) warn that in a face-to-face interview, anonymity cannot always be fully guaranteed because the interviewer may identify and know the participants. These authors maintain that it is the responsibility of the researcher to provide credible confidentiality and convince the participants that their participation will not compromise their safety and autonomy. Issues of confidentiality and anonymity were explained and guaranteed to participants through the letters of consent that declared that while participation in the research project would be appreciated, they still had the right to withdraw from participating

anytime they wished to do so. The aim was to create a rapport between the interviewer and the respondents taking part in this research study.

3.9 Summary

This chapter has focused on the research design and methodology that was employed during the study. Research approach and paradigm adopted in this study were also discussed. Case study methodology was described and the reasons for adopting this methodology were given. The context of the study, describing giving how participants were selected, the venue and how positive atmosphere was, created were presented. Data generation methods and data analysis were also explained. Ethical issues and trustworthiness were discussed. The next chapter focuses on the data presentation and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology that was employed in this study. This chapter presents and discusses the data that was generated through semi-structured interviews. The data was generated from three schools which were drawn from three different contexts, that is, semi-rural, rural and township. School-A was located in a semi-rural area, School-B in a rural area and School-C in a township. Firstly, the profiles of these three schools are discussed. Secondly, the themes that emerged from analysing data generated are presented and discussed.

4.2 Profiling the three schools

The data that is presented and discussed in this chapter was generated in each of the three schools and these are sometimes referred to as case study sites. The profile of each school is outlined below.

4.2.1 School -A

School-A is one of the oldest schools in Umbumbulu Circuit. It was built in a rural area in 1977. The area was later developed and transformed into what people usually refer to as semi-rural area. It is now surrounded by a mix of houses, comprising what is usually called rural houses, congested urban design houses, and also by government low income subsidy houses. Learners come from these areas and there is a substantial number of other learners who come from other areas by buses and taxis. The school is about 15 kilometres from Isipingo (a small town in the south of Durban) and, about 34 kilometres from Durban.

The school has 1444 learners and 44 educators. There are 5 HODs and 2 deputy principals. The principal is a male with 11 years of experience as a principal in this school. School-A is characterised by dramatic turn around since the arrival of the principal. Before he came, the school was virtually dysfunctional; it is reported that the school had no starting time and finishing time; people did whatever they wanted to do; pass rate in matric was 0% in the year 2000; it was operating under very bad infrastructure with no windows, doors and toilets; enrolment stood at around 400 learners, and had the post-provisioning norms (PPN) of 17 educators. All that changed with the arrival of the then new principal. He worked very hard to bring back the culture of teaching and learning in this school; the following year, the results improved to 22% and then to 75% in 2002. To address infrastructural problems, the principal sought and secured sponsorship with which he renovated the school and built new classrooms and toilets. The school is also well fenced. With improvement of the conditions in the school, including teaching and learning, the average matric pass percentage in the past three years has consistently stood at 80% and above; the average pass percentage in all other grades in the past three years has been around 75%. Learner enrolment and staff establishment has escalated to the current levels of 1444 and 44 educators respectively.

The school had a well-defined and visible vision and mission statement that is displayed in the foyer, offices and in the classrooms. The vision statement highlighted open access to the school, addressing the needs of all learners, giving equal opportunity to all learners and being accountable to all stakeholders. The school's stated aims were to provide the best possible education for all learners, according to their needs and abilities, regardless of their race, religion, language or gender. The mission statement expressed the need to develop skills, attitudes, and values of the learners that are conducive to their personal, academic and social development. The aims were to develop in their learner's self-discipline, respect for others, critical thinking and resourcefulness. The school community aimed at achieving this by establishing a supportive and stimulating environment for the staff, with the aim of fostering their personal and professional development.

4.2.2 School-B

School-B is a typical rural school which was built by the community in 1971. The school serves the surrounding community with very few learners who come from other areas. The school is about 25 kilometres from Isipingo and 47 kilometres from the city of Durban.

The school has 440 learners and 17 educators. There are 3 HODs and 1 deputy principal. The principal is a male with 10 years of experience as a principal in this school. According to the principal, he is the one who applied and was successful in installing running water for the school. Educators' toilets are now flushed, with the exception of learners' toilets which still use the pit system. The school had 18 classrooms of which 14 were used by learners and the 4 were unutilised. The principal explained that it is because of rural depopulation. The school also had 1 science laboratory although it was not furnished. There was also a computer laboratory with 4 computers which did not seem to be working. The principal explained that many computers were stolen. The library was full of books which were in good condition and was being used by the learners. The buildings were well maintained. The principal boasted that his appointment in this school was a blessing because, in his leadership, the school had undergone remarkable improvement in terms of facilities and results. Although the school has been under-performing in matric results, the pass percentage was increasing. The school got 65% in their matric results in 2011. The average pass percentage in all other grades in the past three years was around 58%.

The school had the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education vision and mission statement displayed in the principal's office. When asked about the school's vision and mission statement, the principal said that they were in the process of collectively revising their vision and mission statement, to align it with the changed circumstances of the school. He showed me the SGB minutes of the meeting held on the 29th July 2012 where they unanimously agreed to revise the vision and the mission statement of the school.

4.2.3 School-C

At the time of writing this report, School-C was one of the newer schools to have been built in Umbumbulu Circuit, and was located in the township. The school was about 10 kilometres from

Isipingo and 29 kilometres from Durban. The school was built in 1993 and it serves learners from the township and adjoining semi-rural communities.

There were 918 learners in this school, with 27 Post-level 1 educators and a male principal. The school had 4 HOD posts of which 2 were vacant. There were also 2 vacant posts for 2 deputy principals. According to the principal, the vacancies occurred because of increased learner enrolment and because one HOD was promoted to be a deputy principal in a neighbouring school, while another deputy principal had been displaced. Since the school was established in 1993, there has been in-fighting about management posts. The first principal had to go through a number of court cases which dragged over 8 years regarding her post. When the enrolment increased, the post for the principal was upgraded to a higher level and the post was advertised. The new principal was appointed in her presence. This was not accepted and it was challenged by the first principal and so did some of the staff members. The newly appointed principal found it difficult to stay at the school, and left.

The school became dysfunctional and was characterised by poor matric results. The retired SEM was appointed as a caretaker principal for a period of two years to try and revive the culture of teaching and learning. Later on, the current principal came in as a displaced principal from another school. It was only after the first principal died five years ago that the post was advertised and the current principal got it. The school has since improved drastically in terms of human relations and the culture of teaching and learning. The average matric result in the past three years is now 62%. The average pass percentage in all other grades in the past three years has been around 58%.

The vision and mission statement of the school was well displayed in a big banner in the foyer. The mission statement highlighted the commitment to academic excellence; the promotion of respect for human beings; the ability to interact with different cultures with dignity and; a positive self-image and confidence. The stated aim of the school was to develop self-discipline thereby, empowering their learners to take their place in the South African society which affords equal opportunities to all. The school aimed to achieve this by placing teaching and learning first in everything they did; giving their educators opportunities to develop and improve their skills;

preparing learners to become responsible and active members of a democratic society and; working hard to raise support and commitment from the community.

4.2.4 Profiling the participants

This section summarises the profiles of all participants from the three schools. These profiles show the gender, age, qualifications, teaching experience, experience as principals, as well as, experience as principals in their current schools. Profiles of the three principals is presented in Table 1 below, while those of the educators, who were deputy principals, Post-level 1, and HODs, respectively, are presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Principals' profile

	Principal-A	Principal-B	Principal-C
Gender	Male	Male	Male
Age category	>50	40 - 50	>50
Qualifications	Senior degree	Senior degree	PhD
Teaching experience	20 – 30 years	20 – 30 years	30 – 40 years
Experience as a principal	11 – 15 years	5 – 10 years	>20 years
Experience as a principal in the current school	11 – 15 years	5 – 10 years	< 10 years

The profile of the principals from Table 1 above, show that all the three participating principals were male, two of them in an age category of above 50 years and others in the age category of between 40 years and 50 years. The table also shows that the principals had a wealth of academic expertise. They had senior degrees (Honours or Masters) with the Principal-C having a PhD degree. The principals had many years of teaching experience, ranging from 20 years to 50 years. Principal-C had more than 20 years of experience as a principal, though he had less than 5 years as a principal in the current school. Principal-A and Principal-B had similar range of experience as principals of between 10 and 15 years respectively. Principal-A was promoted to be a principal in the same school that he was teaching and had experience as a principal only in

the current school. Principal-B and Principal-C had fewer years of experience as principals in the current schools but had experience as principals in the other schools as well.

Two of the participating educators were males and one female with age category ranging from 30 years to 50 years as shown in Table 2 below. They all had degrees with Educator-B and Educator-C having senior degrees. They had similar range of between 20 years and 30 years teaching experience with Educator-A having no teaching experience in another school. Educator-B and Educator-C had 10 years to 20 years teaching experience in the current schools, with teaching experience in the other schools as well. Educator-A is a deputy principal, Educator-B Post level-1 and Educator-C an HOD.

Table 2: Educators' profile

	Educator-A	Educator-B	Educator-C
Gender	Male	Male	Female
Age category	30 – 40	40 - 50	40 – 50
Qualifications	Degree	Senior degree	Senior degree
Teaching experience	20 – 30 years	20 – 30 years	20 - 30 years
Years in the current school	20 – 30 years	10 - 20 years	10 – 20 years
Current position	Deputy Principal	Post Level - 1	HOD

4.3 Themes and sub-themes that emerged from data generated

The following themes and sub-themes emerged from the data generated through semi-structured individual interviews.

4.3.1. “It is not a matter of believing; principals should be instructional leaders”

The data suggest that principals regarded themselves as instructional leaders. It is not a matter of believing, principals should be instructional leaders. This theme emerged when participants were asked if they believed that principals should be instructional leaders or not. All the participants

were resolute about their beliefs that principals should be instructional leaders. Different reasons were given for this belief. The principal of School-C emphasised the leadership position of the principal that makes him an overseer of every component and activities of the school. For instance, the principal of School-C said:

It is not a matter of belief that principals should be instructional leaders but the principal is an instructional leader by virtue of being the principal of a school. It requires you as a principal to know that in each and every engagement with any section in the school or any component in the school you have got to influence, support and give directions as a leader (Principal-C).

Similar sentiments were echoed by an educator in School-B. He accentuated teaching and learning as the core function of the school and hence, the main responsibility of the principal. This is what he said:

It is not a question of believing that principals should be instructional leaders. Principals need to be instructional leaders. There is no way that the principal can be somewhere else. Schools are there for one reason, teaching and learning. I think that other things, for me, are secondary (Educator-B).

The other participants were also definitive about their positions that principals should be instructional leaders. They justified their stand by pointing out that the schools were there for the purpose of providing quality education, and that principals were there to oversee that quality education was indeed being provided. This is evident from the following excerpts from both educators and principals. For instance, the educator from School-C had this to say:

Principals need to be instructional leaders as teaching and learning is the core business of the school (Educator-C).

These sentiments were shared by the principal of School-B who maintained that:

Instructional leadership is essential in schools, without it schools will fall into the drain because teaching and learning is the centrepiece of the existence of schools. The principal is accountable for everything that is happening in the school. He oversees that quality teaching and learning is taking place in the school (Principal-B).

Commenting on this issue, the educator of School-A attributed the success of schools in providing quality education to instructional leadership practises of principals. To support his position, this is what he said:

I can say successful schools, schools that are performing well, are schools where principals are practising instructional leadership. Through instructional leadership practices of our principal, we get quality education (Educator-A).

The view that principals should be instructional leaders is also supported by scholars such as Sim (2011); Robinson (2007) and Marzano *et al.* (2005), to cite just a few. These scholars acknowledge that whilst there are other responsibilities of the principal (general management and administration, financial management, governance, handling discipline issues), focus on teaching and learning forms the core responsibility of the principal. Furthermore, The Department of Basic Education (DBE) expects that principals should influence, direct and support the best quality teaching and learning to enable learners to attain the highest levels of achievement in their own interest, the interests of their community and of the country as a whole. The evidence emerging here indicates that principals should be instructional leaders. Whilst there are other tasks that principals have to perform, a focus on supporting and leading teaching and learning forms the core of their responsibility, as schools are there for the purpose of teaching and learning.

4.3.2 Principals' Instructional leadership practices

The participants were asked to elaborate on what exactly the principals did that was characteristic of instructional leaders. Instructional leadership practices that were identified were that principals shared their vision with the members of the school; they directly or indirectly monitored instruction; encouraged professional development; ensured that instructional time was not interrupted; furnished useful professional materials and resources to teachers; monitored and discussed assessment issues with staff and parents; recognised and rewarded good performance; prepared and sustained an environment that was conducive to learning teaching. All these practices are discussed below.

4.3.2.1 Principals share vision among members of the school

The participants in the study were in agreement that principals shared their respective visions with their staff members in the school. They shared the same view that, if the vision was shared among members of the school, it became easier to implement it. The data generated from principal of School-B was, however, silent on this issue. Furthermore, while the participants stated that all the stakeholders at a school should participate in the process of vision development, they emphasised that there needed to be effective communication between the school principal and other members of the school. This view is illustrated by the following excerpts from the participating principals:

You need to have a vision alone, and then you need to sell that vision to the school community. Once people have bought into the vision, you will move quicker and easier unlike when you are trying to do it alone. You need the muscles of all these other people to get going so that the load does not rest on your shoulders alone (Principal-A).

This view was corroborated by the principal of School-C who commented that:

As an instructional leader, I make sure that the mission and vision of the school is understood and agreed upon by all stakeholders. I then come up with the plan which will make the vision and mission of the school to be realised (Principal-C).

Similar sentiments were also echoed by the participating educators who supported the view that their principals shared the vision with the members of the school community.

Everybody has an input on the vision the principal has and on what the principal conceptualises. We also put our ideas. We have a common vision, goals that we are to achieve for the enhancement of learner achievement (Educator-A).

The educator from School- C also corroborated this view by commenting that:

The principal communicates his vision with all stakeholders like SGB, SMT, educators, learners and parents, in order to ensure that everybody buys into it and it becomes easy to implement (Educator-C).

The view that vision should be shared among members of the school is supported by Supovitz and Poglinco (2001) when they say that a vision held solely by one person, no matter how powerful, that vision is invisible to others. The evidence presented here suggests that in order for the vision to become a reality, it must gain widespread acceptance and even advocacy throughout the organisation.

4.3.2.2 Principals directly and indirectly monitors instruction

The participants were in broad agreement that the principals, directly and indirectly, monitored instruction. One issue emerging from the responses of the participants which shows that principals were indirectly involved in monitoring instruction is that principals utilised HODs to manage instruction. The principal of School-A maintained that it is the duty of the HODs to monitor if effective teaching and learning takes place in the school. The HODs report to him if there are deviations. This is what he said:

The HODs are at the centre as specialists to monitor teaching and learning in their departments. They are the people that are doing that stuff (monitoring of instruction) because they are expected and that is what they are paid for. If there are any deviations they report to higher management (Principal-A).

The principals of School-A and School-B, affirmed the position that they were indirectly involved in monitoring instruction in the classroom by expressing the view that they get reports from the HODs on how their departments are performing. The terms they used of ‘giving instruction’ and ‘supervising’ when expressing how they expected HODs to perform this duty, sounded more authoritative. For instance, the principal of School-B said:

I give instruction to HODs on how to carry on with their duties so as to monitor and support teaching and learning. I get reports from them as to how their departments are performing (Principal-B).

Similarly, the principal of School-C expressed an authoritative stance on how he expected teaching and learning to be monitored by the SMT, and this is what he said:

I supervise. I draw up a direction that will be followed by the SMT. I need to be convinced that monitoring of teaching and learning does take place effectively in the classrooms (Principal-C).

Educators echoed the similar sentiments that principals utilise HODs to ensure that teaching and learning is monitored.

There is a relationship of trust between the principal and the HODs. He gets reports from HODs and these are his base line for monitoring teaching and learning. The principal relies on these people (Educator-B).

According to the educator from School-C, her principal utilises HODs to monitor teaching and learning because he does not have the expertise of all the learning areas offered in the school. She explained that the principal gets reports from the HODs who have a better understanding of their departments. In expressing this view, she said:

The principal ensures that the HODs monitor on the cyclic bases teachers' and learners' books. He encourages them to do class-visits. HODs give reports to the principal on how their departments are functioning to ensure that teaching and learning takes place in the school. He collaborates with the HODs because he is not familiar with the most learning areas to ensure that there is teaching and learning (Educator-C).

Another view centred on direct involvement by principals in monitoring instruction. It emerged from the responses from the participants that principals as instructional leaders conducted class visits as a means of monitoring and ensuring that effective teaching and learning took place. They visited classes to ensure that classroom instruction was aligned with school goals and departmental policies. They also used information gathered through class visits to support educators and for the betterment of instruction practices. The principal of School-B had this to say about his direct involvement in monitoring instruction:

I do class visits. When I go into the classroom I go there with a template. I just listen, even if it is the Physical Science. I do not understand Physical Science, but I can see when the learners do not understand the teacher, and when the teacher interacts with the learners, I can see that the teacher is doing it just for the sake of doing it. If the teacher is

effectively teaching I can also see that this teacher is teaching them effectively. If I notice that there is something wrong, maybe the teacher is not doing it effectively, then, I do not disappoint the teacher in front of the learners. I call the teacher in my office to say so and so, I realised that you did not do that thing right and the teacher will explain. By the way, these visits are for improvement; for the benefit of the teacher and learners at the end (Principal-B).

All the participants emphasised that class visits can be the most influential instructional leadership task to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. It is through frequent engagement about classroom practices that a principal, as an instructional leader, can directly enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. This can only happen if class visits are arranged to ensure that educators do not lose focus of the intended goals that the school has to achieve. Class visits should be conducted with the spirit of offering suggestions, pro-actively giving advice for the improvement of instruction and teacher development.

4.3.2.3 Principals encourage professional development

It emerged from the responses of the participants that principals encouraged professional development. Principals empowered HODs in carrying out their duties to improve the quality and performance of teachers' instruction. They ensured that HODs held discussions with their teachers to share information obtained from the courses attended. Some participants described professional development as something that was very important for educators. Most principals did not speak of professional development for themselves. Rather they spoke of engaging in professional development with teachers. The benefits were clearly described as being meant for the educators to improve their instruction. This was clearly illustrated by the principal of School-B who stated that:

I conduct workshops with educators. I have got a schedule for that whereby we are developing them. And during morning assembly, those moral lessons sometimes develop the professionalism to educators. All educators need to be there and listen to anyone who would be conducting that morning assembly. If it is me, I make sure that all participants gain because when I am there, I speak something that is very professional. Furthermore,

workshops are the best things that helped me develop educators professionally. I also allow them to attend workshops around which are conducted by the Department of Education. This is important for the enhancement of their teaching (Principal-B).

The principal of School-C had this to say about his involvement in professional development activities:

We do professional development in different ways. At times HODs, who are specialists in their areas, handle that part of development. I also request expertise from outside to empower my educators. Problem areas are identified before that particular expert begins the session to help or assist. I also make sure and encourage that educators attend developmental workshops that are organised by the DoE. The result of these staff development is improved teaching and learning in the classroom (Principal-C).

Similar sentiments were echoed by educators that their principals encouraged them to attend workshops, sought help from within and outside the school, shared information and encouraged them to develop one another as people from within know the context of the school. They also highlighted that principals encouraged and ensured that educators who have attended workshops, reported back to the HODs and to the educators concerned. Principals also encouraged them to further their studies so as to keep abreast of the demands of constantly changing curriculum. Improved performance by educators and hence learner achievement, was highlighted by the principals, as the main reason for encouraging professional development. This was clearly stated by an educator from School-A, who stated that:

The principal communicates consistently with CES, DCES and subject advisors, requesting them to visit the school to develop our educators. He makes sure that educators attend workshops. He makes sure that educators go and teach in other schools and educators from other schools do come to our school to help develop our educators. He also encourages educators to further their studies to keep abreast with the curriculum developments. He encourages educators to remain students all the time since curriculum is changing all the time. This makes educators feel comfortable and enjoy going to the classes. The learner-teacher relationship improves drastically and there is improved teaching and learning (Educator-A).

The principal's effort to improve teachers' abilities to perform their duties efficiently was recognised through supporting and providing teachers' professional development through acquiring more knowledge from within the school and elsewhere. According to Supovitz and Poglinco (2001, p.16), instructional leaders take every opportunity to support teachers in their work and enhance teachers' skills to improve student learning. According to them, educators are likely to commit themselves to contribute positively and meaningfully to improve and enhance opportunities for quality and effective learning if they are professionally developed.

4.3.2.4 Principals ensures that instructional time is not interrupted

All the three participating principals were unanimous in maintaining that instructional time was crucial for effective teaching, and in view of that, they were devoting substantial energies to protecting it from various interruptions. They emphasised that if schools are to succeed in their mission, it was imperative that teachers and learners focus most of their time and energies on teaching and learning. This required them to have various timetables to ensure that the flow of teaching and learning goes on without interruptions. This view is illustrated by the following excerpts from the participating principals:

Instructional time is very vital. I make sure that instructional time is not, in anyway, disturbed (Principal-C).

Similar sentiment emerged from the Principal of School-B who added that he made sure that instructional time was not interrupted by other activities that did not relate to teaching and learning. He said:

Instructional time is 95% good. I make sure that learners are in the classroom and teachers are teaching. Everything is smooth. Insurance people come during break and I stop them even if they are not finished when break time is over. People must understand that we are here for one thing only, teaching and learning and not business. I have timetables and relief timetable for absent teachers. No class remains without a teacher (Principal-B).

In expressing a similar view to this, the principal of School-A highlighted strategies that he used in order to ensure that instructional time was used in the most profitable way.

I bring experience from the private sector where the adage 'time is money' is their way of life. I do not compromise on instructional time. Interruptions; yes we cannot stop them from time to time but we actually try by all means to minimise them. We have got a year plan and everything must fit in its place. I make sure that educators fulfil their obligations of being at school and in classes on time. I utilise young people (RCL) whom I have groomed to understand that school is about teaching and learning. They report to the Grade Coordinators ... I delegate... we do not have to take the load on our shoulders alone. I encourage educators to have extra classes especially for the matriculants to give them quality time to close gaps (Principal-A).

The educators in the study corroborated the view that their principals had some ways of protecting instructional time from various interruptions. The educator from School-A added that his principal worked collaboratively with his SMT, Master and Senior educators, as well as, with the RCL, to maintain order in the school. This helped prevent unnecessary interruptions which had the potential to waste instructional time.

The principal uses SMT, Master teachers, Senior teachers, Grade Coordinators and RCL to protect instructional time by ensuring that there is always a teacher in the class teaching and learners are not roaming around (Educator-A).

It was also highlighted by the educators that interruptions of teaching and learning did occur but that the principals tried to minimise them. The educator from School-C stated that:

The principal, I would say, minimises things that interrupt teaching and learning although some of the things are beyond his control. For example yesterday we had to leave early as there was no water in the school (Educator-C).

The theoretical framework guiding this study advocates that the principals, as instructional leaders, should work collaboratively with their SMTs and educators to protect instructional time from various interruptions and effectively use time allocated for instruction. This view is also supported by Blase and Kirby (2000, p.75) who assert that “effective principals understand that

the key to improving their schools' effectiveness lies not with persons skilled in compliance with bureaucratic rules and procedures or in discussions about those rules, but in effective use of time allocated for instruction.”

4.3.2.5 Principals furnish useful professional materials and resources to teachers

There was a general view from the participants that the principals, as instructional leaders, made sure that the teaching and learning materials were always available and that they were being used. They also made sure that the budget of the school focused on getting materials and physical resources that enhanced teaching and learning. They also utilised human resources with skills to assist their educators for the benefit of their learners. Commenting on this issue, the principal of School-C had this to say:

Through sponsorship, I have got library, science laboratory, computer laboratory which are very useful to both our teachers and learners. We have got overhead projectors which make teaching and learning interesting. All the learners have books and I am very strict on the recovery policy of books (Principal-C).

Similar views were also echoed by other participating principals. For example, the principal of School-A said:

I seek assistance from the DoE and other schools that have experts in that particular field. I continuously invite experts to come into our school and support the teachers (Principal-A).

Participating educators also supported the view that their principals tried by all means to provide useful professional materials and resources so that teaching and learning was promoted.

Principal ensures that LTSM and policy documents governing the process of teaching and learning are available for the use by the educators. If there are problems, he invites subject advisors and sometimes experts from publishers (Educator-A).

The core purpose of principal-ship, according to Department of Education, (May, 2005, p. 10), is to provide leadership and management in the school, to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning takes place and which promote the highest possible standards of learner achievement in any context. This is possible when the principal makes best use of financial, physical and human resources in the process of enhancing teaching and learning.

4.3.2.6 Principals monitored and discussed assessment issues with staff and parents

The participating principals used assessment analysis to evaluate teaching and learning process. Educators were responsible for the formal and informal assessment of the learners, to check how each learner was progressing towards meeting the set outcomes. Results were analysed and discussed in the meetings set by principals with educators and parents so as to come up with better strategies to improve teaching and learning. In this regard, the principals in this study stated similar views as illustrated by the following excerpt:

We give learners assessment tasks which indicate effectiveness of teaching and learning. We analyse and discuss results with all educators and discuss improvement strategies. Remedial work is done where necessary (Principal-C).

Similar sentiments were echoed by the principal of School-B who stated that:

We monitor student progress through reports. I meet with educators and parents to discuss learner performance. I make sure that educators do remedial work where they use different approaches for the sake of giving everyone an opportunity to pass. (Principal-B).

Principals also insisted on discussing the performance of the learners with their registered parents to maintain consistency in terms of working as a tripartite. They called parents' meeting quarterly where they requested that, only parents registered in their databases, attended. Principals said that this was helping them as educators were able to discuss learner achievement and issues that affected the performance of learners both from school and from home. For this

reason, they insisted that learners had to bring in registered parents and not just grab anyone to come and represent them. The principal of School-A had this to say about this issue:

From 2009, I said that reports are no more to be given to learners. Reports are now given to the rightful parent that is registered in our database. That is helping us a lot because parents have got a chance to talk to the educators and educators are having a chance to communicate with the right parents and discuss how learners are progressing and how performance can be improved (Principal-A).

The view that principals worked with educators and parents to discuss result analysis for the sake of improving teaching and learning, was supported by the participating educators as illustrated in the following excerpts:

Formal and informal assessment mark schedules, analysis and reports are submitted to the principal and he uses them to strategise about what needs to be done to improve the situation. He calls the meetings with the SMT, educators and parents to discuss the results. In these meetings, we are able to identify and discuss problematic issues that hinder the performance of learners (Educator-C).

To corroborate this view, the educator from School-A had this to say:

The principal ensures that there are meetings where we discuss learner progress in each learning area and how we can improve. Parents are called to discuss results (Educator-A).

Whilst an educator from School-B was in agreement that the results were analysed and discussed with educators and parents, he also offered a unique perspective that the focus was mainly in Grade 12 at the expense of other grades. He was very much vocal that everyone tended to look up for the FET Band and disregarded the GET Band. Hence the FET was doing very well but the GET was struggling. His frustration is illustrated by the following excerpt:

The principal is very much concerned about results, especially for Grade 12. We always analyse results and discuss what new strategies to take. Experts and subject advisors are called in, educators attend developmental workshops, and Grade 12 parents are also

called in. My main concern is about the focus on Grade 12 at the expense of other grades. The GET Band does not get much attention. The national, provincial and local departments and hence the principal are all focusing on the FET Band. No one is concerned about GET Band. Nothing is said about the ANA (Annual National Assessment) results in which learners performed very poorly and yet we all know about matric results. The GET results are not discussed and compared with other schools. I would say that is where we are actually lacking (Educator-B).

Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) support the view that principals as instructional leaders work with other stakeholders to analyse discuss result and strategise practices that would help improve performance of learners. They assert that effective instructional leaders tend to analyse evaluations and discuss instructional strategies with teachers and parents, provide evaluations that help teachers improve their practice, encourage the use of different instructional strategies, and observe classroom instruction frequently. The importance of monitoring and evaluating learner progress, discussing results with educators and parents by the principal as an instructional leader is cited by several other researchers and theorists (Cotton, 2003; Marzano, *et al.*, 2005; Robinson, 2007). The results were used to provide support to both teachers and learners to improve, as well as, to help parents understand where and why improvement was needed.

4.3.2.7 Principals recognise and reward good performance

Participating principals were in agreement that they recognised and rewarded good performance by both educators and learners. They believed that this helped to motivate educators and learners to perform better. In other words, recognising and rewarding good performance served as a tool to motivate those who were performing well and those that were not performing well, to improve their performance. Various methods were given as means to motivate learners. For example, the principal of School- A had this to say:

We have got a rewarding kind of a set up for top learners where they are called in front and given tokens to uplift their spirit and motivate learners that are a little bit lazy (Principal-A).

The educator from the same school, argued differently. This educator maintained that, whilst acknowledging that the principal recognised and rewarded good performance, he had a different view about how the principal should motivate learners as he did not believe in incentives. He emphasised intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation. This is what he said:

The principal motivates educators and learners to perform more. He acknowledges good performance. I do not believe in incentives but in inculcating the culture of discipline. Learners should not work because they expect to be paid for their work. We need to inculcate a culture of working whether there are incentives or not. It is motivation all the way rather than giving them incentives. Probably what can replace incentives is acknowledgement of good performance. For example, naming the class with that particular learner (Educator-A).

The educators from School-A, and School-B corroborated the view that their principals recognised and rewarded good performance by both learners and educators as illustrated by the following excerpt from the interview:

The principal praises those who produce good results. He believes that good performance has to be recognised and made public so as to encourage good performance and instil that attitude to others as well (Educator-B).

The finding that the principals as instructional leaders recognise and reward good performance is in line with the findings of Sim (2011) which proved that principals as instructional leaders performed two roles excellently, namely, identifying outstanding students who excel in academics by awarding incentives or certificates and making use of the assembly time to motivate students in their studies.

4.3.2.8 Principals prepare and sustain learning environment conducive to teaching and learning

Preparing and sustaining learning environment that is conducive to teaching and learning emerged as another practice done by participating principals as instructional leaders in this study.

The principals developed school environments before anything else where friendship and mutual trust occurred and everyone was happy at work.

Quality education is my main thing. I take charge of teaching and learning and I am very firm but also fair. I started by cultivating the culture of teaching and learning into the minds of the people. I made the parent and learners to see light in the tunnel by making sure that the school environment is like that of former Model-C schools. That is why parents are sending their children to our school (Principal-A).

The educator from School-B supported this view by highlighting what their principal did to prepare and sustain learning environment that was conducive to teaching and learning:

The principal helps create conducive climate for teaching and learning by sharing ideas, motivation, support, working collaboratively, encouraging relationship of trust, encouraging staff development and sharing information and knowledge (Educator-B).

Leaders promote a positive learning climate by communicating instructional goals, establishing high expectations for performance, establishing an orderly learning environment with clear discipline expectations, and working to increase teacher commitment to the school (Weber, 1996). School climate is vital in determining the quality of learning in school. This is due to the fact that school climate has a huge influence on self-concept, ability to work and learn effectively, as well as, the ability to create interpersonal skills (Sim, 2011). This finding supports that conducive school climate is able to enhance learning and performance. As Yavuz and Bas (2010) suggest, a school atmosphere is very important and has a valuable impact on students' effective learning.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter the data generated through semi-structured interviews was presented and discussed. This was done by looking closely at the common themes that emerged during data analysis. In the next chapter, the presentation of the findings and recommendations will be done.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this study, instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit were explored. A postulate of the study was that schools that had shown dramatic turn around, a sound culture of teaching and learning, consistent good matriculation examination results, such achievements are largely, attributed to effective instructional leadership. Semi-structured interview technique as one of the qualitative research methods in literature, was used in the case study of three such schools to explore how the principals enacted instructional leadership and why they enacted instructional leadership the way they did. The previous chapter presented and discussed the data that was generated through semi-structured interviews. This chapter presents the analysis, findings and makes recommendations to various stakeholders.

5.2 Research questions restated:

In presenting the findings, research questions have been stated and the extent to which each one of them has been addressed is reflected in the discussion that follows each question.

5.2.1 How do secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit enact instructional leadership?

The discussions below detail the findings about the dominant practices of instructional leadership that were enacted by the three secondary school principals in Umbumbulu. The findings suggest that principals enacted instructional leadership by (a) sharing vision among members of the school (b) monitoring instructions (c) encouraging professional development of their teaching staff (d) ensuring that instructional time was not interrupted (e) furnishing professional materials and resources to the teachers (f) monitoring and discussion assessment issues with the teachers (g) recognising and rewarding good performance and (h) preparing and sustaining learning

environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. Each of these findings is summarised in the section below.

5.2.1.1 Sharing vision among members of the school

This study has found that principals in the three researched school shared vision among members of the school. The reason put forward for sharing vision was that if the vision was shared among members of the school, it became easier to implement it. This finding concurs with the notion of Duke, (1987) and Ubben and Hugh (1997) which noted that every good planning starts from the vision and goals. They proposed that the vision of effective teaching is essential to the improvement of teaching and learning. Hallinger and Murphy (1985); Mbatha (2004); Gruenert (2005); and Zimmerman (2006) also affirm that setting the vision of the school and sharing it with all stakeholders so that it is understood and supported, is a crucial activity of an instructional leader. The literature reviewed suggests that sharing vision and working collaboratively towards its realisation have a positive impact on the school's academic achievement.

5.2.1.2 Monitoring instruction

According to the data presented, it has emerged that principals were directly and indirectly involved in ensuring that effective teaching and learning took place. They took a supervisory stance on HODs to ensure that they performed their core duty of ensuring that their departments were functioning towards the realisation of school goals. The principals received reports from the HODs. The principals also worked collaboratively with the HODs. For example, Educator-C said "*He (the principal) collaborates with the HODs because he is not familiar with the most learning areas to ensure that there is teaching and learning.*" Principals as instructional leaders also conducted class visits. The reason for performing such tasks was highlighted by the participating principals; they said that it was a means of monitoring and ensuring that effective teaching and learning took place, and to ensure that classroom instruction was aligned with

school goals and DoE policies. The principals also used information gathered through class visits to support educators and for the betterment of instruction practices.

5.2.1.3 Encouraging professional development

The data presented in Section 4.3.2.3 in Chapter 4, reveals that the three principals in this study encouraged educators to improve their professionalism through courses, workshops, and provision of formal leadership that encouraged teachers to collaborate in their communities of practice. The reasons for professional development were that educators needed to develop and upgrade themselves continuously to improve the quality and performance of teachers' instruction. For instance, Principal-B stated, "*Professional development of educators is important for the enhancement of their teaching.*" This finding is in accordance with the literature reviewed that the provision of teacher professional development aims at leading to changes in professional learning and changes in professional practice, which ultimately would impact on student achievement (Davis & Nicklos, 1986; Steyn, 2000; Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001). Study findings by Supovitz, Sirinides and May (2010) affirm that principals who establish cultures of collaboration and trust and encourage instructional improvement, draw teachers together to engage in joint work to improve teaching and learning. Steyn (2000) acknowledges the need for teachers to keep renewing their knowledge for the betterment of their facilitation of teaching and learning. Moreover, Wallace, LeMahieu and Bickel (1990) reveal that teachers who attended staff development programme are able to improve student's performance and achievement. These findings also have common views with Davis and Nicklos (1986) that principal's role is important in promoting staff development program to achieve success for the school.

5.2.1.4 Ensuring that instructional time is not interrupted

The finding from the data shows that the principals ensured that instructional time was not interrupted. The reasons put forward was that if schools were to succeed in their mission, they required that the teachers and the learners focused most of their time and energies on teaching

and learning. This would prevent unnecessary interruptions which tend to waste instructional time as the principal of School-A put it, *“I do not compromise on instructional time.”* This finding is in line with Murphy (1992) who maintains that instructional time is a direct correlate to student achievement and is of the opinion that where principals encourage teachers to make maximum use of subject allocated time for teaching and engaging students in learning, higher student academic achievement can be realised.

5.2.1.5 Furnishing useful professional materials and resources to teachers

Principals in this study tried by all means to provide useful professional materials and resources so as to promote teaching and learning. Resources included human (experts from other schools); physical (libraries, science laboratory, and computer laboratory) and financial resources (budget that focused on teaching and learning). For instance Principal-C stated, *“Through sponsorship, I have got library, science laboratory, computer laboratory which are very useful to both our teachers and learners. We have got overhead projectors which make teaching and learning interesting.”* This shows the effort put by the principal in providing useful physical resources necessary for enhancing teaching and learning. Contributing to the instructional leadership debate, Kruger (2003) acknowledges that the primary role of the principal in the school is to make sure that all the school resources are used to make sure that the educative function is carried out to the desired level. The literature reviewed, for instance, Sindhvad (2009) and Chapman *et al.*, (1993), also affirm that the provision of instructional materials is one of the most important ways of supporting the teacher and enhancing student achievement.

5.2.1.6 Monitoring and discussing assessment issues with staff and parents

Principals in the three schools monitored and discussed assessment issues with staff and parents and used assessment analysis to evaluate teaching and learning process. This demonstrates a collaborative practice. The reason put forward for doing this activity was that it helped them to come up with better strategies to improve teaching and learning. This finding is in line with the literature reviewed that monitoring and evaluating learner progress, discussing results with

educators and parents help improve performance of learners (Cotton, 2003; Marzano *et al.*, 2005; Robinson *et al.*, 2008).

5.2.1.7 Recognising and rewarding good performance

Pertinent to the dimension of the role of monitoring student progress, the findings showed that principals performed two roles excellently, namely, identifying outstanding students who excel in academics by awarding incentives or certificates and making use of the assembly time to motivate students in their studies. The data revealed this practice is done to motivate learners so as to improve their performance.

5.2.1.8 Preparing and sustaining learning environment conducive to teaching and learning

Based on the data presented in **Section 4.3.2.3 in Chapter 4**, the three principals, prepared and sustained learning environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. They believed that creating an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning situation was important and that it helped increase teacher and learner commitment to the school. According to Educator – B, his principal created conducive climate for teaching and learning by sharing ideas, motivation, support, working collaboratively, encouraging relationship of trust, encouraging staff development and sharing information and knowledge with others. This finding is supported by Weber (1996) who posits that leaders promote a positive learning climate by communicating instructional goals, establishing high expectations for performance, establishing an orderly learning environment with clear discipline expectations, and working to increase teacher commitment to the school. Furthermore, Petersen (1999) affirm that teachers and learners do their best when they work in a healthy and pleasant environment. Yavuz and Bas (2010) also contend that a school atmosphere is very important and has a valuable impact on students' effective learning.

5.3.2 Why do secondary school principals in Umbumbulu Circuit enact instructional leadership the way they do?

The main finding on why secondary school principals in Umbumbulu enacted instructional leadership the way they did is that they wanted to improve the quality of teaching and learning, thereby, improving learner achievement. What has emerged strongly in the data is that all these principals believed that it was their duty to ensure that effective teaching occurred in their respective schools. Therefore, their practices were informed by their beliefs about what should happen in their schools, and what role they, as principals, should play. Instructional leadership as a concept occupied their minds all the time. Evidence of their commitments can be witnessed in the profiles of the schools as presented in Chapter 4. The school profiles presented in **Section 4.2 in Chapter Four** shows that there has been a dramatic improvement in the average matric pass percentage in the three case study schools under the leadership of the participating principals. The average matric pass percentage results were 80%, 62 % and 65% in Schools-A, B and C respectively.

It is acknowledged in this study that there could have been many other contributory factors that could have caused this change. However, the literature reviewed indicated a strong relationship between instructional leadership practices of the principal and the effectiveness and success of a school (Roberts & Roach, 2006; Taylor, 2007; Robinson *et al.*, 2008; Sim, 2011). For example, Sim (2011) showed the existence of concordance between the level of instructional leadership and the level of students' academic achievement, implying that instructional leadership role is vital in producing better academic achievement in schools.

5.4 Recommendations

There are only two recommendations that are made in this study; one is directed at the principals of secondary schools, and another one at the research community.

5.4.1 Recommendations directed at secondary schools principals

It was noted in the data that although all the principals that participated in the study embraced instructional leadership, more often than not, they viewed monitoring of the educators teaching as the duty of the HODs. This has a potential to shift their responsibility to the HODs. It is therefore, recommended that principals need to use a direct rather than an indirect way of supervising and monitoring the work of the teaching staff.

5.4.2 Recommendations directed at the researchers

Another recommendation is directed to the research community. Since South Africa has been known for low learner performance when compared with other countries, and since the role of principals in ensuring effective teaching has been highlighted in literature, more research is needed in this area. We need to know what exactly principals do that make schools succeed, so that those that do not do well can learn.

5.5 Conclusion

This study had conceptualised principal involvement in instructional activities as the fundamental tasks through which the principal can improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, build the expectations for student learning and ensuring that all staff members strive to meet those expectations by working collaboratively with them. Using a qualitative case study of three secondary schools principals in Umbumbulu Circuit, the study found that these principals were enacting their instructional leadership role by directly and indirectly working collaboratively with other members of the staff. The main reason for enacting these functions was to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. It has also emerged from this study that their leadership practices were underpinned by their strong beliefs that, instructional leadership was their duty.

I must also add that while this study has provided a detailed description of how and why the principals in the study enacted instructional leadership, the findings are consistent with the current body of knowledge in the field. The literature that has been cited raises the issues that were also found in the study, thus confirming what is already in the academic domain.

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Appendix 1: Letter requesting permission from the principal

P.O. BOX 65
Umbumbulu
4105
21 June 2012

The Principal
Sample Secondary School

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

I am currently a Masters student in Education Leadership, Management and Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. I am presently engaged in a research study which aims to explore how secondary school principals enact instructional leadership and why they enact it the way they do. The topic of my research is: *Exploring the instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals: A case study of three secondary school in the Umbumbulu Circuit*. I would very much like to conduct the study in your school because I believe that you can provide valuable insight in extending the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

Your identity in this study will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold your autonomy as the participant. You will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to yourself. However, you will be asked to complete a consent form. In your interest, feedback will be given to you during and at the end of the study.

You may contact my supervisor or me should you have any queries or questions:

Supervisor is Dr TT Bhengu

Tel. 031-2603534 (office)

Cell: 083 9475321

E-mail: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za.

My contact number:

Cell: 0836530077

E-mail: bnckmkhize@gmail.com

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

BN Mkhize (Mr)

.....DETACH AND RETURN.....

Declaration

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **Exploring instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals: A case study of three secondary schools in Umbumbulu Circuit.** I have 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 understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from research at any time should I so desire.

Signature of Principal

Date

.....

.....

Thanking you in advance

BN Mkhize (Mr)

Appendix 2: Letter requesting permission from the educator

P.O. BOX 65

Umbumbulu

4105

21 June 2012

The Educator

Sample Secondary School

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH

I am currently a Masters student in Education Leadership, Management and Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. I am presently engaged in a research study which aims to explore how secondary school principals enact instructional leadership and why they enact it the way they do. The topic of my research is *“Exploring the instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals: A case study of three secondary schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit”*. I would very much like you to participate in this study because I believe that you can provide valuable insight in extending the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

Your identity in this study will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold your autonomy as the participant. You will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to yourself. However, you will be asked to complete a consent form. In your interest, feedback will be given to you during and at the end of the study.

You may contact my supervisor or me should you have any queries or questions:

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E-mail: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za.

My contact number:
Cell: 0836530077
E-mail: bnckmkhize@gmail.com

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

BN Mkhize (Mr)

.....DETACH AND RETURN.....

Declaration

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **Exploring instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals: A case study of three secondary schools in Umbumbulu Circuit.** I have 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 understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from research at any time should I so desire.

Signature of Educator
.....

Date
.....

Thanking you in advance

BN Mkhize (Mr)

Appendix 3: Letter to DoE requesting permission conduct research in KZN schools

P.O. Box 65
Umbumbulu
4105
21 June 2012

Attention: The Superintendent-General (Dr NSP Sishi)
Department of Education
Province of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3201

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Nhlanhla Mkhize, a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree fulfilment, I am required to conduct research. I therefore kindly seek permission to conduct research in five secondary schools under your jurisdiction in Umbumbulu Circuit, Umlazi District. The schools are: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The title of my study is:
Exploring instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals: A case study of three secondary schools in Umbumbulu Circuit.

This study aims to explore how secondary school principals in this area enact instructional leadership and why they enact it the way they do. The planned study will focus on secondary school principals. The study will use semi-structured interviews with principals and educators. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 40-60 minutes at the times convenient to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Each interview will be voice-recorded.

Responses will be treated with confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used instead of the actual names. Participants will be contacted well in advance for interviews, and they will be purposively selected to participate in this study. Participation will always remain voluntary which means that participants may withdraw from the study for any reason, anytime if they so wish without incurring any penalties.

You may contact my supervisor or me should you have any queries or questions:

Supervisor is Dr TT Bhengu
Tel. 031-2603534 (office)
Cell: 083 9475321
E-mail: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za.

My contact number:
Cell: 0836530077
E-mail: bnckmkhize@gmail.com

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely
B.N. Mkhize (Mr)

Appendix 4: Interview guide for school principals

[NB. These questions will guide my discussion with the principal and probes are indicated under each question. However, follow-up questions will also be posed depending on the responses of the participants].

1. The Department of Basic Education expects principals to be instructional leaders.

Do you believe that principals need to be instructional leaders?

Yes/No

[Probes: If Yes, why do you believe that principals need to be instructional leaders?

If No, why do you believe they should not?

2. Do you consider yourself as an instructional leader?

Yes/No

[Probes: If Yes, What exactly do you do as an instructional leader in your school?

Please elaborate!

Why do you enact these instructional leadership tasks the way you do? Please elaborate!

3. Do you think that instructional leadership is essential in schools?

[Probes: If Yes, why do you regard these instructional leadership tasks essential?

If, No, please explain why?

4. How do you ensure that the right climate is created to facilitate teaching and learning?

[Probes: How do you ensure that the instructional schedule is protected from a variety of interruptions that may occur?

5. Do you regard your instructional leadership activities as contributing to the effectiveness of teaching and learning in your school? If you do, why? **[Probes:** how do you ensure that these activities contribute to effectiveness of teaching and learning situation? Please elaborate?

What other information can you add as far as the issue of instructional leadership in your school is concern?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview.

Appendix 5: Interview guide for educators

[NB. These questions will guide my discussion with the principal and probes are indicated under each question. However, follow-up questions will also be posed depending on the responses of the participants].

1. The Department of Basic Education expects principals to be instructional leaders.

Do you believe that principals need to be instructional leaders?

Yes/No

[Probes: If Yes, why do you believe that principals need to be instructional leaders?

If No, why do you believe they should not?

2. Do you consider your principal to be an instructional leader?

Yes/No

[Probes: If Yes, What exactly does he/she do which you believe are signs of an instructional leader?

Please elaborate!....Why do you think your principal enacts instructional leadership tasks the way she/he does? Please elaborate!.....

3. Do you think that instructional leadership is essential in schools?

[Probes: If Yes, why do you regard these instructional leadership tasks essential?

If, No, please explain why?


4. What do you think is the right climate should be like that facilitates teaching and learning?

[Probes: How is such a climate created in your school? How is the climate sustained (if at all it exists?)....how does your principal ensure that the instructional schedule is protected from a variety of interruptions that may occur?

5. Do you regard your principal's instructional leadership activities as contributing to the effectiveness of teaching and learning in your school? If it is so, why? **[Probes:** how does your principal ensure that these activities contribute to effectiveness of teaching and learning situation? Please elaborate?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview.

Appendix 6: Permission to conduct research in the KZN DoE Institutions



kzn education
Department:
Education
KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar Tel: 033 341 8610 Ref.:2/4/8/248

Mr Bongani Nhlanhla Mkhize
P.O. Box 65
Umbumbulu
4105

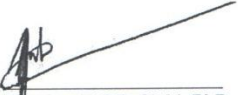
Dear Mr Mkhize

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **Exploring Instructional Leadership Practices of Secondary School Principal: a Case Study of Three Secondary Schools in Umbumbulu Circuit**, 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 July 2012 to 31 December 2013.
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 the following Schools and Institutions:

10.1 |
10.2 :
10.3 |
10.4 |
10.5 |



Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education

20/07/2012
Date

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

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL : Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa

PHYSICAL: Office G 25, 188 Pietermaritz Street, Metropolitan Building, Pietermaritzburg 3201

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Web: www.kzndoe.gov.za