

**Understanding the principals' leadership role in
promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century**

By

Thembisile Favourite Mlotshwa

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in the
Discipline, Educational Leadership, Management and
Policy**

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

December 2022

Supervisor: Prof T.T. Bhengu

Declaration

I, Thembisile Favourite Mlotshwa declare that:

- i. The research in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated is my original work.
 - ii. This dissertation has not been submitted for any qualification 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. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written and information attributed to them has been referenced accordingly,
 - b. Exact words or their writings have been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
 - v. Where I have produced a publication of which I am an author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.
- iv. 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 section.

Signed:



Date: 28 June 2023

Thembisile Favourite Mlotshwa

Statement by Supervisor:

This dissertation is submitted with ~~with~~ without my approval.



Signed.....Date...28/06/2023....

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



18 September 2021

Mrs Thembisile Favourite Mlotshwa (934358083)
School Of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Mlotshwa,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00003186/2021

Project title: Understanding the principals' leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21 century:
A case study

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 12 August 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

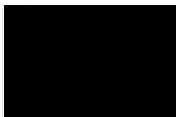
This approval is valid until 18 September 2022.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to the following people:

- First and foremost, I would like to thank God, Almighty, for the many blessings He has bestowed upon me. I look up and smile knowing, it was You Lord.
- My parents (Thandekile and Bongumusa Mahaye) for life lessons.
- My husband (Thokozani Mlotshwa) my friend, pillar of strength and my praying partner, for your presence in my life. Thank you for your support throughout my studies.
- My daughters (Noxolo and Uyanda) for understanding when my time was spent on my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have a list of amazing people who contributed immensely to the completion of this research project. Without them, I would not have been able to complete this project. Their contribution is highly appreciated; I am forever indebted to:

- My Supervisor, Professor T.T. Bhengu whose patience is remarkable. Thank you for your guidance throughout this journey.
- My sister Nokubonga Goge who assisted me with my daughter in times of need.
- My mother-in-law who has been a pillar of strength and took care of my family.
- My colleagues, Nonhlanhla Xaba, Linda Xaba, Violet Makwara and Sandile Sithole for being part of my academic journey.
- My friend, Samkelisiwe whom I started this academic journey with. Thank you.
- All my classmates with whom we shared a similar work ethic that has led us to complete our studies.
- Last but not least, the research participants who shared their experiences with me. Without their contribution this research project was not going to be completed.

ABSTRACT

The study reported in this document was conducted as a research project towards a Masters' degree (MEd). The study focused on exploring the principals' leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century by adopting the interpretive, qualitative, multiple case study approach, consisting of ten purposively selected principals from the uMgungundlovu District, KwaZulu-Natal. A qualitative approach was adopted because it allowed the participants to share their experiences and views. It aimed at exploring how the principals practised their leadership role in the 21st century. Instructional leadership theories underpinned this research study. Semi-structured interviews, through telephonic and face-to-face interviews, as well as document reviews were used to generate data. The data was thematically analysed. Both local and international literature was reviewed to understand the principals' leadership and their role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century.

The findings suggest that the principals' leadership played a major role in promoting effective teaching and learning. Principals also practised instructional leadership as they have influenced and guided educators to teach based on the collective vision, principals' instructional guidance and expectations. However, principals were overwhelmed by the different aspects that their job entails. The findings also affirm that the principals' role is changing in order to meet the new demands of modern schooling in the 21st century. The recommendations in the study were that the principals have to find the right balance between administrative tasks, management and leadership of the school. They must also find a balance between all the roles and functions of a principal in order for them to be highly effective in promoting teaching and learning. There is also a need for principals to engage more stakeholders with the right expertise to assist where they fall short. This would allow principals more time to focus more on promoting teaching and learning. The school principals should also lobby the Department of Basic Education to come with programmes that are relevant to modern day schooling and will assist with promoting teaching and learning. These programmes should focus on areas of need and also prepare the principals for 21st century schooling.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	
ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
BEEI	Basic Education Employment Initiative
COLTS	Culture of Learning and Teaching Services
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 19
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DH	Departmental Head
FET	Further Education and Training
JIT	Just-In-Time
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Material
NDP	National Development Plan
NSC	National Senior Certificate
OECD	Organisational for Economic Co-operation Development
PLC	Professional Learning Communities
POA	Programme off Assessment
PYEI	Presidential Youth Employment Initiative
SASAMS	South African School Administration and Management System
SBA	School Based Assessment
SMT	School Management Team
T65	Schools that achieve results of less than 65% in the NSC examinations
T75	Schools that achieve results of less than 75% in the NSC examinations

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
CONTENT	
Title	i
Declaration	ii
Supervisor's statement	iii
Ethical Clearance Certificate	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Abstract	vii
Abbreviations and Acronyms	viii
Table of contents	ix
CHAPTER ONE	
ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the study	2
1.3 Statement of the problem	4
1.4 Purpose and rationale for the study	4
1.5 Significance of the study	5
1.6 Research Questions	6
1.7 Demarcation of the study	6
1.8 Clarification of key concepts	7
1.8.1 School leadership	8
1.8.2 Educational outcomes	8
1.8.3 Instructional programme	8
1.8.4 Leadership behaviour	9
1.8.5 Teaching and learning	9
CHAPTER TWO	
LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 The role of the principal in the 21 st century	10
2.2.1 International studies	12
2.2.2 Regional studies	12
2.2.3 National studies	14
2.3 The leadership functions of the principal	15

2.4 Principals' leadership and management roles	16
2.5 The link between the role of the principal and teaching and learning	17
2.6 Principals' perceptions of their role in order to promote teaching and learning in the 21 st century	21
2.7 The kind of support that is offered by the principals in the classroom in order to promote teaching and learning	23
2.8 Theoretical framework	24
CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Introduction	31
3.2 Research paradigm	31
3.3 Research design	32
3.4 Research methodology	33
3.4.1 Design of the case study	34
3.4.2 Categories of case study	34
3.5 Sampling methods	35
3.6 Data generation methods	36
3.6.1 Document analysis	36
3.6.2 Pilot study	39
3.6.3 Semi-structured interviews	39
3.7 Data analysis	42
3.8 Trustworthiness	44
3.8.1 Credibility	44
3.8.2 Transferability	44
3.8.3 Dependability	45
3.8.4 Confirmability	45
3.9 Ethical issues	45
3.10 Limitations of the study	46
CHAPTER FOUR ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	
4.1 Introduction	47
4.2 Profile of research participants	47
4.3 Biographical details of participants	48
4.4 Data presentation and discussion	50

4.4.1 Understanding the principals' role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21 st century	50
4.4.2 Principals' perceptions and experiences regarding their role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21 st century	57
4.4.3 Kinds of support offered by principals in the classroom in order to promote teaching and learning	64
4.4.4 The role of principals in staff development in order to promote teaching and learning	66
4.4.5 Mechanisms put in place by school principals to promote teaching and learning in the 21 st century	68
4.5 Summary of the findings	72
CHAPTER FIVE SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1 Introduction	74
5.2 Study summary	74
5.3 Conclusion	75
5.4 Recommendations	78
5.5 Implications of the study	79
5.6 References	81
APPENDIX A: Informed consent letter	98
APPENDIX B: Permission to conduct research in the KZN DOE institutions	100
APPENDIX C: Declaration of consent	101
APPENDIX D: Policy of the South African Standards for Principalship	102
APPENDIX E: Interview schedule	104
Turnitin certificate	105

CHAPTER ONE

SETTING THE SCENE: AN ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

According to studies by Tucker and Coddling (2002); Bush (2013) and Mestry (2017), principals in the 21st century perform multi-faceted roles; their responsibilities are much more demanding, challenging, not clear, complicated, and at times, they are overloaded. The reasons for this are derived from high expectations from policy makers, parents, governing bodies, economic, social, technological, political issues, and constant curriculum changes (Mashele, 2018). Zuze and Juan (2018), on the other hand, have found that the role of the principal has gone through many advanced stages. It has been modified and it has changed from just being managers and administrators to that of being bearers of teaching and learning. In this regard, Mkhize and Bhengu (2018) explain that principals' role has changed over the years and has more added responsibilities. Over and above this, school principals are still expected to play a major role in driving the culture of teaching and learning in schools.

There is added pressure and scrutiny that is placed on school managers, or principals as they are also called. They must constantly learn to work under rapidly changing and dynamic environments (Mahfouz, 2020). Adding to this debate, Sebastian et al. (2018) also emphasised the complexity of the principals' diverse tasks and long hours as well as the impact it has on teaching and learning. These scholars also highlighted that the dramatic changes in education policy have resulted in additional demands on principals as they have found it difficult to address the multiple and changing needs of the school environment. Ganon-Shilon and Schechter (2017) have also added to the debate and argue that there is an overlapping interest among stakeholders, and these interests might distract principals' focus on leading teaching and learning. Despite the principals' attention being focussed on learner performance, it has been highlighted that they split it by focusing on the various interests of the different stakeholders. These include students, parents, district officials, teachers and policy makers (Schechter et al., 2018). Therefore, principals have to work even harder to embrace the tension between external and internal forces or demands on the operation of the schools. Many studies that have been done concur that the role of the principal has become increasingly complex (Fullan 2014; Lunenburg, 2013; Pont, 2014; Schleicher, 2012; Tucker & Uline, 2015). Principals are constantly under a lot of pressure and have found it difficult to strike a balance between external forces and inner pressures of the school (Schechter et al., 2018).

The factors highlighted in the paragraphs above point to the need of a study such as this one, which seeks to understand how school principals lead their schools in the 21st century. Leadership of school principals has been cited as the most important element that makes schools productive and enhance learner academic outcomes (Bush, 2018). Student outcomes are influenced greatly by leadership. Therefore, effective leadership is of great importance in promoting effective teaching and learning (Leithwood et al., 2006). Morgan (2018) also concurs with this view, by using educational research he has confirmed that the relation between students' achievement and school leadership is of great importance and its impact cannot be ignored. This is the first chapter, and it provides an orientation to this problem, beginning with the background to the study. After the background of the problem is the statement of the problem, followed by the rationale of the study, as well as the significance of the study. Research questions that guide the study follow. Thereafter, the demarcation of the study and the clarification of the key concepts of this study will be discussed. Finally, a chapter summary will conclude this chapter.

1.2 Background to the study

There has been tremendous pressure on school principals to adapt to various multifaceted issues resulting from political, economic and radical social changes (Mestry, 2017). This has had a negative impact on educational and especially learner outcomes. Mestry (2017) also argues that the main culprit is that principals have not been empowered to deal with the challenges of the 21st century schooling. This is not just the case in South Africa alone. Many nations across the world are going through educational changes in the instruction, assessment and the curriculum delivery (Bush & Glover, 2005; Russell & Cranston, 2012; Thessin, 2019). Educational reform phenomenon is not new in South Africa or in the world. However, the main concern has been the high rate at which changes take place, this has increased the principals' volume of work and put more pressure on their administrative tasks (Kinney, 2009). In some instances, their capacity to handle such reforms have not kept pace with these changes.

There are studies that have been done on the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning (Adam & Muthiah, 2020; Lavy, 2020; Naidoo, 2019; Singh, 2019; Sharif et al., 2020; Teo, 2019). However, studies have not been very clear on their role in the changing environment as well as in describing the link between the roles that principal's play and

teaching and learning (Bush, 2013; Tucker & Coddling, 2002; Maponya 2020 & Mestry, 2017). Heystek (2016) found that school principals are placed under extreme pressure to keep up with educational expectations of the 21st century. These changes are taking place on a continuous basis and administrative work has significantly increased. Many principals have found it difficult to adapt to the new environment. Other scholars (Pont, 2014; Schleicher, 2012; Sumbera et al., 2014 as cited in Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017) also concur that educational changes have expanded the role of the principals' drastically. The principals' role has become more onerous than ever before (Organisational for Economic Co-operation Development [OECD], 2010). Ganon-Shilon and Schechter (2017) allude to the fact that principals are finding it hard to make sense of their new role and struggle to give new meaning to the new processes. Their working habits have faced confusion, misunderstandings, and ambiguity in their new role.

According to Bush (2018), governments in many countries have expanded the role of the principal by decentralising functions. Many governments have shifted many core responsibilities to school principals. For instance, Weinstein et al. (2016) surveyed 26 new principals in Chile. The survey showed that the majority (81%) of the school leaders found their role to be difficult or very difficult. The main problems included excessive time spent on administrative work, multiple responsibilities, and general unpreparedness for the role. In another study Crow (2006) noted that many school leaders in the United States took up all their responsibilities without much support from the State governments. Therefore, challenges exist, and it has become very clear that the role of the principal has taken a new direction due to educational reform. According to Spillane and Kenney (2012), research has clearly shown that principals have become the main players in the process of change and that they play an important role as agents of change. Finally, despite these problems it is accepted worldwide that leadership is at the centre of students' outcomes (Bush, 2018). This background suggests that school principals have had to adjust to the school environment and the environment outside it. Such changes have also added on the responsibilities that school principals have, and some of these responsibilities have negatively affected their focus on leading teaching and learning.

This study was conducted in a township setting. In recent years, township schools are mostly no-fee schools, and are classified as Quintile 1 up to Quintile 3; thus, implying that learners do not pay school fees and they receive more funding from the government than fee paying schools. Despite the fact that township schools have become no-fee paying schools, the levels

of poverty are still the same because the geographical area in which they are situated has not changed (White & Van Dyk, 2019). Mathikithela and Wood (2021) conclude that township schools are characterised by poor infrastructure, insufficient access to social welfare services, lack of basic services such as sanitation and clean water as well as inadequate resources for teaching and learning. The focus and scope of this study explores the role that school leaders play in teaching and learning under the above-mentioned circumstances of the 21st century and their impact on educational outcomes. The study also assesses the extent to which principals are central to the learners' learning and teachers' teaching. According to Day et al. (2016), international research has provided evidence of both positive and negative impact of principal leadership on teaching and learning.

1.3 Statement of the problem

This study explored the principals' leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century schooling setting. It is based on understanding the principal leadership influences on teaching and learning. Bush (2018) has noted that despite the challenges that principals face, there has also been growing pressures of accountability bearing on them. Bush (2018) adds that leadership of the principal has an influence on the students' academic outcomes. However, the focus has shifted from those outcomes to focus on staffing issues, financial management and many other functions whose ultimate aims are to support effective teaching and learning in the schools. Adams and Muthial (2020) also concur that there is a strong link between student learning and principal leadership. Thompson (2017) also asserts that there is an emerging theme in scholarship that confirms that the quality of leadership has a positive impact on school performance.

Bush (2018) argues that principalship is a specialist occupation that requires distinct readiness for the position as well as certain leadership behaviours. In today's educational era, there are drastic changes in the role of the principal. The demands on principals are high and there are significant expectations placed on the principals. There are also noticeable limitations in the effectiveness of the principals' leadership in driving school success as they suffer from lack of support from stakeholders (Adams & Muthial, 2020). Thessin (2019) adds that the responsibilities placed on the principals have broadened and do not narrowly focus on classroom instruction. However, principals take data-driven decisions for teaching and learning, facilitate teaching and learning and drive professional development. Boyce and

Bowers (2018) adds that ongoing pressures of accountability places an immense burden on school principals to show noticeable academic success. Finally, the notion that principal leadership is constantly evolving and not as direct as it ought to be is neither new nor straightforward. In the context of this study, a township setting was chosen as it is one of the areas where previously disadvantaged schools and communities are found in South Africa. The other contexts that are usually considered as deprived in South Africa, are rural areas.

1.4 Purpose and rationale for the study

In South Africa, the principal of the school is mandated by the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) mainly Section 16a and its amendments (Republic of South Africa, 2007) to provide expert administration and management for a school. However, this seems vague and unclear, broad and unpacked in relation to leadership of schools in the 21st century. Maponya (2020) explains that school principals in the South African school context are recognised as leaders and managers, and they execute both leadership and management duties. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) state that the principals' role consists of three dimensions: defining the school mission of their school; managing the instructional programme and promoting teaching and learning. Many scholars concur with this view regarding their role as instructional leaders (Bush, 2013; Mestry, 2017; Zulu et al., 2021). However, these scholars also acknowledge that their role has changed drastically in the 21st century and they note that the principals' role has now included extra management and leadership duties and functions.

Maponya (2020) emphasises that certain schools have principals who are regarded as outstanding, yet the learners' results are poor. In other cases, there are those who are regarded poor or weak, but the learners' performance is excellent. Maponya (2020) further explains that at times, the leadership of a principal is considered good, and the learners' results are also good and vice versa is true. Teaching and learning in the South African context today may require different leadership and management approaches in its promotion, achieving educational outcomes and instructional delivery (Maponya, 2020). The aim of this study was to understand the role that principals' leadership play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. Therefore, there is a need to understand how school principals grapple with leadership demands in their role to promote teaching and learning in the 21st century.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study has become important at this point in time because there are many issues surrounding the role of the principal in teaching and learning in the 21st century. For instance, Heystek (2016) found that principals are placed under extreme pressure to keep up with educational expectations of the 21st century. These changes are taking place on a continuous basis and principals' administration duties have significantly increased, leaving little room for the supervision of instruction. Many principals have found it difficult to adapt to the new environment. Bush (2018) adds that despite the many changes, the scope of the management and leadership at school level has expanded as governments have shifted more functions to school principals. The study sought to find an understanding of the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. Scholarship shows clearly that there are multiple perspectives on the role played by principals in teaching and learning in the 21st century and it is very important to explore these perspectives. Baptiste (2019) highlights that principals create meaning in the work that teachers do to promote teaching and learning. Furthermore, they develop a shared vision and set high standards for teaching and learning. Principals also determine policies and operational goals of the school Ch et al. (as cited in Baptiste, 2019). Naidoo (2019) is of the view that principals should ensure professional development and set the tone for the whole school through effective instructional leadership. The role of the principal should focus on professionalism of teachers and academic supervision (Saleh & Mutiani, 2021). According to Davis and Boudreaux (2019), principals must effect positive change in teaching and learning through evaluation and supervision skills, constant communication and engaging stakeholders in creating action plans.

1.6 Research questions

This study is trying to answer one main question and four subsidiary questions in order to clarify the main issues of the study.

Main research question

- What is the principal's leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century?

Sub-questions

- What are the principals' perceptions and experiences regarding their role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century?
- What is the link between the principal's leadership functions and teaching and learning?
- How do secondary schools' principals practise their role in the promotion of teaching and learning in the 21st century?
- What kind of support is offered by the principals in the classroom in order to promote teaching and learning?

1.7 Demarcation of the study

This study is aimed at understanding the principals' role in teaching and learning, as well as explore this phenomenon deeply. The study explores the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. The study targeted ten school principals in the township setting. According to Mampane and Bouwer (2011), a township is a residential area which consists of low-cost housing for black labourers and developed during racial segregation in South Africa. The township is linked to violence, poverty and crime. Bush and Heystek (as cited in Mampane and Bouwer, 2011) also concur that a township is mostly associated with poverty, unemployment, crime and overcrowded classrooms.

1.8 Clarification of key concepts

There are five key concepts whose application in the study is clarified. These key concepts are school leadership, educational outcomes, instructional programme and leadership behaviours, and these are briefly outlined below.

1.8.1 School leadership

Leithwood et al. (1999, p. 6) explains leadership as a "process of influence". It has also been explained as an element of influencing a follower towards goal attainment (Fidler, 1997). In the context of a school, leadership can be viewed as a process whereby principals influence, direct and motivate teachers and other staff to collaboratively work towards the achievement

of the school (Hallinger, 2015). School leaders create a common vision of the school and assist individuals and group energies to execute mutual goals (Mkhize, 2017). In the context of this study, school leadership refers to the school principals and other members of the school management team as they are responsible for monitoring teaching and learning in schools.

1.8.2 Educational outcomes

The focus of educational outcomes is on learners' academic achievement of their studies. This is an action of desired learning objectives, plans, realisation, or aspiration (Homel & Ryan, 2014; Khoo & Ainley, 2005). In this study, educational outcomes refer to the scores that learners achieve in examinations as indications of the context to which they have understood learning materials provided during the course of the year or quarter.

1.8.3 Instructional programme

The instructional programme is a set of interconnected programmes for students and teachers which is guided by a common framework for instruction, assessment, curriculum and the learning climate over a period of time (Newman et al., 2001). According to Weber (1989), instructional programme refers to the translation of academic excellence and educational techniques into effective learning objectives. Weber (1989) adds that this includes managing the instruction and curriculum, giving feedback to teachers, assessment, promoting a conducive learning environment and defining the school mission. In short, this refers to all the teaching and learning materials that are provided to the learners in a grade.

1.8.4 Leadership behaviour

Leadership behaviour combines management models and leadership theories as well as adapting leadership styles. It focuses on how to use theory in practice (Bush, 2006). The management models and leadership theories are applied in the school setting in order to influence the learning environment. It also refers to the levels of relationships as well as job satisfaction. It can reveal whether relations within the institution are weak, moderate or strong (Turloglu & Consay, 2020).

1.8.5 Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is a structure of instruction (Hardy et al., 2019). It is based on the idea that students learn when they can associate new information with prior knowledge as well as when they see meaning in school work (Munna et al., 2021). Student's own experiences are also part of learning. Teachers are in the forefront in order for students to achieve academic excellence. They have assisted many young people to achieve academic excellence (de Bruin, 2019). Learning focuses on permanent change as well developing new experience and skills. Teaching focuses on events that are outside of learners which are designed to support and develop learners in the learning process (Sequeira, 2012).

1.9 Chapter summary

This chapter has introduced the study, which focuses on principals' leadership in promoting teaching and learning, especially in the 21st century. The study acknowledges that numerous changes have occurred in the area of the role of the school principal. The South African education system has faced many economic, social, technological, and political challenges. These challenges have affected school principals directly and indirectly. Despite these challenges, principals still have to make sure that teaching and learning takes place and that educational outcomes are achieved. This chapter focused on the challenges that principals face and their role in promoting teaching and learning. The principals' role has evolved in the 21st century. This research study hopes to add to the body of knowledge and assist principals in their role of promoting teaching and learning as well as provide recommendations that will contribute to effective principalship in the 21st century. The next chapter will present a review of relevant literature and discuss a theoretical framework that underpins this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One presented an introduction to this study and gave a clear overview of the study's problem. This chapter focuses on reviewing literature and current trends around the world. The literature review will provide more insights on the role that principals play in promoting quality teaching and learning in the 21st century. This chapter also includes the theoretical framework which is used as a lens through which an understanding of the study is created. This chapter is divided into subheadings. The subheading covers the following topics; namely, the complexity of principal leadership in the 21st century; the changes in the role of principal leadership in the 21st century; the leadership functions of the principal; leadership and management roles; the link between the role of the principal and teaching and learning; accountability issues facing principals in the 21st century, the kind of support that is offered by the principals in the classroom in order to promote teaching and learning and the theoretical framework underpinning this.

2.2 The role of the principal in the 21st century

Dimmock (as cited in Adams et al., 2017), highlights that school leaders are experiencing a lot of pressure when it comes to balancing administration, leadership, and management as school leadership functions. These competing elements create difficulty for school leaders as they find it impossible to decide which one is more important than the other. This is an ongoing debate in education. The earlier study by Vaillant (2015) revealed that; in the 21st century, principals have discovered that administrative tasks are dominant at the expense of educational outcomes. Therefore, this study assumes that there are major changes in the role that principals play in teaching and learning or learners' outcomes in the 21st century. Adams et al. (2017) also highlight that over and above normal functions and responsibilities, school leaders have become accountable for learning outcomes, in an environment that is "result driven". This may have resulted in ambiguity in their role because the scales have tipped over in every angle and it has become difficult to find the balance between leadership, management, administration and learning outcomes.

The leadership role of the principal is constantly changing in the 21st century and it has become extremely difficult for principals to keep up with the changes in educational policy. The changes have made the job more complex. Shava and Tlou (2018) note that there are constant changes in educational reform across the world, and South Africa is no exception. If educational changes are proven to be effective in certain countries, then, policy makers have the tendency to wish to try new ways of doing things or implement similar changes in their countries. In their earlier studies, Day et al. (2016) explain that educational reform has been marked by ongoing world-wide efforts to raise the standard of education by policy makers through many different practices in schools. These practices that are aimed at raising academic standards are common with almost all governments. As a matter of fact, our government is not an exception. Their study was supported by Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development (2008, 2010) in their earlier study which found that the changes in policy have resulted in many other changes on how schools are run, as well as principal leadership across the world.

Principals in the 21st century perform multi-faceted role; their responsibilities are now more demanding and challenging, unclear, complicated at times and overloaded (Mestry, 2017). The reason for this has been the high expectation from policy makers, parents, governing bodies, economic, social, technological, political issues, and constant curriculum changes. Therefore, it is very clear that school principals usually function or work within multiple contexts (Mestry, 2017). The majority of the contexts stem from varying socio-economic conditions of the 21st century. Zuze and Juan (2018), add that principals must seek different management and leadership approaches to deal with multiple challenges and still focus on learners' achievements. The expectations and the stakes are far too high in the 21st century. It can be concluded that some of the problems they face are very intricate and outside of their scope.

Zuze and Juan (2018) argue that the role of the principal has gone through many advanced stages. It has been modified and changed from just being managers and administrators to that of being bearers of teaching and learning. Mkhize and Bhengu (2018) explain that principals' role has added responsibilities in recent years. Over and above their existing responsibilities, principals are still expected to play a major role in driving the culture of teaching and learning in schools. Most principals find it difficult to strike the balance between all these variables (Mashele, 2017). Over the past two decades, principals have been put under extreme pressure

due to intense changes in educational policy. They are now placed under a lot of pressure to address diverse and multiple responsibilities (James et al., 2018). Vaillant (2015) also found that there are high expectations with regards to school leadership. Tasks and responsibilities have increased drastically, and many factors must be reconsidered. These factors include incentives for principals, training levels and support. Vaillant (2015) in their earlier study found the same issues and also agree that administrative tasks have become a dominant factor at the expense of teaching and learning.

2.2.1 International studies

Adams and Muthiah (2020) presented the studies on the issues that challenge the principal leadership in the context of North American, European, African, and Australian schools. The purpose of their study was to analyse the existing literature on leadership challenges faced by school principals in the 21st century. The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, through two main databases, Web of Science and Scopus were used. The 16 eligible documents were used as data sources. Whereas, in this current study I used telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews and document analysis. Internationally, Adams and Muthiah (2020) found that the principal leadership affects school and student performance. The study revealed that personal challenges, school context such as lack of trained staff and inadequate facilities and resources, financial constraints, and stakeholders, hampered the principal's roles. Given these sentiments, establishing the roles of principals in the South African context may also help in understanding whether they also experience these challenges. Furthermore, the negative attitudes of parents and interventions from the Ministry of Education also contributed to the failure of effective teaching and learning in schools. The study found that the principals' lack of knowledge and skills of organising affect learners' achievements. In addition, Adams and Muthiah's (2020) study revealed that the principals do not receive adequate professional leadership training programmes considering that the government for secondary school teaching requires only a bachelor's in education (B.Ed.) degree instead of a professional leadership degree. These findings prompted me to determine whether or not the principals in this study had experienced such challenges from performing their roles within their schools.

2.2.2 Regional studies

In Ghana, Ampofo et al. (2019) explored the influence of school heads' direct supervision on teacher role affects performance in public senior high schools. Like the current research, a study conducted by Ampofo et al. (2019) adopted mixed methods design. However, it differs in that this study had 10 participants while their study employed simple random and purposive sampling methods to select 222 class prefects, 295 teachers, 86 Heads of Department, 13 school heads and one Regional Director for the Inspectorate Division of the Ghana Education Service. This study used telephone interviews, face-to-face interview and document analysis as data generation techniques while that of Ampofo et al. (2019) employed questionnaires and interview guides. The Ghanaian study found that school headmasters allocated very little time for supervision of lesson planning and delivery of teachers. This study established that school heads' lesson planning supervision and lesson delivery supervision had a significant influence on teacher role performance. These findings by Ampofo et al. (2019) were pointers to the current research where I also had to establish the roles of principals in the 5th revolution during the pandemic. Ampofo et al. (2019) recommended the education services to dedicate more portion to the promotion requirement of the school heads to evidence of direct supervision of teachers. The current study focused on principals' roles during COVID-19, thus, the similarities and differences on the roles of principals in the two contexts need to be established.

In Tanzania, Ngole and Mkulu (2021) examined the role of heads of schools' supervision in improving quality of teaching and learning in public secondary schools. The author's research adopted a mixed approach under convergent parallel research design. Their study had 1 District Education Officer, 4 Ward Executive Officer, 4 Heads of Schools, 30 Teachers, and 47 Students while the current study only focused on 10 principals in public high schools. Questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussion were data generation techniques used in the Tanzanian study. The Ngole and Mkulu's (2021) study is dissimilar to the current study in methodology as well as the sample size. The authors study used a mixed method approach which used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 computer package and thematic analysis. The Tanzanian study found out that heads of schools are key instructional supervisors in schools. Furthermore, effective supervision was found to be the key factor for the academic performance in schools. Therefore, these findings act as a guide for the current study. The Ngole and Mkulu's (2021) study recommended that heads of schools should be

setting time for instructional supervision in schools because it was the main role that influence learners' academic achievement positively. The Tanzanian study is relevant to my study as it examines the role of head of schools.

2.2.3 National studies

In South Africa, Mestry (2017) explored the importance of promoting a culture of professional development that will prepare principals to confront education challenges and obstacles facing them. This was qualitative research which employed individual interviews whereas the current study adopted, document analysis, face-to-face interview, and telephone interviews. Fifteen principals from public primary and secondary schools were selected to determine their perceptions and experiences of how they were prepared and professionally developed to lead and manage schools. While the current study only used 10 principals from high schools. Findings revealed that in South Africa, there is no formal preparation for aspiring or practicing principals taking on leadership and management positions, and very few in-service professional development programmes are available. Mestry (2017) reported that principals need to be empowered to effectively deal with challenges facing them in the 21st century. From these findings, it was therefore vital to establish whether the participants in the current study were empowered and engaged in professional development programmes in order to undertake their roles.

Still in South Africa, Naidoo (2019) investigated the perceptions of teachers and school management team (SMT) members of the leadership qualities exhibited by principals who acquired the professional qualification referred to as the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership and Management (ACESLM). Naidoo' study used stratified random sampling to identify and select 600 respondents (consisting of deputy principals, heads of department and post level-one teachers) at the 120 selected schools. While in this study employed purposive sampling to identify 10 principals. Findings showed that leadership development for principals is crucial for school improvement because of active teaching and learning. Leadership capacity requires principals to skilfully participate with relevant stakeholders, and where there is high leadership capacity, instructional leadership develops into sound leadership practices. Therefore, this study was viable to be explored.

From the above discussions, all the studies from international, regional, and national had a bigger sample size with differing participants (such as teachers, learners, and district officials). While this current study only focuses on principals.

2.3 The leadership functions of the principal

Scholars have long found that there are many forms of leadership; however, within the different forms there are four main functions of principal leadership (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood et al., 2006). According to Hitt and Tucker (2016), principals have to perform the following functions: firstly, they must lead the teaching and learning programme. The focus should be on learning outcomes. Teachers must teach and learners must learn. The principal must avoid any activities that distract teaching and learning or interfere with instructional time. Secondly, they must involve all stakeholders in decision making and this will help them to meet the needs and aspirations of stakeholders. Stakeholders include policy makers, parents, teachers, and anyone involved in education. Teachers have direct contact with teaching and learning while principals play a role of promoting teaching and learning through indirect contact with learners. Principals must involve all stakeholders in order to achieve educational outcome. Thirdly principals need to develop the vision of the school and offer guidance in order to promote teaching and learning. This means setting clear goals and objectives of the school and how these goals will be achieved. Finally, principals must promote continuous professional development among teachers. This should be ongoing and not a once-off programme that is not effective. Access to continuous professional development will lead to quality teaching and learning.

In earlier studies, Leithwood (2011) and Murphy (2016) concur that principals have to play a strategic role in building or promoting professional learning communities (PLC). They believe that this will promote a positive environment, one that is conducive of teaching and learning. Therefore, this study hopes to explore the link between principal leadership and teaching and learning. Other functions include using instructional leadership to contribute to effective learning of students (Tan, 2018). Instructional leadership is used to empowering teachers decide suitable instructional decisions and help them deal with their differing learning needs. Many scholars have concurred with the notion of instructional leadership as having the greatest impact on teaching and learning of disadvantaged students (Day et al., 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2011; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). Therefore, in this current study these sentiments were acting as a guide to my study as I wanted to explore the principals' roles. Tan (2018) concludes that

it is vital for principals to empower teachers in order to improve teaching and learning or instruction in schools as this will result in better or improved student results.

Leithwood et al. (2019) also recognise the four main areas of leadership and their impact on principal leadership. Their evidence show that students' achievements rely on the following areas: building relationships and developing people, setting direction, improving the instructional programme and redesigning the organisation to support desired practices. The idea is that the principal will communicate the goals and mission of the school, create a good working environment, develop the culture of the school and give support in terms of the instruction. In another study done by Biesta (2009), three main functions of the school are identified. Principals are expected to lead within these three functions: socialisation, individuation, and qualification. They all have an influence on the role of a principal; however, it was to be established whether the participants in this current study used these functions. The qualification function focuses on improving teaching and learning (instruction).

The individuation and socialisation functions place more emphasis on the interrelationships as well as a conducive learning environment within the school. It puts no emphasis on instruction. The idea is that through individuation and socialisation principals will be able to lead successful schools and through qualification they will lead high achieving schools. In the study conducted by Leithwood et al. (2019), it was found that the main areas of leadership were the source for success in schools; hence, this study needs to establish whether the principals have implemented them. Hallinger (2018) concurs that the role of the principal is the one that supports teaching and learning. Finally, it is somewhat expected that principal lead the instruction in order to stay in a managing role, so that their leadership role is more effective in achieving educational outcomes (Zepeda et al., 2017). Like in the Leithwood et al. (2019) study, Hitt and Tucker (2016) also highlight that there is a relationship between principal leadership and instruction and that this relationship supports positive student outcomes.

2.4 Principals' leadership and management roles

One of the questions that has been posed for many decades is about the relation between leadership and management, and the question persists even today. The question I posed in the opening of this section is whether leadership and management roles of the principal are different or not. According to Hallinger (2018), leadership aims to bring about change and

assist organisations in improving their processes. Leaders also seeks to influence others. Leadership is the responsibility of everyone in a school (parents, teachers as well as students). In that way, leadership seems to focus on influence and change. Hallinger (2018) further explains that principals in a school occupy management roles. On the other hand, management is defined as a formal administrative role performed by an individual. There are specific management activities within these roles. They include organising, controlling, dealing with policy, operation and planning (Hallinger, 2018). The focus is on project management, quality management as well as finance and budget management. Therefore, both leadership and management roles are a requirement for effective principalship which promotes a conducive environment for teaching and learning.

Tan (2018) asserts that different types of school leadership are characterised by certain leadership functions. One of these functions is instructional leadership. It is clear that one way of improving learner teaching is to improve instruction. Proven evidence shows that principals need to be well versed with the teaching-learning programme in others in order to help teachers excel in their jobs (Hitt & Tucker, 2015; Leithwood, 2006). From a study by Tan (2018) it was found that the principals should use distributive leadership in order to delegate tasks and allow all stakeholders (teachers and other levels of management) to be part of decision making. In addition, Tan (2018) revealed that the principals need to develop the school vision and staff development in order to succeed in their schools. Whether the principals in this study implemented the distributive leadership is still to be established. Furthermore, literature showed that continuous staff development through active professional learning communities is an effective way that principals should foster improvement in academic performance (Leithwood, 2012; Murphy, 2015; Opfer & Pedder, 2013).

2.5 The link between the role of the principal and teaching and learning

In 2012, the National Development plan (NDP) outlined the importance of intensifying the role of school leadership in South Africa. The main focus was on consolidating and prioritising principal leadership (National Planning Committee, 2012). There has been a great emphasis on learning gains as well as the critical role that the school leadership can play in order to raise academic standards. This has come with increased levels of accountability on principal leadership (Wills, 2015). The following three areas have been proposed by the NDP in order to improve policy: providing principals with more powers to manage schools, managing

principals' performance and managing the appointment process (National Planning Committee, 2012). The right appointment of a suitable principal from the onset is also of great importance according to the NDP.

Moser (2017) alludes to the fact that research has raised many questions about the link between teaching and learning, the role of leadership and learners' performance. The study found that research has failed to answer this question or give clarity to issues pertaining to the relationship between the leadership role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning. Thompson (2017) strongly highlights the new theme in the discourse on effective principalship. This study sought to find the relationship between the principal leadership and teaching and learning. In the light of previous studies, international research has however, consistently demonstrated that principal leadership has both a positive and negative impact on school leadership (Moser, 2017 & Thompson, 2017). I wondered how principals' roles in the 21st century have addressed these failures in the past as the current study focused on principals' roles on promoting teaching and learning in schools. This impact is evident on how schools are run, the conditions and culture of the schools, as well as quality of teaching and learning, which results in learners' performance (Day et al., 2016; Gu & Johansson, 2013; Mulford, 2008; Robson et al., 2008; Silins & Mulford, 2002). Dimmock (1999) highlights this dilemma. These competing elements include administration, management and leadership. Bush (2013) and Gunter (2005) also found that there is a dilemma between these three concepts and how they are used interchangeably. The use of these terms has transformed from 'educational administration' to educational management' to 'educational leadership'. Whether the principals in the current study had the dilemma along those three elements needs to be explored.

In the 21st century, it has become clearer that there are competing elements of principals that maintain this balance. All this knowledge which was developed over the years has not made their job easier. It has become even difficult for principals to decide which elements are important than others. So, finding the balance has made their job extremely difficult. According to Wills (2015) there has been a big move in the past ten years to raise the value of management and school leadership to raise the bar in learning gains in the education system. Shava and Tlou (2018) also concur that in most cases school principals are responsible for variations in learners' outcomes in schools and this is regarded as one of the most important factors (Shava & Tlou, 2018). McCarley et al. (2016) add that they are aware that many factors may contribute

to learners' outcomes. However, the principals' role and effective leadership have transformed the school and resulted in major changes academically.

Governments across the world are shifting a lot of responsibilities like staffing and financial management to schools which were initially performed outside the school. This has resulted in principals adopting more and more responsibilities (Bush, 2018). On the other hand, principals feel a lot of uncertainty as they may not be prepared for this role of multi-tasking, extra ordinary hours dedicated to administration and unexpected events that have less to do with teaching and learning. In many instances it is unclear if principals have the capacity to perform all these tasks (Mestry, 2017). The responsibilities have expanded and are more time consuming. This leaves less time for instruction. The effectiveness of teaching and learning programmes is measured through learner academic achievements with the expectation that school principals are essential 'tools' toward improved instructional delivery in their schools (Maponya, 2020). According to Naidoo (2019), principals are expected to have certain leadership qualities to achieve and maintain quality schools in complex environments. There is a general agreement in scholarship that leadership does make a big difference in school effectiveness (Naidoo, 2019). However, there is an ongoing debate of the upcoming view and realisation that classroom learning bears limited results on leadership practice.

Agasisti et al. (2012) in their study explore the relationship between the managerial role and characteristics of principals as well as learners' performance. The study found that performance was not only based on the leadership role that principals play in teaching and learning. Therefore, understanding the roles of principals in the 21st century became crucial. In addition, Agasisti et al. (2012) reported that there are many factors other than managerial characteristics that influence learners' performance. The authors' study also revealed that there are other factors like assessment policies, teacher behaviour, parental involvement, participation in decision making among others. Hence, it was vital to establish whether the principals in this current study experienced the similar views. Maponya (2020) also concurs that school principals have not yet mastered their role in curriculum leadership because they have focused mainly on issues of management, finance, staffing, governance among others.

Kiat et al. (2017) argue that it is the effectiveness of the principals that make schools successful and achieve high educational standards. They also found that principals enhance instruction, motivate teachers, manage resources and create environments that are conducive for learning

while the lack of effective leadership has resulted in poor academic performance globally. Therefore, undertaking this study was important, as it was focusing on determining whether the principals' roles affect or promote the teaching and learning in the school. Bush (2018) also found that principal leadership is generally understood to have the greatest influence on student outcomes. This finding acts as a guide to this current study. However, there is compelling evidence that certain leadership styles promote effective student learning. Bush (2018) adds that this influence can only be exerted when leaders are very close to teaching and learning. Zuze and Juan (2018) acknowledge that a strong leader is required and of great importance in promoting teaching and learning but allude that this task cannot be performed by principals without the help of other stakeholders. Scholars believe that effective leadership of the principals relies mainly on the role played by numerous stakeholders. Zuze and Juan (2018) found that apart from principals, departmental heads have a major role to play in managing instruction and that they should be the focal point of future research. In support to the above findings, Naidoo (2009) also mentioned that the principals' effectiveness can only be realised when they involve other stakeholders in the leadership and management of the curriculum. From these findings, it was crucial to determine whether the participants in the current study had the same perspectives about their roles. These stakeholders include teachers who are more familiar with the teaching strategies as well as the curriculum in order to improve teaching and learning. Naidoo (2019) found that it has been difficult to link learning and teaching and the role that principals play in its promotion. Therefore, this finding act as a pointer to my study.

Many studies suggest that the role of a principal is typically one that is continually changing and always in a state of transition. They have moved from a role of instructional leaders and are trying to adopt other leadership styles in order to improve their role in leadership (Abdullah & Kasson 2011; DeMatthews, 2014; Mestry, 2017). Tingle et al. (2019) has indicated that in some instances, principals are adopting other styles of leadership with the hope that they will improve their role as leaders which can achieve better learning outcomes. A study by Shava and Tlou (2018) showed that the role that leaders play in schools is linked closely to the exceptional learner academic achievement. Whether the principals in the current study had the same sentiments need to be established.

Fullan (2018) makes a strong argument on why there is an urgent need for the principals' role to change in order to embrace their ever-evolving role and how schools are run. Fullan (2018) also acknowledges the instructional role of the principal; however, he sees instructional

leadership as something that will soon be outdated. The new roles are defined as follows: principals should become the leader of learners, district, and system players as well as agents of change. Therefore, whether the principals in this study displayed these roles would be determined. Fullan (2018) concludes that this change in their role will help principals become more effective. Mestry (2017) argues that the ineffective instructional leadership of the principals in recent years has resulted in poor academic standards in South Africa. In another study conducted by James et al. (2018) revealed that research has been clear about the link between student learning and the principals' role in it. They acknowledge that school leadership has been researched for the past four decades but there is still a grey area on its connection to teaching and learning. Hence, it was important for me to explore the current study in order to understand whether the principals' role affected or promoted teaching and learning in the 21st century. James et al. (2018) conclude that the roles of principals promotes a conducive environment for learning as opposed to promoting teaching and learning. Given these arguments, it was vital for me to partake in the current study as there is a significant gap in the link between the roles that the principals play and student learning.

2.6 Principals' perceptions of their role in order to promote teaching and learning

There is a perception that there are schools that have not succeeded in achieving their educational outcomes. One may wonder if the problem lies with the inability of the principals to perform their duties or their perceptions about their role in the school context. Komalasari et al. (2020) study determined the management competence of principals in improving the quality of education. The authors' study showed that principals face more challenges in the 21st century and their role and functions in the period of accountability have become increasingly more demanding. The presence of a principal in a school can either lead to success or failure over longer periods of time. Komalasari et al. (2020) also revealed that the principals' complex role in the 21st century require a change in attitude if they are to lead successful schools. From these findings, it was therefore significant to determine whether the participants' role affected teaching and learning negatively or positively in order to promote teaching and learning in their schools. The changes in dynamics in their role currently call for multitasking abilities. It has been generally accepted that principals' effective leadership in teaching and learning is the key component for achieving quality teaching and learning (Komalasari et al., 2020). Hendarman (as quoted in Kolamasari et al., 2020) suggests that multitasking must include shaping teachers' attitudes, promotion of a harmonious institution and good human relations, influencing

educational outcomes positively, motivation of teachers to achieve school goals and improvement of the culture of learning and teaching. Therefore, it was important to partake the current study and explored whether the principals' roles had positive influence in promoting teaching and learning as well as learner's performance in the 21st century.

The principal must understand the school as a complex and special institution. It must not be taken for granted that schools can just be managed and led by any principal. In addition, it is noted that principals are supervisors who lead educational institutions like schools with wisdom and good leadership skills in order to achieve positive educational goals. Risdianto (as cited in Komalasari et al., 2020) also concur that this is a complicated task that requires special skills. Therefore, the effectiveness of any school requires a good principal who understands that there are environmental and resource limitations at play. And that these limitations may have a huge impact on teaching and learning if they are not addressed properly. In other words, good principals are able to guide teachers to effectively teach within these limitations and complexities. It is a big task with multiple roles that are performed by one person. Scholarship is clear of the fact that the role of a principal is highly demanding and complex. Even though the principal is key in promoting quality teaching and learning and achieving educational outcomes, it is not an easy task to create such an environment.

Henderman (2018) concludes that learning spaces are understood to be spaces that must respond to various factors, which are also continually changing. The main goal in education is clear; however, there are many deviations and factors that have nothing to do with teaching and learning that shift the focus from educational outcomes. A study by Henderman (2018) study reveals that low professionalism from principals impacted negatively on a school as a whole. Again, it was reported that there is a lack of competence in dealing with internal and external factors affecting the school. Furthermore, Henderman (2018) adds that the internal factors which include lack of effective professional development, lack of resources, incompetent staff, lack of cooperation from learners and parents, poor leadership skills, and distractions that interfere with instructional time. External factors include social, economic and political issues. Therefore, from these findings, it was important to establish whether roles of principals hinder or promote teaching and learning in schools.

Adams et al. (2017) pointed out that school principals are under a lot of pressure to perform in the 21st century as their performance is measured by learners' results. The nature of education

today is result driven and principals are accountable to circuit managers. According to Adams et al. (2017), principals encounter a lot of accountability issues in the 21st century. As the environment becomes more and more result driven then the principals' ability to lead and manage schools is put under the microscope. Thus, important to understand whether the participants in this study also experienced these factors. The national Department of Basic Education (DBE) has made it clear that they are holding principals to account if schools do not perform. The DBE has even introduced contracts based on school performance (Khumalo, 2011; Phakathi, 2012 as quoted in Wills, 2015). In June 2011, the DBE proposed a draft performance agreement. The purpose was to hold principals to account concerning learner performance or results. The DBE was unsuccessful as the draft was resisted by teacher unions and as a result it was withdrawn in 2012 (Wills, 2015).

Bush (2018) asserts that the new role of the principal in the 21st century requires better preparation. He adds that there is a growing awareness that principalship is an occupation that needs principals to acquire certain preparation. Many countries have neglected this preparation and it is very easy to become a principal without any form of preparation or specialised training. Countries like China, Singapore, France, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Chile and Canada have prescribed leadership qualifications for future principals (Bush, 2018). This might help prepare them better for the new challenges facing school principals in the 21st century. The question can be why other countries fail do the same in preparing school principals for their new role. Mestry (2017) also concurs that many practising principals have fallen short when it comes to basic management and leadership. They lack basic training before and after they become principals.

2.7 The kind of support that is offered by the principals in the classroom in order to promote teaching and learning

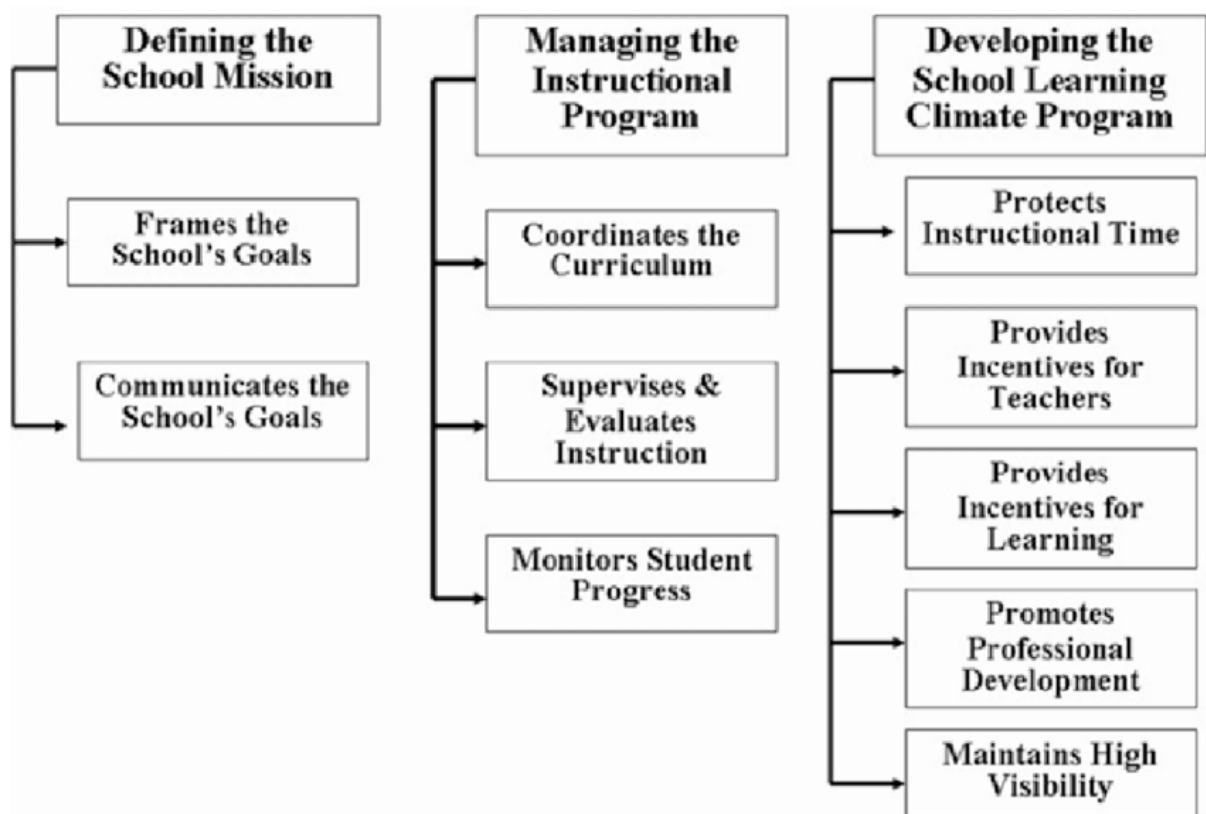
According to Sterrett and Richardson (2020) one of the main roles of the principals is to support and nurture others under their supervision. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) also conquer that support is imparted through establishing instructional expectations, professional development and making regular class visits. Sterrett and Richardson (2020) add that leadership is central to helping others grow professionally and an important tool for capacity building. On the other hand, Saleem et al. (2022) pointed out that principals give support by giving direction and providing supportive leadership in order to achieve goals and objectives. They add that the

principals solve problems, assess teaching methods, sustain curricular standards, monitor students' progress and create an environment that is conducive for learning to take place (Saleem et al., 2022). Park et al. (2019) are of the view that the support offered by the principal should be to involve teachers in decision making, give meaningful feedback, mentor novice and experienced teachers as well as implement procedures and routines.

Principals are familiar with educational contexts and provide support in administrative and academic domains (Saleem et al., 2022). They can also influence pedagogics through their leadership and familiarity with educational contexts (Navaridas-Nalda et al., 2020). Based on the notion that educational settings are constantly changing and there is a need to adapt knowledge and practice, that is why principals foster and encourage teachers to engage in professional learning communities (Day et al., 2016). According to Grissom et al. (2021) principals give support by building a productive climate for learning, engage in focused interaction with staff, facilitate productive school climate and professional learning communities and manage all resources including staffing.

2.8 Theoretical framework

This study is informed by the instructional leadership theory, leadership for learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). The theoretical framework is a lens through which an understanding of this study is created. This model consists of seven key components and this study focuses on these components to understand how school principals support effective teaching and learning in schools. These components are, (a) promoting the professional development of teacher; (b) developing high standards and expectations; (c) increasing motivation for teachers and students, (d) coordinating the curriculum; (e) protecting instructional time; (f) framing and communicating goals, (g) supervising and evaluating instruction. All these seven elements have covered the role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning completely. Other studies covered some of these elements. However, Hallinger and Murphy (1986) took it a step further and discussed how instructional leadership informs the role of the principal in its entirety.



A framework of instructional leadership. (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985)

Similarly, Hallinger and Murphy (1985) examined the school principals' behaviour in the context of instructional leadership and found that it focused on three dimensions. These included promoting the school climate; defining the mission and managing instructional programme. Later in the 1990s Murphy' Model added to Hallinger and Murphy's Model by noting that principals in effective schools demonstrated instructional leadership. They did this by promoting a climate for learning; instruction and assessment; developing the school mission and goals; co-ordinating; monitoring and evaluating the curriculum as well as creating a supportive working environment (Murphy, 1990).

However, Weber's Model (1996) identified other aspects of instructional leadership which identified five important aspects of instructional leadership. These aspects included defining the school mission; promoting a positive learning environment; managing curriculum and instruction; defining the mission of the school; observing curriculum and instruction as well as assessing the instructional programme. Even Alig-Mielcarek's Instructional Leadership Model (2003) established similarities on the importance of instructional leaders in monitoring and giving feedback on the teaching and learning process, defining and communicating goals and

the importance of professional development. The overlap of the studies on the principals' leadership role is noted. However, there are more similarities which are noted than differences thus far.

Instructional leadership has been advocated by many scholars as the principal leadership that improves learning and teaching (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Louis, 2011; Neumerski et al., 2018). Instructional leadership has occupied many educational spaces, all over the world, for half a century. Many countries around the world rely on instructional leadership which is referred to as 'policy borrowing'. It means using a policy that improves education but originated in another country. Therefore, this model is relevant for this study which sought to understand how principals' role promote effective teaching and learning in the 21st century. Bush (2013, p. 6) adds that "instructional leadership is the longest established concept linking leadership and learning." This is because principals who focus on instruction put more emphasis on student learning, which has a positive influence on learning and teaching. Hallinger (2018) and OECD (2016) are aware that teachers foster teaching and learning as their key task; however, school principals have a responsibility to support teaching and learning and make sure that learner outcomes are achieved. According to Murphy (1995), there was not much emphasis in the early 1900s. Jacobson and Cypres (2012) take it a step further and add that there were no specific leadership models that were noted in the same period. However, Button (1966) argues that school leaders did focus on instruction and curriculum. According to Gumus et al. (2018), educational theories started to emerge after the 1900s. Most educational theories used today (like instructional leadership, distributed leadership and teacher leadership) emerged after the 1980s (Lunenburg, 2013). It can be concluded that the role of the principal had to focus on instruction and curriculum.

Many scholars who have advocated for instructional leadership have also supported the view that as early as the 1960s and 1970s the effective school principal was characterised by promoting teaching and learning (Bridges, 1967; Edmonds, 1979; Goldman & Heald, 1968). The main focus was on the principal's supervisory role. The principals supervise teachers in order to improve the instructional programme, establish teaching and learning goals, assess the quality of instruction and monitor the progress of students. Therefore, their studies conclude that there was some form of instructional leadership in that period. It might not have been called instructional leadership but it definitely fits the instructional leadership description depicted by Hallinger and Murphy (1986). Gumus et al. (2018) assert that instructional leadership was not

very clear or well understood until the 1980s, and they add that the scholars who gave life to instructional leadership were Hallinger and Murphy in 1986. Instructional leadership is one of the oldest models of educational leadership.

In the 20th century the educational leadership models that were used by the principals shifted and focused on distributed and transformational models. However, it did not last long before instructional leadership gained momentum again in the 21st century (Gumus et al, 2018). This could have been caused by the accountability levels of principals as well as an increased focus on learner outcomes and achievements. This could also be due to the fact that instructional leadership has been best described as ‘leadership for learning’ (Bush, 2003). According to Gumus et al. (2018), instructional leadership mainly focuses on the role of the principal leadership in instructional programmes, as well as learners’ outcomes. For many reasons instructional leadership remained the most popular model of educational leadership for more than three decades.

Hallinger and Heck (1996) affirm that instructional leadership is very effective in school improvement and learner achievement. Hallinger et al. (2015) also emphasise that instructional leadership is explained as the leadership that assist in achieving learners’ high standards and it is the responsibility of the principal to promote the positive and conducive culture of learning. Heck (1992) also concur that principals put more emphasis on instructional issues and monitoring of learners’ progress in high achieving schools. Whereas it is the total opposite in low achieving schools. This is confirmed by Hallinger and Heck (2011), who explain that even low achieving schools experienced improvements where principal exercised instructional leadership that focused on teaching and learning. Therefore, instructional leadership has an impact on learners’ performance especially when it focuses on teaching and learning.

Therefore, principals in the 21st century have adopted many challenges of the past centuries as well as their limitations and are faced with even bigger challenges. They have to turn around unsuccessful schools into fully functional schools. Mendels (2012) suggests that principals of the 21st century should centre their leadership in line with instruction and administrative activities. Management activities should come second. In spite of the fact that principals play a greater part in school improvement, their instructional leadership should be at the heart of school improvement. The major attention on instructional leadership has been brought about

by empirical evidence linking student achievement and school leadership (Leithwood et al., 2004).

Shaked et al. (2017) also concur that instructional leadership is centred on the responsibility of the principal to monitor and develop teaching and learning in the whole school. They further add that instructional leadership is identified as the main duty of the principals who wish to improve their schools and achieve positive learners' results. The study focuses on the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning. Therefore, instructional leadership will enable me to find out about the actual role that principals play as well as answer questions on their perceptions and experiences regarding their role in promoting teaching and learning. Liu and Hallinger (2018) explain that instructional leadership is fundamental and of great importance in forging high standards of learning for learners and determining principals' contribution in it. They affirm that instructional leadership has grown geographically across the world. Hallinger's concepts will assist in getting more insight on how principals practise their role in promoting teaching and learning.

The model proposed for this study by Hallinger and Murphy (1986) was selected as the most suitable model for this study. The suggestion of the following dimensions are fundamentals for effective instructional leadership. The dimensions are similar to other studies on instructional leadership: *promoting the professional development of teachers* means that the principals have the responsibility to assist teachers with their professional growth efforts. Instructional leadership has reviewed models that are multidimensional, embracing many professional practices that are executed at the same time (Mestry et al., 2013). This defines the exact role of the principal as stated in the instructional leadership theory (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). They do this through in-service training, workshops and training programmes that support staff and help them develop instructional practices that are effective in the classroom. These may include: creating conditions for improved teaching and learning; setting direction as well as focus on teaching and learning.

Instructional leadership advocates for capacity building (Fullan, 2018). In a way, such professional development programmes assist teachers to understand and deal with changes that they encounter in their professional work. The principal is at the centre of instruction. The principals' role involved many activities which require their full attention. The second component is about *developing high standards and expectations*. This means that principals

shape schools directly through policies that focus on learners' progress, remediation, student grading and promotion. They believe that effective instructional leadership set high standards for learners and maintain high expectations for all learners. Hallinger (2011) contends that instructional leadership focuses on learners' learning. According to Hallinger (2010), there is evidence that instructional leadership is collaborative. It is employed by school to achieve school or educational outcomes through learning. Thirdly, *increasing motivation for teachers and students*, it is also believed to be contributing to the teachers' motivation in their teaching practices and enhanced efforts. In terms of this component, increasing teachers' motivation entails establishing a rewards system that promotes a positive climate for learning. These rewards focus on the whole school. Instructional leaders may use many different types of reward systems in order to motivate students and teachers. The rewards may include awards ceremonies, certificate of merit for good marks, school attendance and good behaviour as well as many other forms of recognition.

The fourth component is *coordinating the curriculum*, in this regard, instructional leaders make sure that there is coordination between the schools' instructional objectives and the curricular materials used in the classroom. These materials may include apparatus that are used in the classroom in order to achieve instructional objectives. The fifth component is *protecting instructional time*. This means that there must be no disruptions of the curriculum. Instructional leaders use policies that focus on instruction and curb truancy, absenteeism and laziness. According to Robinson (2011), instructional leaders direct the work of teachers, develop common goals and purpose as well as minimise distractions. School leaders work hand-in-hand with teachers in order to develop instructional practices that are more effective in the classroom. In other words, when teachers spend time away from the classroom when they should be in class, would constitute non-protection of instructional time. Similarly, when teachers engage in other activities during teaching time will be violating this principle of protecting instructional time. Hallinger and Heck (2010) add that in the twenty-first century, instructional leadership has the primary focus on school leaders influencing directing activities aimed at learners learning with the help of educators. The sixth component, *framing and communicating goals*, focuses on a clearly defined mission of the school. The principal is key in communicating the goals of the schools through set objectives. These goals are communicated on a daily basis and in different contexts of the school. Lastly, in *supervising and evaluating instruction*, the principal plays a supervisory role by observing classroom instruction. The principal is supervising instruction in the classroom while teachers are teaching

(Sebastian & Allenswoth, 2012). Principals' work with teachers to make sure that there is a connection between the school goals and classroom objectives. In their supervisory role, they also assist, provide constructive guidance to teachers on classroom and curriculum matters.

It can be concluded that principals take a leading role through instructional leadership to lead their schools and promote instruction in order to support learning. This is done by principals through: promoting professional development of teachers, developing high standards and expectations; increasing motivation for teachers and students, coordinating the curriculum, protecting instructional time, framing and communicating goals, as well as supervising and evaluating instruction. Goddard (2003) further adds that instructional leadership places the principal as the supervisor of instruction and the curriculum expert.

2.9 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed the literature on the role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. The role of the principal is of utmost importance in promoting teaching and learning. Good leadership by the principal influences the success of learners and promote a conducive environment for teaching and learning. It is also noted that, many scholars advocate for instructional leadership as the leadership for learning with many positive learner outcomes. The next chapter discusses in detail, the design and methodology issues underpinning this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two presented a detailed discussion of the literature review and theoretical framework on the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. Chapter Three aims to provide the reader with an understanding of principals' leadership and their role to promote teaching and learning. Chapter Three focuses on the research design and methodology that were followed in conducting the study. It describes the research methodology used in the study to conduct research. The description comprises of methods adopted for the research, research design, sampling techniques used, data generation methods and the instruments used for data generation. The qualitative analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. The interviews and document analysis were used as data collection tools. Finally, the chapter discusses the trustworthiness of the study and presents ethical issues.

3.2 Research paradigm

There are many paradigms that guide research. Paradigms explain different ontologies. Ontologies rest on the nature of different realities that participants will share when answering questions. The paradigms also rest on epistemologies which are theories that guide the nature of knowledge about the phenomenon (Tuli, 2010). This is the investigation of how we know what we know and if it is valid knowledge or not. This study is based on the interpretive paradigm. This paradigm focuses on reality as something that is socially constructed (Tuli, 2010). And there are many realities (multiple realities). According to the interpretive paradigm, it is important to understand situations through the lens of the participants. The interpretive research is located within qualitative research. The assumption is that 'reality is socially constructed' and "that there is no single reality" (Creswell, 2007, p. 26). Mutch (2005), as well as Tuli (2010) also concur that the reality cannot exist independent of people and that the reality is human constructed. Therefore, there are many realities of each event. In other words knowledge is constructed and not found. This has led to the use of the term 'constructivism' which is also used to mean 'interpretivism' (Creswell, 2007). Through interpretive research paradigm, the researcher was able to get insight on these multiple realities that principals have

about their role in promoting teaching and learning. The meaning of what principals do to promote teaching and learning stemmed from their own experiences. These experiences differed from person to person and their interpretation also depended mainly on their settings.

3.3 Research design

According to Creswell and Poth (2016), research design is a plan that the researcher intends to use in order to address research objectives. It is strategy that is used in research based on evidence in order to answer research question (Cohen et al., 2018). It is also a plan of how a researcher intends to address the research objectives in order to process data (Creswell & Poth, 2016). According to Creswell (2007), researchers use different designs or approaches when doing research. Researchers may use the qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods when doing a study. Quantitative research is an assumption about independent facts of the single reality which could be based on statistics or numbers. According to Healy and Perry (2000), the world is viewed in a one-way mirror. The mixed method uses both the strengths of both the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. The researcher chose the qualitative approach for this study because it answered the research questions. It helped the researcher to generate empirical evidence that assisted in understanding the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century from participants' perspectives. Therefore, the focus is on participants' voices in answering the research questions (Creswell, 2007).

This study adopts a qualitative design or approach because the qualitative research approach will study the phenomenon in its natural context and trying to explain the world in terms of meanings that principals bring to it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This assisted in acquiring as much knowledge as possible about the participants. It also assisted in obtaining the most important information about the phenomena as well as answer research questions (Geertz as cited in Cohen et al., 2018). According to Merriam (2002), the qualitative inquiry requires gathering and interpretation of data through a suitable instrument. Qualitative research also aims to interpret and understand people and their experiences and the ability they have to construct their own world. The meaning people bring to their experiences is of great importance. Qualitative research helped uncover the principals' role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century.

A research design is a plan of action that is used to arrange research as well as make it realistic (Cohen et al., 2018). This plan helps the researcher to be able to answer the research questions based on evidence collected from participants. The purpose of research design is to effectively answer the research questions. On the other hand, Cohen et al. (2018) explains that there is no single, specific way for research planning. They add that research planning can be done in a convergent and divergent phase. The divergent phase reveals the possible and various or differing alternatives available to the researcher. The convergent phase will eliminate alternatives that are not in harmony with each other. Once this has been decided then the researcher is in a perfect position to handle or tackle the research problem.

De Vaus (2001) asserts that research design aims to give evidence that research was able to answer the initial questions in a clearer and unquestionable way. The research design addresses the research questions, objectives and purpose of research. Therefore, when a case is made, it is important to provide evidence that supports the case that is being made. De Vaus (2001) also concurs that research design provides evidence that is needed in order to answer the research questions. There seems to be a general agreement that research design includes data types and methods of data analysis as well as instruments for data collection (Gorard, 2013). The participants in this study helped the researcher to understand their realities through their lens which helped the researcher answer the research questions.

3.4 Research methodology

Research methodology is a mechanism that informs us about how we explore the phenomenon. It also includes the approach that the researcher uses and the principles that justify the types of research approach used and how research is ‘constructed’ (Cohen et al., 2018). Researchers may choose from surveys, case studies, artefacts and so forth. The case study was the chosen research methodology for this study. According to Yin (2013), case studies involve a study of a case within real-life, context settings. It seeks to investigate the topic of interest extensively (Yin, 2003).

3.4.1 Design of case study

Researchers have a choice between a single case study and multiple-case study, this choice is guided by the research objectives and questions (Zainal, 2017). Researchers may adopt a single

case study where there are no other cases available for reproduction. This means that there is a single existence that events are limited to. On the other hand, the multiple-case design is based on real life events that show various sources of evidence through reproduction (Zainal, 2017). This study adopted the multiple-case study design as it is more appropriate. The evidence is based on the previous results or occurrences of lived experiences of participants as well as seeing situations through the lens of the participants (Cohen et al., 2018).

3.4.2 Categories of case studies

In social sciences, there are three commonly used case studies. Namely; explanatory, exploratory and descriptive case studies. According to Yin (2003), explanatory case studies explore any phenomenon that is of interest to the researcher. It can be used in generating large-scale experience experiments or surveys through the generation of hypotheses. The second category is the descriptive case study, which provides narrative accounts. The third case study is the explanatory case study, which tests theories and explores new scientific discoveries. This study has adopted a descriptive research design as it is aligned with objectives of this study as it provides narrative account of the participants.

The case study is well suited to this study because it provided the comprehensive understanding of the cases being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Tight (2010) also concur with this view that a case study is defined as a detailed investigation of a particular real-life system, project, policy, or institution. Creswell (1994, p.12) just like Rule and John (2011) defines the case study as a single instance like a school, a child or community. The case study as the research methodology generated thick and rich data as this would help generate my participants' accounts of their experiences and perceptions in their role to promote teaching and learning (Cohen et al., 2018 p. 377). The case study made conclusions about the overall meanings and these meanings are called assertions (Stake, 1995). The focus was on the voices of participants in generating data in order to answer all the research questions (Creswell, 2007). Finally, it was concluded that case studies help understand real people in real situations. They are easier to interpret than principles or theories. Through case studies readers understand how each element fit together to make the situation realistic. Case studies are also flexible and can include many variables in one case. The case study also allowed me as researcher to use many techniques to generate qualitative data. It enlightens, describes, explains, and illustrates (Yin, 2009). Nisbett

and Watt (1984, p.78) add that case studies' biggest strength is that "they observe effects in real context"

The case study was a suitable methodology for this study as it includes interviews and document analysis. The case study enabled me to produce thick descriptions of what it is like to be in a certain situation as it portrays lived experiences of participants. School principals were able to explain their lived experiences and give the researcher clear accounts which were realistic on how they promote teaching and learning in their schools. Case studies are also illustrative, accessible and easily disseminated and they contain vivid accounts, which are strong in reality (Wellington, 2015). Case studies are also strengthened by the fact that they are not representative of the whole population.

3.5 Sampling methods

Sampling entails choosing segments of the population that the research wishes to examine in detail. The idea is to select a few people from a data set in order to do a study. The purpose is to investigate beliefs, attitudes, and characteristics (Cohen et al., 2018). Sampling is also used to direct the focus of the research. Therefore, research needs to obtain data from a smaller group that represents the total population (Cohen et al., 2018). There is an expectation that knowledge gained will represent the total population being studied, and such a view is applicable in quantitative designs that utilise probability sampling strategies. Qualitative designs utilise non-probability sampling techniques (Maree & Van Der Westhuizen, 2009). There are different types of sampling that are available to researchers. All sampling techniques that are used in qualitative inquiry belong to the broad family of sampling known as probability and non-probability sampling. Researchers may choose from, convenience, quota, purposive, snowballing and so forth. Convenience sampling involves choosing participants who happen to be available at that time of research (Suri, 2011). Quota sampling identifies the characteristics and proportions of the wider population. Snowballing sampling is used when it is difficult to locate the sample because maybe the topic is sensitive, communication and reach is difficult or the group is marginalised (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). The researcher selects a small group with the characteristics of interest (Cohen et al., 2018). There many other sampling types that may be used by qualitative researchers.

Purposive sampling was chosen for this study. This method of sampling is selective, and it is used for a specific purpose in order to cater for specific needs of the study (Cohen et al., 2018). Purposive sampling is an element of qualitative research that includes handpicking the cases to be included in the sample. Therefore, a sample is selected for a specific purpose (Teddie & Yu, 2007). In this study ten principals were selected because they were considered ‘knowledgeable people in their field’. The ten principals came from different township secondary schools in the Umgungundlovu district which is located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The district is located in the middle part of the province, known as the Midlands whose dominant language is IsiZulu. Parents generally come from low-income households and township schools are characterised by poor infrastructure, insufficient access to social welfare services, lack of basic services such as sanitation and clean water. This selection may not represent all the principals from township schools; however, it served the purpose of providing me with enough data to answer the research questions. In-depth information and knowledge came from the right people who were in a good position to provide the relevant information (Ball, 1990).

3.6 Data generation methods

Data generation may be a term used to obtain data (Bryman, 2016), for the purposes of this research, ‘data generation’ is the preferred term instead of using the term data collection which is used by quantitative researchers who usually adopt positive research paradigms, and it implies that data is readily available to the researcher to collect (Goldkuhl, 2019). Data generation is based on the researchers’ research questions, interest in the inquiry and it must produce data that is as original as possible in everyday life and its realities (Goldkuhl, 2019). Two data generation methods were used in this study. They are document analysis and interviews. They assisted with triangulation in order to ensure trustworthiness of my study.

3.6.1 Document analysis

Document analysis was also used as a first data generation method. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), in qualitative research it is a useful tool as it is the procedure that is used to evaluate the document that is used in research. According to Labuschagne (2003), documents develop rich data that is organised into themes and that provide easy access and use for the researcher. Bowen (2009) adds that it is a procedure to evaluate electronic or printed documents. These documents include agendas, minutes of meetings, books, diaries, manuals,

brochures, journals, letters, press releases, charts, advertisements, event programmes and event programmes. The document analysis is used with other qualitative methods in order to triangulate the data. By using different methods, the researcher may substantiate the data thus reducing biases (Patton, 1990). Collection of data from various people with different perspectives also assist better understanding of a phenomenon. Document analysis is always used with other methodologies in qualitative research as a way of triangulation (Bowen, 2009)

Triangulation refers to data sources or multiple methods that are used in qualitative research (Patton, 2014). They are used in order to improve and create better understanding of a particular phenomenon (Patton, 1990). It also allows qualitative researchers to test to ensure credibility of the data through the use of multiple sources (Denzin, 2011). The types of triangulation consist of the following: method; investigator; theory and data source triangulation (Patton, 1990). The triangulation method entails the use of various methods when collecting data about the same phenomenon. Hussein (2009). Denzin (2011) asserts that observation, field notes and interviews may be used in qualitative research as part of method triangulation.

Investigator triangulation can bring about different perspectives and confirmability of findings considering that two or more researchers may provide conclusions and observation about the same study (Denzin, 2011). On the other hand, theory triangulation opts for different theories in order to interpret the data. Finally, the data source triangulation entails collecting data from various types of people. These may include groups of people, communities or individuals with the idea to acquire different perspectives.

The document that was used for this research is 'The South African Standard for Principals' (DBE, 2016). There were no challenges when analysing this document as the gatekeeper permission was not required because the document is in the public domain. This document was analysed and interpreted in order to gain more knowledge on the role that principals play in the 21st century as well as their own perspective on the role. Its main purpose is to improve the professional standards of leadership and management for the benefit of learners and quality of learning. The meaning found in this document assisted me in developing empirical evidence which assisted in answering the research questions. The document is coded into different categories and these categories had to fit into research questions so that they could assist in

answering the research questions. Appendix D depicts the policy on the South African Standards for Principalship which was used as a data generation method.

Appendix D shows that the policy is a prescriptive document that clearly lists the functions to be performed by the school principals in the South African context. This policy outlines eight key areas. The key areas are: leading teaching and learning, shaping the direction of the school, managing quality of teaching and learning and securing accountability, developing and empowering self and others, managing the school as an organisation, working with and for the community, managing human resources (staff) in the school and managing and advocating extramural activities. The study is based on the role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century, this policy clearly states actions or functions that principals should execute in promoting teaching and learning. The key area that the study focused on is *leading teaching and learning in the school*. This key area gave real insight into the role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. It is also clear on how principals' professional standards as a way of benefitting all stakeholders can assist in order to improve teaching and learning in recent times. According to Goddard (2003), the principal is the expert of instruction. Principals develop high standards and expectations, increasing motivation for teachers and students, coordinating the curriculum, protecting instructional time, framing and communicating goals, as well as supervising and evaluating instruction (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

The document covers the role of the principal, as well as aspects such as: commitment to learning and teaching; promote positive learning culture; promote teaching and learning as the core of the schools' strategic planning; ensure opportunities for professional development; promote positive learning culture and ethos within the school; understanding the prescribed National Curriculum; continuous monitoring of teaching and learning, learner progress and achievement. The policy covers the main functions of the principal and it also covers many aspects which have posed a challenge for principalship in the 21st century. I checked the role of the principal through the document analysis. I created the table and put each role that enhances teaching and learning. Thereafter, I prepared an interview schedule in line with the document analysis. Interviews were done to confirm that what is required by the DBE links with the principals' role.

3.6.2 Pilot study

I first used pilot interviews for this study. It is always advisable to test the interview protocol for quality as well as to identify potential biases. The pilot interviews were used in the study to do pre-testing or trial of the actual interview (Baker, 1994). It is also aimed at achieving validity. It is used as a pre-test research instrument before conducting the actual interviews, to find any flaws by identifying the problems in the instrument that may require adjustments (Baker, 1994). I interviewed three principals as part of testing the tool and its effectiveness. Pilot interviews assisted me in giving prior warning which helped to avoid failure of the research project. It added value in assisting with checking whether the research instrument was appropriate for the study or not. It was administered exactly like the actual interview.

I asked the questions and probed further where necessary for further clarity. It also assisted me in identifying weak or ambiguous questions, record the time it took to complete the interview, check if responses actually answered the research questions as well as linked to the relevant theory. Thereafter questions were adjusted or modified as required (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Question four in the pilot study did not answer the research question. The principals' focus was on venting about unhappiness with what they experienced and shifted away from the role that they play in promoting teaching and learning. The question was simplified and directed towards the principals' role in promoting teaching and learning rather than their unhappiness.

3.6.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used for data generation in this study. The interview explores issues in-depth. It is used for data collection purposes. It is a flexible tool that allows for the use of multi-sensory channels (Cohen et al., 2018). The interview involves three stages: pre-interview, during the interview and post interview. The pre-interview is the pilot study. During the interview, which is the interview and post-interview involves transcribing of data, coding, use of themes and translation of data (Gani et al., 2020). On the other hand, the document analysis is the systematic procedure used as part of the study to evaluate or review documents which may be in printed or electronic format. Semi-structured interviews were used, and this assisted me to use open-ended questions, which allowed me to probe certain areas for more clarity (Cohen et al., 2018). These interviews were ideal because

the investigation is more open-ended and less structured (Merriam, 2002). It allows participants to give more responses that are not restricted which leads to more data being generated.

Semi-structured interviews allowed me to probe for more responses and the questions were structured in such a way that they suited each interviewee. The key questions were included in the interviews schedule (Refer to APPENDIX E), and they allowed me and the interviewee to probe for more detail and clarity. Probing is a credible method that enhances meaning and accuracy and avoids speculating and guessing what the participant may have meant by what he or she may have said (Cohen et al., 2018). The interview schedule is the instrument or a tool that was used to guide the interview. Open-ended questions were used by me during the interviews, which allowed me to probe for more relevant information. The questions were set so that they moved from general to more specific questions. According to Gill et al. (2008), the questions should be done in such a way that the order moves according to the importance of the questions. The way questions were set allowed me to first ask general question so that the participants can settle down and not find difficult questions at the beginning of the interview. The interview schedule became an important tool in that it guided the whole interview process even though probing questions (which were not part of the interview schedule) were asked during the interview.

During the interview, I asked questions and the participants responded to the questions. The participants' answers represent data that was generated during the interview. Researchers construct data by making situations available for data to be elicited and captured (Goldkuhl, 2019). Therefore, data is not readily available, but it was generated through interactions between the participants and myself. Interviewing is considered as one of the important qualitative methods (Bryman, 2019). I generated data through asking questions and then, recording them and taking notes which are used during data analysis. Semi-structured interviews are also used as an effective tool to generate data because they are flexible. They enable different senses. They also allow me to get responses to serious and complex questions (Cohen et al., 2018). They are better than other methods because I can connect events, behaviours and ideas as well as allow me to probe in order to gain valuable data (Hochschild, 2009).

Telephonic interviews were conducted in this study due to COVID-19 restrictions as well as the University protocols with regards to COVID-19. As students, we were given clear

instructions that we cannot conduct face to face interviews because of health regulations which did not allow people to get into close proximity and that outsiders were not allowed to get inside schools. After restrictions were eased in 2022, I did follow-up face-to-face interviews with four participants. It assisted with further clarity in cases where there were shortfalls in the data. We held discussions over the phone, and this practice did not in any way weaken the process of data generation. These interviews proved to be useful in the study because I managed to save time on travelling. They were also conducted at a suitable time for the participants, and there were less interruptions. There is also more uniformity in the way in which the interview is conducted (Kee & Browning, 2013). Smartphones were used during telephonic interviews. They allow more flexibility and I can download many Apps in a single device. Smartphones also work like a computer and allow for more functions like recording and playback which is an advantage (Raento et al., 2009).

The interview involves three stages. These three stages are pre-interview, during the interview and post-interview (Gani et al., 2020). During the pre-interview, I decided on the participants for the pilot interview. The interview questions are designed based on the objectives of the study. The interview sessions are organised with the participants and they include details like dates and time of the interview. During the interview, I greeted the participant, did an introduction, had an informal conversation in order to make the participants feel at ease (Gani et al., 2020). It is important to establish good relationship with participant in order for them to speak freely (Gani et al., 2020). I explained the purpose of the study and the length of the session. I had already asked the participants to fill-in the consent to participate in the study, explained that the interview is voluntary and that confidentiality is ensured. I followed interview protocols by asking probing questions, recorded the interview and took notes. Finally, I checked if the interviewee would like to ask any questions and then closed the interview by thanking the participant (Gani et al., 2020). According to Gani et al. (2020), the data from the interview is to be transcribed verbatim, coded and themed accordingly. I also translated the transcriptions from IsiZulu into English before I conducted the data analysis. Thereafter, I modified or refined the questions in order to guide me during interviews.

3.7 Data analysis

Researchers must make sure that they keep the data that was generated original (Creswell & Clark, 2004). The use of quotes from participants, or verbatim responses is vital. Therefore, it

is important to use original statements and phrases from participants in order to keep data original and faithful to the exact sentences that were used by the participants. When analysing data, I took down notes and used memos as well as all data that was generated from the field. It must be clear how the researcher interprets data and draws conclusions from it (Gläser & Laudel, 2013). The aim is to capture the most important parts and key issues of generated data. Verbatim transcription of recorded interviews will provide a data base for analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

The qualitative analysis of data was conducted in this study using thematic content analysis. It is important that once data has been produced, it can be organised in such a manner that it gives meaning. Qualitative analysis is a process that includes coding, categorising and interpreting data in order to explain the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). Data analysis is used to answer the research questions (Merriam, 2009). Data analysis includes explaining, describing, organising and understanding data (Taylor & Gibbs, 2010). Once data has been generated, reading also begins. According to Thomas (2006), during data analysis the researcher must read, read again, interpret, and make notes about the data. In other words, data needs to be organised. Comments and notes will be made on the margins as data is analysed (Merriam, 2009). During the analysis process, I immersed myself with the data in order to find interpretations from the raw data (Creswell and Clark (2004). To analyse the data, I adopted a technique devised by Creswell and Clark (2004). There are specific steps that are involved in data analysis. The process entails the following steps: I must check the data. This is vital to avoiding data overload (Creswell & Clark, 2004). At times, too much information is not helpful, and it becomes difficult to analyse. In terms of this step, I am expected to keep relevant data for the purposes of data analysis (Creswell and Clark, 2004). Therefore, I read the data over and over again to get used to its content and find meaning.

The second step entails coding of data. Data is coded for easy management (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Identifying key concepts that link together and group them together. This involves combining the data in sequences that will allow the researcher to make sense of accounts (Cohen et al., 2018). I used coding and thematic analysis to analyse data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Coding helps in identifying similarities (Cohen et al., 2018). I used phrases, names, numbers and colours during coding. Labels or names were given to group similar information. This helped me retrieve the data sets easily at the most convenient time (Merriam, 2009).

The third step entails me finding descriptions and themes from the data (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Data sets consisted of recordings, transcripts, reflective memos and field notes which will be placed together in an organised manner so that it is easily accessed when needed. Information was edited, put together and irrelevant information was put aside (Creswell & Poth, 2016). I used certain patterns like numbers, colours, codes to group similar categories, and present descriptions and themes.

According to Adu (2019), there are seven steps to be followed when creating codes. Step 1: label research questions, step 2: search for relevant information in the data, step 3: create and define codes, step 4: assign codes to relevant information, step 5: arrange codes alphabetically and sort them, step 6: consolidate the codes and avoid repetition and step 7: sort codes and create themes. These seven easy steps assisted in creating the codes in line with the objectives of the study and research questions. The table with the following headings was used to create: research question, label and code.

Question	Label	Code
What is your understanding of your role in promoting teaching and learning in the classroom?	Principals' role in promoting teaching and learning	PRPTL

Figure: 3A (Steps used during coding)

Figure 3A above is an example that explains how each research question explained what different interpretations meant to the reader in order to organise and synthesise the data. The next step entails interpreting the data. Interpreting the data reflects on the assumption that shape the study. I interpreted the data by using summaries, themes, concepts, and theories which define the phenomenon. I used themes during the process of data analysis.

3.8 Trustworthiness of the study

Trustworthiness of the study assists the researcher in making sure that negligence, harm, carelessness, and mistakes are avoided during the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). A piece of research needs to be checked for credibility, and thus ensure trustworthiness. Researchers doing

interpretative research do not do validity and reliability as it is done in quantitative studies that statistically test the results for validity and reliability. Lincoln and Guba (1986) developed alternative concepts of ensuring trustworthiness of the findings and reported that qualitative researchers seek trustworthiness more importantly when evaluating what is worth in the research. Shenton (2004) stated that a researcher must allow transferability by giving details of the context of the fieldwork. By doing this, the reader is able to decide whether the findings are justifiable and can be applied in other settings or not.

3.8.1 Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1986) refer to trustworthiness of the researcher's study as the ability to answer four main questions concerned with consistency and neutrality, truth value and applicability. They developed four criteria to ensure trustworthiness, and these are known as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). According to Polit and Beck (2010), credibility explains the truthfulness of data collected in research as well as the researcher's interpretation of the data. The most important thing is for the researcher to verify the descriptions with participants. Credibility in qualitative research is confirmed by the recognition of similar experiences by individuals. Therefore, triangulation of data by using both interviews and document analysis resulted in the credibility of the case study. Therefore, interviews assisted with credibility and especially if other people in the same field share similar information.

3.8.2 Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1986) point out that transferability is achieved when the findings fit into another context, other than the ones in the study. There was transferability in this study due to thorough descriptions of accounts that will be given by respondents. This helps the reader transfer what they read to other settings due to similarities in what was described (Merriam, 2002).

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability is also confirmed if other researchers concur with the same findings that the researcher had found, meaning that findings can be replicated (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). In the context of this study, I conducted the dependability audit.

3.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is achieved if the researcher can prove that the data represents participants' responses as opposed to the researcher's biases. This can be achieved by using quotes from participants' responses (Polit & Beck, 2012). Authenticity is of great importance in research as it expresses what participants feel emotionally about certain experiences in an honest manner. The data is interpreted through participants' original phrase and sentences. Therefore, recorded data with direct statement from participants was used in order to improve trustworthiness. Another technique, the participants were asked to check interview data or transcripts for truthfulness as this will ensure confirmability (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This is also known as member checking. Member checking will be used so that participants confirm that their voices are heard and interpreted correctly. This makes findings more credible.

3.9 Ethical issues

Gatekeeper permission was requested from the Department of Basic Education and it was approved (Ref: 2/4/8/1714). The ethical clearance was granted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's ethical clearance committee. The ethical clearance number is HSSREC/00003186/2021. I respected all the rules put in place by the gatekeepers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were informed of the research and their role as participants. The researcher also requested the participants to willingly sign consent forms to be part of the study (refer to APPENDIX C). The researcher explained to the participants that they may feel free to withdraw from the study should a need to do so arise. Because their participation is voluntary. Pseudonyms were used in order to protect the participants' identity and organisations. Ethical standards were ensured. Participants' rights, anonymity, confidentiality and mutual respect are of utmost importance in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). It was explained that all the information collected from participants would only be disclosed to my supervisor. I did not expose participants and schools to any form of harm. I did not engage

in any deceptive practices about the purpose of the study. I also made sure that feedback about the study would be given to all the participants.

3.10 Limitations of the study

The sample size posed a challenge. Deciding whether the sample size is small, big or just right was difficult. Case study research may not allow cross-checking which involves multiple data sources to verify themes and it should be seen throughout the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Cohen et al. (2018) added that there is lack of objectivity and an element of bias in qualitative research. COVID-19 protocols (social distancing, using online platforms, wearing of masks) also posed a challenge and maybe loss of interest from participants. I was unable to use observation which was one of the data generation methods that as the researcher had chosen originally. This was due to COVID -19 regulations that were instituted during the height of the pandemic. To ensure that the researcher overcomes all these challenges, I used telephonic interviews at the start of COVID–19 and face-to face interviews for follow-up once restrictions were eased. I bought free minutes so that we could have sufficient time to discuss the issues of leadership during difficult times such as those faced in the 21st century.

3.11 Chapter summary

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the research design, methodological technique and paradigms followed in conducting research for the study. I had explained in detail why I chose the techniques. These include sampling, data generation techniques and analysis procedures. The next chapter discusses findings and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter Three, a detailed discussion of methodology issues including data analysis process, as well as use of the relevant instrument to produce data was discussed. Chapter Four focuses on the qualitative data analysis and discussion of findings. It focuses on discussing, analysing and presenting findings based on the participants' responses. This would assist in understanding the research questions and the role played by the principals in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. I have begun the chapter by presenting the profiles of the participants in order to create a clear understanding of the participants in my study. The findings from the participants' responses indicate the role of the principal who were part of the study in promoting teaching and learning. This chapter also serves as a guide from the participants who took part in the study that will lead to conclusions as to whether they play an important or effective role in promoting teaching and learning or not. This chapter starts by presenting biographical details of the participants. Thereafter the data will be organised into different classification which represents themes. The themes are organised into categories based on the transcriptions.

4.2 Profile of research participants

The data for this study is from principals of different township schools which are all based in the uMgungundlovu District. All the participants have been given pseudonyms so that they can remain anonymous. Their schools are either grouped as Quintile 2 or Quintile 3. The findings are based on the responses of the participants. The participants' responses are based on the research questions which all principals responded to. The biographical detail of the participants will be discussed below. It shows the number of participants, their qualifications, years of teaching experience, marital status, and years of experience as a principal, number of years in current school, number of years as departmental head or deputy principal.

4.3 Biographical details of participants

Principal	Marital status	No. of years in teaching profession	No. of years taught before being promoted	No. of years as departmental head/ deputy	No. of years in the current school	No. of years as a principal
Miss Mkhize	Single	22	10	4	22	8
Mr Mabuza	Married	30	8	12	15	10
Mr Ngcobo	Married	25	12	5	18	8
Mr Magubane	Married	28	8	8	12	12
Mr Zulu	Married	32	13	8	19	11
Mr Sithole	Married	23	15	2	11	6
Mr Shabangu	Married	24	9	9	20	6
Mr Hlongwane	Married	30	11	6	21	13
Mr Nhlangulela	Married	22	11	4	18	7
Mr Thingo	Married	36	8	8	31	20

Table 1. Teaching and management experience of principals

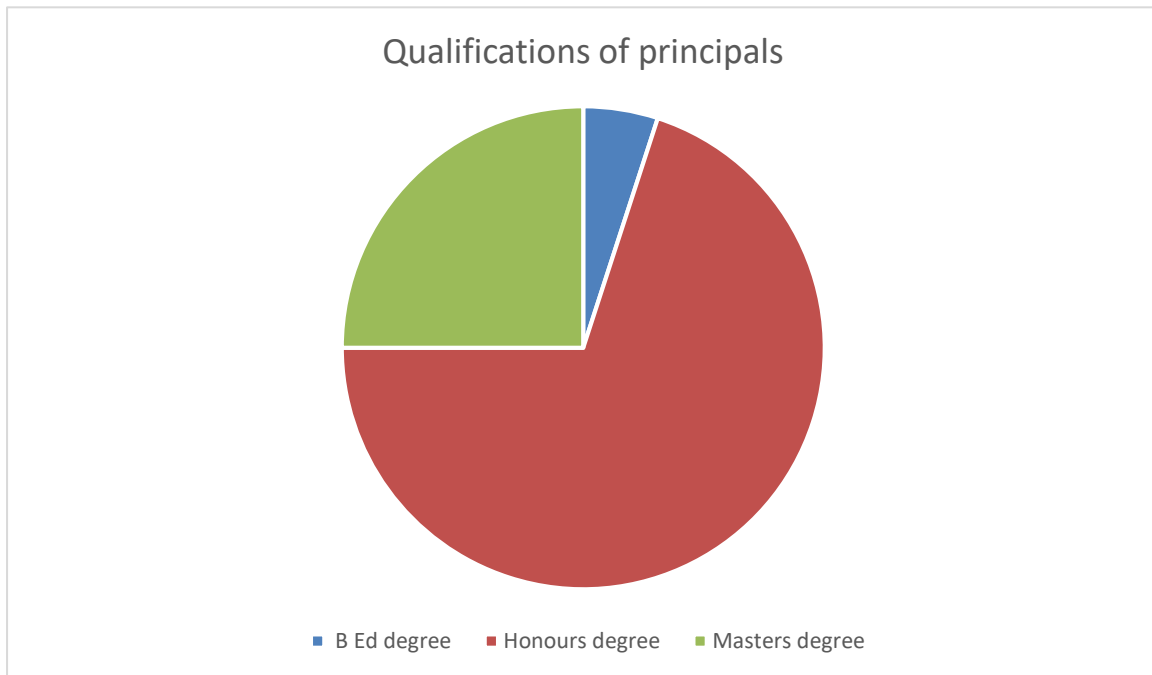


Figure 1: Qualifications of participants

The pie chart as reflected in Figure 1 indicates the spread of qualification of the participants. This figure clearly shows that while all of the participants were fully qualified as teachers, a huge majority had postgraduate qualifications. A small number had Bachelors’ degrees only.

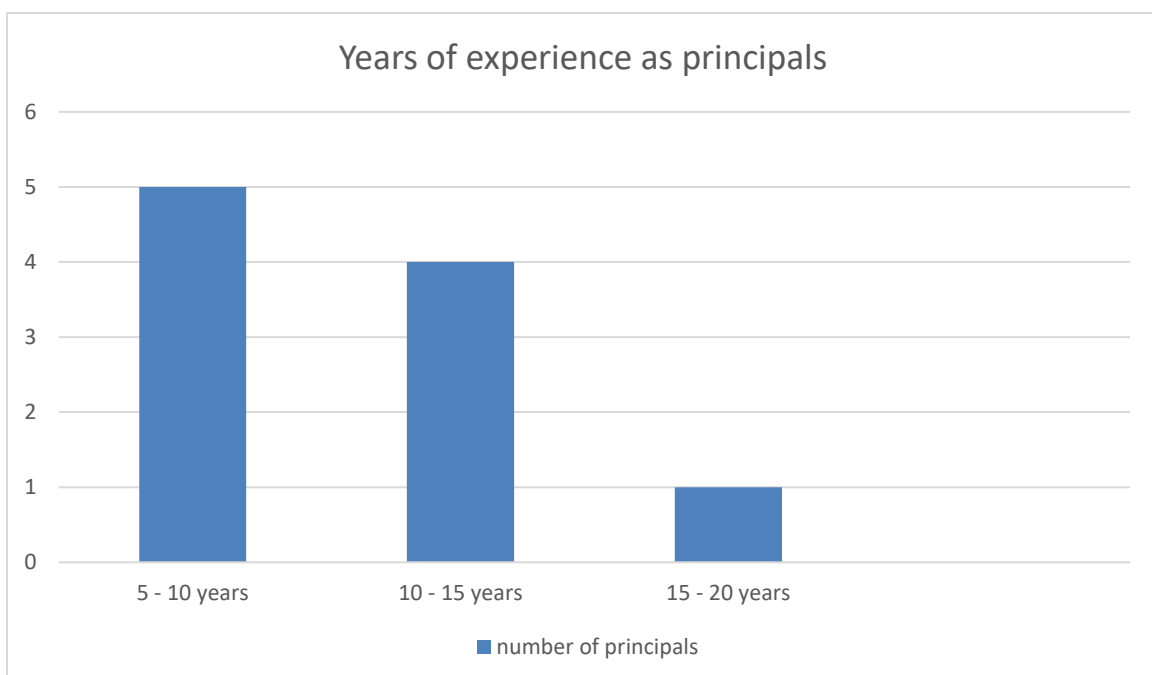


Figure 2: Year of experience of participants as principals

Figure 2 above illustrate the experience of the participants in years. A big number of the participants was relatively new in their positions as principals as they were between 5 and 10 years of experience as school principals.

4.4 Data presentation and discussion

Qualitative data analysis generated three themes and seven sub-themes, and these are summarised in Table 4.4 below. After this table, generated data is discussed, using literature to enhance the discussion.

Table 4.4 Themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
1. The role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning in the 21 st century	a) The principals understanding of their role in teaching and learning. b) Impact of policy on the principals' role. c) Impact of administrative tasks on academic standards
2. The principals' perceptions and experiences regarding their role.	a) Challenges faced by principals in their role to promote teaching and learning.
3. Mechanisms in practising the principals' role.	a) Kinds of support offered by principals in the classroom b) Role of the principal in staff development. c) Mechanisms put in place by principals in order to promote teaching and learning.

Themes that emerged from the data, Table 4.3

4.4.1 The principals' understanding of their role in promoting teaching and learning

The principals who were part of the study were asked a question about their role in promoting teaching and learning. Principals' responses indicated that the changes in the schools' environment had an impact on instruction. They also noted that COVID-19 had also added immense pressure on their tasks. Their responses were based on many factors in understanding their work. The DBE policies for teaching and learning that were discussed very strongly by the principals. They were of the view that the changes in the requirements of promotions and progression policy impacted hugely on schooling. This policy is contained in the Government Gazette - National Policy Pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12. There are many changes in educational policy in many countries. In the 21st century scholars have started to view the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in different contexts (Aas & Brandmo, 2016; Shaked, 2018, 2019). The view from the responses was that schools as learning spaces have focused more on promotions. The role of principals is burdened with responsibilities; however, the principals who were part of the study felt that there was more emphasis on promotions and progressions than before. They also highlighted that the role of teaching has focussed more on teaching to test. Good schools are measured by their pass rates, which reflect on the success of the principal. According to Sharif et al. (2020), the main role of the principals is to enable teaching and learning. The principals' responses indicated that most of their duties have been overshadowed by the emphasis on these requirements. Participants in the study felt that secondary schools' success is measured by their National Senior Certificate (NSC) results yet the promotion and progression requirements of all the other grades are not in line with NSC results.

In 2020 and 2021, learners in the Further Education and Training (FET) and Senior Phase did not write examinations due to curriculum trimming and gaps. Therefore, they have not written examinations in two years. They will sit formal examinations for the first time in Grade 12 in 2022. The promotion and progression requirements allowed learners to go through to Grade 12 on the following requirement. School based assessment (SBA) of 80% and the final common test (which replaced examinations) counted 20% for the overall pass. In essence principals feel that Grade 12 learners will be unable to meet the NSC examinations standards after two abnormal years. Taking into consideration that when it comes to NSC examinations the ratio

is 25% represents SBA and 75% represents the final examinations. This has put immense pressure on schools and principals. This is what Mr Thingo had to say:

Promotion and progression requirements sometimes rub salt to an open wound. A learner may not qualify to progress to the next grade, but the DBE policy could result on progression. The very same learner will be expected to somehow make it in Grade 12.

The issue of NSC results did come up strongly in most responses, as this puts immense pressure on schools to perform despite the challenges in the years prior to the NSC examinations. The evidence show that the principals felt that the DBE put too much emphasis on the results and not the process. It is indeed the responsibility of the principal to advance high academic standards. The focus is on results as academic standards are measured by performance. This is what Mr Zulu had to say:

The NSC standards have not changed yet Grades 8-11 standards have been relaxed. These learners were exposed to a trimmed curriculum for two years and suddenly they have to switch to normal schooling. They have been less prepared for the NSC examinations and that is without a doubt.

Similarly, Mr Shabangu's responses also indicated that he felt strongly about the issue of progressed learners as well as their impact on academic standards.

Progressed learners who will affect our NSC results. Without sounding negative but the reality is that these learners did not pass Grade 10 and or Grade 11. And suddenly they are expected to pass Grade 12. Is this even possible? We have a matric group that has emerged from two years of curriculum trimming and alternating days. It is not going to be easy (Mr Shabangu).

The three concur that it is going to be difficult to expect high academic standards from a group of learners who went through two years of curriculum trimming and without Grade 11 examinations. They are also of the opinion that all these factors will impact on the final outcome. However, Bush (2018) suggests that the principals' leadership is generally understood to have greater influence on student outcomes. Following the same line of thinking was Mr Hlongwane who mentioned that academic standards are affected by many decisions made by policy makers. He has this to say about the limitations that he sees in his role to promote teaching and learning:

I feel that poor Grade 12 results due to a large number of progressed learners have been one of my biggest challenges so far (Mr Hlongwane).

In the above extracts the principals emphasised that policies were also part of what they considered to be a concern in their role. Mr Nhlangulela found that his role in promoting teaching and learning was mainly affected by his inability to keep motivating staff to keep going, when learners are extremely weak.

I think that there are still learning gaps and learning losses. How the policy makers will make amends is a cause for concern? It was really good that the DBE saved the year 2020 but at what cost. We are constantly put under immense pressure to perform but the learning losses are huge and learners are becoming weaker and weaker every year (Mr Nhlangulela).

The discussion above shows that the impact of COVID-19 in schooling has been mentioned as their biggest concern affecting what they do. The impact is huge, and principals are left to pick up the pieces. Learning gaps and losses, as well as curriculum trimming is not something that can be overcome in 2022, but it has impacted on schooling across all grades, and they felt that it will in turn affect high school results years later. Mr Zulu also added to this discussion by emphasising the fact that academic standards have been lowered and learners have slackened off which has made his job really difficult. This is what he had to say:

The Programme of Assessment (POA) has also changed in most subjects. Promotion requirements were heavily affected by SASAMS weightings. These were major changes, and they will have a major impact on the NSC results in a couple of years. All the learners who have been progressed by 80% (School Based Assessment – SBA) and 20% year-end controlled tests will not know what hit them in their matric year. Yet the DBE will expect good matric results (Mr Zulu).

The policy is a worrying factor for principals. Another factor that principals felt created uneasiness was the issue of policy development. Every school had to design an admissions' policy. School principals hoped that the admissions' policy would assist in admitting the kind of learner that each school wanted. There are many learners who have been problematic in their schools and will try and get admitted at a new school. Principals were also hoping that the admissions policy would assist in preventing problematic learners in their schools. As ill-disciplined learners are moved from one school to another, the problem is not solved but shifted from one school to another. Principals felt that the admissions' policy is not working in their favour or as anticipated. Shava and Tlou (2018) allude that learning environments are diverse and complex which means that they require a great deal of effective leadership from school leaders.

The principals highlighted that there is a lot of interference from the DBE concerning learners who are sent to their school by the DBE, and had to accept them even if they do not meet the criteria that is stated in the school admissions' policy. They also understood that it is the responsibility of the DBE to make sure that every learner has a school. Miss Mkhize also added that she was also visited by politicians (especially the Ward Counsellors) who throw their weight around and force her to accept learners who do not fit the admissions' policy criteria.

The admissions' policy is non-existent when the DBE informs you of who will be sent to your school. In this case we adopt other schools' discipline problems as most of these learners have been expelled from their schools (Miss Mkhize).

Principals who were part of the study felt that the anticipation disappeared with the introduction of the policy. There were a lot of expectations and excitement with the introduction of the policy unfortunately she felt that it was not used for the purpose it was intended. Fullan (2018) posited that there is an urgent need for the principals' role to change in order to embrace their evolving role and how schools are run. The new role should include: principals becoming lead learners, district and system players as well as agents of change.

The admission policies have a lot of interference from the Department, politicians and counsellors by forcing us to accept learners who do not fit our admission policy (Mr Zulu).

In the same breath, Mr Zulu also shared similar opinions about the admissions policy. There is still a perception that there are schools that have not succeeded in achieving their educational outcomes. One may wonder if the problem lies with the inability of the principals to perform their duties or their perceptions about their role in the school context. Komalasari et al. (2020) acknowledges that principals face more challenges in the 21st century and their role and functions in the period of accountability have become increasingly more demanding. Principals highlighted that the administrative tasks have increased. Since the onset of COVID-19, there has been daily submission to the DBE. These submissions include statistics about COVID-19 cases, absentees etc. COVID -19 was mentioned by most principals as one of the administrative tasks that has added to their duties and responsibilities. The principals have to submit statistics about the number of positive cases daily. These statistics take priority in every school and must take priority and must be submitted by 9am. There are also reports to be completed. Despite any other work on their tables, these statistics and reports took preference, and the process is time consuming. This is what Miss Mkhize has to say:

I have experienced unrealistic demand and deadlines by DOE that have made the job really unpleasant (Miss Mkhize).

In this discussion she also found it disturbing that the extensive administrative work does not relate to teaching and learning. The statistics had to be submitted to different offices. She further highlighted that:

There is a lot of duplication of tasks in terms of submissions to the DoE (Miss Mkhize).

Miss Mkhize's perception expresses that she sees this as a time-waster and a challenge as it did not protect the instructional time as the statistics took priority over anything else. Hallinger and Murphy, the theorist, the study is based on, highlight the importance of the principals' role in protecting the instructional time in the school. This is according to the theorist chosen for this study. Kolamassari (2020) alludes that principals must learn the art of multitasking if they are to be effective. The statement above raised the question of the core duties of the principal. Surely another senior member of management could have been tasked with the duty of completing departmental statistics, which will allow principals to focus on their core duties. Similarly, Mr Ngcobo raised concerns about the administrative burden on his shoulders. He highlighted that the administrative list of duties was getting longer. He mentioned that despite the statistics there were many other tasks that have been added to their role. He mentioned that:

There is an increase in administrative demands now including shortlisting and interviewing as well as unrealistic deadlines (Mr Ngcobo).

He feels that this has put a lot of pressure on him, and he is already burdened with other tasks. This view could mean that his scope as the principal is getting wider and wider. It covers more functions than before. Komalassari et al. (2020) also concur with the analysis that principalship has become a complicated task that requires special skills. Miss Mkhize's response also highlighted challenges and she gave insight into her role in the 21st century. She had this to say:

There is administrative burden since the onset of COVID-19. Daily submission of statistics and reports to the DBE take up too much time as well as unrealistic demand and deadlines by DBE has made the job really unpleasant. My cell phone has to be on at all times and any time of day to respond to questions or submit certain information immediately to the DBE (even during school holidays). I have no family life; 12 hours is not enough to do all that I need to do as the principal (Miss Mkhize).

Mr Ngcobo shared the same views concerning the issue of the amount of work that he has to do now compared to what he wishes to do as well as what principals did in the past. He highlighted that:

I spend more time on administrative work rather than engaging with learners and teachers. It is more difficult to engage in teaching and learning since there are more meetings to attend, more compliance forms and reports to complete. There has been an increase in administrative demands now including shortlisting and interviewing. I am unable to monitor educators since I am most of the time drowning in administrative work. Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) and the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) processes took too much time as well as of human resources for people who are only hired for three months (Mr Ngcobo).

The scope of the task seems to have become wider than before, and principals are expected to do more. Mestry (2017) concurs that school principals in the 21st century perform multi-faceted role; their responsibilities are more demanding and challenging, unclear, complicated at times and overloaded. The evidence suggests that there are challenges and the role of the principal has changed and that their duties include so much more than before. Principal's responses indicated that there was high demand in recent years and that this job has been made difficult by several factors. Schools are learning institutions and principals needed to focus on promoting teaching and learning. Their main focus should be on promoting instruction more than anything else. The challenges sort of took away from their main functions. Mr Nhlangulela highlighted that:

With extended hours of work. I have found that my job has become more demanding in terms of time required to complete tasks. I never use to take schoolwork home but this has become normal. I do not think that company executives put in as many hours as principals do. My biggest frustration is the amount of paperwork that we have to submit to the DBE. After all is said and done, I do hope that someone looks at it because it takes up more time than teaching. He added that: My administration duties never end. They take up most of my time. I wish I could be out there more often and see what happens in the classrooms. To manage and lead people is not easy. Most of the management functions impede on my role to promote teaching and learning. (Mr Nhlangulela).

The job seems demanding for the principals in the 21st century from their views. They are doing more than what principal use to do. I used to think that it is a fancy job with more status but now principals are doing more work than ever before. One study has put the emphasis on their

job. It has required principals to be hard working and become strategists. The nature of schooling has evolved, and new demands are now placed in the hands of the principals (Arhipova et al., 2018). Mr Zulu also shared the same sentiments on his inability to promote teaching and learning in his school. He felt that his role to promote teaching and learning was in many ways limited by his administrative work which left less to no time for the classroom. In his responses he mentioned the following:

I spend more time in the office rather than in the classroom. There is less time to observe what teachers are doing in the classroom. I am also bombarded with many issues which take my time away from the classroom (Mr Zulu).

It is evident that there has been an increase in administrative tasks and that this has had a major impact on teaching and learning. The impact is negative and interferes with instructional time. Dimmock (as cited in Adams, Kutty & Zabidi, 2017) highlights the very important point of the ongoing debate about how principals are caught between balancing administrative tasks and other functions like leadership and management. The principals' role includes defining the goals of the school, coordinating curriculum, monitor learners' progress as well supervise the curriculum according to Hallinger and Murphy's instructional leadership theory. The duties of the principals leave very little time for instruction. Most of their duties have nothing or little to do with promoting teaching and learning. One study also highlighted that the principals' workload limits time they need to dedicate to education (Turkoglu & Consay, 2020). This is what principals felt is a real problem. Less time is spent on instruction. The discussion above is an indication of principals' experiences and perception of their role and how their role has changed in modern times.

4.4.2 The principals' perceptions and experiences regarding their role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century

As part of the study, principals were asked about their perceptions and experiences in their role to promote teaching and learning. The shortages of resources in helping them execute their tasks came up a few times. The principals mentioned shortage of teachers and insufficient Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) as an area of concern. The responses from principals show that it is difficult to promote teaching and learning when there are still shortages of educators and lack of LTSM. Mr Zulu spoke about staffing and lack of resources as another big problem; he stated that:

Staffing is my biggest challenge. Sometimes a whole term will go by without a teacher in the classroom (Mr Zulu).

The data generated indicates that there are still classrooms without teachers. This is a concern for Mr Zulu. In his school there are limitations to instruction as learners are without a teacher. According to the instructional leadership theory, principals are accountable for instruction in the classroom. Bush (2018) asserts that principals in the 21st century require better preparation. This is because there is a growing awareness that principalship is an occupation that needs principals to acquire certain skills in order to be effective. Therefore, some principals have opted for volunteers so that there is a teacher in the classroom because the DBE is not hiring, replacing or filling up teaching posts. Mr Shabangu shared the same sentiments about staffing, he felt that:

The biggest challenge has been to find good and experienced teachers who can promote teaching and learning. There has been a lack of depth in terms of curriculum knowledge as well as the experience of teachers (Mr Shabangu).

Principals' responses stated that the kind of teachers that were hired today, did not study teaching as a career but ended up in teaching because there seemed to be a belief that it is an easier way to get a job. The evidence also indicated that staffing policies have also impacted negatively on teaching and learning. Despite the shortages of teachers that schools experienced there was also a concern on the type of teacher who enter that schooling system and how new teachers are hired. Miss Mkhize shared more light on this issue of staffing:

New educators who were not trained as teachers, but train in other fields and then study for one year at a university towards a teaching qualification battle to improve teaching and learning. This is simply because the scope is too wide for them and their training lacks the finer details of real teaching (lack of content, cannot unpack or deliver the content). Educators who received the Funza Lushaka bursaries have been given first preference to be hired by the DBE and they are hired without an interview. They have no interest in teaching and learning and the DBE wants them to be developed. How? With what resources? (Miss Mkhize).

There was a feeling among the principals that shortages of teachers and LTSM hindered teaching and learning. The same sentiments were also shared by Mr Hlongwane:

As a principal I am unable to find educators who can drive teaching and learning. New or young educators who cannot cope with current situation in high school and lack of curriculum knowledge (Mr Hlongwane).

Based on the challenges exposed in participants' responses, it is clear that the job has many challenges. There are still schools without a teacher in the classroom in the 21st century. This makes it difficult to drive teaching and learning as teachers are needed for learning to take place. Mr Mabuza had also shared his experiences. He had this to say:

Failure by the DBE to employ or replace teachers on time means that some classes have not had a teacher for a whole term.

This response revealed that principals are faced with staffing challenges. It is very difficult to promote teaching and learning without teachers in the classroom. It is also difficult to fill up teaching posts because principals have no control over hiring of level one educators. Most of these schools that were part of the study are no-fee paying schools meaning that even if the principal wishes to hire a teacher, the reality is that township schools are not in a position to do so. The lack of resources was mentioned as another challenge that constantly hinders their duties in promoting teaching and learning. Working with limited and no resources has had a major impact on what they are trying to achieve. Mestry (2017) echoed the same sentiments that the role of the principal is constantly changing and always in the state of transition. The principals' role has changed many times over time depending on the school environmental changes. Mr Zulu did not hesitate to point out that:

Policy makers have such high expectations. We are expected to perform wonders with no resources. I was hoping that that the DBE will come to our rescue in terms of offering extra classrooms so that we can comply with COVID-19 protocol.

The discussion above clearly indicates that some of the schools are in dire situations. The lack of resources is seen from the time one enters the premises. Some classrooms did not even have a teachers' table. Another principal who explained the challenges that he faced was Mr Sithole. He highlighted shortages of resources as an impeding factor which affects learning and teaching.

My school is under-resourced, and this puts a lot of pressure on our ability to improve teaching and learning (Mr Sithole).

Mr Sithole's concern is shared by other principals. Mr Mabuza also highlighted the same issue.

Poor infrastructure is another huge disadvantage. Our learners do not even have proper ablution facilities. The staff does not have access to computers except for departmental heads and they are shared within departments. It would be nice for educators and learners to be exposed to projectors, etc. (Mr Mabuza).

The data reveals that sometimes it is the lack of basic infrastructure like ablution facilities that is a problem. Educators find it difficult to teach subjects like Dramatic Arts without a hall to

perform, Life Sciences and Physical Sciences without a laboratory, Physical Education without a sport field (most schools did not even have space for a sports field). Many of these factors impact on teaching and learning negatively. Based on the kind of challenges faced by schools and principals, it has become difficult to lead a successful and effective school in the 21st century. He also spoke about the shortage of teaching and learning materials as another contributing factor to his challenges.

We do not have a decent library with recent material that is relevant to educators and learners (Mr Mabuza).

The views expressed above are an indication of what impedes on the principals' role at the schools that were part of the study. Their reactions make it unimaginable how these schools function year after year under these conditions and are still expected to carry on with normal teaching. Mr Zulu shared the same sentiments again in his responses about lack of resources. He felt strongly about lack of resources

I have found that managing human and physical resources without financial resources is a challenge. For example, we have to comply with COVID-19 protocols and this school does not even have sanitizers or space or manpower to accommodate learners (Mr Zulu).

The views of the participants who took part in the study highlighted that the challenges are overwhelming and it has become more difficult for principals to focus on the schools' core business which is teaching and learning. Mr Sithole also shared the same view on the shortage of resources and the impact it has on his role to promote teaching and learning. He found that there were far too many challenges in his school. This was his opinion on what influenced his role in his school.

Financial management has become a challenge for me despite the fact that there is no money, there is literally no money to manage. When we receive what is due to us from the DoE, it comes when there are many holes to fill, and it is a matter of a drop in the ocean. I did mention that the school is under resourced. I must be honest. Some of the resources were purchased but they have been stolen and replacing them does not make any sense as they will be stolen again and again. We do not have a library which is what learners need for their assignments and projects. We do not have access to the internet in the 21st century. We do not have a computer room that learners can use in order to assist them with their schoolwork. We converted a classroom into a science laboratory, but we do not have the correct apparatus for a science lab (Mr Sithole).

The data reveals that the principals' views expressed in their responses clearly indicate that there is a lot that hamper their role in promoting a conducive environment for learning. Hallinger (2018) states that the role of the principal is to support teaching and learning. Therefore, despite challenges principals are expected to lead instruction. Principals lead the instruction in order to stay in a managing role, so that their leadership role is more effective in achieving educational outcomes (Zepeda et al., 2017).

Many factors have created barriers in their role to promote teaching and learning. Many principals are overwhelmed by the duties that have nothing to do with teaching and learning. Six principals identified social ills as one of the main reasons why their role has changed and, in some instances, become difficult. Principal had the view that socio-economic issues have a direct impact in the classroom. The data exposed that learners do not live in a bubble; they come from communities and therefore, their environment has a direct impact on their lives. They highlighted the role of social factors in education. The following factors came across very strongly from the principals: drugs (including dependency, abuse, peddling and recently wars), teenage pregnancy leading to high rates of dropouts, violence, crime, gangsters, protests, and safety and security issues. On the other hand, studies show that there is an urgent need for principals to focus seriously on instruction in order to develop good learning and high levels of teaching (Turkoglu & Consay, 2020).

Principals also highlighted that the ill-disciplined learners have not helped in promoting teaching and learning. They felt that ill-discipline impedes the quality of learning and teaching. They also added that ill-disciplined learners are high maintenance and discipline issues take up most teaching time than they should. It also became clear that detention after school is very difficult to implement due to after school classes. Afternoon classes finish late and staying till very late results in safety issues as schools are easy targets for criminals in the township. Miss Mkhize felt that schools were left with the problem and there was no support system. She stated the following:

Learners who are battling with substance abuse have really exhausted our limited resources. We are not privileged like city schools. We do not have school counsellors and we do not have the resources to assist these learners, yet we are expected to deal with them, promote teaching and learning and help the learners pass (Miss Mkhize).

Mr Sithole also raised the same concern about the state of his school. These realities have been an eye opener and they have in many ways opened a can of worms. This is what he had to say about these hush realities:

I suspect that there has been an increase in the number of learners who are taking drugs hence the increase in bad behaviour in general. Our learners have been involved in many fights and we suspect that drug abuse aggravate this behaviour (Mr Sithole).

It was clear from the principals' responses that schools that were part of this study are really affected by social ills and it does not seem as if there was any promise of assistance. The issues that principals are faced with are mind-boggling. Mr Mabuza also highlighted gangs and drugs as some of the key issues that impede on his role as a principal.

Boys in my school are involved in gangs for the purpose of protection and their issues have filtered into the school. They will stay away from school for a number of days during their township fights. Some learners are involved in drugs as runners for extra cash and some are battling with drug abuse. All these issues affect their academics. The list is endless but all in all social issues affect the classroom. Parents like school have no idea how to discipline their children. Most of these problems are as a result of poor parenting (Mr Mabuza).

Principals shared the opinion that the communities in general have become notorious for drug related problems and schools in these areas have not been spared. The other aspect that principals found worrying was the fact that they had no resources or even knowledge to deal with social problems. Mr Zulu highlighted that:

My job is demanding and sometimes I lack expertise to deal with some of the issues facing my school (Mr Zulu).

He felt the system has created a monster of lawlessness in our society since schools exist within these societies they have not been spared. Almost all principals who were part of the study felt this way. Mr Magubane also highlighted the same issue on social problems. This is what he had to say:

In all aspects schools have become hospitals or clinics as we manage teenage pregnancy (Mr Magubane).

Mr Shabangu's view bordered on the same view as that of Mr Magubane. He said:

Drug abuse, violence, teenage pregnancy and infightings in the area have filtered into the school (Mr Shabangu).

In some instances, communities have deliberately closed the school. This is what Mr Hlongwane has to say:

Protests in the community have not helped with absenteeism. During protest learners are prevented from coming to school. Sometimes protestors deliberately close the school (Mr Hlongwane).

He added that among the many problems that they face, teenage pregnancy is one huge problem that is not going to go away anytime soon. This is what he had to say:

Teenage pregnancy is a challenge that is not going to leave us. Poor parenting, lack of self-love and poverty have been the main causes of teenage pregnancy. There is a need for dialogue in black communities about teenage pregnancy (Mr Hlongwane).

Principals in this study shared the same sentiments on the issue of social ills. Problems in schools have become huge. The government and communities have battled to find positive solutions as there are too many social issues. Our way of life and the nature, formation and structure of our families have changed which has resulted in many changes in our society. Mr Nhlangulela spoke very strongly in his response about the lack of detail when it comes to teaching and learning. He saw many issues as simple distractions; however, they were huge and could not be ignored. These issues emanated from the many factors, and they were also part of the school community. However, the fact remains that effective teaching and learning must take place despite the challenges. Tingle et al. (2019) pointed out that principals needed to adopt leadership that will improve the status quo and assist in achieving better learning outcomes despite the challenges.

Safety and security are an issue that concern me on a daily basis. How do we make sure that every single individual at school is protected? There is one security guard at the gate and his main responsibility is to open and close the gate. I am not sure about the kind of security he would provide if there was a need. School safety is a big issue in the township. Gangs and 'drug wars' are rife. In most cases our own learners are involved in them. A school is no longer just a place of learning but an institution that has embraced all sorts of problems and we lack the skills to deal with most of them because our specialty is teaching (Mr Nhlangulela).

The views expressed in the above extracts suggest that the problems that principals are facing in schools were huge and that in many cases they felt helpless. They could not talk about how to promote teaching and learning in the 21st century without talking about the factors that stand in their way when doing so. These factors were persistent and could not be ignored. Studies have supported this notion that the principals' job has become more complex (Arhipova et al.,

2018). Their role revolves around what happens in their schools. For some there was no hope, while there was a light at the end of the tunnel for others.

The principals' responses shed more light on the role of social factors in a school setting. The school environment reflects the kind of problems that are faced by our country in modern days. The school has become a playground for criminals, gangsters and unwanted behaviours. It became very clear that the issues are overwhelming, and principals do not have the training to deal with some of the issues. The amount of administrative work as well as submissions to the DBE is also growing, which is not assisting them in dealing with issues of teaching and learning. It has also become very clear that there are many limitations in terms of what principals can do in the classroom. Principal leadership can no longer ignore the fact that many factors affect their role in schooling in general. There has been influence globally on socio-economic and political life which directly affects schooling (Arhipova et al., 2018).

4.4.3 Kinds of support offered by principals in the classroom in order to promote teaching and learning

The principals were asked about their role in the classroom and the kinds of support that they offer and how they supported staff in order to promote teaching and learning. According to Sharif (2020), principals must lead teaching and learning and this has become a guiding principle for educational leadership in the 21st century. Mr Hlongwane's response puts more emphasis on tracking learners' performance as this enabled him to keep track of those who were meeting the standards and those who didn't meet the standards. The tracking of learners' performance is done per grade, per subject and according to males and females. This is what he had to say:

I make sure that the SMT focuses on tracking learners' progress through end of term results (Mr Hlongwane).

He felt that these statistics assisted him in identifying areas of need for both learners and educators. According to the theory of instructional leadership which this study is based on, the role of the principal is to monitor learners' progress and performance. The discussion above indicates that there is a need to protect instructional time due to various factors. The evidence from Mr Ngcobo, Mr Shabangu, Mr Hlongwane and Mr Magubane highlighted their role in the moderation and monitoring of work, tasks and examinations. Mr Shabangu emphasised that

it has become very important to monitor both educators and learners in order to achieve goals. This is what he had to say:

The School Management Team (SMT) has put more emphasis on monitoring. We have monitored each subject progress by thoroughly analysing each term. The tracking of learners' progress is a priority. We have also put more emphasis on evidence of learners and educators work (Mr Shabangu).

Mr Hlongwane shared the same sentiments about monitoring work or tasks as he said that:

Tracking of learners and educators' work, moderation of learners and educators' work has a direct impact on what happens in the classroom (Mr Hlongwane).

The evidence shows that teaching and learning relies heavily on all the follow-up that happens inside and outside the classroom. It would be difficult to assess whether teaching and learning takes place or not if there is no monitoring. Therefore, monitoring is one of their duties of instructional leadership. Principals are responsible for the highest level of accountability. However, Zuze and Juan (2018) acknowledged that a strong leader acknowledges the importance of other stakeholders in order to achieve educational outcomes. Therefore, this task cannot be performed by the principals without the help of others. On the other hand, Mr Nhlangulela highlighted that:

Keeping up with teachers who should not sit in the staffroom but who should be in the classroom and teaching. I have learned that being in the classroom does not mean that you are teaching. Therefore, being in the classroom and teaching is of importance (Mr Nhlangulela).

Therefore, principals have to constantly educate staff about the importance of promotion of teaching and learning in the classroom. This requires monitoring of educators, which also adds to their role as principals of the 21st century. According to Maponya (2020), the effectiveness of teaching and learning programmes is measured through learner academic achievements with the expectation that school principals are essential 'tools' towards improved instructional delivery in their schools. Mr Magubane had this to say:

Constant feedback from the Departmental Heads gives a clear picture on the performance and areas of immediate intervention (Mr Magubane).

Therefore, principals in their responses felt that their role has focused more and more on monitoring, feedback, and moderation. Departmental Heads and Deputy Principals could easily manage this in the past. This could easily add to their role in education which I think is already 'larger than life'.

4.4.4 The role of the principals in staff development in order to promote teaching and learning

The promotion of staff development, teamwork and empowerment also came up strongly in almost all the discussions. This is another major role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning. According to Batiste (2019), it is the leaders' behaviours that influence teachers' work life and experiences. Principals believe in assisting educators with their personal growth in order to be more effective in the classroom, this came up in their responses. The following principals discussed professional development and empowerment of educators as the key factor in improving school performance and learners' achievement: Miss Mkhize, Mr Mabuza, Mr Sithole, Mr Nhlangulela and Mr Thingo. Educators together with professional development are part and parcel of instructional leadership. Principals need to enforce some kind of staff development for personal growth in order to improve teaching and learning. Principals develop learners indirectly by focussing on developing staff, in turn will assist learners meet the required standards. Miss Mkhize elaborated on this key issue as part of her role as the principal:

Staff development is another area that I am focusing on. My staff needs to be empowered to deal with many issues that I have already mentioned (Miss Mkhize).

Staff development came up very strongly in principal's discussions. So, despite the challenges there were many positive factors that came across. The evidence from the discussion above made it clear that the principals knew their role in promoting teaching and learning. The protection of instructional time and monitoring tools targeted the very people who are tasked with responsibility to impart knowledge in the classroom. On the other hand, Mr Mabuza felt that he played a much larger role in his school in terms of staff empowerment. This is what he had to say:

I play the role of the facilitator, parent, principal, counsellor, priest, you name it. I have empowered staff through workshops and staff development (Mr Mabuza).

This response also shows that the principal should be someone who is empowered in order to empower others. Mr Sithole felt very strongly about his role in staff development. He said:

I organise workshops to assist the staff develop a good work ethic. Staff development is at the top of my list as this promotes teaching and learning. Workshops to assist the staff develop a good work ethic. (Mr Sithole).

Mr Hlongwane also cited that he worked very hard in making sure that his staff is fully empowered. He said:

My role of capacity building is of great importance as it will help to empower all staff members (Mr Hlongwane).

The impact of staff empowerment is seen as vital by principals. The emphasis is also on its importance as part of their role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. Mr Nhlangulela felt that he had a big responsibility in making sure that his staff is capacitated.

I have a responsibility to empower and develop staff members (Mr Nhlangulela).

It is also clear from this response that he considers staff development as a significant part in his role of promoting teaching and learning. Similarly, another principal also responded by sharing the same sentiments.

Educators are attending a number of workshops; these have yielded positive results. Subject advisors and departmental support are a permanent feature in our school which has improved teaching and learning, planning and implementation which has helped us to double-down on our efforts (Mr Magubane).

Principals generally took a clear position in terms of how they saw their role as having an impact in the classroom. They made it clear that even though they were not in the classroom, but they influenced what happens in the classroom through their members of staff. They also felt strongly that if educators were developed, then they would teach the curriculum well which would impact on teaching and learners' performance. Zuze and Juan (2018) believed that the effective leadership of the principal relies heavily on the help of other stakeholders.

I have made sure that all educators attend workshops as well courses offered by external organisation in order to improve their skills which impacts positively on teaching and learning (Mr Zulu).

Similarly, another response bordered on the same line of thought. The following was highlighted that:

Staff development and professional development are other most important areas that have helped me to address human relations issues and develop a better work ethic (Mr Shabangu).

Principals had a strong belief in educator development. Many of them touched on the impact of developing staff in order to influence the results in the classroom. Principals' responses indicated without a doubt that their role in promoting teaching and learning involves empowering and development of staff in order to raise the standards. The evidence show that principals realised a link between staff development or empowerment of educators with teaching and learning. It is clear from principals' responses that there is a link between the promotion of teaching and learning, empowerment and development of staff.

4.4.5 Mechanisms put in place by principals in order to promote teaching and learning in the 21st century.

The principals were asked to elaborate on the mechanisms that they have put in place in protecting the instructional time in order to promote teaching and learning. According to Hallinger and Murphy (1986), principal s' role is to protect instruction is one of their primary objectives. The principals noted that there is a significance rise in the number of added hours used for instruction by the DBE and individual schools. Educators are now teaching in the morning before school starts, after school, on weekends and during school holidays. Principals must coordinate the curriculum and protect instructional time. Principals were asked about the strategies that they have put in place in promoting teaching and learning over and above their already pilling responsibilities. As Davis and Boudreaux (2019) put it, school leaders will remain openly expended by the unlimited administration and managerial duties.

This makes me work under pressure as I have to be at school 7 days a week (Mr Mabuza).

Principals are still spending more time in the office than in the classroom. Schooling hours have increased which has resulted in learners spending more time at school. Principals are trying to protect instructional time and there has been a great need to make up for the lost time. Miss Mkhize also felt that there is definitely more time spent on teaching for many T65 schools (T65 means schools that achieve less than 65% in the NSC results. She said:

I have organised extra lessons in the mornings before school starts, and also in the afternoons, as well teaching on weekends and during school holidays (Miss Mkhize).

The principals are of the view that this has helped the schools to make up for the lost time during COVID-19. There are many mechanisms to be put in place in order to promote teaching and learning in the 21st century. Despite the many challenges, principals have to come up with mechanism to promote teaching and learning. The situation must have been different back then but there seems to be many challenges in the modern day. COVID-19 also added more challenges to the already stretched schooling system. The role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning has had many challenges in recent years and it also challenges their impact in education. The principals were asked about the kinds of mechanism they have put in place in order to deal with the challenges. Some of these interventions have made a big difference in the effectiveness of some schools. Principals are constantly trying to find ways

to make education make sense in the modern day. Despite the challenges they are forging ahead in trying to impact the classroom.

I have made sure that textbooks are offered to each learner and learner support documents from the DoE, extra support by the DoE through programmes for both learners and teachers through Just-In-Time (JIT) and Step Ahead support material have impacted teaching and learning positively. As well as supported learners with extra notes, class activities and lessons through JIT and Step Ahead documents (Miss Mkhize).

The principals' duties involve the protection of instructional time. It is something they constantly have to do in order to promote teaching and learning and achieve educational goals. The DBE has also played a positive role in supporting the schools with support material in order to make teaching easy. The support is highlighted by many responses in the study as something that has helped educators and learners. Despite the many challenges, principals are seen to be forging ahead with their mandate and they are not resisting any help. Other principals have also implemented certain mechanisms in their schools in order to promote teaching and learning. These mechanisms are in line with the DBE requirements.

I have put more emphasis on syllabus coverage. The use of Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) is a must in every grade. This document guides teaching and what we want to achieve by when. As bad as it sounds; we do not teach to test, but the Programme of Assessment (POA) is part and parcel of teaching and promotion requirements (Mr Mabuza).

He also added that sometimes as schools are also compelled to use mechanisms enforced by the DBE. This did not sit well with him as some of these mechanisms do not bring about positive progress in all the schools. He added:

The reality is that every school is unique. Sometime a one hand fit all approach is not always effective. The JIT workshops and material has brought about positive changes in the improvements teaching and learning (Mr Mabuza).

It is clear that the DBE is aware of the challenges facing schools and their negative impact on teaching and learning. So, they have gone out of their way to help schools where they can. Principals have had many experiences and their role has included much more in the 21st century. It is becoming very clear from their responses that their duties have increased and there is more accountability and expectations from all stakeholders. Even support from policy makers they sometimes felt that the support comes in a one glove fit all approach which sometimes did not suit the needs of individual schools. School principals are tasked with so

much more in terms of addressing all educational gaps (Acton, 2018). Mr Ngcobo also acknowledged there was a need for mechanisms to bring about positive change in the promotion of teaching and learning. He also agreed that the extra help from the DBE has had a positive influence in order for him to achieve his objectives. He highlighted the following:

Support from subject advisors for certain subjects has positively impacted teaching and learning. The introduction of extra support through JIT and Step Ahead documents has brought about positive change (Mr Ngcobo).

According to the principals' responses, support is available, and the DBE has assisted in making sure that schools were getting enough support. The support has also assisted the principals in improving teaching and learning. Mr Sithole also concurred with them in terms of the extra support from the DBE and how it has assisted his school. He highlighted that the extra support from the DBE made an impact because it helped improve teaching and learning. This is what he had to say:

Extra support in the form of Step Ahead and Just- In-Time has helped to improve quality learning and teaching (Mr Sithole).

All these mechanisms brought about positive changes and support the principals' duties in promoting teaching and learning. Principal's responses indicated that the DBE also played a positive role in supporting their initiatives of improving teaching and learning. Principals noted the extent of the DBE's initiatives and all the extra resources that were offered and how it assisted them in their role of promoting teaching and learning. The principals have also made sure that these extra resources are used positively as they promote teaching and learning. Most principals noted that the mechanisms put in place were helpful and assisted them in achieving their objectives. The participants noted that the strategy of using Lead Teachers also had a positive impact on learning and teaching as well as giving support to educators of that particular subject. A Lead Teacher is a Grade 12 teacher from a performing school, who is sent by the DBE to assist the teacher who battles to meet set targets for the NSC examinations. He had this to say:

Lead teachers come from other schools to teach our learners. I have seen a huge improvement (Mr Magubane).

Therefore, this mechanism has assisted his school to improve results and assist subject teachers in order to improve the entire experience of teaching and learning. Mr Zulu, on the other hand, put more emphasis on the development and empowerment of educators through workshops. His mechanism revolved around what his school does internally.

I have made sure that all educators attend workshops as well courses offered by external organisation in order to improve their skills which impacts positively on teaching and learning (Mr Zulu).

It is noted that extra support is necessary in order to assist educators deliver the content and meet educational goals. It is the principal's responsibility to offer developmental support. Therefore, their instructional leadership role involves teacher and professional development. It is clear that their role covers a wide range of duties and their functions and responsibility have increased over the years. The goal of any school is to promote teaching and learning and achieve academic standards. It is becoming very clear that schools are measured by their NSC results and what schools do internally impact their external results. Principals are under a lot of pressure to make sure that their schools perform well or else their schools will be put under a lot of scrutiny. Principals in their responses concur on one thing, there has to be mechanisms put in place to improve teaching and learning. Kiat et al. (2017) added that enhanced instruction, motivated teachers and well-managed resources create environments that are conducive for learning. They may all go about it in different ways but the main idea is to achieve the same goals of promoting teaching and learning in the modern-day context. Principals' role is affected by many challenges, but despite the challenges, schools have to be seen as institutions of learning and teaching.

I make sure that the SMT focuses on tracking learners' progress through end of term results. Check with the SMT in terms of moderation of tasks and learners work and I have developed a tool to monitor educators' work weekly (Mr Hlongwane).

His mechanisms include tracking of learners' performance in order to assess if standards are met or not. It also includes monitoring which is ideal when assessing performance. Mr Nhlangulela also believed in his own mechanisms that assisted him in achieving educational goals. This made staff accountable for not meeting school targets. Analysis of results to identify areas of improvement was also highlighted. He had this to say about his own mechanisms:

There is more emphasis on the analysis of results and accountability if targets are not met. Diagnostic reports per subject and a plan on how to improve if there are areas of concern (Mr Nhlangulela).

Diagnostic reports as external documents are vital in improving teaching and learning. The diagnostic report identifies areas of weakness and misconceptions about each subject. This report can assist principals in guiding educators on how to improve teaching and learning. There is a general agreement in scholarship that leadership does make a big difference in school effectiveness (Naidoo, 2019). It can be concluded that effective learning and teaching relies

heavily on principal leadership. According to Hallinger and Murphy's theory (1986), principals play a major role in being responsible for the learning outcomes, they also account for learners' results. What principals said they were doing was to practise the instructional leadership from the perspective of school principals. I say this because the manner in which principals enact instructional leadership is not the same as the ways in which teachers do it. As the heads of the school, they are fully accountable for the instructional development and improvement. They must also communicate the goals of the school among all stakeholders. Shava and Tlou (2018) acknowledge that in most cases school principals are responsible for variations in learners' outcomes in schools and this is regarded as one of the most important factors.

4.5 Summary of the findings

The purpose of the study was to explore and understand the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. The focus was also on understanding the challenges that impede on their efforts of promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. The research findings have established that principals' experiences promote teaching and learning and offer their own mechanisms that they put in place to assist in curriculum matters. It is evident from the principals' responses that they are aware of their role to promote teaching and learning. However, the dynamics of the school environment have changed in the 21st century. The challenges of the classroom have become secondary and the challenges that affect the classroom indirectly have become primary. Among the many challenges that affect their role, it is also clear that most of them are out of their depth in term of dealing with challenges that affect the school environment.

The principals' role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century has been influenced by many factors ranging from shortages of LTSM, shortages of teachers, drug abuse and dependency, teenage pregnancy, ill-discipline, pressure to perform, the list is endless. It has become very difficult to run high school in the 21st century. This view is based on schools and principals who were part of the study. Participants highlighted that they were receiving support from the DBE. However, most of this support was in the form of extra teaching materials. This support might be vital, but it does not solve most of the problems that affect teaching and learning. Some of these challenges happen outside the classroom but impact on what happens in the classroom. Principals are called upon time and again to deal with challenges that are

outside their scope. Multi-faceted challenges have a negative impact on the delivery of the curriculum. The lack of support from parent and communities was established as one of the aspects that affect learning and teaching. Furthermore, addressing these issues is sometimes a challenge due to lack of expertise and experience on the part of the principals. Principals have established ways to cope with some of the challenges through collaboration with other stakeholders as well as personal experiences. Participants acknowledged the role of the DBE in supporting their schools through resources that have been made available to them.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter presented a discussion as well as presented and analysed the findings acquired from data generation and literature review and the interviews held with participants. Chapter Five presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has presented the findings from the participants. This chapter will present and discuss the conclusions that are drawn from the findings discussed in Chapter Four. Before presenting conclusions, I will present a summary of this study. The research conclusions are discussed, using the research questions to organise it. The conclusions and implications are based on the analysis of the data from principals who were participants in the study.

5.2 Study summary

There has been a significant discussion on the role of the principal in recent years. The principals who were part of the study shared a lot of insight on their role in high school. The study's purpose was to gain insight on the principals' role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. Their role in the 21st century also influence what educators do in the classroom. Their experiences played a significant role in informing what happens in the classroom. The research questions were formulated for the purpose of the study. They are as follows:

Main research question

- What is the principal's leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century?

Sub-questions

- What are the principals' perceptions and experiences regarding their role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century?
- What is the link between the principal's leadership functions and teaching and learning?
- How do secondary schools' principals practise their role in the promotion of teaching and learning in the 21st century?
- What kind of support is offered by the principals in the classroom in order to promote teaching and learning?

The rationale of the study is also discussed in this chapter as it guides the reader through the structure and background of the study. Chapter Two gives a detailed literature review to the study. The literature seeks to theorise and conceptualise the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. The theoretical framework of the chapter is also presented. Chapter Three gives a detailed discussion on the research design and methodology which are applied in this study. A case for approaching this study as qualitative research is argued. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the participants. The generation of data was done through semi-structured interviews with the principals of schools. Chapter Four presents the analysis and presentation of findings. The data for this chapter is presented thematically. The research participants gave responses which were recorded, analysed and presented in the discussion.

5.3 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the role that principals play in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century. The study sought to uncover what principals do differently in recent times in order to promote instruction that supported effective learning. The research findings revealed that the principals shared the same voice in understanding their role in promoting teaching and learning. The principals play a major role in promoting effective teaching and learning. The findings have indicated that principals in the study practiced instructional leadership. Through their instructional leadership, they have influenced and guided educators to teach based on the principals' vision, instruction, and expectations. Having said this, I must hasten to say that the vision, approaches to instruction, as well as their role are a collaborative and shared venture. In monitoring teaching in the classroom, principals do not necessarily have to be in the classroom. However, the findings suggest that they have put systems in place in order to make sure that learners are taught. In addition, they run staff development workshops, design intervention programmes, track progress of learners, get constant feedback from the DHs on the progress of teaching, and moderate both learners and educators' work. They also indicated that they always required constant feedback from both educators and learners in the form of evidence of teaching and learning. Based on these findings, the conclusion is that leading teaching and learning, is in line with the instructional leadership model by Hallinger and Murphy (1986).

The research findings established that principals also perform many tasks in the process of protecting instructional time. They draw up programmes for teaching and learning during

normal schooling hours and beyond. The principals revealed that they spend more hours at school than anywhere else. They must be at school before school starts, during school hours, after school, on weekends and during school holiday. The principals' job is quite detailed. They wear many hats. They are now at the same level as company executives. This is based on the time spent at the office as well many extra functions that they perform. The principals' management of human, physical and financial resources is remarkable considering that they are trained as teachers. Some of them indicated a lack of expertise in some of these fields. This was also mentioned in their responses. The conclusion that can be drawn is that these participants embraced and observed all seven dimensions of instructional leadership model as advocated by Hallinger and Murphy (1986).

Principals perceived their role through the functions that they perform. They were still able to influence what happens in the classroom. However, there has been a shift from the functions that they used to perform and those that they perform now. There was a common understanding among them about what their role entails in the 21st century. The principals felt that there was more emphasis on school performance. They added that learners' performance was used on a large scale to measure their schools and their effectiveness as leaders. There has been more emphasis on promotions and progressions, results, teach to test and assessments than ever before. It was clear that their experiences and the way they performed their tasks were heavily influenced by their leadership role.

The principals' role is quite detailed and focuses on many functions. The stakes are high in the new era of accountability and their role has focused on more functions than ever before. The increase in administrative tasks is also part of accountability. The principals' role entailed a lot more than just running the school. They leave school late and still take their work home. They now work on weekends and school holidays. Their cellular phone must be on all year round as there are sometimes submission at any given time even during school holidays. These principals felt that it is unfair for them to be called to account when their leadership and management plans have been interfered with by the very same education department that is supposed to support them and enable them to produce good results.

The research findings also established that promoting effective teaching and learning in the 21st century is complex. Principals exercise leadership in policy driven environments that are unclear and always shifting. The issue of the policy is a case in point as policy changes have

also impacted on the principals' role. Therefore, principals are always called to employ more strategies to deal with new problems in the 21st century. The socio-economic conditions and their impact on schooling have changed. Principals have to manage 21st century problems using skills acquired in another era, which is a challenge on its own. The support from many structures have not been forthcoming. The lack of synergy from governmental structures have made the principals' job even more difficult. As they are expected to play a role of a policeman, social worker, psychologist, accounting officer to mention a few. Most of the time their role shifted from teaching and learning to more on variables that affected teaching and learning.

Therefore, there were many factors that have an impact on the role of the principal in promoting teaching and learning. The challenges are quite intense and sometimes requires special skills. While principals in the study lacked specific training and skills to deal with challenges, they, nevertheless, came up with some strategies to counteract the negative effects. Challenges were multifaceted, and included economic, political and social. The challenges were common in every school. Issues like drug dependency, teenage pregnancy, discipline issues and general lack of control of policy came up very strongly in their responses. Schools seem to be bombarded with many environmental factors. The lack of basic infrastructure, resources and shortages of educators also indicated that there are concerns. These concerns affected teaching and learning. Lack of basic resources like the laboratory, library, tables, doors and many more indicated that there are many challenges and they impact directly on teaching and learning. On the outside it looks as if schools have everything under control. Just by looking at the building without any knowledge one might be tempted to assume that principals are running highly effective schools. Despite the concerns, principals were not in distress. Maybe one becomes immune to problems without immediate solutions.

School children have found themselves in the middle of drug wars, which are extended to their schools themselves. Some of them have identified the role of social factors as a limitation to what schools are trying to achieve. Principals have had to change certain aspects of running the school due to the fact that their role had changed. Many aspects which are not part of teaching and learning have trickled into their schools and found a way into the classroom. They have to be addressed with no knowledge, resources or experience. The lack of support from the DBE when it came to these issues that are external is a worrying factor for the principals.

5.4 Recommendations

The research findings suggest that principals in the study seem to understand their mandate as school leaders. The principals' role and functions are burdened by many challenges which are found to be prevalent worldwide. Their perceptions have also contributed greatly on how they run their schools as administrators, managers and leaders. There are many gaps between what principals do and the expectations. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends that the principals lobby for programmes to empower and develop their skills for modern day schooling that is relevant to the 21st century to be made available. One of the skill area that they should demand is courses on financial management. This recommendation is consistent with the views expressed by Mestry (2017).

The study recommends that principals find the right balance between administrative tasks, management and leadership of the school. Respecting hours of work for all employees as stated in the Basic Conditions of Employment is also important. Time management did not seem to be a problem based on the research findings. However, their responses also indicated the administrative duties were overwhelming and left them with little time for other duties and functions. Therefore, there has to be a balance between all the functions of the principal in order for them to be highly effective and focus on teaching and learning.

I also recommend that principals engage more stakeholders with the right expertise where they fall short. This would allow principals more time to focus more on promoting teaching and learning. Parents must be involved in areas where they have neglected their role. Because this means that school are using school time to solve issues that are not related to the schools. All strategies should be tailored to accommodate the needs of each school. The school principals should also lobby the DBE to come with programmes that are relevant to modern day schooling and will assist with promoting teaching and learning. These programmes should focus on areas of need and also prepare the principals for the 21st century schooling.

The research findings also revealed that the lack of resources have had a major impact on teaching and learning. Principals need to find ways to involve the private sector to assist with some of the challenges that prevent the promotion of learning and teaching. It was revealed in the research findings that the lack of support from the DBE has negatively impacted on some schools' poor performance. I recommend that principals find other ways to source the right

help for their situation. Many companies are looking for meaningful CSI programmes for communities and among others, schools. Principals can tap into this huge resource for their schools.

5.5 Implications of the study

The limited nature of case study is based on the fact that only ten principals were interviewed as part of the study. Therefore, the conclusions are drawn based on case study principals. In terms of implications, it is important to also note that no generalisations can be made on the role of the principal on teaching and learning in the 21st century beyond this case study. It is important to note that the study was able to give a lot of insight on what principals do, their perception and challenges that they face nowadays.

The research findings revealed that even though there is a lot of work that is being done to improve schooling or instruction, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done. Extra support given to schools has been valuable and it has assisted learners as all interviewees indicated. However, steps must be taken to empower school leaders to be able to deal with the 21st century challenges. The challenges are caused by rapidly changing and dynamic environments of the modern-day schooling (Mahfouz, 2018). This is a duty that must be attended to by policy makers or the DBE, principals and all other stakeholders. I acknowledge the limited nature and scope of this study. Therefore, the responsibility of ensuring that the necessary support is made available is put on the shoulders of the principals as leaders to demand.

5.6 Chapter summary

Chapter Five has used the research questions to discuss the conclusions of the study. This chapter also gives the overview of the study. The study found that principals have a role to play in promoting and supporting teaching and learning in the 21st century. There were many indications of positive contributions to education by heads of school. There are also many challenges and concerns that prevented them from executing their duties effectively. The study found that there were many conflicting views between what policy says and principals' role. Principals know their role in heading schools and its implications on schooling; however, they have no control over what policy makers decide. It is also noted they have more knowledge on educational matters at school level. The conclusions, recommendations and implications of the study link Chapter Four and Five and sum up the study in its entirety. Chapter Five concluded

the journey taken in this study and gave insight into the understanding of the principals' leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century.

6. References

- Aas, M. & Random, C. (2016). Revisiting instructional and transformational leadership: The contemporary Norwegian context of school leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 54(1), 92-110. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-08-2014-0105>
- Adu, P. (2019). *A step-by-step guide to qualitative data coding*. Routledge. <https://books.google.co.za/books?id=k0-QDwAAQBAJ&Ipg>
- Adams, D., Kutty, G.R. & Zabidi, Z.M. (2017). Educational leadership for the 21st century. *Journal of educational leadership*, 1(1-4). <https://doi.org/10.22452/ijel.vol1no1>
- Adams, D. & Muthiah, V. (2020). School principals and 21st century leadership challenges: A systematic review. *Journal of Nusantara Studies (JONUS)*, 5(1), 189-210. <https://doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol5iss1pp189-210>
- Abdullah, J.B. & Kassim, J.M. (2011). Instructional leadership and attitude towards organizational change among secondary school principals in Pahang, Malaysia. *Procedia Social and Behavioural Science*, 15, 3304- 3309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.04.290>
- Agasisti, T., Bonomi, F. & Sabina, P. (2012). Do the managerial characteristics of schools influence their performance? *International Journal of Educational Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513541211251415>
- Alig-Mielcarek, J. M. (2003). *A model of school success: Instructional leadership, academic press, and student achievement*. The Ohio State University.
- Ampofo, S. Y., Onyango, G. A. & Ogola, M. (2019). Influence of School Heads' Direct Supervision on Teacher Role Performance in Public Senior High Schools, Central Region, Ghana. *IAFOR Journal of Education*, 7(2),9-26. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1236226>
- Arhipova, O., Kokina, I. & Rauckienė-Michaelsson, A. (2018). School principal's management competences for successful school development. *Tiltai: socialiniai mokslai*, (1), 63-75. DOI: 10.15181/tbb.v78i1.1757
- Baker, E. (1994). Making performance assessment work: The road ahead. *Educational Leadership*, 51(6). <http://www.mathtestprep.com/ci-bin//tprep.cgi>
- Ball, S. (1990). The sociological implications of the Education Reform Act. *British Journal of Sociology*, 11(4), 485-491. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142569900110409>

- Baptiste, M. (2019). No Teacher Left Behind: The Impact of Principal Leadership Styles on Teacher Job Satisfaction and Student Success. *Journal of International education and leadership*, 9(1). <http://www.jielusa.org/>
- Baxter, P. & Kack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559. <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/baxter.pdf>
- Biesta, G. (2009). What kind of citizenship for European higher education? Beyond the competent active citizen. *European Educational Research Journal*, 8(2), 146-158. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/eevj.2009.8.2.146>
- Bowen, G.A. (2009). Document analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2) 27-40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Boyce, J. & Bowers, A. J. (2018). Toward an evolving conceptualization of instructional leadership as leadership for learning: Meta-narrative review of 109 quantitative studies across 25 years. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 56(2). <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-06-2016-0064>
- Bridges, E. M. (1967). Instructional leadership: A concept re-examined. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 5(2). 136-147 <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb009614>
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Bush, T. (2003). Concepts and Evidence in Educational Leadership and Management. *Educational Management & Administration*, 31(3), 227-230. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0263211x03031003001>
- Bush, T. (2006). Theories of Educational Management. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 1(2), n2. ERIC
- Bush, T. & Glover, D. (2005). Leadership development for early headship: The New Visions <https://doi.org/10.1080/13634230500116314>
- Bush, T. (2013). Instructional leadership and leadership for learning: Global and South African perspectives. *Education As Change* 17(sup1), 5-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16823206.2014.865986>
- Bush, T. (2018). Research on educational leadership and management: Broadening the base. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 46(3), 359-361. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143218758555>
- Button, H. W. (1966). Doctrines of administration: A brief history. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 2(3), 216-224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X6600200306>

- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morison, K (2011). *Research Methods In Education*. Routledge.
https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=mLh0Oza3V1IC&oi=fnd&pg=PR3&ots=SPJPFjxipj&sig=2SB7VbwPJqWJRGGZPIGpiTIPpgw&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=DOI&f=false
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morison, K (2018). *Methodologies For Teacher Research Research Methods In Education*. Routledge.
<https://books.google.co.za/books/publisher/content?id=9mYPEAAAQBAJ&pg=PP1&img=1&zoom=3&hl=en&ots=GGs-Sd7Xzd&sig=ACfU3U2sBg860G96pKQ7aEXUGjrycqtXg&w=1280>
- Cohen, N. & Arieli, T. (2011). Field research in conflict environments: Methodological challenges and snowball sampling. *Journal of peace research*, 48(4), 423-435.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343311405698>
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008). Strategies for qualitative data analysis. *Basics of Qualitative Research. Techniques and Procedures for Developing grounded theory*, 3(10.4135), 9781452230153.
- Creswell, J. W. & Clark, V. L. P. (2004). Principles of qualitative research: Designing a qualitative study. *Office of Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research*. University of Nebraska.
https://community.csusm.edu/pluginfile.php/21112/mod_resource/content/1/CresswellJWAndPlanoClarkVLPrinciples_of_QualitativeResearchDesigningQualitativeStudyPPT.pdf
- Creswell, J.W. (2007). Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *The counselling psychologist*, 35(2), 236-264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000006287390>
- Creswell, J. W. & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications.
<https://edge.sagepub.com/creswellqi4e/access-codes-0>
- Crow, G. M. (2006). Complexity and the beginning principal in the United States: Perspectives on socialization. *Journal of educational administration*, 44 (4), 310-325
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09578230610674930>
- Cuban, L. (1988). *Managerial imperative and the practice of leadership in schools*. The Suny Press. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED304758>
- Davis, F. & Boudreaux, M. K. (2019). Teacher leaders' perceptions of charter school principals' instructional leadership practices. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 9(1), 7. DOI:10.5590/JERAP.2019.09.1.07

- Day, C., Gu, Q. & Sammons, P. (2016). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: How successful school leaders use transformational and instructional strategies to make a difference. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 52(2), 221-258.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X15616863>
- DeMatthews, D.E. (2014). How to improve curriculum leadership: Integration leadership theory and management strategies. *A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 87(5), 192-196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2014.911141>
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2011). *The SAGE Handbook of qualitative research*. SAGE Publications. DOI:10.2307/3121684.
- Department of Basic Education. (2016). *Policy on the South African Standard for Principals*. <https://static.pmg.org.za/140807sastandardforprincipalship.pdf>
- De Vaus, D. (2001). Research design in social research. *Research design in social research*, 1-296. SAGE Publications.
- Dimmock, C. (1999). Principals and school restructuring: conceptualising challenges as dilemmas. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 37(5), 441-462.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09578239910288414>
- Edmonds, R. R. (1979). A discussion of the literature and issues related to effective schooling. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Graduate School of Education. *Centre for Urban Studies*, ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED170394>
- Fidler, B. (1997). School leadership: some key ideas. *School Leadership & Management*, 17(1), 23-38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632439770140>
- Fowler, J. E. (2009). Compressive-projection principal component analysis. *IEEE Transactions on Image Processing*, 18(10), 2230-2242.
<https://doi.org/10.1109/TIP.2009.2025089>
- Fullan, M. (2014). Leadership: Maximizing Impact Michael Fullan.
http://www.michaelfullan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/14_Spring_Maximizing-Impact-Handout.compressed.pdf
- Fullan, M. (2018). *The principal: Three keys for maximizing impact*. John Willey & Sons.
- Gani, N. I., Rathakrishnan, M. & Krishnasamy, H. N. (2020). A pilot test for establishing validity and reliability of qualitative interview in the blended learning English proficiency course. *J Crit Rev*, 7(5), 140-143. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.05.23>

- Ganon-Shilon, S. & Schechter, C. (2017). Making sense of school leaders' sense-making. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 45(4), 682-698. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143216628536>
- Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, 204(6), 291-295. DOI: 10.1038/bdj.2008.192
- Gläser, J. & Laudel, G. (2013). Life with and without coding: Two methods for early-stage data analysis. In *Qualitative Research Aiming at Causal Explanations*, «Forum: Social qualitative research», (14).
- Goddard, R. D. (2003). Relational networks, social trust, and norms: A social capital perspective on students' chances of academic success. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 25(1), 59-74. <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737025001059>
- Goldkuhl, G. (2019). The generation of qualitative data in information systems research: the diversity of empirical research methods. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 44, 572-599. <https://doi.org/10.17705/1CAIS.04428>
- Goldman, H. & Heald, J. E. (1968). Teacher expectations of administrative behaviour. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 4(3), 29-40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X6800400303>
- Gorard, S. (2013). Research design: Creating robust approaches for the social sciences. *SAGE Publication*
- Grissom, J. A., Egalite, A. J., & Lindsay, C. A. (2021). How principals affect students and schools. *Wallace Foundation*, 2(1), 30-41. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED611009>
- Gu, Q. & Johansson, O. (2013). Sustaining school performance: school contexts matter. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 16(3), 301-326. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2012.732242>
- Gumus, S., Bellibas, M. S., Eden, M. & Gumus, E. (2018). A systematic review of studies on leadership models in educational research from 1980 to 2014. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 46(1), 25-48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143216659296>
- Gunter, H. M. (2005). Conceptualizing research in educational leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 33(2), 165-180. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143205051051>
- Hallinger, P. (2010). Developing instructional leadership. In *developing successful leadership* (pp. 61-76). Springer, Dordrecht. DOI: 10.1007/978-90-481-9106-2_5

- Hallinger, P. (2010). A review of three decades of doctoral studies using the principal instructional management rating scale: A lens on methodological progress in educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(2), 271-306. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X10383412>
- Hallinger, P. (2013). Running on empty? Finding the time and capacity to lead learning. *NASS Bulletin* 97(1), 5-2. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192636512469288>
- Hallinger, P. (2015). The evolution of instructional leadership. In *Assessing instructional leadership with the principal instructional management rating scale* (pp. 1-23). Springer, Cham. <https://citations.springernature.com/book?doi=10.1007/978-3-319-15533-3>
- Hallinger, P. (2018). Bringing context out of the shadows of leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 46(1), 5-24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143216670652>
- Hallinger, P. & Heck, R. H. (2011). Exploring the journey of school improvement: Classifying and analysing patterns of change in school improvement processes and learning outcomes. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 22(1), 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2010.536322>
- Hallinger, P. & Murphy, J. (1985). Assessing the instructional management behaviour of principals. *The Elementary School Journal*, 86(2), 217-247. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/461446>
- Hallinger, P. & Murphy, J. (1986). *Instructional Leadership in Effective Schools*. Educational Resources Centre. Eric. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED309535>
- Hardy, I., Decristan, J. & Klieme, E. (2019). Adaptive teaching in research on learning and instruction. *Journal for educational research online*, 11(2), 169-191. <https://doi.org/10.25656/01:18004>
- Healy, M. & Perry, C. (2000). Comprehensive criteria to judge validity and reliability of qualitative research within the realism paradigm. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 3(3), 118-126. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13522750010333861>
- Heck, R. H. (1992). Principals' instructional leadership and school performance: Implications for policy development. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 14(1), 21-34. <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737014001021>
- Heystek, J. (2016). Educational leadership and organisational development and change in a developing country. *South African Journal of Education*, 36(4), 1-3. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC199612>

- Heystek, J. (2007). Reflecting on principals as managers of moulded leaders in a managerialistic school system. *South African Journal of Education*, 27(3), 491-506. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC32129>
- Hitt, D. H. & Tucker, P. D. (2016). Systematic review of key leader practices found to influence student achievement: A unified framework. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(2), 531-569. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315614911>
- Hochschild, J. L. (2009). Conducting intensive interviews and elite interviews. In *Workshop on interdisciplinary standards for systematic qualitative research* (pp. 124-127). National Science Foundation.
- Homel, J. & Ryan, C. (2014). *Educational outcomes: the impact of aspirations and the role of student background characteristics*. Adelaide: National Centre for Vocational Education Research. <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/298130>
- Hussein, A. (2009). The use of triangulation in social sciences research: Can qualitative and quantitative methods be combined? *Journal of comparative social work*, 4(1), 106-117. <https://doi.org/10.31265/jcsw.v4i1.48>
- Jacobson, S. L. & Cypres, A. (2012). Important shifts in curriculum of educational leadership preparation. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 7(2), 217-236. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942775112455117>
- James, S., Camburn, E. & Spillane, J. (2018). Portraits of Principal Practice: Time Allocation and School Principal work. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 2018, 54(47-84). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X17720978>
- Kea, K. F. & Browning, L. D. (2013). Recruiting for and conducting qualitative telephone interviews to study dispersed groups, virtual organizations, and distributed communities. In *National Communication Association annual conference*. [www1.chapman.edu/~knee/PDF C \(Vol. 17\). http://octgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Kee-2013-17.pdf](http://www1.chapman.edu/~knee/PDF%20C%20(Vol.%2017).pdf)
- Kiat, K. T. H., Henig, M. A. & Atman-Lim, C. (2016). *Curriculum Leadership by Middle Leaders*. Taylor & Francis. <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016016871>
- Khoo, S. T. & Ainley, J. (2005). *Attitudes, intentions and participation*. https://research.acer.edu.au/lsay_research?utm_source=research
- Kinney, P. (2009). The Principal's Role in Literacy. *Principal Leadership*, 9(9), 56-57. ERIC <https://eric.ed.gov/?ti=Book+Reviews>

- Komalasari, K., Arafat, Y. & Mulyadi, M. (2020). Principal's management competencies in improving the quality of education. *Journal of Social Work and Science Education*, 1(2), 181-193. <https://doi.org/10.52690/jswse.v1i2.47>
- Labuschagne, A. (2003). Qualitative research: Airy fairy or fundamental. *The Qualitative Report*, 8.1, 100-103. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2003.1901>
- Lavy, S. (2020). A review of character strengths interventions in twenty-first-century schools: Their importance and how they can be fostered. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 15, 573-596. <https://doi.org/10.1007/511482-018-9700-6>
- Lechuga, V. M. (2012). Exploring culture from a distance: The utility of telephone interviews in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 25(3), 251-268. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2010.529853>
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A. & Hopkins, D. (2019). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School Leadership & Management*, 40(1), 5-22.
- Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK). <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijem.1999.13.6.301.4>
- Leithwood, K., Janzen, D. & McElheron-Hopkins, C. (2006). The development and testing of a school improvement model. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(4), 441-464. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243450600743533>
- Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S. & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). How Leadership Influences Student Learning. Review of Research. *Wallace Foundation*.
- Leithwood, K. & Seashore-Louis, K. (2011). *Linking leadership to student learning*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1986). *But Is It Rigorous? Trustworthiness and Authenticity in Naturalistic Evaluation*. Jossey-Bass. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.1427>
- Liu, S. & Hallinger, P. (2018). Principal Instructional Leadership, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher professional learning in China: Testing a mediated-effects model. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54 (4), 501-528. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X18769048>
- Lunenburg, F. (2013). Leadership Versus Management: A Key Distinction—At Least In Theory. *Main Issues of Pedagogy And Psychology*, 3(3), 15-18. <https://doi.org/10.24234/miopap.v3i3.15>
- Mahfouz, J. (2018). Mindfulness training for school administrators: Effects on well-being and leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 56(6). 602-619. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-12-2017-0171>

- Maponya, T.J. (2020). The instructional leadership role of the school principal on learners' academic achievement. *African Education Research Journal*, 8(2), 183-193.
http://www.netjournals.org/aer_index.html
- Mampane, R. & Bouwer, C. (2011). The influence of township schools on the resilience of their learners. *South African Journal of Education*, 31(1).
<http://hdl.handle.net/2263/16862>
- Marcelo, C. (2009). Professional Development of Teachers: past and future. *Sísifo. Educational Sciences Journal*, 8, 5-20. <http://sisifo.fpce.ul.pt/>
- Maree, K. & Van der Westhuizen, C. N. (2009). *Head start in designing research proposals in the social sciences*. Juta and Company Ltd.
- Mashele, L. M. (2017). *Experiences of Three Female Principals of Nkomazi West Circuit in the Ehlanzeni District Office in Mpumalanga*. <https://hdl.handle.net/10210/414484>
- Mashele, S. F. (2018). *The impact of curriculum change on the working lives of rural teachers* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria).
<http://hdl.handle.net/2263/71718>
- Mathikithela, M. & Wood, L. (2021). Youth Participatory Action Research as a Catalyst for Health Promotion in a Rural South African School. *Qualitative Research in Education*, 10(2), 144-171. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17583/qre.2021.7166>
- McCarley, T. A., Peters, M. L. & Decman, J. M. (2016). Transformational leadership related to school climate: A multi-level analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 44(2), 322-342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143214549966>
- McMillan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. (2014). *Research in education: Evidence based inquiry. Pearson Higher Education*. Pearson.
- Mendels, P. (2012). The effective principal: 5 pivotal practices that shape instructional leadership. *The Learning Professional*, 33(1), 54. The Wallace Foundation
<https://www.asdn.org/wp-content/uploads/LF-FEBRUARY-2012-THE-EFFECTIVE-PRINCIPAL.pdf>
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). Introduction to qualitative research. *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*, 1(1), 1-17. John Wiley & Sons
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation, revised and expanded from qualitative research and case study applications in education*.
<https://docs.edtechhub.org/lib/7G2UTPZC>

- Mestry, R. (2017). Principals' perspectives and experiences of their instructional leadership functions to enhance learner achievement in public schools. *Journal of Education*, 69, 257-280. http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2520-98682017000200012&lng=en&nrm=iso>
- Mestry, R. (2017). Empowering principals to lead and manage public schools effectively in the 21st century. *South African Journal of Education*, 37(1), 111. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC-5cda88587>
- Mestry, R., Moonsammy-Koopasammy, I. & Schmidt, M. (2013). The instructional leadership role of primary school principals. *Education As Change*, 17(sup1), S49-S64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16823206.2014.865990>
- Mkhize, B. N. C. K. (2017). *Instructional leadership practices of secondary school principals in the context of multiple deprivations in Umlazi District: a multiple case study* (Doctoral dissertation). <http://hdl.handle.net/10413/15478>
- Mkhize, B.N. & Bhengu, T.T. (2018). Leading teaching and learning: Secondary school principals' perspectives. In V. Chikoko (Ed.), *Leadership that Works in Deprived School Contexts of South Africa*, (pp. 77- 77). NOVA Science Publishers.
- Morgan, T. L. (2018). Assistant Principals' Perceptions of the Principalship. *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership*, 13(10), n10. <http://journals.sfu.ca/ijepl/index.php/ijepl>
- Moser, M.A. (2017). *An exploration of the relationship between principal leadership, emotional intelligence and student achievement*. (Doctoral dissertation, Bowling Green State University). https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/leadership_diss/97
- Mulford, B. (2008). The leadership challenge: Improving learning in schools. https://research.acer.edu.au/aer/2/?__hstc=227787458.34e3a56a4c773f89949c75cda0bb2ae1.1488412800063.1488412800064.1488412800065.
- Munna, A. S. & Kalam, M. A. (2021). Teaching and learning process to enhance teaching effectiveness: a literature review. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*, 4(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.33750/ijhi.v4i1.102>
- Murphy, J. F. (2016). *Professional standards for educational leaders: The empirical, moral, and experiential foundations*. Corwin Press. <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016037642>
- Mutch, A. (2005). Discussion of Willmott: Critical realism, agency and discourse: Moving the debate forward. *Organization*, 12(5), 781-786. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508405055948>

- Naidoo, P. (2019). Perception of teachers and school management teams of the leadership roles and school principals. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(2).
<https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v39n2a1534>
- Navaridas-Nalda, F., Clavel-San Emeterio, M., Fernández-Ortiz, R. & Arias-Oliva, M. (2020). The strategic influence of school principal leadership in the digital transformation of schools. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 112, 106481.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106481>
- Neumerski, C. M., Grissom, J. A., Goldring, E., Rubin, M., Cannata, M., Schuermann, P. & Drake, T. A. (2018). Restructuring instructional leadership: How multiple-measure teacher evaluation systems are redefining the role of the school principal. *The Elementary School Journal*, 119(2), 270-297. <https://doi.org/10.1086/700597>
- Newmann, F. M., Smith, B., Allensworth, E. & Bryk, A. S. (2001). *School Instructional Program Coherence: Benefits and Challenges. Improving Chicago's Schools*. ERIC
- Ngcobo, T. (2008). Towards leadership for school cultures associated with good academic performance in South African township secondary schools: the 'power' of organic emergence, diversity and service. <http://hdl.handle.net/10566/1512>
- Ngole, D. M. & Mkulu, D. G. (2021). The role of school heads' supervision in improving quality of teaching and learning: a case of public secondary school in Ilemela District Mwanza Tanzania. *Int. J. Engl. Literat. Soci. Sci*, 6(1), 59-73.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.22161/ijels>
- Nisbett, J. & Watt, J. (1984). Case study. In J. Bell, T. Bush, A. Fox, J. Goodey & S. Goulding (Eds.), *Conducting small-scale investigations in educational management* (pp. 79-92). Paul Chapman Publishers.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2008). *OECD Factbook 2008*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing. <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/125175>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2010). *Education at a glance 2010: OECD indicators*. OECD. <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/49896>
- Opfer, V. D. & Pedder, D. (2013). Teacher change and changing teachers via professional development. *Teachers learning: Professional Development and Education*, 93-117. Cambridge University Press.
- Park, J. H., Lee, I. H. & Cooc, N. (2019). The role of school-level mechanisms: How principal support, professional learning communities, collective responsibility, and group-level teacher expectations affect student achievement. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 55(5), 742-780. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X18821355>

- Polit, D. F. & Beck, C. T. (2010). Generalization in quantitative and qualitative research: Myths and strategies. *International journal of nursing studies*, 47(11), 1451-1458. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2010.06.004>
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Pont, B. (2014). School Leadership: From Practice to Policy. *International Journal of Educational Leadership and Management*, 2(1), 4-28. <http://www.hipatiapress.com>
- Raento, M., Oulasvirta, A. & Eagle, N. (2009). Smartphones: An emerging tool for social scientists. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 37(3), 426-454
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124108330005>
- Republic of South Africa. (2012). *South African Schools Act (84/1996): Approval of the regulations pertaining to the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12*. Government Gazette, 570(36041).
- Robinson, V. (2011). *Student-centered leadership* (Vol. 15). John Wiley & Sons.
<http://eric.ed.gov/?id+ED529294>
- Robinson, V. M., Lloyd, C. A. & Rowe, K. J. (2008). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: An analysis of the differential effects of leadership types. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5), 635-674.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X08321509>
- Rule, P. & John, V. (2011). *Your guide to case study research*. Van Schaik.
- Russell, D. & Cranston, N. (2012). An examination of professional development offerings for school leaders in one large education system. *Leading and Managing*, 18(1), 1-18.
<https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/aeipt.194222>
- Saleem, A., Aslam, S., Yin, H. B. & Rao, C. (2020). Principal leadership styles and teacher job performance: Viewpoint of middle management. *Sustainability*, 12(8), 3390.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su12083390>
- Saleh, M. & Mutiani, M. (2021). The Role of the Principal in Increasing Teacher Performance Through Periodic Academic Supervision. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 13(2), 1135-1141. Doi:10.35445/alishlah.v.312.889
- Sebastian, J., Allensworth, E. & Huang, H. (2016). The role of teacher leadership in how principals influence classroom instruction and student learning. *American Journal of Education*, 123(1), 69-108. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26544390>

- Sharif, U. M., Nanyangwe-Moyo, T., Moyo, N., Zheng, X. & Guo, C. (2020). The role of the principal is developing an instructional leadership team in school. *Educational research and reviews*, 15(11), 662-667. <https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2020.457>
- Shava, G. N. & Tlou, F. N. (2018). Distributed leadership in education, contemporary issues in educational leadership. *African Educational Research Journal*, 6(4), 279-287. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1208340>
- Schechter, C., Ganon, S. & Ganon-Shilon, S. (2018). Leadership Metaphors: School Principals' Sense-Making of a National Reform. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 17(1), 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2016.1232836>
- Schleicher, A. (2012). *Preparing teachers and developing school leaders for the 21st century: Lessons from around the world*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264174559-en>
- Sebastian, J. & Allensworth, E. (2012). The influence of principal leadership on classroom instruction and student learning: A study of mediated pathways to learning. *Educational administration quarterly*, 48(4), 626-663. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X11436273>
- Sebastian, J., Camburn, E. M. & Spillane, J. P. (2018). Portraits of principal practice: Time allocation and school principal work. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54(1), 47-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X17720978>
- Sequeira, A. H. (2012). Introduction to concepts of teaching and learning. *Social Sciences Education e-journal*. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2150166>
- Shaked, H. (2018). Why principals sidestep instructional leadership: The disregarded question of schools' primary objective. *Journal of School Leadership*, 28(4), 517-538. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461802800404>
- Shaked, H. (2019). Perceptual inhibitors of instructional leadership in Israeli principals. *School Leadership & Management*, 39(5), 519-536. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2019.1574734>
- Shakes, H., Benoliel, P. & Hallinger, P. (2017). How National Context Indirectly Influences Instructional Leadership Implementation: The case of Israeli. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 1-33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X20944217>
- Sharif, U. M., Nanyangwe-Moyo, T., Moyo, N., Zheng, X. & Guo, C. (2020). The role of the principal is developing an instructional leadership team in school. *Educational research and reviews*, 15(11), 662-667. <https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2020.457>

- Shava, G. N. & Tlou, F. N. (2018). Principal leadership and school improvement: Experiences from South African school contexts. *International Journal of Innovative and Applied Research*, 6(12), 1-10.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for information*, 22(2), 63-75.
- Silins, H. & Mulford, B. (2002). *Leadership and school results* (pp. 561-612). Springer Netherlands. Springer
- Singh, B. (2019). Character education in the 21st century. *Journal of Social Studies (JSS)*, 15(1), 1-12. doi: 1021831jss.v15i;1.25226.1-12
- Spillane, J. P. & Kenney, A. W. (2012). School administration in a changing education sector: The US experience. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 50(5), 541. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231211249817>
- Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. New York: SAGE Publications. https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=ApGdBx76b9kC&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=stake+1995&ots=KwOJe3Gnem&sig=7DdIbRF2PbAYpkR53BqLVjwP9Zo&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=stake%201995&f=false
- Sterrett, W. & Richardson, J. W. (2020). Supporting professional development through digital principal leadership. *Journal of Organizational & Educational Leadership*, 5(2), 4. <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/joel/vol5/iss2/4>
- Sumbera, M. J., Pazey, B. L. & Ashely, C. (2014). How building principals made sense of free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 13(3), 297-333. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2014.922995>
- Suri, H. (2011). Purposeful sampling in qualitative research synthesis. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 11(2), 63-75. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ1102063>
- Tan, C. Y. (2018). Examining school leadership effects on student achievement: The role of contextual challenges and constraints. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 48(1), 21-45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2016.1221885>
- Taylor, C. & Gibbs, G. R. (2010). What is qualitative data analysis (QDA). *Online QDA Web Site*. Hampshire Constabulary
- Teddle, C. & Yu, F. (2007). Mixed methods sampling: A typology with examples. *Journal of Mixed methods Research*, 1(1), 77-100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806292430>

- Thessin, R. A. (2019). Establishing productive principal/principal supervisor partnerships for instructional leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 57(5), 463-483. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-09-2018-0184>
- Teo, P. (2019). Teaching for the 21st century: A case for dialogic pedagogy. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, 21, 170-178.
- Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analysing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214005283748>
- Thompson, C. S. (2017). Teachers' expectations of educational leaders' leadership approach and perspectives on the principalship: Identifying critical leadership paradigms for the 21st century. *Journal of Organizational & Educational Leadership*, 2(2), 4. <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/joel/vol2/iss2/4>.
- Tight, M. (2010). The curious case of case study: A viewpoint. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 13(4), 329-339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570903187181>
- Tingle, E., Corrales, A. & Peters, M. L. (2019). Leadership development programmes: Investing in school principals. *Educational Studies*, 45(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2017.1382332>
- Triangulation, D. S. (2014, September). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. In *Oncol Nurs Forum* (Vol. 41, No. 5, pp. 545-7). DOI: 10.1188/14.onf.545-547
- Tucker, M. S. & Coddling, J. B. (2002). Preparing principals in the age of accountability. *The principal challenge: Leading and managing schools in an era of accountability*, 1-40. <http://ndl.ethernet.edu.et/bitstream/123456789/28083/1/127.pdf.pdf#page=27>
- Tucker, P. D. & Uline, C. L. (2015). The role of candidate assessment within educational leadership doctoral programmes. *International Journal of Educational Reform*, 24(3), 248-265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105678791502400304>
- Tuli, F. (2010). The basis of distinction between qualitative and quantitative research in social science: Reflection on ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives. *Ethiopian Journal of Education and Sciences*, 6(1).1 <https://doi.org/10.4314/ejesc.v6i1.65384>
- Türkoglu, M. E. & Cansoy, R. (2020). School Principals' Opinions on the Meaning and Sources of Workload. *International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research*, 7(1), 177-191. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1262118>

- Vaillant, D. (2015). School leadership, trends in policies and practices, and improvement in the quality of education. *Education for All Global Monitoring Report*, 1, 1-15.
<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=7ff08935b58a0814dd0c99fcb9103e8b294158fd>
- Van Teijlingen, E. & Hundley, V. (2001). The importance of pilot studies. *Social Research Update*, (35), 1-4. <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU35.pdf>
- Weber, J.R. (1987). *Instructional leadership: A composite working model*. Washington DC: Eric Clearinghouse
- Weber, J. R. (1989). Leading the Instructional Program.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.1997.10543916>
- Wellington, J. (2015). *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical approaches*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Weinstein, J., Marfán, J. & Horn, A. (2016). Chile: School leadership challenged by double accountability towards schools. In *Educational Accountability* (pp. 70-88). Routledge.
- White, C. J. & Van Dyk, H. (2019). Theory and practice of the quintile ranking of schools in South Africa: A financial management perspective. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(Supplement 1), s1-19. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v39ns1a.1820>
- Wills, G. (2015). Informing principal policy reforms in South Africa through data-based evidence. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 5(2), 95-122.
<http://ref.scielo.org/cg72ts>
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5). SAGE Publishers.
<https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/resource/pt/pah-15330>
- Yin, R.K. (2003). Designing case studies. *Qualitative Research Methods*, 359-386. SAGE Publishers.
- Yin, R. K. (2013). Validity and generalisation in future case study evaluations. *Evaluation*, 19(3), 321-332. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356389013497081>
- Zainal, Z. (2017). Case study as a research method. *Jurnal kemanusiaan*, 5(1).
<https://jurnalkemanusiaan.utm.my/index.php/kemanusiaan/article/view/165>
- Zepeda, S. J., Payola, O. & Klar, H. W. (2017). Educational leadership for teaching and learning. *The Wiley International Handbook of Educational Leadership*, 227-252.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118956717.ch13>
- Zulu, J. K., Bhengu, T. T. & Mkhize, B. N. (2021). Leadership challenges and responses to complex township school life: perspectives from four secondary schools in South

Africa. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 24(2), 206-225.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2019.1623918>

Zuze, A. & Juan, T.L. (2018). School leadership and local learning context in South Africa.

Research on Socio-Economic Policy, University of Stellenbosch.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143218814006>

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

21 Redwood Crescent

Panorama Gardens

Pietermaritzburg

3201

02 December 2021

Dear Principal

Request for participation in the research project

My name is Thembisile Mlotshwa, I am a registered student reading for Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is **‘Understanding the principals’ leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century: a case study’**.

You are invited to participate in this study as one of the high school principals with at least five years’ experience. The purpose of this research is to understand the principals’ leadership role in promoting teaching and learning, achieving educational outcomes as well as the principals’ perceptions and experiences on their role in Umgungundlovu district. The focus of the study is on the principals’ role in promoting teaching and learning in the current schools’ settings. The information obtained will be treated with confidentiality and will be used solely for the purposes of this research.

This study will only involve the principal. The study will not interfere with the time allocated for teaching and learning. If permission is granted for this study to be conducted, the following procedure will be followed: a time slot, which is convenient for the principal and the researcher, will be chosen, in which a telephonic interview will be conducted. Please be informed that once permission is granted, I will further seek your consent to be part of the study.

Please note that:

- 1) Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion. The interview is once off and would take approximately 30 minutes.
- 2) Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for the purposes of the research only. Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- 3) You have a choice to participate, or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalised for taking such action. This interview will be recorded for the convenience of the research. Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- 4) Please note that the study will not put you, staff and learners at any risk.

Your approval to participate in this study will be highly appreciated.

I am happy and available to answer any questions and concerns that you have with regards to the study. You may contact me at this email address: 934358083@stu.ukz.ac.za or Cellular phone number: 0748944558

Or my supervisor Professor T.T. Bhengu: Bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za or Cellular phone number: 0839475321

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the study or the researcher, then you may contact

HUMAN & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbheki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Kind Regards

Thembisile Mlotshwa (934358083)

APPENDIX B



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 3921063 / 033-3921051

Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za
Buyi.ntuli@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Phindile Duma/Buyi Ntuli

Ref.:2/4/8/1714

Mrs TF Mlotshwa
21 Redwood Crescent
Panorama Gardens
PIETERMARITZBURG
3201


Dear Mrs Mlotshwa

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **“UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPALS’ LEADERSHIP ROLE IN PROMOTING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A CASE STUDY”**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 25 March 2021 to 01 August 2023.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma/Mrs Buyi Ntuli at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT


Dr. EY Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 31 March 2021

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

APPENDIX C

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I (Full names of Principal), have been informed about the study, “**Understanding the principals’ leadership role in promoting teaching and learning in the 21st century: a case study**” by Thembisile Mlotshwa

1. I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.
2. I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.
3. I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher on Email: 934358083@stu.ukzn.ac.za or Cellular phone number: 0748944558 or my supervisor Professor T.T. Bhengu: Bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za or Cellular number: 0839475321

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

I hereby consent to (circle the correct response):

Be interviewed telephonically	YES	NO
Interview to be audio-recorded:	YES	NO

Principal

Date



School Stamp

APPENDIX D

POLICY ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN STANDARDS FOR PRINCIPALSHIP

Actions related to leading teaching and learning in the school:

The principal should:

- a) Demonstrate a personal commitment to learning and standard of excellence*
- b) Promote strategies for encouraging high expectations and for setting realistic targets for achievement*
- c) Challenge underperformance, ensuring appropriate remedial action support*
- d) Facilitate the on-going monitoring and evaluation of educators in relation to all classroom practices*
- e) Ensure that sound data, at class and school level, is collected and used to inform the continuous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, together with learner progress and achievement*
- f) Keep up to date on current research, debates and trends, through reading professional books, journals and publications*
- g) Network with professional learning forums*
- h) Share and transmit ideas and stimulate discussions on pedagogic and welfare issue with all staff*
- i) Ensure that educators have a full understanding of the prescribed National Curriculum and possess skills related to teaching, monitoring and evaluation*
- j) Encourage on-going debate among staff on the development of teaching and learning in the school and on affecting improvements*
- k) Promote positive learning culture and ethos within the school and demonstrate an understanding of the principles and practices of effective teaching and learning through effective curriculum management*
- l) Ensure that teaching and learning are the core of the schools' strategic planning and management of all resources*
- m) Ensure that educators have opportunities to access quality professional development in order to improve their teaching*
- n) Work with the school's community to ensure a school environment that is safe, secure and disciplined*
- o) Engage with staff and share knowledge of effective teaching and learning in global context*

- p) Monitor the implementation of school plans and ensure that objectives are achieved through the necessary intervention*
- q) Provide advice and guidance to professional staff and parents on educational issues*
- r) Promote achievement of the school's Mission Statement*
- s) Act in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, all the relevant laws and regulations, and the Code of SACE*
- t) Initiate and manage changes necessary for the development of the school, in consultation with all stakeholders*
- u) Identify problems and challenges and find solutions which enhance teaching and learning*
- v) Include the use ICTs in advocating active and critical learning – ICTs are the ideal tool for facilitating a learner-centred approach*
- w) Through DBE/PED/ private partnership funding, equip classes with Smart boards, laptops for teachers, digital projectors and Smart tablets for learners to promote the use of ICTs in the school*
- x) Respond to the 21st century demands of learners in the teaching and learning situation*
- y) Ensure that teachers and learners have access to ICT laboratories on a regular basis*
- z) Foster partnerships with schools in the vicinity that have ICTs and provide opportunities for teachers and learners to be exposed to the use of ICTs on a regular basis*

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Background question

- 1.1 How long have you been a principal?
- 1.2 Have you been a principal at a different school in different settings?

2. What is your role in teaching and learning?

- 2.1 What is your understanding of your role in promoting teaching and learning in the classroom?
- 2.2 Do you think that your role has an impact in the classroom? How so?
- 2.3 In your experience, what are the biggest challenges for principals in promoting quality teaching and learning?
- 2.4 Principals' duties include management, leadership, administration etc. Have your duties impeded on your role to promote teaching and learning?
- 2.5 How have you managed to keep the balance between your duties and promoting teaching and learning?

3. What are your perceptions?

- 3.1 Has the role of the principals changed in the 21st century? Elaborate.
- 3.2 How has your role assisted in promoting curriculum matters?

4. How do you practise the role of the principal?

- 4.1 What kind of support do you offer in the classroom in order to meet the growing demands of the 21st century of teaching and learning?
- 4.2 What mechanisms have you put in place in order to deal with curriculum matter related to teaching, learning?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INPUTS.

Turnitin Certificate 6%

Thembi Mlotshwa First Draft Turnitin

ORIGINALITY REPORT

6%	5%	2%	%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	2%
2	A Decade of Research on School Principals, 2016. Publication	1%
3	wiredspace.wits.ac.za	1%