

**THE ROLE OF SUBJECT ADVISORS IN STRENGTHENING TEACHER
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY OF ONE
EDUCATION DISTRICT OFFICE IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

BY

HAMILTON THULANI MBANJWA

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Masters Degree in
Educational Leadership Management and Policy in the School of Education**

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
(EDGEWOOD CAMPUS)**

2014

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa, declare that this research report, “**The role of subject advisors in strengthening teacher instructional leadership practices: A case study of one education district office in KwaZulu-Natal**” abides by the following the rules:

- i. The research report 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.
- iv. This dissertation does not contain other persons’ writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - (a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
 - (b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
- v. Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am an author, co-author or editor, I indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.
- vi. This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the References Sections.

Researcher: -----

Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa

Date:

14.03.2014

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

The dissertation has been submitted with/ without my approval

Mr. Sipiwe Eric Mthiyane (Supervisor)

March 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God, almighty for blessing me and giving me physical strength, courage and spiritual guidance throughout this journey.

My supervisor, Mr. Sipiwe Mthiyane for his exceptional supervision and to make sure that this research study is completed. Sir, I am indebted to you for all your impeccable advice and support. Without you, I would not have done this!

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all my lecturers, Professor Vitalis Chikoko, Dr T.T. Bhengu, Dr Saths Govender, Dr Inba Naicker and Mr Phumlani Myende having contributed to the success of this study. I will always treasure the times spent with you. You were truly remarkable and your positive words always kept me going.

To my gorgeous wife, Lindiwe for her prayers and encouragement during this study period, To my adorable children Phumelele and Talente and my grandchild Khanya who were always supportive.

To my parents, Terry and Siphosenkosi and my siblings for always believing in me that I will make it.

All the subject advisors who participated in the research process and contributed to its successful completion.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my late younger sister, Nomvula who was always so optimistic about life. How I wish that you would see your elder brother graduating and becoming an effective leader. Nevertheless, you continue to inspire.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to explore the role of the subject advisors in strengthening teacher instructional leadership practices in schools. A case study was conducted in one education district office where the focal point was on the Districts' General Education and Training Band subject advisors. The intention of the study was to get the real experiences and challenges encountered by the subject advisors when they perform their professional functions through the interaction that occurs. South African education context today requires the education personnel to clearly understand their roles and responsibilities and that there is that important link between the district office and the schools, so that teachers can be more effective when they perform their tasks. Therefore, the study also wanted to explore whether there is that paradigm shift in subject advisors' mindset when they pursue departmental programmes and checking whether curriculum policies are being implemented or not. Through this study, I was able to note and learn the strategies that the subject advisors utilise when they focus on their scope of work and on how they deal with their challenges in order to ensure that there is progress in their respective schools.

The study was located within the qualitative case study. Furthermore, the study fitted in the interpretive paradigm because the subject advisors will construct different shared meanings with the researcher with a view to enhancing teaching and learning. The data generation methods that I used were interviews and documents reviews which enabled me to interpret and understand the subject advisors' perspectives. I also reviewed relevant international, continental and local literatures in order to balance my arguments about the study. The theories that underpinned this study were instructional leadership theory and distributive leadership theory. The conclusions of the study were that the subject advisors' were influential and played a prominent role in assisting teachers to properly deliver the curriculum. Based on the study findings I made some recommendations informed by the conclusions of the study. Some of those recommendations were that the subject advisors need to be continuously capacitated so that they can be able to meet those curriculum challenges, and that the DBE needs to speed up the curriculum delivery by ensuring the they fill up the vacancies, supply the subject advisors with the necessary resources so that they can perform their tasks with ease. The study also found that the teachers' understanding of the subject advisors' role helps to enhance teachers' productivity.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

- ANA- Annual National Assessment
- CAPS- Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statements
- DBE- Department of Basic Education
- DOE- Department of Education
- DDIS- Data Driven Instructional Systems
- HOD- Head of Department
- HRM- Human Resource Management
- KZN- KwaZulu- Natal
- IQMS- Integrated Quality Management Systems
- PED- Provincial Education Department
- SADTU- South African Democratic Teachers' Union
- SGB- School Governing Body
- SMT- School Management Team
- USA- United States of America
- GDP- Gross Domestic Product

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Title page	i
Declaration of originality	ii
Supervisor's statement	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Dedication	v
Abstract	vi
List of acronyms	vii
Table of contents	viii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 The purpose and the rationale of the study.....	2
1.3 Statement of the problem.....	3
1.4 Research objectives and critical questions.....	4
1.5 Definition of key concepts.....	4
1.5.1 Subject advisors.....	4
1.5.2 Curriculum leadership.....	4
1.5.3 Management.....	5
1.6 Literature review.....	6
1.7. Theoretical frameworks.....	6

1.7.1	Instructional leadership.....	6
1.7.2	Distributed leadership.....	7
1.8	Methodological approach.....	7
1.9	Outline of the study.....	9
1.10	Chapter summary.....	9

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1	Introduction.....	10
2.2	International literature on the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices.....	11
2.3	Continental literature on the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices.....	19
2.4	National literature on the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices.....	24
2.5	Role of subject advisors in creating the professional learning communities.....	28
2.6	Theoretical frameworks.....	29
2.6.1	Instructional leadership theory.....	29
2.6.2	Distributed leadership theory.....	33
2.7	Chapter summary.....	34

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction.....	35
3.2	Research design methodology.....	35
3.2.1	Research design.....	38
3.2.2	Methodology.....	36
3.3	Research Paradigm.....	37
3.4	Sampling.....	38
3.5	Data generation methods.....	38
3.5.1	Semi-structured interviews.....	39
3.5.2	Documents review.....	39
3.5.3	Data Analysis.....	40
3.6	Issues of trustworthiness.....	41
3.7	Ethics in research.....	42
3.8	Delimitations of the study.....	43
3.9	Limitations of the study.....	43
3.10	Chapter summary.....	44

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1	Introduction.....	45
4.2	Discussion of findings.....	46
4.2.1	Subject advisors understanding of their role in supporting teacher’s instructional leadership practices.....	46
4.2.2	Subject advisors practices in supporting teaching and learning.....	4

4.2.3 Subject advisors involvement of others in supporting and managing teaching and learning.....	52
4.2.4 Challenges that subject advisors experience whilst teaching and learning.....	55
4.2.5 How subject advisors overcome the challenges that they experience as they support teaching and learning.....	64
4.2.6 The working relations in the district.....	66
4.2.7 Other issues related to the management of teaching and learning.....	68
4.3 Chapter summary.....	69

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction.....	70
5.2 Study summary.....	70
5.3 Conclusions.....	71
5.3.1 Subject advisors understanding of their role.....	71
5.3.2 Importance of updating schools on curriculum developments.....	71
5.3.3 Promotion of good working relations.....	72
5.3.4 Teachers poor working ethics.....	72
5.3.5 Subject advisors willingness to go an extra mile.....	72
5.3.6 District management support.....	73
5.3.7 Ensuring school safety.....	73
5.4 Recommendations.....	73
5.4.1 Continuous capacity building for subject advisors.....	73

5.4.2 Subject advisors to develop support programmes for schools.....	74
5.4.3 Effective monitoring of school work.....	74
5.4.4 Embrace professional values at all times.....	74
5.4.5 Always rise under difficult conditions.....	75
5.4.6 Promote responsibility and accountability.....	75
5.4.7 Establish strong working relations with the community structures.....	75
5.5 Implications for future research.....	75
5.6 Chapter summary.....	76
REFERENCES.....	77

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Permission letter to the KZN Department of Education.....	86
APPENDIX B: Permission letter to the District Director.....	88
APPENDIX C: Request to conduct the interviews.....	90
APPENDIX D: Consent Form.....	92
APPENDIX E: Interview schedule.....	93
APPENDIX F: Documents review schedule.....	94
APPENDIX G: Language Clearance Certificate.....	95

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The district officers primary aims are to offer immediate assistance to schools because of their proximity and they serve as the link between the Department of Basic Education, Provincial Education Department, schools and the public (Motshekga, 2012). One such sub-directorate at the District Office is Teaching and Learning Services in the General Education and Training Band. This sub-directorate has the subject advisors to carry out the professional responsibilities of facilitating curriculum implementation and curriculum delivery in schools. This study focused on this sub directorate and explores the roles of subject advisors on how they support and strengthen teacher instructional leadership practices in schools.

Subject advisors are strategically placed by the Department of Basic Education to contribute to the development of district planning that focuses on the provision of curriculum support to schools with the intention to deliver progressively high quality education to learners. *The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (Department of Basic Education, 2013) states that the district office has a responsibility with regard to the development and arrangement of curriculum programmes in accordance with the identified needs of teachers, which clearly means that the subject advisors need to complement and strengthen teacher instructional leadership practices.

Subject advisors are the new innovation by the democratic government as the mechanism to support effective curriculum delivery in schools. The Employment of Educators Act (No 76 of 1998) specifies the roles and functions of the subject advisors (senior education specialists) as the provision of supportive leadership and assisting in the effective implementation of the curriculum in schools, although I feel that there is still an unfilled space in their (subject advisors) operational scope which needs to be uncovered so that the teaching practice can always be under the microscope, enabling the provision of support services and resources to teachers.

1.2. The purpose and rationale of the study

As the principal of a school for the past three years I have observed on numerous occasions that the subject advisors do not perform their work with distinction especially in our circuit where we rarely see any curricular programme being run or facilitated by the subject advisors. Therefore, I believe that this study would conscientise everyone, positively contribute to my personal development and to the development of my research participants as well. *The Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy* (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2012) states that the subject advisors need to create the opportunities for the curriculum development for teachers so that they become more effective when implementing it.

When I interacted with the teachers in my circuit, I have noted that they view subject advisors as people who lack capacity in various curriculum areas. Furthermore, there has been an outcry in some quarters that they only see the subject advisors in schools when they come to deliver the workbooks or handouts. This study assisted both the subject advisors and the teachers to narrow the gap that currently exists between them (teachers and subject advisors) and jointly come up with the mechanisms or recommendations that will positively change the curriculum implementation and curriculum delivery in schools. Meanwhile, the study also made the contribution to the debates on effective curriculum management and delivery and it can also serve as the yardstick to what is happening in other districts as well.

Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) state that the learning organisation is constantly and systematically reflecting on its own practice and making appropriate adjustments and changes as a result of new insights gained through reflection. My constant communication with the subject advisors enabled me to know the real problems they are experiencing when assisting the teachers thus developing a better understanding of their job description and on how they facilitate curriculum delivery.

Odhiambo and Hii (2012) affirm that instructional leadership stresses the inter-connection between the departmental officers and teachers that leads to the sound culture of teaching and learning in schools. Their shared views is more appropriate in the Australian context because their education system is more solid, organised and well managed unlike in our country where we are still recovering from the apartheid past, However, we are making inroads to reverse those imbalances.

Bush (2003) reiterates that the success or failure of public schools has been directly linked to the influence of the district officers including the subject advisors, particularly in the instructional arena. Therefore, I used the knowledge that I acquired as the former district Curriculum 2005 / National Curriculum Statement facilitator to advise the subject advisors on various education transformational matters rooted in democratic values as they are underpinned by the National Education Policy Act, 27 (1996). According to Zepeda (2008), education officials (subject advisors) provide a supportive environment for improving performance where the required standards are not met and enhance the capacity of teachers to apply the curriculum leadership and curriculum management competencies required in their positions. Further, the subject advisors are expected to lead, direct, manage, supervise and strengthen the quality of teaching and learning offered to learners.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The statement of the problem of this study is to establish the role and challenges associated with the subject advisors and how they navigate those challenges to support teacher instructional leadership practices.

1.4 Research objectives and critical questions

This study is underpinned by the following objectives:

- To explore the role subject advisors play in leading, managing and supporting instructional leadership among teachers in schools.
- To investigate the challenges that the subject advisors experiences as they support teacher instructional leadership practices.
- To explore how subject advisors navigate the challenges that they experiences as they support instructional practices in schools.

This study sought to answer the following critical questions:

- What is the role that the subject advisors play in leading and supporting instructional leadership among teachers in managing schools?

- Why is it so imperative that the subject advisors investigate the challenges that they experience as they support teachers instructional leadership practices?
- How do the subject advisors navigate the challenges that they experiences as they support instructional practices in school?

1.5 Definition of key concepts

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), a concept is defined as the word representing a particular idea more accurately. The concepts below are key to my study:

1.5.1 Subject advisors

The Employment of Educators Act (No 76 of 1998) specifies that the subject advisors facilitate curriculum delivery and provide guidance to institutions on policy formulation and implementation. In my study the subject advisors will use their curriculum expertise and skills to support school development activities based on needs which are in line with the principles and values of the applicable policy frameworks and plans like Integrated Quality Management Systems, Curriculum Assessments Policy Statements, etc.

1.5.2 Curriculum leadership

Sawyer (2007) states that the curriculum leadership is defined as connecting curriculum, instruction, assessment and evaluation in an effort to improve learning and understanding. This author's view clearly shows that the subject advisors are there to serve the particular purpose, that is, to provide curriculum leadership in schools, inspire and motivate people's behaviour so that they contribute towards the goals of the education department.

1.5.3 Management

Smith (1995) states that it is the process of working with and through staff, learners and resources to accomplish organisational goals. In addition, Bush (2003) affirms that four key managerial functions of the management process consist of planning, organising, motivating and controlling, therefore the subject advisors need to ensure that these are adhered to because they are the foundational competences of any organisation. In addition to that, *The Curriculum*

Management and Delivery Strategy (KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education, 2012), rightfully states that curriculum delivery and management requires teachers, relevant experts and subject advisors to work collaboratively to support teaching and learning in schools.

1.6 Literature review

Vithal and Jansen (1997) reiterate that the literature review demonstrates that the researcher has read extensively and intensively on the topic. The main purpose of the literature review is to have an overview of different perspectives about the research study. It helped to expand my knowledge and helps me with the valuable data about my study. Below I review international, continental and national literature regarding teacher instructional leadership practices.

Heikka, Waniganayake and Hujala (2013) state that instructional leadership embraces the importance of the collaboration and teamwork in the Australian learning organisations which requires total effort and commitment for everyone involved. If there is a lack of commitment and coordination to the above mentioned features then this will have negative consequences for the school's learning culture. Subject advisors need to be effective leaders that focus on learner achievement and teacher learning thus strengthening instructional leadership.

Sykes, Schneider, Plank and Ford (2009) give us the American perspective which says that the district officials (subject advisors) act as the state policy interpreters and policy enactors in an attempt to direct the work of schools by aligning the curriculum to meet the state standards and national assessments. This shows that districts in America have got more powers to develop policies but my main concern is the lack of curriculum management tracking part that they are playing to assist teachers to ensure that meaningful learning does take place. Furthermore, Sykes, Schneider, Plank and Ford (2009) state that district officials (subject advisors) main objective is to serve as the middle ground agencies that tends to build in hallmarks of professional community, including shared values, reflective dialogue, focus on student learning and collaboration in order to scale up the effective teaching practice that will produce the required results.

Hilty (2011) states that school based and office-based teachers must always provide teacher leadership by participating in the national educational projects, professional organisations and

external networks in order to build their capacity and become competent when they perform their tasks. This requires an education system that is more organised, planned, well monitored, and where there is a good coordinated system that supports all education activities taking place. Furthermore, the subject advisors must realise the importance of networking with the professional bodies so that they can build their professional base and strengthen the competency level of teachers.

1.7 Theoretical frameworks

This study was informed by the following theoretical frameworks: instructional and distributed leadership. These theories of leadership are relevant and gave me the broader view about my research study.

1.7.1 Instructional leadership

Naidu, Joubert, Mestry and Ngcobo (2008) reiterate that instructional leadership is an interactive, interdependent process that is utilised by education leaders who manage not only learning and teaching in schools, but also lead and manage people. Whereas, Hoadley and Ward (2009), state that instructional leadership is centred on core sets of practices for successful leadership: setting directions, developing people, redesigning and managing the organisation. I concur with the above notions but I need to stress that the good working relations between the subject advisors and teachers can be a contributing factor to determine whether there will be success or not. Therefore, this theory highlights the importance of having the shared vision and values where the teachers and subject advisors work as a unit to plan their work and execute it so that they can achieve the intended objectives.

1.7.2 Distributed leadership

Harris (2008) argues that the central notion is that this leadership is not the preserve of an individual but results from multiple interactions at different points in the organisation, therefore this theory was prevalent in my study because its strengths is on understanding leadership as dynamic organisational entity, embraces broad-based leadership where everyone becomes more responsible because everybody's contribution is valuable. This theory, emphasises that leaders

decentralise authority, ensure monitoring and evaluation of all curriculum activities and encourage participation of all role-players, as well as support and strengthen teacher instructional leadership practices in order to enhance organisational effectiveness which I think is so vital in my study.

1.8 Methodological approach

Bak (2004) states that the research design is a plan for collecting and analysing evidence that will make it possible for the investigator to answer whatever questions he or she has passed. Basically that meant that as the researcher, I needed to plan my work accordingly considering that I was going to be interacting with the different research participants. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) maintain that the research methodology is the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project. To some extent this approach dictates the particular tool the researcher selects in the study.

Patton (1990) affirms that a paradigm is a world view, a general perspective, a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world. Maree (2007) reiterates that there are four underlying paradigms for research, that is positivism, post-positivism or constructivist, interpretive and critical theory. Nevertheless, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) state that each paradigm has several basic beliefs that are ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology and these basic beliefs are still going to be explored further. This study fits in the interpretive paradigm because subject advisors interpreted, constructed different shared meanings with the researcher that strengthened the teacher instructional leadership practices.

The study befits the combination of purposive sampling and quota sampling which are non-probability samples in the study. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) affirm that in purposive sampling, the researcher hand-picks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgement. It focuses on specific issues and it provides greater depth to the study. Daniel (2012) states that quota sampling guarantees the inclusion or it is representative of members of different populations. This study focused on the subject advisors specialisations and ensured that both genders male and female are represented equally when conducting the interviews.

The data generation methods that I used were the interviews and the documents reviews. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) states that the interview is an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. They can be a valuable source of information provided they are used correctly. There was one-on-one interaction with four different subject advisors who specialise on all different subjects taught, that is Languages (Home Language and First Additional Language), Mathematics, Life Skills, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Technology, in order to get their own perspectives about their roles, challenges and on how they strengthen teacher instructional leadership practices in schools.

As the researcher I visited the subject advisors district offices on five occasions to carry out the research processes. The first visit introduced the study to the subject advisors and let them know the rationale of the whole research exercise. Then, I conducted the face to face interviews with the subject advisors specialising in different subjects, After some consultations with them, I developed an interview schedule that stipulated time, date, the subject advisors pseudonyms to be interviewed where each session took thirty to forty five minutes. The duration was two weeks because I interviewed at least two participants per week at a time convenient to them.

Another data generation method that was utilised in my study was the documents review. Hornsby (1987) states that document analysis is a systematic examination of instructional documents such as syllabi, assignments, lecture notes, and course evaluation results in order to identify instructional needs and challenges. I intended to critically examine and careful interpret the documents that were relevant to the study so that I could better view whether they are addressing the broad issues about the roles of subject advisors in strengthening teacher instructional leadership practices or not.

Flick (2007) states that qualitative data analysis is about explaining data, making sense of data in terms of participants' definition of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. I used the combination of one on one qualitative interviews and documents reviews to generate and analyse data. Four subject advisors and documents reviews are the key data sources mainly because the study was about them and the roles they played in shaping the teacher instructional leadership practices and the relevant documents they are utilising when they perform their professional functions. The subject advisors were selected because they are at the forefront of the whole research exercise, they supervise the taught curriculum in schools and they

provide skills development training through in-service education and training for teachers (*The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*, Department of Basic Education, 2013).

1.9 Outline of the study

Chapter One introduces the study. It outlines all the key features that were entailed in the study and also states its significance in the research by making brief comments about each feature.

Chapter Two reviews different literature relevant to the study. It also presented the theoretical frameworks that underpinned this study.

Chapter Three outlines the research design and methodology used in the study. Pertinent aspects regarding the research processes are also presented and it concludes by presenting the limitations of the study.

Chapter Four presents the data and analysis that was produced using the methodology described in Chapter Three.

Chapter Five presents the study summary, makes conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter provides an overview of what the research study is all about. I introduced the study, gave the purpose and the rationale of the study and outlined the objectives and the research questions. What was crucial about the study is that the key concepts have been defined, literature reviewed and theoretical frameworks briefly explained and mentioned the research designs and methodology used in the study. I mentioned the limitations as well as the delimitations of the study. Lastly gave the outline of the study. The next chapter focuses on the detailed review of the literature as well as mentioning the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that are relevant to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I provided an introduction to the study by briefly explaining the key features of the study. This chapter reviews national, continental, international literature and theoretical frameworks relevant to the study. Specifically, the chapter examines the roles of subject advisors in strengthening teacher instructional leadership practices in schools and also in creating the professional learning communities. Subject advisors and teachers are expected to have a mutual relationship for the effectiveness of the schools that will ultimately lead to quality teaching and learning in schools (*The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*, Department of Basic Education, 2013).

The Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2012) spells out that the curriculum delivery is the core function of the Department of Education. Subject advisors are properly the most important curriculum leaders that contribute to the school's academic achievement. However, their effectiveness is dependant on the manner they conduct themselves in assisting schools to achieve their instructional objectives and the way schools responds to their curriculum support. Therefore, subject advisors and teachers in schools need to develop a supportive culture where teachers obtain continuous support from their subject advisors in order to attain the organisational objectives. Furthermore, *The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (Department of Basic Education, 2013) affirms that this policy makes clear that the subject advisors must exhibit professional qualities when performing their essential function, which is to support schools to deliver the curriculum.

2.2 International literature on the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher Instructional leadership practices

Carnoy and Rhoten (2002) state that on-going evaluation as a means to investigating, analysing and improving teaching practice is a further critical area for teacher investment. Carnoy and Rhoten (2002) further stipulate, and say that the quality of national education systems is increasingly being compared internationally and this has placed increased emphasis on the national curriculum standards, testing and meeting standards by changing the way curriculum is delivered. It is this statement that drives me to look at some international studies that are relevant to my study on how their subject advisors (superintendent and district officials) in their international context strengthen instructional leadership in their respective teachers in schools. Drysdale and Gurr (2011) also mention the key features that make a highly successful organisation: that it is teacher-directed learning, explicit instruction, use of various teaching strategies and establishing very good relationships with students. These features are pillars of the effective organisation that is results-driven and goal-orientated. Therefore, it is essential that school leadership makes everyone to be accountable for their actions and create the positive climate that is conducive for sound teaching and learning that will enable teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge and experience when they perform their tasks.

Southworth (2013) states that inter-professional relations and reflection are critical to the school's success and that dealing with all education stakeholders, subject advisors included, is the key to effective leadership. Therefore, it is essential that the subject advisors must have good working relations with schools because that promotes professional dialogue which is not quite evident in our schools. Ongoing reflections need to occur on all levels and tend to improve the practice but everybody involved must be committed to it or else it will be a fruitless exercise. Subject advisors need to realise that their scope goes beyond running workshops. They need to reflect on their own practice and check whether they are making any impact in schools or not.

Hasbrouck and Denton (2005) point out that teachers often find change difficult and suggest various reasons for teachers' resistance to change, including a lack of adequate training and support or motivation; school climate and the principal's influence. I strongly feel that the subject advisors have a role to play in supporting principals and teachers by ensuring that they run advocacy workshops on any curriculum changes so that teachers will know the importance of

the paradigm shift thus knowing the rationale behind the change that needs to be effected. However, the schools must build a good rapport with their district offices especially the subject advisors so that any curriculum challenges that arise will be dealt with accordingly. In addition to that, Hilty (2011) states that district support is essential for continuing educational improvements and to motivate those less willing to change.

Further, Hasbrouck and Denton (2005) affirm that subject advisors focus on the vital part of continuous motivation to the actual implementers of the curriculum change, who are the teachers. To add on that, Hallinger (2009) argues that teaching and learning must be at the top of the priority list on the consistent basis for the departmental officials responsible for curriculum delivery. These key features about the subject advisors require the school management to have the shared vision about the school, give teachers holistic support, have the required resources that will enable teachers to perform their tasks with ease and maintain a culture of continuous learning to everyone (Hallinger, 2009). By doing, this everybody will be highly motivated and be geared to change thus boosting their work performances because both structures complement one another and they will realise that curriculum change implies a journey of learning. Through my observation of teachers, I need to indicate that after all that has been said, there are teachers who will always be reluctant to change, de-motivated and cannot implement the required curriculum changes irrespective of what has been said or done. However, on the other hand, there are teachers who are always willing to learn, enthusiastic, motivated and optimistic about the incoming changes that will further develop them.

Odhiambo and Hii (2011) put strong emphasis on the effective leadership and what is it that needs to be done by the teachers in schools and subject advisors to ensure that there is smooth flowing of the curriculum in schools. The focal point is that the strong district management structure filters down to the subject advisors so that they can help the school to achieve its intended objectives as it is one of the foundational competences of any school management. These shared views require instructional leaders who usually report on empirical evidence about its effectiveness on teaching and learning and reflect on learning (Hallinger, 2009). It will be immaterial to talk about the effective leadership if there is no cohesion between the main roleplayers. Furthermore, this will create uncertainty and a lack of direction. However, effective

leadership from both angles (schools and district office) will ensure the provision of quality teaching, thus benefitting the learners.

Hallinger (2009) embraces the principals as the instructional leaders who are crucial to school effectiveness, but did not mention the subject advisors as the valuable personnel that give guidance and support in curriculum implementation in schools. Instructional leadership is about establishing a climate of trust and ensuring good working relations between all major stakeholders in education, thus making it crucial to look at all management levels of education in order to ensure its effectiveness. Zepeda and Mayers (2008) share the view that these shared leadership responsibilities are about conducting staff development activities to ensure that high-quality learning and teaching happens in the school. Further, curriculum support is the most critical aspect of education management which means that every education structure need to play its part to check whether there is complementary relationship between the teachers and subject advisors.

Jones (2010) argues that using the current instructional technology makes the work of teachers much easier in American schools. Teachers called this 21st century learning which arouses much interest to the learners because they use latest technological resources like computers, interactive whiteboards, computer laboratories and internet to advance teaching and learning. Even the department officials (subject advisors) easily keep track of both teachers and learners performance because everything is recorded on the latest software's when they visit schools to offer instructional coaching to teachers. However, this is more appropriate in the American context because they are a well developed country and their schools are well resourced.

Turning into our context, we are still faced with so many technological challenges, inequalities especially in rural and township schools, which our government is still trying to redress in order to ensure that there is technological transformation and proper curriculum development in teaching and office based personnel. *Teacher Laptop Initiative*, set up by the Department of Basic Education (2010) to distribute computers to teachers and office based teachers was not a success due to exorbitant costs charged by the preferred suppliers. Nevertheless, some individual schools and subject advisors have taken the initiative to buy and use the latest technological resources to advance teaching and learning and much still needs to be done to train and capacitate teachers and office-based teachers in general on how to access information and

communication technological resources for teaching and learning as well as to use the information, communication and technology to extend and enrich educational experiences across the curriculum (White Paper on e- Education, 2004).

Similarly, Halverson, Grigg, Prichett and Thomas (2005) affirm that in the United States of America, Pearson school found in rural district with the limited resources forces the district to stretch personnel across schools. The Pearson principal is also the principal of five schools in the area, but the close cooperation between the district and the rural schools ensures that they achieved better 5th-grade test scores than New York City schools. Further, Halverson, *et al.*, (2005) mention that most impoverished schools; lowest achieving schools were responsible for the largest gains in maths and reading due to the fact that the district personnel worked closely in turning schools into learning organisations and also to introduce the standardised testing for schools. All this were made possible because there was a strong demand for schools to respond to external accountability measures set up by the state/ country. Clearly this is an indication that if the education department put so much effort, resources in schools and does not leave schools to operate in isolation, results are there to be seen by everyone. To add on that, Bush (2003) reiterates that all education leaders are ultimately responsible for improvements in student learning as well as changing the organisational conditions for improvements across schools.

Moreover, Harris (2008) claims that managing education and training comprises planning and coordinating learning and assessment systems, both at micro and macro levels. Halverson, *et al.*, (2005) argue that to turn schools into learning organisations, rural principals use the Data – Driven Instructional Systems (DDIS) as the tool to develop programmes and to create an information flow to schools. All schools were linked to this DDIS and it serves as the curriculum alignment, integration, instructional design and test preparation. This exercise makes the work of the district supervision much easier because the curriculum was synchronised and there was constant feedback from them.

As an individual, I find it strange that in the country (United States of America) that is viewed as economically powerful and the richest in the world, they have rural schools with the limited resources, where one principal is also heading five local schools. To me, that is the sign that even in the first world countries we still have underdeveloped schools that are still lacking in terms of adequate resources. This move shows that even in the USA, the wealth of the country is not

evenly distributed because some schools are still neglected and marginalised, but thanks to the total commitment and effort shown by the district personnel to make a strong statement on rural teaching and learning in schools.

Halverson, *et.al*, (2005) argue that the learning organisation occurs when priority is given to education management development, to ensure that teachers and learners achieve their potential though they do not have all the necessary equipment and resources, but with the teaching force that works together to resolve problems, many obstacles can be overcome. I strongly support their notion because the under resourced factor cannot determine the destiny of the school, but it is the commitment, passion and good working ethics of the teachers and subject advisors that will make the schools to prosper. To add on that, supportive approach by the subject advisors enables the schools to remain focused on what they want to achieve. Furthermore, Pillay and Govinden (2007) highlight the way teachers may work creatively within the constraints of the South African education system and against the negative impressions that presents counter-narratives of teachers' success, resistance and inventiveness. In other words, there are so many positive ways in which education personnel can defy the odds and recreate themselves and become agents of change.

Jones (2010) affirms that in the United States of America, school policies are reviewed at least on a biennial basis and they are broad enough to permit education administrators (though not specified as subject advisors) and teachers to interpret and adjust according to changing conditions. Nothing much is being said about the role of subject advisors in this article, except to say that they assisted teachers to interpret, suggests change in policies considering their context as well. But when it comes to curriculum practice management, nothing is being said about them. This answers that the American education system is progressive and it is able to produce skilled, competitive learners who can contribute to the global economy. It is quite interesting to note that the policies are constantly reviewed because to me that shows the effectiveness of their education system because they knew that policies tend to ensure the positive teacher-learner relationships without stifling creativity in instructional leadership. Reitzug, West and Angel (2008, p.704) state that the "districts in which most of our principals worked had provided extensive professional development for principals on professional learning community in recent years. Further than that, many principals cited such discussions with the teachers and team of teachers."

Moreover, this view is supported by Fraser, Reid and Mckinney (2007) whom they stated that teachers' professional learning whether intuitive or deliberate, individual or social, results in specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, or action of teachers and teachers professional development, takes place over a long period of time, resulting in qualitative shifts in aspects of teacher professionalism.

According to Fraser, *et.al.*, (2007), these professional development and professional learning are located in the concept of "teacher change" which requires everyone involved in teaching and learning to play his or her part, like in my case where subject advisors are expected to play the prominent role to empower their subordinates. Furthermore, they suggested that "teacher change" can be described in relation to learning, development, socialisation, growth, improvement, implementation of something new or different, cognitive and affective change and self-study. This exercise needs to be encouraged because the rationale of the districts conducting professional development workshops to principals, is for them to disseminate such relevant information to their subordinates. Through my observation and interaction with my fellow colleagues, they are rarely given that opportunity to share or discuss what transpired in those professional development meetings with their staff which means that they are moving in the opposite direction. Let me hasten to say that, irrespective of what is being done, there will always be teachers and subject advisors who are demotivated and cannot make the required change, but on the other hand there are teachers and subject advisors who want to learn and develop so that they can effect change. All this is part of human nature but we need not rest on our laurels if we need concrete change. We need to take them to task thus eventually benefitting from their inputs as well.

In addition, Jazzar (2004) affirms that the Superintendent Christopher Moser, was employed to raise state-wide test scores and increase teacher morale. Moser emphasised the value of each staff member to Unified School District by referring to each staff member as a member of a very important professional family. Under his leadership, learner achievement during the last 11 years has soared in the district. Principals as instructional leaders provide guidance support and accountability for the improvement of instruction leading to increases in learner achievement because they work tirelessly to ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place (Jazzar,

2004). Though he achieved his primary aim, I need to indicate that the actual implementers who made it possible were the teachers.

Therefore, Superintendent, Moser put systems in place like external accountability to the principals for their school actions. This move revitalises principals to always be vibrant and supportive to their subordinates. To further add, Ruff and Shoho (2005) mention that accountability not only provides a way of measuring the fit of curriculum programmes, but also the way of measuring the fit of teachers. In addition, Ruff and Shoho (2005) state that accountability is the way to measure or assess teachers. Reading the article, written by Jazzar (2004), it is clear to me that Superintendent Moser is so strategic in dealing with the principals and teachers because he realised that they were at the centre of professional development, thus needing his full support at all times.

When Superintendent Moser took over the Unified School District, state-wide test scores were far below in all other schools. The state legislature uses this state-wide test scores as the benchmark to assess whether the school is meeting the state standards or not. Jazzar (2004) points out that the state legislature passed the “school takeover legislation” where low performing schools were given an ultimatum to improve their state-wide test scores within three years or face closure. This idea brings high productivity and high levels of accountability to everyone involved provided there are adequate resources in the learning organisation because everyone is always alert and motivated to the cause.

Infact, I support Jazzar’s (2004) view because it brings the element of professionalism to the teaching profession and ensures the provision of quality teaching and learning. Our education is facing some huge challenges such as lack of indecisive management, too much union influence, teacher incapacity, low morale, etc. Despite comparatively high government expenditure which is 5-6 per cent of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) which is approximately R363 billion on 2012 budget alone, yet we are performing poorly in national tests such as the Annual National Assessment. Some schools are dysfunctional, there is poor learner performance and some learners cannot read or write (The Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2011). Considering the amount of money we are spending on education we should be producing competent, skilled people who will contribute to the country’s economy and play an instrumental role in forming small business enterprises thus creating more jobs for the unemployed.

Our Department of Basic Education needs to consider this Unified School District case study because it strengthens accountability and collaboration of all the main roleplayers. It will bring more stability and positively shake our education and improve our international ratings because education is at the heart of any country's economic development, provided there will be enough resources and there is spirit of corporation between the subject advisors and teachers in schools. All education personnel will be quite aware that failure to perform or meet the stated objectives will mean that their performance contracts will not be renewed. Reitzug, *et al.*, (2008) further mention that high-stakes accountability environment perpetuates more responsibility to instructional leadership.

This was a mammoth task, but Superintendent Moser uses his experience to continuously engage the principals on instructional leadership matters, to influence and to boost their morale so that they were going to have high self-esteem when they perform their tasks. He (Superintendent Moser) knew that people that were at the centre to turn things around and to fulfill his dream were the teachers and principals; he understood that schools need coherence leadership in order to succeed in their endeavours, which is the exact thing that happened during his reign of leadership. Crucially, Ruff and Shoho (2005) claim that traditionally, school leaders (principals and superintendents) as part of their responsibilities are asked to share power, they are simultaneously being held to higher standards of accountability and Superintendent Moser used that notion to its full effect because results are testimony to that.

Sharma (2012) gives us the principal's perspectives of instructional leadership practiced in four Asian countries, that is India, Malaysia, Thailand and United Arab Emirates that says focus must always be on student active teaching, supply teachers with resources and incentives to keep their focus on students. Whereas, Hallinger (2009) argues that the principal's role in instructional leadership is about defining the school's vision and mission statement, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate. Meanwhile, Tan (2012) describes the effective instructional leader as a principal performing at high levels in four areas that is resource provider, instructional resource, communicator and visible presence in school.

All the above mentioned attributes want leaders who are always prepared to provide curriculum leadership to their subordinates and even go beyond that. As much as these authors mentioned

their own perspectives about instructional leadership, to me it lacks some credibility because principals are not operating in a vacuum but; they are part of the education management structure. Therefore, subject advisors or superintendents need to be mentioned as the valuable people who facilitate curriculum delivery into schools thus impacting on principals to shine provided there is continuous support.

The common features about all these articles is about getting to know more about the role of subject advisors and on how they enhance effective teaching and learning in schools. Nothing much is being said about the role of subject advisors, but reading from the articles I have noted that these international countries use superintendents, central office leaders, district officials/district personnel as the people who monitor and support the implementation of the curriculum in schools and ensure that teachers have all the requisite curriculum and assessment documents for each and every subject. I have not come across the word subject advisors but their responsibilities are the same.

2.3 Continental literature on the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices

Mbeki (1999) makes the point that in this post-colonial period, African governments have used education as a means of forging national unity through curricular interventions, fostering intra-continental learning and curricular exchanges. Furthermore, *The Africa Region, Human Development Department: The World Bank* (2005) document states that education is central to development and it is critical to the Africa's attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. It is in this context, that I want to explore what some other African countries are doing with regard to their subject advisors (office based educators) in enhancing teacher instructional leadership practices.

Moswela (2010) states that the instructional supervision and school inspectorate is prevalent in Botswana schools and its primary aim is to ensure that schools become learning organisations and provide quality education that will ensure that all learners are developed so that they make a difference wherever they are. Teachers were having different views on the instructional supervision and school inspectorate stating that it was unfriendly, judgemental, unstructured and many were saying it is disruptive to their cause and their views were not even considered. This

clearly means that the teachers and head teachers were quite confused about the roles of the instructional supervisors whose primary aim is to give teachers assistance when they perform their tasks and inspectors who focus mainly on curriculum implementation as they were both coming from the Regional Office known as the field officers.

Moswela (2010, p71) claims that “a two-way exchange between inspectors and teachers need to be created so that classroom teachers do not feel abandoned or that their contribution is unimportant”. Essentially, Moswela (2010) states that the role of field officers in Botswana, though skewed towards inspection, touches on some development aspect of instructional supervision for teachers. Furthermore, Moswela (2010) mentions that teachers’ views on instructional supervision in Botswana are that it is not well structured as there is no clear policy on it and field officers who are supposed to offer professional guidance to teachers have not been effective in this regard.

The above mentioned comments show that instructional supervision in Botswana leaves so much to be desired. Teachers are so sceptical and they are unsure about its focus and development strategy. Therefore, this is an eye opener to our subject advisors to do their own self-introspection about their work performances and realise that there is a lot that they still need to uncover if they want teachers to take them seriously as people who can play a pivotal role facilitating curriculum delivery in schools.

Pansiri (2009) suggests that the school management team and senior teachers should take the lead in organising capacity building workshops in Botswana primary schools, but my own perspective is that teachers as well, must be given an opportunity to explore and facilitate workshops for the entire staff in order to build their self-esteem so that they become more assertive. This can be productive if the subject advisors can equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge. This exercise needs to be encouraged in all schools so that teachers can take more responsibility thus having the capable staff that will assist in school’s growth.

Similarly, Rulinda, Role and Mukewa (2013) in their Rwandan study point out that those school facilities facilitate effective teaching and learning. I disagree with their views simply because I have seen the rural schools that have defied all odds with old dilapidated buildings and no facilities but they have consistently produced high quality results especially in Grade 12. There is

constant reflection and communication between the school and the subject advisors. This shows that effective subject advisors as instruction leaders won't be discouraged by the prevailing conditions, but it will inspire them to do better.

Mbeki (1999) claims that educational change in Africa will only begin to play a significant part in development if there is highly skilled educational personnel, adequate funding and access widened at all departmental levels. In addition to that, Checchi (2006) states that education development remains the vehicle for social-economic development and fosters intra-continental learning and educational exchanges. When I relate both these views to my context, it is quite obvious that African countries need to channel more resources to education if they wish to produce highly skilled people who will contribute in the global labour markets.

There must be strong education management that will ensure that the curriculum is implemented accordingly. With regard to my study, it is so essential that the subject advisors have a role to play in our education because they are the immediate personnel closer to schools, though nothing is mentioned about their specific roles and responsibilities when reading the articles. When our African intellectuals like Mbeki and Checchi talk about education change and education development, they clearly state that our African governments need to reinforce their office personnel so that they are going to professionally assist schools and hold them more accountable for their actions (Mbeki, 1999).

Nahum (2011) claims that inferior education provided to Africans posed a serious challenge to the leadership and management of schools during the colonial era. Since Namibia were liberated in 1990, more than two decades in the democratic order. He felt that the study was going to give him some indications on whether there was any progress on school management or not. The writer of the article who is now the Inspector of Education did the study on the instructional leadership in a Namibian rural school. Based on his findings, Nahum (2011) emanated that the school was still facing challenges on the learner indiscipline, poor time management, teacher incapacity. It was so strange to me that teachers can mention the above challenges to him, but it clearly shows that teachers were not supported enough by the higher office in education. That study lacks some credibility because it was going to be crucial to hear his curriculum management viewpoint as the Inspector of Education on how they go about strengthening teacher instructional leadership practices in schools.

Owusu (2013) states that instructional leadership is about developing leadership teams. He further states that there is the need to support distribution of leadership by reinforcing the concept of leadership teams. Therefore, leadership training and development must be extended to school heads, their deputies and potential future leaders in the school. Also on that point, Rulinda, *et al.*, (2013) argue that it is so essential to collectively share the objectives with the teaching staff in order to meet the school expectations. Both these views highlights the importance of working collaboratively so that people are going to take ownership for their actions and enhances their performance which I think is significant for the subject advisors to accomplish the curriculum goals. I fully agree with both author's views, but inability to mention senior education structures or subject advisors in their articles raises so many unanswered questions about the crucial part played by the subject advisors in Ghana and Rwanda respectively, if there is any.

Pansiri (2009) reiterates that in Botswana The Ministry of Education re-organised the education and formed the Primary School Management Development Project with the primary aim to build capacity of the School Management Team and it was further reinforced with the creation of thirty new professional advisory positions in Ministry of Education for trained personnel to support School Management Teams and teachers in carrying out the curriculum implementation. This clearly illustrates that the Ministry of Education wanted to strengthen the education by getting those professional advisors on board to assist the curriculum implementers. Crucially, the most interesting part was that this project was so coherent and interlinked because it filtered down to schools where the School Management Team cascades the curriculum information down to teachers. Then the professional advisors support teachers in terms of curriculum leadership and implementation. Even our subject advisors can learn from this Botswana study that education is an interdependent process that requires all levels of education to work as a unit to enhance the teacher instructional leadership practices in schools.

The professional advisors looked beyond the curriculum delivery; they also focused on developing teacher interpersonal skills like good human relations and cooperation, conflict management and delegation (Pansiri, 2009). Furthermore, teachers were quite excited about this skills initiative programme because it was going to further improve their instructional practice. I can applaud this move by the professional advisors as well, but I will further explain some of

these attributes which are conflict management and delegation. Moswela (2010) emphasise that conflict is predictably part of a school's functioning. This implies that no teacher can permanently escape conflict in the school environment. Due to this, the ability to deal effectively with conflict is a key aspect of managerial success. Whereas, Pansiri (2009) states that the conflict management includes activities or techniques that involve the resolving of conflict. Those three ways of managing conflict are peaceful co-existence, compromise and problem solving. This leads me to say that subject advisors must be able to handle curriculum issues professionally because they can obstruct teaching and learning aims if they are left unattended. Subject advisors must view conflict seriously because they can make or break the learning organisation on its mission to support instructional leadership.

According to Hornsby (1987) to delegate means to entrust or appoint a representative to a meeting or to perform a task. Bringing that to the context of my study, delegating can promote a sense of responsibility, ongoing skills development and develop a culture of trust and support. This attribute can assist the subject advisors to develop the potential and abilities of their servicing teachers on various curriculum matters, but I must hasten to say that subject advisors must be objective, consistent and fair when delegating tasks to teachers because most teachers want to be given tasks to perform so that they will feel that their input is being valued. Inability to delegate appropriately can cause unnecessary tension amongst teachers.

Wanzare (2012) states that the Ministry of Education in Kenya established the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards to check that the national curriculum is being implemented, teaching and learning is actually taking place and educational standards are being met. Furthermore, Chabala (1994) claims that these Quality Assurance and Standards Officers conducted these external supervision to observe classroom teaching by individual teachers to assess their professional competence and to identify their curricular needs. In view of the above, subject advisors must create the good atmosphere for the supportive subject advisor-teacher interactions so that can be translated to productive teaching and learning.

In terms of the African articles that I have read, I have noted that they use the words such as professional advisors, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, government education officers field officers and inspectors to describe the similar roles done by the subject advisors to strengthen the provision of quality education in our African schools.

2.4 National literature on the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices

In the State of the Nation Address presented to the Joint Sitting of Parliament in Cape Town on the 3rd of June 2009, *Curriculum News: Planning for 2010 and Beyond* (Department of Basic Education, 2009) the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Jacob Zuma, stated that “Education will be the key priority for the next five years, we want our education officials, teachers, learners and parents and society at large to work together with government to turn our schools into thriving centres of excellence.” When I unpack and put this remarkable statement into the context of my study, I can simply say that the ideal dream of the President of our country is to see all the main roleplayers consistently working together to achieve school success. Therefore, this study will also enlighten me to see whether the subject advisors are exactly making their contribution to support teaching and learning which can in turn lead schools to become centres of academic excellence.

In terms of *The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (Department of Basic Education, 2013) it provides a common approach for the subject advisors to support schools to deliver the curriculum. Further, it states that they (subject advisors) are expected to assist all education institutions to receive the services they need to improve education provision and quality. Yes, there is a difference between the theory, practice and reflection. In terms of the theory, it gives some clarity on subject advisors role but it depends on them to actually perform because the policy cannot give the guarantors that the schools will function well. Through my observation, there is a lot that still needs to be done with regard to curriculum support and observation and there are so many subject advisor vacancies that remain unfilled since the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has put a moratorium on all office-based educator vacant posts and (HRM Circular No. 06 of 2013) is testimony to that.

Christie (2010) argues that educational change in the post apartheid era is important. It is so imperative that the departmental officials (subject advisors) have a greater understanding of their roles in transforming education so that it can meet national goals and objectives. Furthermore, they must understand the legislation that are pertinent to education so that they can help teachers to implement new policies that will assist them to be effective school managers that are proactive, visionary and goal-orientated but also work with all stakeholders to achieve the school's

set goals. Moreover, Van Deventer and Kruger (2003) claim that principals as instructional leaders play the multifaceted tasks that create a school environment in which teaching and learning can effectively be realised.

Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaul and Armstrong (2011) on their *Report for the National Planning Commission* mention of how the mediating layer of the districts should function and stated that the district officials should facilitate curriculum communication and information sharing between the authorities and schools. In terms of their report, they even stated that so many ways of strengthening schools remain largely unexplored. These views, clearly state that the district offices are the immediate arm of the government that is closer to schools that can be able to detect whether the *National Planning Commission* education standards are being adhered to or not (Berg, *et al.*, 2011). Those educational standards are (a) strengthening relationships of accountability and support amongst stakeholders throughout the school system; (b) sharpening accountability through better information to parents and education authorities; (c) improve understanding of the language issues; (d) improve the quality of Early Childhood Development facilities. These educational standards will present a strong break from the divisive, discriminative past and sought to create teachers who embraces democratic values and collective leadership and who know the importance of education in our country. Hence, the government needs to invest a lot in subject advisors because they will be able to immediately assist and intervene in the under-performing schools in order to meet the set *National Planning Commission* education standards. To concur with these statements, Manuel (2011) affirms that the National Planning Commission envisions a South Africa where opportunities are available for everyone and states that we must improve the quality of education thus ensuring that more people are working. Quality education will spark a cycle of development that expands opportunities, build capacities and raises living standards for everyone.

Nieman and Monyai (2006) claim that transfer of learning is another form of productive teaching and learning and it occurs when education officials always point out to learners the application value of everything they do, or ask the learners to explain how they can apply their newly acquired knowledge in their everyday lives or in the real world. This application can either reflect negatively or positively. Importantly, that means that subject advisors are also expected to play the role of mediators of learning in order ensure that meaningful learning is taking place.

Both of them need to demonstrate sound knowledge of subject content and various principles, strategies and resources appropriate to teaching in a South African context.

The Action Plan to 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025 (Department of Basic Education 2010, p7) is the Department of Education's strategy to strengthen weak areas in the education system that has been identified as needing support. Goal 27 "highlights the importance of improving the frequency and quality of monitoring and support services provided by district offices to schools". It gives us the broader view of what the government wants to achieve and the targets we want to achieve as part of the Schooling 2025 vision. But it did not mention the specific roles to be played by the district personnel (subject advisors). However, it gives us the picture of the Department of Basic Education's shared vision to improve the quality of education moving forward.

Similarly, Soobrayan (2012) states that the subject advisors (district officers) are key to teachers understanding the strategic importance of effective utilisation of Learning and Teaching Support Materials in the classrooms and added that the district officials (subject advisors) needed to strengthen procurement and supply of these materials, therefore all these departmental documents must be easily accessible and utilised appropriately because they serve as the tool to give knowledge and to empower teachers in their respective schools, especially in those rural and township schools.

Hoadley and Ward (2009) point out that the departmental officials (subject advisors), key foundational competences that they need to focus on with the intention to build teachers self-esteem are personal beliefs concerning teaching, curriculum management, classroom management and professional growth, therefore capabilities on these values contribute to the holistic development of both the subject advisors and teachers at the school and enables them to be able to critically engage and be self-reflective practitioners.

The Schooling Reform is Possible: Lessons for South Africa from international experience (2011) argues that South Africa will not succeed in reforming its public schooling system if it continues to have teachers and education officials who are present only three days a week, but remain employed and receive the same pay as everyone else. The right to fire and hire, and of their superiors to fire principals if necessary, should be reinforced. Yes, indeed our government

needs to review this act of misconduct as it stated in the Employment of Educators Act, 76 (1998) Section 18 (j) “ absents herself or himself from work without a valid reason or permission” as a matter of urgency because this crippled our education and it impacts negatively to the actual cause of teaching and learning. The government needs to introduce tougher laws to deal with this scourge and try to minimise the powers of union activism because it also contributes to this unnecessary situation. Absenteeism is the contributing factor to the high failure rate or low performing schools. Therefore, subject advisors need not fall into this trap because it will compromise their work, thus failing to meet the set departmental objectives.

According to Msila (2005), a principle that underlies African leadership and management is called ubuntu, which is a saying that means, “A person is a person through other human beings” or “ Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu” in Xhosa. Furthermore, Mbigi and Maree (2005) argue that the African village is based on mutual trust, respect and care and they maintain that these are elements that modern South African learning organisations should strengthen and covert into a competitive edge. This is supported by Khoza (1994) who opines that ubuntu has practical implications for the workplace. We as African leaders (researchers, subject advisors and teachers included) need to revitalise this principles of African leadership because they can also play an important role in re-energising all the major roleplayers and further enhance effective leadership and management in schools. In terms of African tradition, a person who is a leader is supposed to give hope and direction, thus I am throwing a challenge to the subject advisors to exercise this Afro-centric approach to leadership and management when they execute their roles to support teacher instructional leadership practices in schools.

The Preamble of the South African Schools Act, 84 (1996) states that this country requires a new education system for schools which will redress past injustices in education provision. This leads me to say that after the advent of democracy in 1994, new legislation pertinent to education were passed to address the imbalances created by the apartheid order, thus transforming education system that will overcome the curricular divisions of the past. Furthermore, the subject advisors were introduced by the Department of Basic Education to especially assist the previously disadvantaged schools by ensuring that the education served as the tool to transform society. Subject advisors also known as senior education specialists in the South African context are a new concept in our education as they were introduced after the advent of democracy in April

1994. They mainly focus on the provision of common curriculum framework for curriculum management and effective implementation for all schools in our province (*The Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy*, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2012). Based on articles that I have read, I need to indicate that this educational concept “subject advisors” is still not a common feature but when reading the articles I was able to diagnose that they were referring to the district personnel responsible for the curriculum delivery. In that regard, words such as district officials, educational officials are mostly used in my study.

Historically, subject advisors were non-existent during the apartheid era in former previously disadvantaged schools. People who were responsible for curriculum support were school inspectors though their intention was too judgemental and scary to teachers and not so developmental, Therefore, this Department of Basic Education policy moves need to be applauded because it further clarifies its obligation to say that education is the priority of our government (Motshekga, 2012).

2.5 Role of subject advisors in creating Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s)

Doolittle, Sudeck and Rattigan (2009, p. 305) state that “the learning community classroom functions in partnership with the entire school community, and also with the stakeholders outside the school building”. Whereas, Huggins, Scheurich and Morgan (2011) mention that one of the most promising ways of creating school reform is through transforming schools into community-like organisations often called professional learning organisations. Therefore, the subject advisors must note that they have a role to play in ensuring that these professional learning communities are a focus. There is sense of direction and serve the particular purpose since they are the link between the Provincial Education Department, the schools and public at large (*The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*, Department of Basic Education, 2013).

Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2010) reiterate that the key attribute of the professional learning communities is that it enables all the roleplayers to respond quickly to unpredictable and changing environments. Furthermore, they put more emphasis on the strong and consistent focus on teaching and learning. Though, the points are also crucial in enhancing teachers work

performance at a school level, the subject advisors need to utilise this opportunity to form these learning communities or activate the ward clusters in their respective districts in order to build strong human/ working relations and contribute to school development and assist teachers to engage in professional development activities that will enable them to acquire new curriculum knowledge and additional skills (*Integrated Quality Management Systems*, Education Labour Relations Council, 2003).

Huggins, *et al.*, (2011) argue that the professional learning communities are a good platform for the subject advisors to explore and to advance their curriculum objectives and most importantly, bring teachers together in order to work as a unit. Moreover, Van Deventer and Kruger (2003) claim that teachers must realise that learners must be at the centre of any curricular activity taking place and must establish a spirit of corporation among learners and staff. The above mentioned points are crucial in school effectiveness but the active involvement of subject advisors can further boost teachers to raise the standards and able to meet the set objectives. My own perspective on the matter is that the subject advisors need to be at the forefront of the creation of the professional learning communities because they can serve as the supporting and monitoring wing to schools to ensure that there is proper implementation of the curriculum.

2.6 Theoretical frameworks

This study was underpinned by the following two theories: instructional and distributed leadership theories and are discussed below.

2.6.1 Instructional leadership theory

Tan (2013) specifically states that the instructional leaders must be strong, directive leaders who can turn their schools around, build a competitive school culture focused on learning, be orientated towards academic goals, coordinate, control, supervise and develop curriculum and instruction and work hard with teachers to enhance learners outcomes. However, Sharma (2012, p.17) gives us her perspective that read thus “Show me a good school and I’ll show good principal”. In light of this statement, it is necessary to link instructional leadership perspective with principalship context to say that the school can shine provided its leader has sound

knowledge of curriculum and instruction, creative thinking skills as well as good communication skills. I want to go a step further and say that the subject advisors need to be visible, exert themselves more on their work so that their names are going to be mentioned thus getting credit when the school does well.

Hallinger (2009) broadly defines instructional leaders as the people who in the line of duty observed teachers in their classrooms, the sole aim of that classroom visit was to develop teachers and to check whether the teacher does demonstrate adequate knowledge of the subject and does he/she use this knowledge effectively to create meaningful experiences for learners and it was something that has been discussed with teachers prior to the visit. In terms of, The Employment of Educators Act 76 (1998) School Management Team (Principal, Deputy Principal and Head of Department) members must have scheduled visits and unscheduled visits to their subordinates to see that the curriculum is delivered in a proper manner and in accordance with approved policies.

There are four instructional leadership models that are so informative, directive and beneficial to my study. These instructional leadership models mainly deal with the practices and processes a person needs to lead a school effectively. Firstly, is Southworth's (2002) instructional leadership model, it is prevalent into my study because it uses three different strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school and they read as follows: modelling, monitoring and professional dialogue and discussion. Secondly, is Hallinger and Murphy's model (1985) of instructional leadership. It incorporates a number of practices and consists of three broad categories of leadership which read thus: defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting the school climate. Thirdly, it is Murphy's model (1996). Murphy (1990) provides a systematic and comprehensive review of instructional leadership in his synthesis of research findings from the effective schools, school improvement, staff development and organisational change. His framework consists of four dimensions and they read as follows; developing mission and goals, managing the educational production function, promoting an academic learning climate and developing a supportive work environment.

Fourthly, it is Weber's model. Weber (1996) identified five essential domains of instructional leadership: defining the school mission, managing the curriculum and instruction, promoting a positive learning climate, observing and improving instruction and assessing the instructional

programme. In all these instructional leadership models (Southworth, 2002; Hallinger & Muphy, 1997; Murphy, 1990; Weber, 1996) some key similarities were eminent from the above models. All four models briefly state the significance of instructional leaders defining and communicating goals, monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process, and promoting and emphasising the importance of professional development. The above mentioned models have key attributes that are relevant to my study. However, the one that gives me an in-depth perspective and is most appropriate to my study is Weber's model (1996). Further, I am going to utilise Hallinger and Murphy's model (1985) to a limited extent in my study.

Weber's (1996) model of instructional leadership is used in my study to analyse data. The subject advisors need to identify themselves as the personnel that complement the work done in schools so that the schools can focus on their core mission, which is sound teaching and learning in schools. The second domain is about managing curriculum and instruction which is the key part in ensuring effectiveness of the curriculum implementation. Furthermore, *The Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy* (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2012) states that one of the subject advisors responsibilities is to visit and observe at least one classroom activity per grade and a lot still needs to be done in order for this to be a reality. The third domain is about promoting a positive climate. Though the subject advisor's are not permanently stationed in schools, no one disputes the fact their continuous interaction with teachers perpetuate a healthy relationship, order and discipline and high professional standards amongst teachers.

The fourth domain is observing and improving instruction. This domain creates a good platform for both the subject advisors and teachers to engage in the professional developmental matters. Hence, *The Integrated Quality Management Systems* (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003) also states that the district officials need to visit schools and ensure that they observe lessons, give constructive feedback to teachers and further explore on curriculum matters so that it will enhance teachers' competences and become more productive. The last domain of instructional leadership is assessing the instructional programme. Both teachers and the subject advisors have the responsibility to ensure that they adhere to the management processes which consist of planning, organising, motivating and evaluating when performing their professional tasks. Therefore, this domain will enable me as the researcher to assess whether the subject

advisors work is effective or not and for the subject advisors to assess whether their curriculum supportive role in schools is paying dividends or not. Weber's (1996) model is illustrated in the Table below.

TABLE ONE

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

The above Table is adapted from Weber's (1996) Instructional Leadership Framework

2.6.2 Distributed leadership theory

This leadership theory incorporates the notion of multiple leaders who interact with followers in dynamic ways of thinking about the school leadership and management (Spillane, 2006). Furthermore, Gronn (2000, p. 324) mentions that the leadership within this approach is “fluid and emergent rather than as a fixed phenomenon” and involves teachers at various times as both leaders and followers working together to evolve problems and accomplish tasks. This theory is applicable to my study because subject advisors and teachers are expected to play a significant role in taking curriculum decisions that will impact on their work. There is evidence that opportunities are going to be given to involve subject advisors views on how they support teacher instructional leadership practices so that they can be seen as people who serve a particular purpose rather than the education personnel who are the creation of the hierarchy of control and supervising.

The practice of distributed leadership is also viewed as fundamental to the realisation of another global concept, that of schools as “learning organisation”, Senge (1990, p. 3) a learning organisation is one “where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together”. Therefore, this theory will be more prevalent on my study because its strengths is on understanding leadership as dynamic organisational entity, embraces broad based leadership where everyone becomes more responsible because everybody’s contribution is valuable.

These forms of leaders are always visible and will stand up to be counted rather than hide behind their troops. They show by their attitudes and actions how everyone else should behave. They also make continued efforts to motivate and rally their followers. Perhaps more than other approaches, they are people-oriented and believe that success comes first and last through deep and sustained commitment (Harris, 2008). Meanwhile, Bennet, Harvey, Wise and Woods (2003, p.3) suggest that this theory is a way of thinking about leadership which can be described as “not something done by an individual to others but rather an emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise”. This theory emphasises that these leaders like to take initiative, empower the subordinates, decentralise authority, ensure monitoring and evaluation of all curriculum activities and encourage participation of all role-

players who are subject advisors to support teacher instructional leadership practices in order to enhance organisational effectiveness which I think is vital to my study.

The interesting part about this form of leadership is that it enriches personal reflections on work and provides the teachers with suggestions from peers on how to refine their teaching practices and they get the opportunity to openly state their views to the senior management. Notwithstanding, Spillane (2006) leaders and followers are involved in the decision making and there is a two-way communication process which I think will be more suited to my study. It is so imperative that the subject advisors must realise the importance of sharing their curriculum expertise with the teachers because this will enhance their foundational competences and improve their knowledge base.

2.7 Chapter summary

In this chapter international, continental and national literature was reviewed. Further, theoretical frameworks such as instructional, transformational and distributed leadership theories were explored on how the subject advisors execute their roles in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices in schools. In the next chapter, the research design and methodology will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored different literature and theoretical frameworks that serve as the basis of the study. In doing this, I also discussed the role of the subject advisors in creating professional learning communities. This study is about examining the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices. This chapter outlines the research design and methodology of the study; it further discusses the paradigms in research; sampling; data generation methods and procedures. It also discusses the issues of trustworthiness; ethical considerations and delimitations as well as the limitations of the study.

3.2 Research design and methodology

A summary of the research design and methodology utilised in this study is presented as follows:

3.2.1 Research design

Maree (2007) describes a research design as a strategy which moves from underlying philosophical assumptions to specify the selection of participants, data gathering techniques and data analysis to be done. Moreover, Babbie and Mouton (1998) state that research design is where the researcher explains why certain methods are used and what type of data is to be captured. The research design helps to indicate the direction to be followed when generating data and how it will be analysed. Basically this means that as the researcher, I need to plan my work accordingly considering that I will be interacting with the different participants to acquire data.

This study is located within the qualitative case study design. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) state that the case study is the study of a case in context and it is important to set the case within its context. Furthermore, De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005) argue that the case study research serves the purpose of facilitating the researcher's gaining of knowledge about

social issues. In terms of Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) there are three types of case studies; that is intrinsic case study, instrumental case study and collective case study but the one that is used in this study is intrinsic case study. An intrinsic case study is a study that is undertaken because one wants to have a better understanding of the particular case (Stake, 2005). An intrinsic case study was used in this research because I wanted to obtain information about social issues that talk about the role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices. Pertaining to the context of my study, I interacted with the subject advisors to get some information with regard to their operational scope and the challenges that they encounter when they perform their professional tasks.

3.2.2 Methodology

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) state that the research methodology is the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project. To some extent this approach dictates the particular tools the researcher may select in the study. Anderson (1998) points out that there are different methodologies that the researchers use when conducting the research, and they include qualitative, quantitative and mixed forms of inquiry. Similarly, Mertens (1998) affirms that the researchers adopt a qualitative, a quantitative or a multimethod mode of inquiry in order to add depth and details to findings. Flick (2007) mentions that the qualitative research emphasises elaborate description of social or instructional settings. It was the qualitative research that is more appropriate for the study that I undertook.

The study uses the qualitative research methodology. Corbin and Strauss (2008) argue that the qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than test variables. Whereas, Mertens and McLaughlin (2004) claim that qualitative research is an approach to research that uses methodologies designed to provide rich, contextualised picture of a social phenomenon. I utilised the interviews and documents reviews as the means to generate data in this study. I engaged the subject advisors to state their own professional functions and how they go about addressing the challenges that they experiences when they perform their tasks.

3.3 Research paradigm

Guba and Lincoln (2000) claim that a paradigm is a basic set of beliefs, a set of assumptions we are willing to make, which serve as the touchstones in guiding research activities. Maree (2007) states that there are four underlying paradigms for research on which the researchers can opt to position themselves that is positivism, post-positivism, constructivist or interpretive and critical theory. The study fits in the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm allowed me to understand how the subject advisors make meaning of their roles as people who are expected to support teacher instructional leadership practices in schools. Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) state that each paradigm has several basic beliefs that are ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology.

Ontology: Researchers within this paradigm believe that reality is socially constructed and as the result there are many ways of viewing the world (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). *Epistemology*: They hold the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed by those in the research process and that it is the duty of the researcher to understand the complex experiences from the point of view the participants (Mertens, 1998). *Methodology*: How do we know the world, gain knowledge of it (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000)? In terms of my study, I utilised the qualitative research methodology to explore the social phenomena. *Axiology*: Focus on the principles and meanings in conducting research, and the ethics that govern these, that is respect and promotion of social justice (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

Mertens (1998) affirms that the basic assumption of interpretive paradigm is that knowledge is socially constructed by those in the research process and that the inquirer and the inquired person influence each other. Furthermore, Babbie and Mouton (1998) mention that in the interpretive paradigm, the focus is on harnessing and extending the power of ordinary language and expression to help us understand the social world we live in rather than on isolating and controlling variables. In the study, subject advisors answered the interview questions, interpreted the Department of Basic Education policies and also talked about their professional experiences.

3.4 Sampling

I used the combination of purposive sampling and quota sampling which are non-probability samples in the study. These two samples satisfied the needs of the study. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) state that purposive sampling allows the researchers to pick informants using his or her judgements to choose participants for specific qualities they bring to the study. That view is shared by Burns (1998) who indicates that the purposive sampling enables the researcher to select the participants on the basis of their experiences and knowledge they have. For this study, four subject advisors who specialised in different subjects offered in the General Education and Training Band were selected on the basis of their experiences as participants and also talk about their scope of work. Mason (2002) further mentions that it is important for the qualitative researchers to understand the setting being studied. Therefore, qualitative researchers typically deal with small purposefully selected samples that can enrich the data. Subject advisors' samples provided me with the relevant data and informative thoughts that advanced my understanding of the roles of subject advisors in enhancing teacher instructional leadership practices.

Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) signify that quota sampling seeks to give the proportional weighting to selected factors (strata) which reflects their weighting in which they can be found in the wider population. Maree (2007) shares the same sentiments with Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) that the researcher has to identify categories of people that need to be in the sample and the required number (quotas) in these categories. Therefore, I ensured that both males and females are represented equally in the study in order for them to state their views during the interviews. I also considered the subject advisors' specialisations in order to ensure that balanced views are communicated thus having the holistic perspective about the rationale of the study.

3.5 Data generation methods

The data generation methods that I used in the study are the semi structured interviews and documents review and these are discussed below:

3.5.1 Semi structured interviews

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) point out that the interviews are a particular kind of conversation between the researcher and the interviewee that require active asking and listening. In addition, Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2006) claim that the interview constitutes learning process for both the interviewee and the interviewer, because that conversation brings especially the experiences of the interviewee and in the meantime the interviewer use this opportunity to further advance the research process. Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) mention different types of interviews that can be used to acquire data from various sources. The one that is most appropriate for my study is semi-structured interviews. Taylor (2006) affirms that semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to use a list of prompts he or she wishes to explore. To further add on that, De Vos, *et al.*, (2005) state that these forms of interviews allow the researcher to explain the questions to the participants and ensure that they understand what is required of them. In terms of my study, semi structured interviews attempted to provide a contextual understanding of the complex factors that the subject advisors encounter when they perform their roles and functions and the exact things that they do to strengthen teacher instructional leadership practices in schools.

All the interviews were voice-recorded. It was imperative for me to voice-record the conversation because it helped me to have accurate records of what transpired during the interview process and to keep a record of the interview without having to be distracted by detailed note keeping (TerreBlanche & Durrheim, 2002). Most importantly, it assisted me to have the whole content of the discussion; to have an in-depth analysis of the entire interaction and be able to make informed perspectives about their strengths and shortcomings when they perform their professional responsibilities.

3.5.2 Documents review

Besides the semi-structured interviews, another data generation method that I utilised in my study is documents reviews. Hornsby (1987) clearly indicates that document review is a systematic examination of instructional documents that guide teachers when they perform their functions. Key documents such as the Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts (2013), Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy (2012), Integrated Quality Management Systems (2003), District Improvement Plan (2011-2013), and Subject

Advisor's minute books were some of the documents that were under scrutiny as they form an important form of data in my qualitative research. Bell (2005) affirms that documents reviews help the researcher to check the reliability of the evidence obtained through the interviews because some data might not be revealed in interviews. Furthermore, Duff (2007) states that documents analysis solicit a comprehensive view of the case being studied. These views clearly show that document reviews served as the supplementary form of knowledge about my study and I critically reviewed them to check whether they are guiding the subject advisors to perform their tasks to support teaching and learning in schools. I focused mainly on the latest and relevant written documents and minutes describing the subject advisors' role as well as their work performances. This move helped me to read, understand and critically analyse the data that was at my disposal so that I can have the complete picture about the role of subject advisors the challenges they encounter and how do they overcome those challenges.

3.5.3 Data analysis

Creswell (2008) states that qualitative data analysis requires understanding of how to make sense of the text and images so that the researcher can form answers to his/her research questions. Moreover, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) state that qualitative data analysis requires a great amount of methodological knowledge and intellectual competence. It is in this context, which I want to mention Creswell's (2008) six steps commonly used in analysing qualitative data because they are going to be helpful to me when analysing the study. *Firstly*, transcription or typed notes from the interviews. *Secondly*, simultaneous process of analysing while you are also collecting the data. *Thirdly*, cycle back and forth between data collection and analysis. *Fourthly*, develop a deeper understanding about the information supplied by your participants. *Fifthly*, it is an eclectic process, there is no single accepted approach to analyse data. *Lastly*, qualitative research is an "interpretive" research in which one makes personal assessment to a description that fits the situation (Creswell, 2008).

All the above mentioned steps are so crucial because they guided me to realise that it was so important to transcribe the data in order not to misrepresent the views of the interviewee, as the researcher I used my research competence to analyse and compare data whilst still generating it. I also asked the participants to give me some clarity, fill the gaps on their data whilst the interviews proceed. During the interviews I constantly reflected on the database in order to have

the thorough understanding of their viewpoints. Four subject advisors and documents review are the key data sources in the study. The focus was on their roles that they are playing in shaping teacher instructional leadership practices and to check whether the relevant documents explicitly explained the roles that they are expected to perform in supporting teaching and learning in schools. Lastly, I made my own analysis and interpretation about the entire study based on the data that I have acquired and also note that the subject advisors are expected to be the vital link to support schools to deliver the curriculum effectively (*The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*, Department of Basic Education, 2013).

3.6 Issues of trustworthiness

Maree (2007, p.80) states that when qualitative researchers speak of research “validity and reliability” they are usually referring to the research that is credible and trustworthy. Most importantly, La Blanca (2010) defines trustworthiness as a demonstration that evidence for results reported is sound when the argument made based on the result is strong. Furthermore, Lincoln and Guba (2000) mention credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as key criteria of trustworthiness in this qualitative research study. Credibility refers to the ability of the researcher to produce findings that are convincing and believable (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Different data sources, which were semi-structured interviews and documents reviews, were the determining factor whether the data was credible or not. Therefore, it was imperative that my viewpoints, analysis and interpreting data helped to improve their practice as subject advisors as well.

Lankshear and Knobel (2004) state that transferability is achieved through producing detailed and rich descriptions of the contexts. Putting that into the context of my study, it was essential that the research process enables the researcher to acquire the detailed data and thorough report about the roles of the subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices. Yin (2004) states that dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher say it did. Considering, that I was interacting with the subject advisors who specialises in different subjects, it was expected that they behaved differently and expressed different opinions in changing curriculum contexts. Lincoln and Guba

(2000) state that confirmability refers to the practice by researchers to go back to the researched with a view to verify whether or not initial interpretations by the researchers are correct. In relation to the study, as the researcher I went back to the participants after the research exercise and initial analysis had been done to check whether my research findings were accurate provided there was a need to do that. According to Cohen, *et al*, (2011) another trustworthiness technique measure is crystallisation. Crystallisation is used to ensure the credible and trustworthiness of the process of the study and its findings. Further than that, Maree (2007) points out that the crystallisation in qualitative research set out to penetrate the human understandings and constructions about it. As the researcher my interview questions probed the participants to elaborate further on the topic, build knowledge and state their own perspectives on how they support teaching and learning.

3.7 Ethics in research

Flick (2007) states that ethics should play a role in the researcher's considerations of how to plan a study, of who the researcher want to work with, and how fieldworkers (subject advisors) should act in the field. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) mention the key ethical aspects in the research that is protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and honesty with the professional colleagues that need to be adhered to when embarking on the study. As the researcher I ensured that the above mentioned ethical issues are observed throughout the research process.

This is an already approved project by the University of KwaZulu-Natal and ethical clearance required has already been applied for by the Project Leader on behalf of the group researchers. Nevertheless, I approached the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (Head Office) to seek permission to do the study in one of their districts so that I can have access to the subject advisors. Then I sent the letter to the District Director to ask permission to conduct the research in his / her district office and lastly to seek participants (subject advisors) permission to do the research. The letters also informed the active participants (subject advisors) about their rights throughout the process. To concur with these statements, Leedy and Ormrod (2005) specify that

the research requires a specific plan for proceedings, like the formulation of management plan that will specify date, time, and venue for the interviews to be held.

3.8 Delimitations of the study

The research study was located in one of the coastal education district offices. It will focus on the District Teaching and Learning Services Sub-directorate. The primary task of this sub-directorate is to ensure that they facilitate curriculum delivery in schools (*The Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy*, Department of Basic Education, 2012). The personnel that were responsible for this essential function were the subject advisors. Subject advisors became the participants because they were being able to provide a tentative explanation for a phenomenon under investigation (Leedy and Ormrod 2005). Therefore, it was significant to note that the interviews formed a crucial part of the study because it was centred on the subject advisors' scope of work in order to avoid unnecessary views or statements. I did not engage any other district officials than the subject advisors on any topic than the current one that was known to the participants and my supervisor.

3.9 Limitations of the study

Limitations keep the researcher alert and focused because they can either make or break the entire study if they are left unchecked. Vithal and Jansen (2008) state that acknowledging limitations empowers the reader to appreciate what constraints were imposed on the study with regard to time, access, resources, availability and credibility of data. Reluctant to participate in the study, I was always prepared to explain the vital part that the subject advisors played in the study and also told them that it was going to benefit and be an eye-opener for their professional practice. Failure of the research participants to honour the interview sessions was going to delay the entire study. In order to curb that, I kept on assuring them that there are no right or wrong answers, and that the study was solely for my research degree and the findings thereof was going to be used only for that purpose.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the research design and research methodology that will be used to gather the data relevant for this qualitative research study. It further brings clarity on the research paradigm, sampling, data generation methods and data analysis. The chapter also discussed the ethical issues, issues of trustworthiness, delimitations as well as the limitations of the study. The next chapter will present and analyse data obtained from the field.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology relevant to this study. The main purpose of this chapter is to present generated data and discuss the findings. The generated data was acquired through the interviews and documents reviews. The interviews were voice-recorded and then transcribed so that the voices of the research participants were not lost and these serve as the actual evidence of the entire research process. Thereafter the data was analysed and in some instances the verbatim quotations are used in the data presentation to strengthen the findings. Data generated were analysed using themes derived from the seven interview questions that guided the study. The participants were the subject advisors and pseudonyms were used. Here is the table below showing the profile of the subject advisors interviewed. **TABLE ONE**

	S A 1	S A 2	S A 3	S A 4
Pseudonym	Mr Shezi	Mrs Gumede	Mr Khumalo	Miss Ngcobo
Subject specialized in	Natural Sciences Grade 4-9	Languages Grade 1-3	Natural Sciences Grade 4-9	Life Skills Grade 1-3
Age	47	45	48	35
Gender Highest qualification	HDE	Honours Degree	Honours Degree	Bachelor of Education
No of years of experience	23	17	23	11
No of year spent in the district	7	5	10	5

4.2 Discussion of findings

4.2.1 Subject advisors' understandings of their role in supporting teacher's instructional leadership practices

It emerged from the data that all the participants have a common understanding of their roles as the subject advisors and that their primary functions are to support the implementation of the curriculum in schools so that it is delivered accordingly to its recipients (learners). The subject advisors views indicate that their tasks are to ensure that teachers in schools follow the relevant curriculum and to provide guidance and mentorship in different subjects. Their views seem to support their fundamental responsibilities because they all gave what looks like valid explanations about their main functions. These are some of the common views shared by the research participants:

The main purpose of the subject advisors is to support the implementation and learning in the classroom, the implementation of the curriculum in schools and to provide teachers in schools with the expertise that is needed to run successful schools (Mr Shezi).

The same view was also shared by another subject advisor who said:

My role as the subject advisor in my district is to ensure that we support teachers in preparation to deliver curriculum at schools. We always empower teachers to be always ready when implementing the curriculum by organising the content workshops and to carry out the vision of the Department of Education (Mr Khumalo).

Similarly, the minutes of meetings that I perused from the subject advisors corroborated their views because issues covered centred on the curriculum matters. It is stated in the minutes that the purpose of their school visits is to give strong supervision to teaching and learning and to check learners' progress. The minutes indicate that the subject advisors discuss various curriculum matters like developing the District Plan for the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements workshops. The subject advisor's head, which is the Chief Education Specialist's

presence in their meeting, is quite significant and her curriculum progress report further shows that subject advisor's work is being monitored and they act within the curriculum framework.

The above responses are in line with The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 (Section 4.6 vii) which states that the subject advisors are expected to facilitate curriculum development and delivery at institutions and at the district level and to support initiatives to improve in different subjects as well as the access to the wider curriculum. The above quotations are in line with Weber's model (1996) second domain that says that this instructional leader monitors classroom practice and provides resources and support in the use of instructional best practices so that it brings about improved teacher and learner performance. This domain show importance of sound teaching and learning and support professional developmental sessions that will improve the quality of teaching in schools. Furthermore, one of the tested models of instructional leadership put emphasis on managing the instructional programme (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). These instructional leadership views further strengthen the importance of coordinating, controlling, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction in the schools. Both these models (Weber's, and Hallinger & Murphy's models') talk about giving guidance to schools on curriculum planning matters and that seems to support subject advisors responses when they talk about their specific roles and responsibilities.

The subject advisors' responses seem to support the view that, the subject advisors' role is to complement and enhances the work done by teachers in schools. They use their professional expertise to interact with the teachers, remind them about the departmental intended curriculum objectives and to see to it that they are providing skills development training through in-service education and training for teachers.

It emerged from the two research participants that they view curriculum as a departmental policy that needed to be effected to the learners so that the school can be able to realise its objectives of ensuring effective teaching and learning. Proper implementation of the departmental policies gives direction and common vision for the future. Their views seem to show that they understand the impact of the departmental policies. Therefore, the subject advisors must know that one of their tasks is that they must be able to analyse and interpret the curriculum policies, and that they serve as the monitors that evaluate policy implementation in schools. Here are views from the research participants that bear testimony to that:

The subject advisors need to offer curriculum help when required and most importantly to see to it that departmental curriculum objectives/ policy are being met (Mrs Gumede).

Another subject advisor also concurs with the above view:

So what we basically do first is to check if all the schools have the curriculum policies and to make sure they understand the departmental policies in front of them and check whether they are teaching according to the prescribed policy (Miss Ngcobo).

The subject advisor's records also strengthen their opinions because their distribution registers showed the schools that have received the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements for the Foundation, Intermediate and Senior Phases documents. One minute book showed me the names of schools visited. However, subject advisor's record books did not show me the monitoring tools that they used to check whether the departmental policies/ lessons are being implemented accordingly or not. Therefore, I was unable to know exactly the rationale of their visit without the monitoring tools/ or set criteria, though I did not ask them.

Likewise, these statements are in agreement with *The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*, (Department of Education, 2013) which states that the subject advisors main functions are to improve the working environment and process of learning by visiting schools, consulting with and advising school principals and teachers on school/ curriculum policy matters. Moreover, Wanzare (2012) talks about the instructional supervisors helping schools to implement government policy. Weber's (1996) model of five domains is appropriate for the above descriptions/ quotations is the one that talk about observing and improving instruction. This domain is about managing teaching and learning programmes by continuously reflecting on school policies and monitoring teacher and learner performance. The subject advisors' need to have a schools visit plan and ensure that they constantly visit schools to observe the teaching practice, though it is a mammoth task considering the number of schools in a district. Furthermore, they need to concentrate more on those schools that were previously disadvantaged. This domain is in line with the subject advisor's views that seem to suggest that

curriculum policy must be uniformly applied to all schools in order to ensure that they meet the curriculum standards set by the government.

Subject advisors must view their work seriously and be quite aware that their understanding and meaningful interpretation of policies further enhances teaching and learning in schools and enables teachers to be more assertive when they perform their professional tasks. Nonetheless, proper policy application gives curriculum direction and promotes effective teaching and learning in schools.

4.2.2 Subject advisors' practices in supporting teaching and learning

The majority of the participants highlight the importance of conducting school visits, observe teaching practice, conduct workshops and giving assistance to teachers where they need help. Clearly, these professional activities help to check whether teachers are meeting the set departmental targets and these conversations further develop a supportive environment for curriculum implementation. The above key aspects are the fundamental competencies of the subject advisors which need to be honoured consistently because these interactions help teachers to meet their curriculum needs and grow professionally. Here are the subject advisor's views that attest to that.

Basically we visit schools, talk to teachers and sometimes get into the classroom now and then, but most of the time we communicate with the educators. We also check educator portfolios, teacher assessment books and check whether they do follow the programme of assessment (Mr Shezi).

The same view is also shared by another subject advisor and read as follows:

We conduct workshops, we do school visits and we make sure that we are always available to the educators whenever they have challenges we are there to help them (Mr Khumalo).

Another subject advisor came with the similar view and it read thus:

Firstly, we visit schools, when we get in schools we go to the classroom where we actually check how teachers are teaching the learners (Miss Ngcobo).

In addition, the minute's shows the list of schools visited, but it did not cover the issues that were raised or discussed with the teachers concerned and the subject advisors. I strongly believe that key issues discussed in such a conversation must be written or recorded on their record books for reflection purposes in future. However, one notice of meeting that was presented to me showed that the curriculum matters like Annual National Assessments and Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements are the main issues covered in their meetings and what I find interesting is that in their meetings the Chief Education Specialist requests all the subject advisors to give the progress report based on what transpired at the workshops conducted so far. The report that I have received on several occasions from teachers in my school after they have attended the departmental workshops have been centred on the above curriculum issues mentioned above.

These subject advisors sentiments show that they understand exactly what is expected of them and wanted to create the good, harmonious working relations with their subordinates. Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2010) reiterate that creation of positive experiences motivate people and enhances teacher self confidence and job satisfaction leading to school effectiveness and school improvement. These moves further help teachers to look at their performance analysis and do their own introspection. The above subject advisors quotations are in line with Weber's model (1996) of instructional leadership domain that put more significance in observing and improving instruction. It put emphasis on the instructional leaders to stay focused and collaboratively works with all the roleplayers to ensure quality teaching and learning thus producing quality results. This model talks about the importance of classroom observation, because it is where actual curriculum challenges are being experienced and it is the place where teachers can always be alert and improve their teaching performance thus becoming more effective.

The subject advisors must create a supportive teaching and learning environment where they will be easily accessible to teachers, and that teachers will always find it easier to consult them if they encounter some curriculum challenges. They must use their positions to encourage collaboration amongst teachers and positively influence teachers to perform their tasks with distinction.

The research findings show that the majority of the participants seem to understand the importance of assessment in learning. When analysing data I have noted that the research participants also mentions the importance of assessment in teaching and learning. The subject advisors view assessment as an integral part of learning that needs to be conducted appropriately so that teaching and learning can serve its purpose. Subject advisors views show that they regard assessment as an act of making sense to any learning activity and obtain and interpret information about the knowledge and understanding of a particular assessment tasks. Here are the notable assertions from the subject advisors:

We update teachers with the latest development with regard to the assessment policies and support them when it comes to planning and programme of assessments (Mr Khumalo).

The other one read thus:

Teachers are also assisted on how to assess, using programmes of assessment in each and every subject (Mrs Gumede).

The last assertion from another subject advisor is as follows:

We look at the file of the educators and sometimes work with the teachers to see whether they follow the subject programme of assessment (Mr Shezi).

In terms of the subject advisors' CAPS programme, I noticed that it also included the subject's programme of assessment, aspects which I think are also critical elements to teachers understanding the curriculum holistically. It also indicates the movement of subject advisors holding these workshops from one circuit to another. However, when I checked the minutes there was no evidence that showed that they clearly focused on the assessment guidelines on each and every subject, though it spelt out in their CAPS programme.

All these statements attest to what Lubisi (1999) says about assessment when he states that assessment recognizes the importance of context in ability of teachers to make the required shift in their thinking and practice, and consequently encourages teachers to engage in authentic tasks related to their own teaching situations. Most importantly, Rudner (2003) also states that the

success of assessment is based upon its credibility in the eyes of its users and as such needs to be based upon very sound principles that will ensure such credibility is maintained throughout the assessment process. When analysing these statements, it is quite prevalent that subject advisors view assessment as an important aspect of curriculum planning and it helps to evaluate the work of the educators and that of the learners and help to assist in planning future curriculum activities.

The above mentioned views are in line with Weber's model (1996) domain which elucidates assessing the instructional programme in order to have the complete view of the curriculum strengths and weaknesses. This domain further outlines to both the subject advisors and teachers the significance of using assessment as a way to develop mechanisms to plan future curriculum activities. The subject advisors' views seem to suggest that building capacity in teachers on how, when, why, what to assess, further enhances their ability to manage the curriculum accordingly and that assessment must not be treated as an isolated process but part of learning.

It must always be clear to both the teachers and the subject advisors that any lesson may be developed around the particular objective. Therefore, assessment is part of learning and it is also a continuous process that determines whether the lesson objectives have been met or not and most importantly provide guidance on how to approach future lessons so that they can be a success.

4.2.3 Subject advisors' involvement of others in supporting and managing teaching and learning

The majority of the participants mentioned the importance of curriculum planning because it is fundamental to any curriculum implementation and it serve as the guide to what school wants to achieve. Clearly, their views seem to suggest that they value the creation of a safe and empowering environment for teaching and learning that will enable effective curriculum management and quality monitoring systems. Curriculum reflection helps to identify weakness areas in the subjects and it must be encouraged at all times. Furthermore, it helps to improve teacher competency levels, promote the spirit of corporation and ensures that everyone is largely

responsible for his/ her curriculum work. Here are the versions of the subject advisors about curriculum planning:

Schools state that the development areas on different subjects that they want us to focus on. The acquired information helps us to put together forward plans on how we organise workshops (Mr Shezi).

Here is another version of the subject advisors about planning:

What we do is that we first sit together and discuss things that we will be doing when we go to schools or when we go to the workshops (Miss Ngcobo).

The similar view was also shared by another subject advisor:

Yes, we work as a team, we always do our curriculum plan effectively and share ideas in the General Education Training Band, co-facilitate the workshops within the district, moving from circuit to circuit (Mrs Gumede).

The minute book shown further serve as the evidence on the above mentioned perspectives about the subject advisors' curriculum planning. All the General Education and Training Band phases had their own plans that cater for all the grades. It also shows the key issues like the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements advocacy and training, Action Plan 2014, programmes of assessment and Annual National Assessments. These development exercises tend to clarify to teachers this paradigm shift as to why and how this curriculum change is going to be implemented in schools. The most interesting part of the minute book that I noted is that the subject advisors' have their own Team Building Committee. Its primary function is to boost their morale, self confidence and make them feel that they have a positive role to play in teaching and learning matters in schools.

Likewise, Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) perspectives bears testimony to the subject advisors views, and refers to school planning as a rational process of goal setting and planning that is persuaded in most organisations and it helps the school to identify its strengths and lays the foundation for establishing the main priorities for future improvement. Whereas, *Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy*, (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2013) views also

concur with the above quotations because it affirms that content planning is the first strategic area that provides space for the monitoring of curriculum coverage and curriculum support at all levels.

Similarly, the above quotations are in line with one of the key features of the distributed leadership theory which is team planning. Gronn (2000) claims that this theory involves teachers at various levels as both leaders and followers working together to solve problems and accomplish the set tasks. The relevance of this theory to my study is that it embraces working as a unit and gives direction to the subject advisors to always realise that any effective curriculum implementation starts with the proper planning.

It is imperative for the schools to take curriculum planning and its implementation seriously because its underlying factors are to provide clearer specification of what is to be taught and learnt on a term-by-term basis.

Since the advent of democracy in April 1994, the vision and direction of the South African education system has shifted and it now embraces the new culture of inclusivity and organisational practices in schools. During the apartheid era, education was treated as the separate entity and there were not enough material resources and meaningful contribution coming from different role players or social partners to support teaching and learning in our schools. In order to strengthen our schools, all interested parties must be quite aware that education can change and uplift the society. One subject advisor was quoted as saying:

We involve different stakeholders; we work with other districts, provinces involving other government departments like the Department of Health focusing on issues that mostly affect youth such as the teenage pregnancy, unions, non-governmental organizations and publishers (Mr Khumalo).

When I checked the minute book, I was unable to get evidence that seems to support the notion of collaborative work with other districts, provinces and any other government departments. Also there was no evidence that seems to indicate that there was any curriculum activity offered either by the non-governmental organizations or publishers. However, the minute book outlines the

partnership that the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education signed with the unions with regard to the schedule of Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements workshops to be co-facilitated with the union representatives.

From the above quotation, I can draw the 8th January 2008 statement made by Mr. Jacob Zuma, African National Congress President which read thus, “Education must be elevated from being a departmental issue, or even a governmental issue, to a societal issue—one that occupies the attention and energy for all our people (*The Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign*, Department of Education, 2010). The 8th January statement seems to reinforce the quotation made by the subject advisor because it states the importance of networking, having common agenda with other major role players to uplift the education, though lack of minutes as evidence raises some eyebrows about the credibility of his view.

Likewise, the theory that is relevant in the above situation is distributed leadership theory. Timperley (2005) mentions that this theory focuses on collaborative model that builds the trust relationships and partnerships within and between their internal and external communities. Therefore, the practice of this model is viewed as fundamental to the realisation of Department of Basic Education Action Plan 2014 goals.

All the interested parties in education must work together to enhance and improve the curriculum performance of schools, because they provide resources or expertise in support of school’s programme. Subject advisors must use their communication and negotiation skills to lure potential social partners that value and committed to educational matters. Meanwhile, the subject advisors need to keep records of all the activities done by the interested parties for future references and to eventually benefit the schools at large.

4.2.4 Challenges that subject advisors’ experience whilst teaching and learning

Research findings suggest that most participants have some concerns about the teachers who either lack capacity or misbehave and that stifles the progress of curriculum delivery. This unpleasant situation impacts negatively on their work because some teachers are not adhering to the departmental expectations, and unable to rise to new challenges and opportunities. The

implications of these wrongful behaviours are that if they are left unattended, some teachers will lose focus of their work and these professional discourses will serve no purpose and eventually it will negatively affect the core functions of the school that is teaching and learning. The subject advisors don't have legal power to discipline or deal with teachers who abscond and do not attend the workshops. Nevertheless, they need to have direct contacts with the school principals in order to make them aware about the teachers that fail to attend such workshops, so that further steps are taken against them, and hoping that this move will stop or minimise this unprofessional conduct. This is the response from one subject advisor:

We then expect that teachers implement whatever that they were capacitated with, but when we do the follow up you find up that they are not properly implementing the curriculum policy (Mr Khumalo).

The other view from other subject advisor reads as follows:

Teachers are reserved and do not want to take the initiatives and this stifle the progress of the curriculum delivery, non-attendance of the teachers in curriculum workshops and that frustrates us because we do not have the power to deal with them.(Mrs Gumede).

Another challenge experienced by the subject advisors read as follows:

Sometimes we find that the School Management Teams make barriers for other subject advisors, because they are unable to give us the relevant information about the curriculum matters whereas we are expected to acquire school comprehensive report and submit it to our Chief Education Specialist (Mr Shezi).

In terms of the documents reviewed, the minute book only shows the workshop attendees but there was no mechanisms mentioned to resolve the above mentioned issues, though it does not mean that the matter was not handled accordingly. However, I think it was not captured on their minutes so that these matters can be considered for future references and also assist the subject advisors to know the individual teachers who are currently experiencing some challenges and need some assistance.

The above quotations seem to indicate that teachers were contravening what is stipulated in the labour legislation. In order to ensure that teachers behave accordingly, they need to be reminded that in terms of, The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998, Section 18 (l) “to perform poorly or inadequately for reasons other than incapacity” is an act of misconduct which means that they can be liable to be charged. This professional reminder can alert the teachers to change their unacceptable behaviours and start conducting themselves professionally. Moreover, this behaviour works against the South African Council for Educators Act No 31 of 2000 which provides a framework for educator’s professional behaviour towards all other stakeholders. Particularly, these unprofessional conduct need to be discouraged at all times because it perpetuates unprofessionalism. This situation works against Leithwood (1999) who states that the manager’s ability to deal with an unhealthy situation instantly helps to promote good working relations and creates good working climate that I think is so essential to the case presented to me, thus enhancing productivity, flexibility and efficiency in our schools. The behaviour of this teachers impede what, Spillane and Diamond (2007) says about the distributed leadership perspective, when they say that it is about shared leadership, it is about entering the discourse about the school leadership and management issues that will eventually lead to school improvement.

The above mentioned negative views clearly show that indeed some teachers lack the passion and have low self-esteem. These challenges require the pro-active leadership that needs to deal with teachers concerns instantly, instil professional ethics so that teachers behave in an acceptable and professional manner.

With regard to the Department of Education, all the participants mentioned the shortage of resources as the contributing factor that hinder their progress as they support schools to deliver the curriculum. Through their conversation it was quite clear that in terms of their work they are overstretched due to many unfilled vacancies and that has remain unfilled over the past two years. Our government has been saying that education is main priority for the past decade. Therefore, they need to increase the budget and channel more resources to the education so that the achievement of quality public education can become a reality.

Here are some of the responses of the subject advisors:

In terms of our Department of Education there is a shortage of resources, basically human resources. Shortage of teachers for example we have educators who are involved in matrics at the same time they teach at the senior phase (Mr Shezi).

The similar view was also expressed by another subject advisor:

The Department of Education needs to fill more vacancies so that there will be enough personnel, provide subject advisors with the adequate resources to carry out their duties (Mr Khumalo).

The same sentiments were echoed by another subject advisor and it read thus:

We don't have our own offices; we share the offices with personnel from other directorates thus losing our important documents at times and having no privacy to discuss our relevant and curriculum findings from schools (Mrs Gumede).

Moreover, the minute books shows that the human resource vacancies was discussed at the subject advisors level, and their senior official, Chief Education Specialist points out that we need to improvise, stretch ourselves because the posts have not yet been advertised. There is no evidence in their minute book that shows that they have raised their concern of unavailability of offices to the District Physical Infrastructure Unit. However, that does not mean that the matter does not need some attention.

Surely, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education needs to lift the moratorium on educator post establishments and increase the Post Provisioning Norm especially in high schools so that there will be more teachers hired, and fill the vacancies for the office based educator's vacant posts and (HRM Circular No.52 of 2013 & HRM Circular No. 06 of 2013) is testimony to that. Meanwhile, Mdletshe (2013) reports that on the recent go-slow campaign called by South African Democratic Teachers Union, among their demands are that they want more than 800 office-based vacant posts to be filled with the immediate effect. The above circular and the newspaper report gives clear proof of what needs to be done by the Department of Basic of

Education to positively change the situation if they want to realise its objective of effective district curriculum management and quality schooling.

Technological resources like laptop and computers are another concern for subject advisors because they use writing pads to record their data, and use files to store it. This is a challenge in the 21st century because any prepared data/ handouts can be lost or stolen. Though it is the obligation of the employer to provide the employee with the necessary resources, my viewpoint is that subject advisors must also take initiative to buy laptops because they are such a useful resource, considering that our historical past tell us that it will take some time before the present government can be able to meet the challenges created by the apartheid order. Here are some of the subject advisor responses that attest to that:

I don't have the computer and that at the end of the week I'm expected to give the report that is typed (Miss Ngcobo).

This view of another subject advisor regarding this matter:

We don't have laptops in our district, we don't have computers sometimes we even need to share one computer to compile information or to prepare some work. At times you find that more than five subject advisors have to do reports using one computer (Mr Shezi).

In terms of the minute book, subject advisors mentioned the importance of having computers/ laptops, and it can be used to plan and provide training in information communication technology integration into teaching and learning, though Chief Education Specialist requested them to improvise and support one another under such a situation.

Obviously, if the Department of Basic Education wants its teaching personnel to be computer literate and enhance the quality of teaching and learning they need to continuously conduct the information and communication technology workshops. To concur with the above statement, *White Paper on e-Education* (Department of Basic Education, 2004) spells out that information communication technology aims to equip teaching personnel with computer knowledge, skills,

ideas and values needed for lifelong learning. In reality, a lot still needs to be done by the Department of Basic Education to ensure that teachers become technologically advanced, but individually teachers/ office based educators must take the initiative and undergo computer courses and go to an extent of even buying their own laptop because the departmental Teacher Laptop Initiative encountered some logistical challenges.

One subject advisor mentions another important challenge that is Department of Education vehicles that are sometimes not available at times when they want to perform their professional functions considering that there are more than five hundred schools in our district that need to be visited constantly if we want to urgently improve the services in our schools. Due to the unavailability of cars at times compromises our work because some work takes too long to be done due to the density of the district. Here is the quote from the subject advisor:

When we visit schools we need to use cars as our transport, we don't have enough cars but the cars that we have you find that sometimes they are faulty
(Miss Ngcobo).

When I read the minute books I noticed that in one of their meetings in January 2013, subject advisors raised the above concerns especially the government vehicles, because they view it as the important means that enables them to reach their destination with ease. The chairperson of the meeting (Chief Education Specialist) responsible for the subject advisors was made aware about the vehicles, but indicated that the vehicles matter is out of their jurisdiction and it is handled by the Provincial Education Department. She further mentioned that the District is a non- Section 21 status, does not have funds to cater for that request but indicated to the meeting that she was going to refer the matter to the District Manager for further scrutiny.

Even Christie (2010) acknowledges the enormous inequalities that continue to exist in our education system and that the work of an educational centre is very different in different context. Furthermore, *the Schooling Reform is Possible: Lessons for South Africa from international experience* (2011) point out that reform attempts are complicated by South Africa's legacy of apartheid past and current issues of politics. However, these subject advisors must not let this

lack of various resources distract them to their intended goals, but they must not sit back, but rather they must face the situation and rise above it.

Surely, all these quotations serve as some of the challenges encountered by the instructional leaders when they perform their tasks. Weber's model (1996) of instructional leadership domain that says promoting a positive learning climate helps the subject advisors to counter this unhealthy situation, not moan but it encourages the subject advisors to ensure that all the necessary resources to facilitate the processes are available and demonstrate good teaching practice. If the subject advisors can develop such a professional attitude, they will have strong character, prosper in their work.

Subject advisors must continue and not despair about this operational context, but they must improvise under these circumstances and be prepared to go an extra mile for the benefit of their learners and the country at large.

In relation to the unions, the participants responses show that there is a poor working relation between the subject advisors and the teacher unions, which is SADTU to be precise. There is no co-ordination between these main role-players on how to plan and facilitate workshop concurrently, if there is a need. There is no cohesion and this leads to confusion between them because they are unable to work towards the common goal. Subject advisor's sentiments seem to indicate that SADTU's views are dominant on any matter and they determine exactly what needs to be done. Subject advisors are so sceptical to counter the perspectives raised by the union representatives because they fear that they might be victimised. Here is the opinion of one subject advisor:

This winter holidays we planned to have our CAPS orientation workshops, only to find that the union (SADTU) have their own CAPS programme as well. So the DOE programme and the union programme sometimes you find that they clash
(Mr Khumalo).

The similar stance was echoed by another subject advisor when she said that:

The teacher union (Sadtu) organise their workshops but they don't involve us and sometimes they involve us during the last minute where you find that we are not able to assist them (Miss Ngcobo).

This view was supported by another subject advisor who mentioned that:

The union especially (Sadtu) want to dictate to the subject advisors by stating what is it that needs to be done by the subject advisors or not. On the recent go slow where an outcry was about the removal of Angie Motshekga and Bobby Soobrayan, SADTU told the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education to stop facilitating workshops until further notice (Mrs Gumede).

Although the minutes showed that the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education had an agreement to conduct the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements workshops with the unions in terms of (HRM Circular No. 3 of 2012), minutes doesn't reflect any conversation that took place between the subject advisors and the union officials at the district level to deal with this uncondusive working environment. Surely, poor working relations cause animosity amongst the affected parties and distract these role players from their intended purpose.

It is so essential that both the unions and subject advisors are reminded about their roles and responsibilities in the upliftment of our education. These union challenges require both of them to be conscientised thus engages in appropriate interpersonal relationships, and contributes to the development of the schools (*Integrated Quality Management Systems*, Education Labour Relations Council, 2003). Similarly, ability to deal with the any work related challenges, respect one another, strengthen good working relations as well as the adherence of the values and principles upheld by the Department of Basic Education that says all social beings must be treated with respect and dignity (*The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (Department of Basic Education, 2001). This situation requires distributive leaders because they are able to build collaborative relationships and partnerships within and between their internal and external school communities for the mutual benefit of each other (Spillane, 2006). Therefore, this leadership theory emphasises the importance of acknowledging one's

contribution because teaching and learning is an interdependent process which means that both the subject advisors and the teacher unions must learn to work together.

Both the Department of Basic Education and the teacher unions must develop a cordial relationship and strengthen their working relations so that this will filter down to the work of the subject advisors and teacher unions locally. It is significant that both parties develop the collaborative approach to tackle educational matters.

One notable point mentioned by one subject advisor is that learners who come from unstable families struggles to do their work accordingly. Family background and environment can either make or break the learner and it can also be a barrier to learning. Therefore, the subject advisors must also advise teachers on how to handle learners who either have educational challenges or wrongly influenced by their respective communities because if those learners challenges remain unresolved it will detrimental affect their curriculum performance. Here is the opinion of one subject advisor about this matter:

The problems that are experienced by educators also come from learners, their family and community backgrounds. This impacts badly on our work because when we visit schools to support teachers implementing the curriculum we also note these barriers need to be overcome as well in order to support the learners
(Mr Shezi).

The minute book did not have a single instance where it indicates that the matter of learners with some challenges was discussed, which in my view as the researcher needed to be reviewed. The researcher's opinion in this regard is that the subject advisors should not deal with learners who have some learning challenges only. Moreover, they need have a plan to deal with the learners who have some educational, family or community challenges in order to enhance teaching and learning in schools. This is the serious matter that requires the attention of everybody involved in education to jointly work together to resolve learner issues.

Based on the subject advisors' viewpoint, Naidu, Joubert, Mestry and Ngcobo (2008) also support the above quotations when they state that teachers need to learn about learners family

and cultural backgrounds and are able to listen, understand their learners interest, objectives and concerns so that they get to know them better. Furthermore, *The Norms and Standards for Educators* (Department of Basic Education, 2000) has seven roles for educators, but the one that is most relevant in this learner context is the one that states that teachers have to play the “Community, citizenship and pastoral role” This quotation is also in line with the version of Hallinger and Murphy’s model (1985) as well as Weber’s model (1996) that defines the school mission. Therefore, principals’ and the School Governing Body need to sell the school vision to the parents and community at large. Principals need to use school structures like Institution Learner Support Team to identify learners who are vulnerable and experiencing family problems. Then all these stakeholders need to know the dynamics of their operations and the context which their learners are coming from and work together to resolve identified problems and strive to work towards accomplishing the school set mission.

It is the fundamental responsibility of teachers to know the backgrounds of their learners and where they are coming from. They need to build good working relations with parents so that they can understand their learners better. Teacher’s ability to handle the above situation and assist learners with so called learning or family problems that will eventually lead to learners paying more attention to their work thus boosting their performance as well.

4.2.5 How subject advisors overcome the challenges that they experience as they support teaching and learning

Half the participants indicated that they did not allow the shortage of necessary resources to dampen their spirits when they perform their professional tasks. Due to the fact their work is mainly centred on interaction with teachers, they indicated that they improvise and assist one another on the usage of computers to support teaching and learning. This situation enables them to be closer and understand one another as colleagues and promote the spirit of co-orporation amongst themselves. Unavailability of government vehicles did not hinder them to visit more than 500 district schools or conduct the workshops that tend to strengthen teachers’ capabilities to implement and manage the curriculum because they stated that those who had transport always assisted those who did not. This gesture shows that they have developed the professional

attitude which is the backbone of the daily experience. This is one perspective about the above matter.

We end up having to use our own resources for example the issue of computers we buy our own computers. On the issue of shortage of cars we try to get lifts from those colleagues who have the subsidised cars when we go to various circuits to conduct the workshops, and even when we visit schools (Miss Ngcobo).

This perspective was also shared by another subject advisor and it read thus:

In order to rise above the situation we share transport and share computers and it assists us to carry our work appropriately. We even go to our neighbouring districts and ask for any available resources that they do not utilise so as to make use of it (Mr Khumalo).

Though the minute books didn't say anything about sharing of the above mentioned resources, I noted that two of my research participants (Khumalo and Gumede) were sharing the laptop and that they were using it to prepare their work and I have seen subject advisors on different occasions using the one vehicle when they go to facilitate workshops or visiting schools.

Clearly, the above responses show that the Department of Basic Education still needs to prioritise the work of subject advisors because they serve as an important link between the schools and the district office. Provincial Education Department needs to inject more financial resources to the subject advisor services and they must ensure that they equip the district office with policy tools, plans and other resources to help raise the quality of teaching and learning in schools (*The Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*, Department of Basic Education, 2013). I strongly believe that if the above matters can receive urgent attention from the Department of Basic Education at large, this will improve the technological capacity of the subject advisors to respond to the usage and sharing of information communication technology resources. Therefore, the White Paper on e- Education, (Department of Basic Education, 2004) primary aim of transforming learning and teaching through information and communication technologies and bridge the digital divide will remain a pipedream, unless the Department of Basic Education adequately provide the subject advisors

with the necessary resources. Similarly, Moloji (2005) concurs with the subject advisors above mentioned attributes that they are suited to the description of the distributive leadership theory because they had the shared vision and that's what is needed to support teaching and learning practices in schools given the changing, challenging environment within which they operate.

The above quotations seem to be in line with the distributed leadership theory. Spillane and Diamond (2007) takes a distributed perspective by elucidating three key organisational functions that must be performed in order for schools to run effectively. One of the organisational functions that is more appropriate for this context is organisational development and it involves procuring and distributing resources necessary for the work of school improvement, including materials, time, support and compensation.

Indeed, the above scenarios seems to suggest that the subject advisors approach on dealing with such challenges was positive and shows that they were self-motivated, focused on their tasks, and wanted to achieve their intended objectives and that they were willing to act beyond their means.

4.2.6 The working relations in the district

All the research participants emphasise the significance of a healthy working environment amongst teachers as it motivates people to greater success in their work. Their views signify the importance of maintaining good working relationships for school effectiveness and contribute directly to a positive and healthy culture. This present situation makes everyone feel useful to the organisation because it give everybody a space to fulfil or realise his/ her true potential for the benefit of the learners. Another key point raised is that of co- facilitation, it helps to strengthen one's self confidence and serve as the morale booster to enhance one's performance. One subject advisor is quoted as saying:

It is good and it creates space for growth because we work as a team and share our experiences together. Our co-facilitation helps us to bond together and promote the spirit of co-orporation (Mrs Gumede).

This was also evident when one subject advisor point out:

We give schools individual attention because it enables every educator to explore on his/ her views concerning the the curriculum and it also give us the proper opportunity to identify areas of weaknesses so as to give the necessary support (Mr Shezi).

Another subject advisor views read as follows:

We have a good relationship with all the subject advisors, sometimes we even have social activities that we normally do to strengthen our relationship. Working relations are so crucial because we spend most of the time in the working place and we always maintain it though there are some challenges at times (Miss Ngcobo).

The minute book seems to corroborate with the above views because they have the Team Building Committee. Presumably, the rationale of that committee is to build character, self-esteem, mental strength of the subject advisors so that they can deal with any situation when they perform their roles. However, no further clarity is stated on how this committee execute its functions, with the exception of those individuals that form the committee.

The above views seem to be in line with one of the Bergeson's (2007) characteristics of the high performing schools which are supportive learning environment which states that collaborative work provides a foundation for the implementation of curriculum programmes. Likewise, the above quotations are further strengthened by Bush and Middlewood (1997) whom they state that peer support programme help to build the capacity of teachers, promote responsibility and accountability when they perform their work, which I think is so crucial for the subject advisors when they perform their tasks. The above responses are in line with Weber' model (1996) domain of promoting a positive climate in the working environment. This domain is also an essential part of any learning organisation because it is characterised by using positive motivation, such as merit awards, recognition and appreciation of the work done by teachers and more importantly to encourage staff to greater achievements due to the fact that they experience greater job satisfaction.

The above quotations fit directly to the idea of establishing positive atmosphere, build good rapport with your fellow colleagues and work towards achieving realistic goals of attaining quality education and strive towards its attainment.

4.2.7 Other issues related to the management of teaching and learning

One subject advisor indicated that the schools are no longer safe and thugs use them to pursue their criminal acts where they wilfully destroy school property. Those criminal elements take our schools and communities backwards. Therefore, they need to be identified by our communities and brought before justice because it is quite obvious that they do not value schools as an important asset of the community. This vandalism creates an unhealthy working environment and hampers the orderly course of teaching and learning activities. This is a cause for concern for the entire school community and it diverts school attention and delays school progress on various areas. Through this unfavourable situation the school will be forced to channel their limited resources to improve the affected areas. Meanwhile, the school is supposed to be a safe learning environment where teaching and learning takes place. School must develop strategies to make parents and the community feel valued and welcomed.

In some instances you find that schools raise funds to buy computers and are stored in schools but you find that the community will come and vandalise the school. Therefore, all these school components need to work together for the betterment of our communities and create responsible citizens in our society

(Mr Shezi).

The minute books refuted the above quotations because there is no evidence that shows that the subject advisors have engaged the District School Governance Sub-Directorate and alerting them about the school safety concerns that they have noted in some of the district schools and assisting them to develop School Safety Committee and implement School Safety Plans that seek to create a work environment conducive to quality teaching and learning (KZN Circular NO 71 OF 2009).

The above views seem to be in line with the *Making Quality Learning Teaching Campaign a reality* (Department of Basic Education 2011) which states that the community must ensure a safe and crime-free environment for schooling, and to protect the school and its assets from

vandalism. Therefore, it is significant that the School Governing Body mobilise communities to take ownership of schools so that they can strengthen the School Safety and Security Committee to operate within the framework of the safety guidelines to address crime and vandalism in schools. Similarly, this response is in line with Bergeson (2003) who states that schools are part of the community, a resource for the community. Therefore, the School Management Teams and the School Governing Bodies must participate in the community meetings to find cohesive solutions to the crime challenges faced by schools within the communities. The above quotation is in agreement with Weber's model (1996) domain of instructional leadership which defines the school mission. The instructional leaders need to work closely with the community structures and the police to identify the culprits that vandalise the school. This move further strengthens the importance of building strong school-community relations that will help to support the schools to meet its intended expectations.

All the School Governing Bodies need to educate their parents and community at large about the social impact of school in building society. They must ask parents to work with the community structures to come forward to identify the culprits so that schools can become crime free zones.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented and discussed the data generated from the subject advisors. It also presented different perspectives based on their experiences, regarding their roles of supporting teacher instructional leadership practices. The chapter presented the voice of participants through the verbatim quotations. Moreover, they also stated how they manage teaching and learning and collaborate with fellow colleagues as they support teaching and learning in schools.

However, subject advisors have mentioned their own challenges when they perform their own professional functions and how they overcome it under certain circumstances. Findings also show their working relations with other subject advisors when they pursue their daily activities in the district office. The following chapter will present the summary, conclusions and recommendations of this study based on the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented, discussed and analysed the data generated from the participants. This chapter presents the study summary, conclusions as well as the recommendations of the study. After careful consideration of the data, certain clear conclusions emerged from the study findings outlined in Chapter Four and are presented here. Also, pertinent recommendations are made informed by the conclusions. Also the implications for future research are discussed.

5.2 Study summary

Chapter One provided an introduction and background to the study. It also outlined the overview of the key aspects of the study by making brief comments about each feature. The purpose and rationale of the study were presented. It also stated the research objectives as well as the critical questions.

Chapter Two presented a detailed international, continental, national literature reviews regarding teacher instructional leadership practices and theoretical frameworks relevant to the study. It enabled me to look at the different perspectives about the study and also outlines the need for the subject advisors to be pro-active so that they could deal with the curriculum challenges that they encounter in schools.

Chapter Three explained the research design and methodology used in the study. It spelled out the paradigm, sampling, data generation methods in the form of interviews and documents reviews that are used to explore subject advisors' understanding of teacher instructional leadership practices. Lastly, the chapter discussed the issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues, limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter Four mainly consisted of data presentation, findings and discussion. This chapter presented the views of the subject advisors based on their roles and functions as they support

schools to perform their curriculum functions which is mainly teaching and learning. It also highlights the challenges that they experience when they perform their duties and the mechanisms that they use to overcome them.

Chapter Five focused on the study summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Lastly, I also indicated some implications for future research.

5.3 Conclusions

The aims of the study were to explore the role subject advisors play in leading, managing and supporting instructional leadership practices among teachers in schools; to investigate the challenges that they experience as they support teacher instructional leadership practices and navigate those challenges.

Based on these aims and the findings of the study in Chapter Four the following conclusions are made.

5.3.1 Subject advisors understanding of their role

All four subject advisors had a similar understanding of their primary role that they are expected to play in enhancing teacher instructional leadership practices in schools. It emerged from the participants that they all comprehend their role in ensuring that they support schools to implement curriculum accordingly. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that they realise the importance of their maximum participation and support in helping schools to realise departmental curriculum goals. The subject advisors' need to provide good leadership at all times so that they can empower teachers to work together, reach the departmental targets together.

5.3.2 Importance of updating schools on curriculum developments

In addition, three of the four participants understood that their job descriptions entails key curriculum managerial aspects that tend to ensure the provision of quality education provided they are well monitored by the School Management Teams. Based on subject advisors' views, it can be concluded that they serve as an important curriculum link between the schools and the Provincial Education Department. Therefore, they need to be consistent and develop the District-

School visit programme and honour it where they will ensure that besides the workshops they visit individuals' schools to get to know their real curriculum experiences when they perform their core function which is teaching and learning.

5.3.3 Promotion of good working relations

Based on the findings, the subject advisors highlight the importance of ensuring that there is a spirit of corporation between themselves and teachers, so that it motivates them to take joint decision making that will enhance their curriculum competences. Therefore, the conclusion that I have made is that the subject advisors emphasised the importance of good working relations that would translate into the creation of a positive climate at the workplace and collaborative approach when dealing with the curriculum matters. Furthermore, this attitude increases their capabilities to take responsible curricular decisions.

5.3.4 Teachers poor working ethics

The study findings further revealed the challenges that the subject advisors experience when interacting with teachers whilst performing their duties. These challenges divert the attention of the subject advisors to unnecessary matters thus delaying progress of curriculum delivery in schools. Some of these challenges show teachers lack of respect and professionalism and they are the act of misconduct which must always be discouraged because it negatively impacts on the actual course of teaching and learning. Lack of resources clearly shows the effects of apartheid on our education system and the journey that the Department of Basic Education still has to undertake to address such injustices created by the old order. With regard to the unions, there is no cohesion and there are poor working relations between the subject advisors and the teacher unions. Most importantly, the subject advisors seem to be scared to object to anything being said by the teacher unions, because they believe that might jeopardise their future upward mobility opportunities if they challenge the teacher unions' call.

5.3.5 Subject advisors willingness to go an extra mile

The study also showed the improvisation by the subject advisors to counter the circumstances that they were encountering by going the extra mile to acquire some of the needy resources. I found it very interesting that the subject advisors did not allow the occurrence of bad experiences

to hamper their professional activities but they were always prepared to rise above any situation for the sake of their work. Clearly, the display of this professional attitude showed their high levels of commitment and that they were willing to defy all the odds to accomplish the set tasks. It is this professionalism and actions that subject advisors and teachers should demonstrate at all levels of their work.

5.3.6 District management support

Based on the findings, the district working relations and climate was positive and vibrant and this allows the subject advisors to encourage and provide opportunities to grow for those who are interested. Therefore, it can be concluded that the maintenance of good working relations is of great importance for district effectiveness and contributes directly to a positive and healthy district culture and climate of corporation. Furthermore, it binds them to a common fate and vision.

5.3.7 Ensuring school safety

Based on the findings, generally some schools are no longer safe and secure due to some vandalism and criminal activities taking place in our schools. Thus it can be concluded that the School Governing Bodies must form partnership and develop good working relations with the state, parents, learners, and private sector and community structures so that schools become safe and secure working environment. Once our communities take the ownership of schools there will be less space for criminals to do their evil deeds.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings in Chapter Four and conclusions above, the following recommendations are made:

5.4.1 Continuous capacity building for subject advisors

All the subject advisors need to be conscientised and be continuously capacitated about their supportive role that they are expected to play in schools and their seniors like the Chief Education Specialists must monitor the work done by the subject advisors in schools and ensure

that there is uniformity in terms of curriculum implementation. Furthermore, teachers and the SMTs need to be made aware of the supportive role that the subject advisors are expected to play in their respective schools so that they won't feel threatened about their presence but, they will benefit professionally.

5.4.2 Subject advisors to develop intervention/ support programmes for schools

Subject advisors must be constantly seen visiting individual schools to get to know the school's unique experiences and offer the expert advice that will improve the practices of teachers as it is stipulated in their primary roles and responsibilities. They must develop District- School Support Programmes that will develop the curriculum knowledge, skills and teaching values of teachers so that they can lead and manage people effectively and contribute to improved curriculum delivery in our schools.

5.4.3 Effective monitoring of school work

Curriculum planning without action and no monitoring is a useless exercise. It is in this context that I strongly recommend that the subject advisors need not be like signposts, which show the direction but have never been to the place where action is taking place in reference to schools. They need to be the main protagonists thus leading by example so that teachers will feel the importance of their work thus implementing the curriculum accordingly.

5.4.4 Embrace professional values at all times

Teaching requires people who are dedicated and determined to succeed on their endeavours. Therefore, teachers need to adopt a positive attitude and develop professional skills in order to enhance performance. Therefore, it is essential that teachers who are behaving strangely and unprofessionally are reminded about the expected professional behaviour. Moreover, the subject advisors' need to work with schools to develop teachers on South African Council for Educators' Act 31, of 2000 on Code of Professional Ethics for Educators' which provides a framework for educators' professional towards in relations to every relevant stakeholder. This move alone can serve as the reminder to teachers and change the way they view the teaching profession. Although it is a mammoth task to address the imbalances created by the apartheid order, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) needs to speed up the curriculum delivery to ensure that

they fill up all the vacancies, supply the subject advisors with the adequate resources so that they won't hassle when they perform their roles and functions.

5.4.5 Always rise under the difficult conditions

This study captured the live experiences of the subject advisors and how they propel in those unfamiliar settings to continue to work with passion and commitment. That professional attitude and initiatives need to be encouraged at all times by their seniors because that serve to show that they understand their historical and operational context and understand that it will take some time for the DBE to change those service conditions.

5.4.6 Promote responsibility and accountability amongst teachers

The subject advisors need to extend good working relations with schools and become more visible rather than focusing on conducting workshops only. This exercise alone can improve interpersonal relationships between the teachers and subject advisors and contribute to school development, thus ensuring that there is an open platform for professional dialogue leading to continued growth and more accountability of all parties concerned.

5.4.7 Establish strong working relations with the community structures

The DBE needs to forge working ties with the community at large, and community structures like Community Policing Forums to educate them about the importance of making schools as crime-free zones, so that the school resources are not going to be tampered with, so that they are going to be used to benefit the school community.

5.5 Implications for future research

The study used the qualitative research methodology to get a deeper view into the role and practices of the subject advisors and on how they support teaching and learning in schools in one education district office. I must also indicate that this does not give a holistic perspective about the primary roles and functions of the subject advisors, but it was confined to the four General Education and Training Band subject advisors in a particular district office. I would have liked to interact with the Further Education and Training Band subject advisors as well so that I can have

an idea on how they demonstrate their competencies on that level. Furthermore, I wish I could have extended this study to cover at least all twelve education district offices in KwaZulu-Natal, so that I can have a broader perspective of subject advisors in other districts considering that nothing much has been covered about this phenomena. Based on the above factors, there is a need for a bigger study to cover all the Education Bands to be conducted using different methodologies like qualitative, quantitative and mixed forms of enquiry in order to get more depth and different dimensions about their scope of work and information on how they operate in their own contexts to enhance teaching and learning in schools.

It was quite evident that all the subject advisors knew the key factors about their role and responsibilities on how they execute them, but there was little evidence that suggests that they were in constant communication with schools. Therefore, they need to come up with the ways or plan that will ensure that they do visit schools because it is obvious it does not happen often so that teachers will realise that their curriculum work is being monitored with the intention to give support. Moreover, the DBE needs to further commit to the provision of adequate resources to the subject advisors so that they can do their work with ease thus having no room to make excuses and solely focuses on what they want to achieve.

Based on the study findings, inability to keep all the records hinders the subject advisors progress and point of reflection. Due to this discrepancy, they are unable to make informed curriculum decisions about their work. Therefore, their seniors like Chief Education Specialists need to stress the importance of keeping all the records because they serve as the tool to check their progress and can always assist them in their work.

5.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a summary, conclusions, recommendations and future research implications that will assist the subject advisors to be more effective in performing their primary roles in future.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, G. (1998). *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. London: Falmer Press.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. (1998). *The Practice of Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bak, N. (2004). *Completing your thesis: A practical guide*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Bell, J. (1993). *Doing your Research Project. A Guide for First-Time Researchers*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bennet, N., Harvey, J., Wise, C., & Woods, P. Retrieved 17 December, 2003. Distributed Leadership: A Desk study. From: www.ncsl.org.uk.uk. literature reviews.
- Berg, S., Taylor, S., Gustafsson, M., Spaul, N., & Armstrong, P. (2011). *Improving Quality Education in South Africa* (1-26). Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Bergeson, T. (2003). *Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools*. Washington: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2006). *How to Research*. (3rd ed). New York: Open University Press.
- Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Bush, T. (2003). *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management*. London: Sage.
- Bush, T., Bell, L., & Middlewood, D. (2010). *The Principles of Educational Leadership and Management*. (2nd ed). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Carnoy, M. & Rhoten, D. (2002). What does Globalisation mean for Educational Change. *University of Chicago Press*. 46 (1). 1-9.
- Centre for Development and Enterprise. (2011). *Schooling Reform is Possible: Lessons for South Africa from International Experience*. (1-8). Johannesburg: Epoch Trust.
- Christie, P. (2010). Landscapes of Leadership in South African Schools: Mapping the Changes. *Sage Publications*, 38(6), 694-711.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. (7th ed.) London: Routledge.

- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative Research*. (3rd ed.) London: Sage.
- Creswell, J. (2008). *Educational Research*. (3rd ed). New Jersey: Pearson.
- Daniel, J. (2012). *Sampling Essentials*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Davidoff, S. & Lazarus, S. (2002). *The Learning School- An organisational developmental Approach*. Lansdowne: Juta & Co.
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Department of Basic Education. (2003). *Integrated Quality Management Systems, Collective Agreement No 3 of 2003*. Pretoria: Government Press.
- Department of Basic Education (2010). *Quality Learning Teaching Campaign*. Pretoria: Government Press.
- Department of Basic Education. (2004). *White Paper on e- Education*. Government Gazette No. 26762. Vol. 1922. Pretoria: Government Press.
- Department of Basic Education. (2010). *Action Plan 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling2025*. Government Gazette No. 2Vol.33434. Pretoria: Government Press.
- Department of Basic Education (2010). *Teacher Laptop Initiative*. Government Gazette No. 32207. Pretoria. Government Press.
- Department of Basic Education (2011). *The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*. Pretoria. Government Press.
- Department of Basic Education. (2013). *Policy on the organisation, roles and responsibilities of Education Districts*. Government Gazette No. 36324. Vol. 300. Pretoria: Government Press.
- Department of Basic Education. (2000). *The Norms and Standards for Educators*. Government Gazette No.20844. Vol. 415.Pretoria: Government Press.
- Doolittle, G., Sudeck, M., & Rattigan, P. (2009). Creating Professional Learning Communities: The Work of Professional Development Schools. *Routledge*, 47 (4), 303-310.
- Drysdale, P. & Gurr, D. (2011). Theory and Practice of successful school leadership in

- Australia. *Routledge*, 31 (4), 355-368.
- Duff, P. (2007). *Case study research in applied linguistic science*. London: CRC Press.
- Fink, A. (2008). *Practicing Research*. London: Sage.
- Flick, U. (2007). *Designing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Fraenkel, J., & Wallen, N. (1990). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. Chicago: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Fraser, C. Kennedy, A. Reid, L. & Mckinney, S. (2007). Teacher's continuing professional development. *Journal of In- service Education*, 33 (2), 153-169.
- Gronn, P. (2000). Designer Leadership: The emerging global adoption of preparation standards. *Journal of School Leadership*, 12 (5), 552-578.
- Gruchy, J. & Holness, L. (2007). *The Emerging Researcher*. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Hallinger, P.(2009, 23 September). *Leadership for 21st Century Schools: From Instructional Leadership to Leadership for Learning*. Paper was firstly presented in a lecture of the Chair Professors Public Lecture Series of the The Hong Kong Institute of Education, The Hong Kong Institute of Education.
- Halverson , R. Grigg, J. Prechett, R.& Thomas, C.(2005). The New Instrumental Leadership: Creating Data – Driven Instructional Systems in Schools. *NCPEA Press*, 10 (7),1-59.
- Harris, A. (2008). *Distributed Leadership: Developing tomorrow's leaders*. New York: Routledge.
- Hasbrouck, J. & Denton, C. (2005). *What is instructional leadership and why is it so important*. Washington DC: Southwest Educational Development Library.
- Heikka, J, Waniganayake, M. & Hujala, E. (2013). Contextualizing Distributed Leadership Within Early Childhood Education: Current Understandings, Research Evidence and Future Challenges. *Sage Publications*, 41(4) 30-44.
- Henderson, J. & Hawthorne, R. (1995). *Transforming Curriculum Leadership*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Henning, E. van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- Hesse-Biber, S. & Leavy, P. (2011). *The Practice of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Gay, L. & Airasan, P. (1990). *Educational Research: Competencies for analysis and application*. Chicago: Irwin Press.
- Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. London: Sage.
- Hallinger, P. & Heck, R. (1997). Exploring the principal's contribution to school effectiveness; *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. Sage, 8 (4), 1-35.
- Hilty, E. (2011). *Teacher Leadership: The New Foundations of Teacher Education*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Hoadley, U. & Ward, C. (2009). *Managing to learn: Instructional leadership in South African Secondary Schools*. Cape Town: HSRC.
- Hornsby, A., Cowie, A. & Lewis, J. (1997). *Oxford Advanced Dictionary of Current English*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Huggins, K., Scheurich, J. & Morgan, J. (2011). Professional Learning Communities as a Leadership Strategy to Drive Math Success in an Urban High School Serving Diverse, Low-Income Students: A Case Study. *Routledge*, 16 (2), 67-88.
- Jansen, J. (2001). Imagining teachers: Policy images and teacher identity in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4), 242-246.
- Jazzar, M. (2004). Instructional or Managerial Leadership: The Principal's Role. *Sage*, 28 (7), 25-33.
- Jones, D. (2010). *Instructional Leadership: Quadrant D Leadership Practices*. New York: International Center for Leadership in Education.
- Khoza, R. (1994). *The need for an Afrocentric approach to management*. Randburg: Knowledge Resources.
- KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education. (2012). *Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy*. Pietermaritzburg: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

- KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. (2012). *HRM Circular No. 03 of 2012*. Pietermaritzburg. KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.
- KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. (2013). *HRM Circular No. 06 of 2013*. Pietermaritzburg: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.
- KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. (2013). *HRM Circular No 52 of 2013*. Pietermaritzburg: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.
- KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. (2013). *KZN Circular No of 71 of 2009*. Pietermaritzburg. KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.
- La Banca, A. (2010). In search of scientific creativity: Retrieved 17 December 2011, from <http://problemfinding.labanca.net>.
- Lankshear, C. & Knobel, M. (2004). *A handbook for Teacher Research*. New York: Open University Press.
- Leedy, P. & Ormrod, J. (2005). *Practical Research* (8th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson.
- Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing Leadership for changing times*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Lubisi, R. (1999). *Assessment in Education*. Pietermaritzburg. University of Natal Press.
- Manuel, T. (2011). National Planning Commission of South Africa. Retrieved. 16.08.2013. from <http://www.gov.za>.
- Maree, K. (2007). *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching* (2nd ed). London: Sage.
- Mbeki, T. (1999). *Speech to Launch the African Renaissance Institute*. Pretoria: African Renaissance Institute.
- Mbigi, L. & Maree, J. (2005). *Ubuntu: the spirit of African transformation management*. Randburg: Knowledge Resources.
- Mdletshe, C. (2013-10-13). Deadlock hurts matrices. *The New Age; KwaZulu-Natal*, 1-2.
- Mertens, D. (1998). *Research methods in education and psychology*. London: Sage.

- Moloi, P. (2005). *The School as a Learning Organization: Reconceptualising School Practices Africa*. (2nd ed). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Msila, V. (2005). Ubuntu and school leadership. *Journal of Education*, 44(2), 67-84.
- Moswela, B. (2010). Instructional Supervision in Botswana Secondary Schools: An Investigation. *Sage Publications*, 38(1), 71-87.
- Motshekga, A. (2012). *Better Districts, Better Quality*. (1-1). Pretoria. Department of Basic Education.
- Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Naidu, A, Joubert, R. Mestry, R. & Ngcobo, T. (2008). *Education Management and Leadership A South African Perspective*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Nakum, N. (2011). *An investigation of instructional leadership in a Namibian rural school*. Windhoek: Rhodes University Press.
- Nieman , M. & Monyai, R. (2006). *The educator as Mediator of Learning*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Owusu (2013, 6 Jan). Improving School Leadership Times. *The Ghanaian Times*, 1-3.
- Odhiambo,G. & Hii, A. (2012). Key Stakeholders Perceptions of Effective Leadership. *Sage Publications*, 40(2) 232-247.
- Pansiri, O. (2009). Instructional Leadership for Quality Learning. *Sage Publications*, 36 (1) 471494.
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd ed). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Pillay, D. & Govinden, B. (2007). ‘ In search of home’-practices of the self in selected teacher narratives. *Journal of Education*, 43, 1-15.
- Reitzug, U., West, D. & Angel, R. (2008). Conceptualizing Instructional Leadership. *Cowin Press*, 40 (6), 694-714.

- Republic of South Africa (1996). National Education Policy Act, (No. 27 of 1996). Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). South African Constitution Act, (No 108 of 1996). Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa (2000). South African Council for Educators Act, (No 31 of 2000). Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). South African Schools Act, (No 84 of 1996). Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa. (1998). The Employment of Educators Act, (No 76 of 1998). Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa. (1999). Public Finance Management Act, (No1of 1999). Pretoria. Government Printers.
- Maluleke, M. (2010). The South African Democratic Teachers Union's 2030 Vision. *Sadtu Secretariat*, 7 (15) 1-15.
- Sawyer, K. (2007). *Group Genius: The creative power of collaboration*. New York: Basic Books.
- Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth Discipline: The art and practice of the learning organisation*. London: Century Business.
- Sharma, S. (2012). Instrumental Leadership Model through Asian Principals' Perspectives. *IACSIT Press*, 30 (1),17-21.
- Smith, R. (1995). *Successful School Management*. London: Cassell.
- Soobrayan, B. (2012). *Minister meets District Directors*. Paper presented at the District Directors meeting in Pretoria (1-4). Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Southworth , G. (2002). Instrumental Leadership in Schools: reflections and empirical evidence. *Routledge*, 22(1), 73-91.
- Ruff,W. & Shoho, A. (2005) Understanding Instructional Leadership Through the Mental Models of Three Elementary School Principals. *Sage Publications*, 41(3),554-557.

- Rulinda, E., Role, E. & Makewa, L. (2013). Factor- Based Student Rating in Academic Performance in Southern Province of Rwanda. *Mevlana Intrenational Journal of Education*, 3(1), 82-92.
- Spillane , J. & Diamond, J.(2007). *Distributed Leadership in practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Stake, R. (2005). *Qualitative Case Studies. The Handbook of Qualitative of Research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Sykes, G., Schneider, B., Plank, D. & Ford, T. (2009). *Handbook of Education Policy Research*. New York: Routledge.
- Tan, C. (2012). Instructional leadership: towards a contextualised knowledge creation model. *Routledge*, 32 (2), 183-194.
- Taylor, N. (2006). *Equity, efficiency and the development of South African schools*. Dordrecht, NL:Springer.
- TerreBlanche, M. & Durnheim, K. (2006). *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences*. (2nd ed). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- The World Bank. (2005). *Africa Region Human Development*. (1-28). Cape Town: University of Western Cape Press.
- Tikly , L. (1999). Postcolonialism and comparative education. *International Review of Education*, 45(20), 603-621.
- Timperley, H. (1999). ‘ Distributed leadership: developing theory from practice’ *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 37 (4), 394-420.
- Van Deventer, I. & Kruger, A. (2003). *An educator’s guide to school management skills*. (2003). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Vithal, R. & Jansen, J. (1997). *Designing your first research proposal: A manual for researchers in education and the social sciences*. Lansdowne: Juta & Co.
- Wanzare, Z. (2012). Instrumental Supervision in Puplic Secondary Schools in Kenya. *Sage*, 40 (2), 188-216.

Weber, J. (1996). Leading the instructional program. In S. Smith & P. P. Piele (Eds) School Leadership. *Clearinghouse of Education Management*. 11(25) 253-278.

Wiersma, W. (2000). *Research Methods in Education*. (8th ed). London: Allyn and Bacon.

Zepeda, S. & Mayers, R. (2008). *Supervision across the Content Areas*. New York: Eye on Education.

APPENDIX A

PERMISSION LETTER TO THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Noqomfela C.P. School

P.O. Box 4

Cato Ridge

3680

10 July 2013

Attention: The Head of Department (Dr. N.S.P. Sishi)

Department of Basic Education

Province of KwaZulu-Natal

Private Bag X9137

Pietermaritzburg

3201

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa, a Master of Education student in the School of Education at the (University of KwaZulu-Natal; Edgewood Campus) specialising in Education Leadership Management and Policy. As part of my studies I am expected to conduct research on the education districts. I therefore kindly seek permission to conduct research in Pinetown District which is under your jurisdiction. The title of my study is: **The role of subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices: A case study of one education district office in KwaZulu-Natal.**

This study aims to explore the role of the subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices in schools. I would like to work with four subject advisors thus conducting the semi-structured interviews and documents review to generate data with them. These interviews will not interfere with their daily professional activities because it will take place after 16h30 or at the time convenient to them. Each interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes and it will be voice-recorded. I hope these interviews will give me the holistic view about the subject advisors and produce data that will benefit me in the study.

Responses will be treated with confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used. Participants will be contacted well in advance for interviews and they have been purposively selected to participate in the study. Participation is voluntary, participants may withdraw from the study for any reason, anytime if they so wish without incurring any penalties.

For further information on this study, please feel free to contact me using the following contact details: Tel: 031-7017175; Cell: 0732194614; e mail: t.mbanjwa@vodamail.co.za.

My supervisor details are as follows: Mr Siphiwe Mthiyane, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus) Education Leadership Management and Policy. Tel. 031-2601870; e mail: Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za

Interview questions are attached herewith for your perusal.

Thanking you in advance for your co-orporation.

Yours Faithfully

H.T. Mbanjwa

APPENDIX B

PERMISSION LETTER TO THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Noqomfela C.P School

P. O. Box 4

Cato Ridge

3680

15 July 2013

Attention: The District Director

Pinetown District Office

Voortrekker Street

3680

Dear Sir / Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa, a Master of Education student in the School of Education at the (University of KwaZulu-Natal; Edgewood Campus) specialising in Educational Leadership Management and Policy. As part of my studies, I am expected to conduct the research on the education districts. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and have been granted (see copy attached). I therefore, kindly seek permission to conduct research in your district. The title of my study is: **The role of the subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices: A case study of one education district office in KwaZulu-Natal.**

This study aims to explore the role of the subject advisors in strengthening teacher instructional leadership practices in schools. This study tends to focus on the subject advisors roles in facilitating curriculum implementation and curriculum delivery in schools. These four subject advisors will give their own perspectives about their roles in supporting teaching and learning in schools. The study will use the semi- structured interviews and document reviews.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the subject advisors and the interviews will be for approximately 30-45 minutes and I will not interfere with their professional functions because the interviews will occur from 16h30-17h15. Each interview will be voice-recorded so that I can listen to what they (subject advisors) are saying carefully thus having an informed view and be able to analyse it.

Please note the following:

- Protection from harm
- Participation is strictly voluntary
- To respect participant's right to privacy
- All information obtained will treated with strictest of confidentiality and will be used for educational research and development.
- No financial benefit that participants may accrue.

For further information on this research project feel free to contact my supervisor, Mr S. E. Mthiyane; Tel: 031-2601870; e mail: Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za

In addition, should you have any queries you can contact me using the following details: Mr. Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa; Tel: 031 7017175; Cell: 0732194614 e mail: t.mbanjwa@vodamail.co.za

Interview questions are attached herewith for your perusal.

Thanking you in advance for your co-orporation

Yours Faithfully

H. T. Mbanjwa

APPENDIX C

REQUEST TO CONDUCT THE INTERVIEWS

Noqomfela C.P School

P. O. Box 4

Cato Ridge

3680

02 August 2013

Attention: The Subject Advisor

Pinetown District Office

Voortrekker Street

3680

Dear Sir / Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa, a Master of Education student in the School of Education at the (University of KwaZulu-Natal; Edgewood Campus) specialising in Educational Leadership Management and Policy. As part of my studies, I am expected to conduct the research on the education districts. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and have been granted (see copy attached). I therefore, kindly seek permission to conduct research in your district. The title of my study is: **The role of the subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices: A case study of one education district office in KwaZulu-Natal.**

This study aims to explore the role of the subject advisors in strengthening teacher instructional leadership practices in schools. This study tends to focus on the subject advisors roles in

facilitating curriculum implementation and curriculum delivery in schools. As the subject advisor you will give me your own perspectives about your role in supporting teaching and learning in schools. The study will use the semi- structured interviews and document reviews.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the subject advisors and the interviews will be for approximately 30-45 minutes and I will not interfere with their professional functions because the interviews will occur from 16h30-17h15. Each interview will be voice-recorded so that I can listen to what you (subject advisors) are saying carefully thus having an informed view and be able to analyse it.

Please note the following:

- Protection from harm
- Participation is strictly voluntary
- To respect participant's right to privacy
- All information obtained will be treated with strictest of confidentiality and will be used for educational research and development.
- No financial benefit that participants may accrue.

For further information on this research project feel free to contact my supervisor, Mr S. E. Mthiyane; Tel: 031-2601870; e mail: Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za

In addition, should you have any queries you can contact me using the following details: Mr. Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa; Tel: 031 7017175; Cell: 0732194614 e mail: t.mbanjwa@vodamail.co.za

Interview questions are attached herewith for your perusal.

Thanking you in advance for your co-orporation.

Yours Faithfully

H. T. Mbanjwa

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM

I.....(Full name of the participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents and the nature , purpose and procedures for the study: **The role of the subject advisors in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices. A case study of one education district office in KwaZulu-Natal.**

I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent to participate in the study. I fully understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from the study at any time should I feel.

Signature of Participant..... Date.....

Thanking you in advance for your co-orporation

Yours Faithfully

Mr. Hamilton Thulani Mbanjwa

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED IN THE RESEARCH

The title of my study: The role of subject advisors' in supporting teacher instructional leadership practices: A case study of one education district office in KwaZulu-Natal.

1. As a subject advisor, what do you understand to be your role in supporting teaching and learning in your district? Please explain.
2. What do you actually do to support and manage teaching and learning in your district? Please elaborate.
3. How do you involve others/ collaborate with others as you support and manage teaching in your district?
4. What are the challenges/ barriers (from teachers, learners, DOE, teacher unions, etc.) that you experience as you enact your leadership and management practices of teaching and learning in your district? Please elaborate.
5. How do you overcome the challenges that you experience as you support and manage teaching and learning in your district?
6. How are the working relations with your colleagues (subject advisors) in the district office?
7. In conclusion, is there anything you would like to share with me as the researcher on teaching and learning which I have not asked you but you feel it is important to share with me? Please feel free to ask/ share with me.

APPENDIX F

DOCUMENTS REVIEW SCHEDULE

The document that will be reviewed will include:

1. Written sources such as minutes of the subject advisors meetings where curriculum matters are discussed.
2. Curriculum Management and Delivery Strategy.
3. Policy on the organisation, roles and responsibilities of Education Districts.
4. Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement documents

Official documents will be used to corroborate the interviews thus improving the trustworthiness of the findings. The documents may reveal aspects that were not found through interviews. They may even shape the directions for interviews (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 52). Fitzgerald (2007) also states that documents can provide valuable information about the context and culture of institutions. Furthermore, Cohen, Manion and Morrison state that the documents may be defined as the record of events or process and may take different forms.

APPENDIX G

25 Maple Crescent
Circle Park
KLOOF
3610

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

Dr Saths Govender

28 NOVEMBER 2013

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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

**THE ROLE OF SUBJECT ADVISORS IN SUPPORTING TEACHER
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY OF ONE
EDUCATION DISTRICT OFFICE IN KWAZULU-NATAL, by H. T. Mbanjwa,
student no. 20040217.**

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language is satisfactory.

Yours faithfully



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