

**THE RESPONSE OF EDUCATORS TO PRINCIPAL'S
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT A HIGH SCHOOL IN GAUTENG**

by

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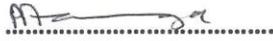
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DECLARATION

I, Alice Mtanga, do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my investigation and research and that this has not been submitted in part or full fulfilment for any degree or examination at this or any other university.

Alice Mtanga

Date: 10 November 2016

A handwritten signature consisting of the letters 'AM' followed by a stylized flourish, positioned above a horizontal dotted line.

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ABSTRACT

Instructional leadership (IL) is a powerful tool that is used by principals to manage schools. There is a need for principals to fully embrace this concept of leadership and understand how educators respond to their IL. This study investigated the response of educators to principals' IL. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six teachers at a selected high school. The results found that teachers were comparatively impressed by the principal's IL. The principal showed partial involvement in managing an instructional programme and promotion of a culture of teaching and learning. The results will enable principals to understand the reaction of teachers to their IL, thereby empowering them to be better instructional leaders.

Keywords

curriculum, educators, high school, impact, instructional leadership (IL), perception, principal, response of educators, supervision, teaching and learning.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GDE Gauteng Department of Education

HOD Head of Department

IL Instructional leadership

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The priority for the South African government is ensuring access to education. Hence the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996: 7 states that all children up to the age of fifteen or grade 9, whichever comes first, are subject to compulsory education (*Government Gazette*, 2011). The government is addressing discrepancies in education that were inherited from the apartheid regime. Therefore a great deal of effort is focused on the provision of quality education. In his 2014 budget speech Mr Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Finance, indicated that as improvements to education are crucial, strides have been made in improving access to education over the past five years.

In view of the above, there is currently a movement towards the improvement of a culture of teaching and learning in South Africa; the role of instructional leadership (IL) in this drive is of significance. Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi (2011:31) concur that effective leadership and management are vital if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for students. Msila (2013:81) is of the opinion that the concept of IL is still gaining momentum in South African schools. The role of the instructional leader should also be expanded to incorporate a shift away from mere “management,” (Concordia Education 2013) to management and leadership. With this in mind, the principal must be well-informed about current developments in the education sector as the instructional context is continually changing (Taole 2013:76).

Deventer and Kruger (2012:246) describe the dimensions of IL identified by Hallinger (2005:6) as: defining the school’s mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive learning environment. On the other hand, the culture of teaching and learning refers to the attitudes of all role players towards teaching and learning, and the development of quality teaching and learning in schools (Deventer and Kruger 2012:3). Educators and principals of schools are role players who hold a major share

in the culture of teaching and learning. The instructional leadership role of the school principal is clearly important in ensuring implementation of new curriculum policies.

According to Wahlstrom and Louis (2008: 459), “Ask anyone who has had one or more years working in a school whether leadership has made a difference in their work and the answer will be an unhesitating ‘Yes’. No matter who the respondent is—teacher, custodian, education assistant, specialist, office support staff—they all seem to know good (and bad) leadership when they experience it”. De Villiers and Pretorius (2011:256) state that effective school leadership and management is critical in safeguarding successful outcomes for all stakeholders.

It is apparent, therefore, that IL does have an impact on educators as principals interact with them. This refers to how principals affect teacher effectiveness and teacher’s confidence in instructional activities. Instructional leaders also make curricular and staff development decisions that influence teachers’ behaviour. Instructional leaders influence the way teachers deliver as well as learner performance through the environment which they create in the school. Leaders also inculcate the attitude of learning. It is this influence that teachers react to. The interaction between the leader and the team has an effect on the organisation’s performance or lack of it (McMurray, Islam, Sarros and Pirola-Merlo 2012:524). However, the extent of this impact is yet to be made known.

Teachers drive quality teaching and learning processes in schools. Quality teachers perform their responsibilities with commitment and excellence to bring about the academic excellence of learners. Principals in instructionally effective schools exercise strong IL (Hallinger 2005:3). It is the responsibility of an instructional leader to support and create a positive teaching and learning environment (Holyfield 2010:52). Much is known about the IL role of the principal, but little about the reception of this leadership task by the educators.

1.2 Background to the Research

My interest in the study was motivated by the literature as well as my personal experience as an educator. During my career I have observed that when the principal

is involved with IL tasks he/she did not consider how educators feel about how the task was conducted. If for example, one knows how teachers perceive the job enrichment programmes provided by the principal, this may encourage the latter to maintain those programmes or increase their scope. Seemingly, IL has been examined solely from the perspective of the principal's execution, presumably owing to IL having been driven by the fact that school leaders are held accountable for student performance (Hallinger 2005). In view of the above, I decided to look at IL from another angle.

The IL dimensions of defining a school's mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger 2005:6) form the basis of many studies. Using these dimensions as a basis Brown and Chai (2012), Louis and Robinson (2012) and Lee, Walker and Chui (2012) discussed IL from the perspective of execution by the principal. For example, the literature, amongst other issues, addressed the development of instructional leaders, the tasks of instructional leaders, effective IL and the impact of instructional leaders on learner performance. Fullan (1991) and Stronge (1988) wrote on the tasks and significance of the IL of the principal. Blasé and Blasé (1999) however looked at IL from the educator's point of view in their study of teacher's perspectives on effective IL. Therefore, literature has also generally looked at IL from the principal's execution point of view. This prompted me to investigate the contribution made by IL, especially with regard to the response of educators concerning the principal's exercise of IL.

Taking the above into consideration, "teachers are the most important school factors influencing student learning, since they are at the heart of teaching and learning activities in schools", (Sedat, Okan and Sekru 2013:1). Principals and teachers are at the helm of quality education. Much of the research work done has paid attention to the role of the principal in the success of the school. As pointed out above, the principal's task as an instructional leader has an impact on teachers and the way they carry out their instructional role. Knowledge and understanding of how teachers respond to principal's IL may lead to a school to attain its goals easier. However there seems to be limited knowledge and understanding pertaining to teachers' response to principal IL. The effect of the principal's instructional leadership on teachers need to be known for the task to be executed more effectively. Sedat, Okan and Sekru (2013:1)

state that principals need to respond to specific needs of the teachers. Neumerski (2013:29) is of the opinion that our knowledge of IL in relation to teaching and learning is in its infancy. In concurring with this, the researcher is of the view that studies have not paid enough attention to how teachers perceive and respond to the different dimensions of IL and whether these dimensions are perceived the same way or differently. It is a well-known fact that leadership plays an extensive role in school effectiveness and that it indirectly affects student success, mostly via its impact on teachers (Louis, Leithwood & Wahlstrom 2010). Against this background, this study concentrated on how educators respond to their principal's IL.

1.3 The Problem Statement

The principal of a school has the responsibility of carrying out IL tasks effectively for the success of the school. However, as the principal is executing his/her tasks, teachers have their own view of how the tasks should be carried out. This includes the teachers' views on the leadership styles employed by the principal. The phrase "Teachers' views" refers to the way teachers think about the way the principal leads the school and the decisions the latter makes. For instance, teachers are likely to react positively or negatively to the way the principal motivates staff members. The way teachers respond to supervision and IL in general is important as it has a bearing on the outcome of IL. Heck and Hallinger (2014:6) believe that the individual teacher's influence on student learning is enhanced in school settings where school leadership and classroom instructional environments are perceived in more positive terms and vice versa.

According to district statistics this high school, the study setting, is one of the better performing schools in the district. This probably suggests that the principal is a good instructional leader. Knowledge of how teachers respond to, for example, suggestions, praise, supervision, staff development, criticism etc. will motivate the principals to maintain or adjust their behaviour. It is therefore critical for principals to identify instructional strategies that will help teachers increase students' achievement (Holyfield 2010:53). Effective IL may lead to teacher efficacy and motivation as teachers respond positively to principal's instructional tasks

The response of educators to instructional leadership of the principal is an area that has not yet received adequate attention in the study of IL. Blasé and Blasé (2000:139) recommended the use of case studies to discover the perspective of teachers on such leadership; these findings were effective as they do not just provide insights into what helps teachers to develop, but moreover they indicate what followers want and find helpful from their leaders (Southworth 2002:81). Therefore, my study focused on understanding how teachers at one high school in Gauteng province respond to their principal's IL with reference to two dimensions of it: managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school learning climate as identified by Hallinger (2005:6).

1.3.1 The research questions

The research was directed by the following central research question:

- How do educators respond to the way principal manages instructional programmes and promotes a positive school learning climate at one high school in Gauteng?

1.3.2 Sub-questions

- How do educators perceive the core duties and responsibilities of the principal?
- What do educators understand about IL?
- How do educators perceive their principal's management of the instructional programme?
- How do educators view their principal's promotion of a positive school learning climate?

1.4 The Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 Aim

The study aimed to investigate and explore the perception and response of teachers to IL.

1.4.2 Objectives

Objectives of the study were as follows:

- To determine what the educators perceive as the core duties and responsibilities of the principal
- To investigate the educators' understanding of IL
- To investigate how educators respond to the way the principal manages instructional programmes
- To investigate how educators respond to the promotion of a positive school learning climate at the high school in Gauteng.

1.5. Research Design and Methodology

1.5.1 Research design

This section discusses the research design and methodology; firstly the research paradigm employed is clarified and secondly, the research approach is explained, then finally, the research type.

1.5.1.1 Research paradigm

Interpretivism was used in this study as it emphasises the “ability of an individual to construct meaning” (Mack 2010:7). Interpretivists seek to understand social meaning, which was the basis of his study.

1.5.1.2 Research approach

As non-quantifiable data was collected, a qualitative research design was used. This was a suitable approach as research was conducted in the school which is “a natural setting” (Neutens & Robinson 2010:319). Data was obtained as words from semi-structured interviews and observations done.

1.5.1.3 Research type

A case study was used for this research. This is an in-depth analysis of a single entity (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:344). The school selected for the study is in Gauteng.

1.5.2 Research methods

1.5.2.1 Selection of participants

Participants were drawn from the staff of the high school under study. Purposeful sampling was used to select them. Participation in the study was voluntary, there was no coercion (McMillian and Schumacher 2010:118) and participants were given the option to opt out if they felt uncomfortable during the course of the study.

1.5.2.2 Data collection

Data was also collected from the single high school under study. Observation of one staff meeting and six morning briefings was carried out to gather data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants. Follow up interviews were held where necessary to clarify information.

1.5.2.3 Data analysis

As this is a qualitative study a large volume of data was collected. Codes were created to analyse these. Analysis took place during and after collection of data. Themes were subsequently identified from the data gathered.

1.5.3 Trustworthiness

Newby (2010:121) describes validity and reliability as the “corner stone” of any research, signifying that if any researcher were to conduct similar research using a similar approach then similar results will be obtained. Triangulation was employed to enhance reliability. Data was collected from more than one standpoint; i.e. it was collected from educators through interviews, through observation of morning briefings and of one staff meeting. Researcher bias was avoided as the researcher remained objective.

1.5.4 Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the research was sought from and granted by the Department of Education, the school and the University of South Africa as well as from the participants themselves. The researcher protected the identity of participants and confidentiality of data collected (McMillian & Schumacher 2010:117), as data was used

solely for purposes of this study and not shared with anyone except the supervisory committee.

1.6 Definition of Concepts

The concepts used in this investigation are described according to their context. Definitions are obtained from previous research work done and adapted to fit the current context.

1.6.1 Response of educators

In this study the response of educators is defined as the reaction of educators to the principal's IL. This response is also guided by the educators' perception of the principal's IL tasks.

1.6.2 Principal

The terms 'principal' and 'school head' are interchangeably used to refer to an individual who occupies the highest official position in the school organisation and whose responsibility it is, amongst others, to manage the school (Wanzare 2012:190). Hensley (2011:8) describes a principal as a person who performs the following functions:

- Shaping a vision of academic success for all students
- Creating a climate hospitable to education
- Cultivating leadership in others
- Improving instruction
- Managing people data and processes.

The principal remains the central source of leadership and influence in a school environment.

1.6.3 Educators

The term "educators" in this study was used synonymously with "teachers". An educator is someone who facilitates the process of teaching and learning. She or he is in charge of a class, is responsible for guiding learners in the learning process and is expected to be knowledgeable on the subject content.

1.6.4 Instructional leadership (IL)

The term IL was employed in this study to describe the behaviour of the principal in accordance with the following descriptions from the literature. Hallinger and Heck (1996:38) believe that principal's leadership that makes a difference is aimed at influencing internal school processes that are directly linked to student learning. According to Neumerski (2013) the aims of IL are tied to the core work of schools, that is, teaching and learning. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) identified the following dimensions of IL:

Dimension 1: defining the school's mission which encompasses framing and communicating the school goals.

Dimension 2: Managing the instructional programme which focuses on coordinating the curriculum, supervising and evaluating instruction as well as monitoring each learner's progress.

Dimension 3: Promoting the school climate by protecting instructional time, providing incentives for learning, providing professional development and maintaining high visibility.

1.6.5 High school

This is an institution of learning that enrolls learners after completion of their seven years of primary education. Learners spend a minimum of four or five years (depending on the curriculum followed by the school) at such institutions to be able to sit for an examination that enables them leave the school and enrol for tertiary education. Wanzare (2012:191) describes a school as any institution in which not less than ten pupils receive regular instruction, or an assembly of not less than ten pupils for the purpose of receiving regular instruction

1.7 Chapter Division

The study is presented in five chapters and is summarised as follows:

Chapter one outlines the introduction, problem statement, as well as the aim and objectives of the study and the research design and methods.

Chapter two documents a literature study pertaining to IL, effective instructional leaders, management of teaching and learning and a culture of teaching and learning.

Chapter three describes and explains the research design and methodology used in gathering and presenting data for this study.

Chapter four outlines the research findings and the discussion of findings in relation to research questions, aims and objectives.

Chapter five contains the conclusion and recommendations for further study.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of IL, the rationale and significance of the study. The succeeding chapter details literature on IL, effective instructional leaders, management of teaching and learning and a culture of teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one provided the background to the study on the response of educators to their principal's IL. The significance of the study was detailed. Chapter two describes the theoretical framework underpinning this research study. A review of available literature on principals' IL will also be furnished.

Creswell (2014), with regard to qualitative research, describes a theoretical framework as a lens of analysis of a phenomenon. Antara and Mertz (2015:5) concur that such a framework helps bring new insight to what is happening and guides one in making sense of what to do, which assists in one's understanding of a particular situation. The said framework assists in making sense of data. The theoretical framework provides a link between the researcher and existing knowledge (Herek 2011:86).

This study is based on three key ideas. First, the study investigates the imperative of IL, which refers to leadership work that is focused on the improvement of teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2005:6). With reference to this concept, the chapter focuses on the conception of IL and its background in relation to school improvement. Secondly, the study explores the idea of principals' IL roles which focus on the behaviour and actions of the school principal and their impact on teaching and learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). This idea initially concentrates on the concept of the school principal as an instructional leader. Then it investigates the roles that this leading professional plays in the success of the school and academic outcomes of learners. Effective IL elicits the culture of teaching and learning, which is elaborated on in relation to this notion. Finally, the study examines teachers' perspectives on their principal's IL, and how it influences their instructional practice.

As Jackson and Marriot (2012:231) put it, "This ongoing discourse has prompted further questions regarding the nature of leadership itself and the relationship between teacher and leader". This study adds to the understanding of the effect school leadership has on the interaction of principal and teacher as far as instructional

influence is concerned. The positions of leaders and followers are dynamic since organisations engage in the varied purposes and activities required to accomplish organisational goals (Jackson and Marriot 2012:236). It is essential to better understand the ways in which principals may influence instructional norms in their schools (Goddard, Neumerski & Goddard, 2010:336) and how teachers perceive that influence.

I begin this chapter in the context in which the study took place and offer a presentation of the theoretical framework. A conceptualisation of IL and its models is presented in this section. A comprehensive discussion of the dimensions is given and the chapter provides a literature review on principal's IL: the principal as an instructional leader as well as his/her roles as a leading professional. Finally, the chapter examines the culture of teaching and learning and the connection between the principal and this culture. A study of these areas could assist in informing one about the responses of teachers and the effects of IL on teachers.

2.2 Contextual Framework

The Department of Education is striving to improve education in South Africa against the background of apartheid which left a huge gap in different institutions of learning. School improvement is very often anchored on the capacity of the principal's leadership role. As is often said, the best resources do not warranty an effective institution unless combined with good leadership (Adegbesan 2013:15). It is against this background of school improvement that the principal's IL plays a role. Special reference to educators' responses towards the latter is made in this study.

IL is the longest recognised premise linking leadership and learning (Bush and Glover 2014:556). However, in South Africa IL is a fairly new concept (Du Plessis 2013:79; Marishane and Botha, 2011:85). A great deal of research on different aspects of IL has been performed (Blasé and Blasé 2000; Southworth, 2002; Hallinger 2005 and Bush 2013) and is continuing in first and third world countries. Nonetheless, according to studies carried out, the concentration of research work shifted from IL to transformational leadership in the 1990's, but the focus has currently returned to IL (Du Plessis 2013:79; Hallinger 2005:9).

The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 ushered the country into a new era that accorded considerable attention to school leadership and management (Bush and Glover 2016:1). However, South Africa is one of the countries where there are no specialised training programmes for school leaders or aspiring school leaders (Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi 2011:31). Lack of training for school leaders has been cited as one of the reasons for lack of emphasis on IL (Marishane 2011:86). School leaders need skills to be effective in their leadership roles. The ACE programme was therefore introduced in 2007 in South Africa to bridge that gap and improve leadership and management issues in schools. This programme assisted new principals in their endeavours to run the school in the most effective way to achieve set goals. Research undertaken in Mpumalanga, South Africa, has also supported this as the authors highlighted that there is an improved focus on IL (Bush and Glover 2013). To appreciate the effectiveness of school leaders, it is therefore important to understand the perception of teachers regarding IL.

The growing need to improve results for Grade 12 learners, poor teacher morale and school achievements, in general, has led to the strong drive towards IL and teacher development in South African schools (Du Plessis 2013:S79). Principals are increasingly required to account for learner performance, more so at Grade 12 level. These results are used as a yardstick for schools to be regarded as non-performing or performing. IL is thus being progressively being employed as a tool to try and improve instruction and ultimately, the results in schools. It is against this backdrop that IL is gaining momentum in South African schools (Msila 2013:81; Bush and Glover 2016:7).

In this study setting, the principal had recently introduced the recognition of teachers by issuing them with certificates for achieving 80% and above pass rates for any grade and any subject. This was done during the school's 2016 honours evening. Though the event was primarily intended to recognise learners, the principal saw fit to duly recognise the teachers who brought about that achievement. All teachers who were recognised were thrilled. This simple gesture may result in two effects, firstly, everyone working harder to be recognised, thereby improving results and secondly, this response makes the principal more zealous to want to do more and improve aspects

of his/her IL. The following section presents the theoretical framework on which this study is based.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the theory of IL. Below is a conceptualisation of this theory where I examine the definition of IL and its models.

2.3.1 Conceptualising instructional leadership

Hallinger (2005:6) describes IL as work that is focused on the improvement of teaching and learning. The fundamentals of a school are based on these. The principal impacts the delivery of instruction either directly through supervision of instruction or indirectly through the decisions he/she makes. Hallinger (2005:6) identifies three dimensions of IL. These dimensions include defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school climate. These are discussed in detail, later.

Southworth (2010:77) states that IL is deeper involvement in the core business of schooling. The management and improvement of this, teaching and learning, including the nature of the work which principals engage in to support such improvement, constitutes IL (Goddard, Neumerski and Goddard 2010). These definitions all focus on the management skills of the principal and their organisation around teaching and learning. In whichever direction the principal steers his/her 'school boat' the destination should be improved quality of teaching and learning. The principal as an instructional leader needs to be hands-on in organising and coordinating instruction, but such a leader cannot single-handedly improve teaching and learning. Involvement of teaching staff cannot be overstated; hence the importance of understanding teachers' response to IL.

Southworth (2010:77) further describes IL as a concept that has a broad and a narrow definition. The broad definition encompasses organisational and teacher culture issues. The organisational culture refers to the culture of the school, which influences the way teachers function, while teacher culture alludes to the behaviours of teachers which affect the growth of students (Southworth 2002:77). The narrow definition entails

leadership restricted to teacher behaviours that focuses on enhancing pupils' learning (Southworth 2002:77). Southworth further suggests that IL is more effective when conceptualised as broad, instead of narrow. Thus, my research study focuses on teachers' response towards the narrow aspect of IL.

According to Lee, Hallinger and Walker (2012:667), studies on IL date back to the 1950's and 1960's and received much attention from researchers until the 1990's when most research work shifted focus to transformational leadership. In justifying the shift of studies back to IL, Hallinger (2011:131) argues that IL "capture the impact" of school leadership on learning better than transformational leadership does. The concept of transformational leadership creates a climate where teachers are involved in continuous learning (Hallinger 2003:338). Transformational leadership focuses on shared or distributed leadership which aims to stimulate change through bottom-up participation (Hallinger 2003:338), whereas IL has been criticised for being top-down, directive and principal centred (Hallinger 2003:330; Hallinger 2005:13).

However, IL is considered the most sustained reputable concept that effectively links leadership and learning (Bush 2013:6). Southworth (2002:79) explains that IL focuses on directing teaching and learning. This places the principal at the helm of a school, coordinating all issues of teaching and learning and influencing the quality of individual teachers' instruction. While directing teaching and learning, the principal will influence teacher behaviour either positively or negatively as he/she carries out instructional tasks. Leadership is viewed as the process of leaders influencing followers in the direction of shared goals (Velsor, McCauley & Ruderman 2010:21). As the principal formulates the school's mission she or he is influenced by other variables, such as available resources and the size of the school. Involvement of teachers as stakeholders in shaping the school's mission will make it easier for the teachers to identify with the goals of the school and work towards achievement of these common goals.

While effective leadership cannot guarantee successful educational transformation, research affirms that sustainable school improvement is seldom found without active, skilful IL from principals (Hallinger 2011:133); Heck and Hallinger 2014:673). Holyfield (2010:45) and Southworth (2002:85) concur that instructional leaders are expected to

have the skills that will help teachers to prepare students academically. These skills will include the principal's ability to understand and interpret the curriculum, ability to solve problems, to monitor learners' progress, empower, as well as to motivate and develop teachers to enable them to drive learner achievement. Well-motivated teachers will work hard to achieve more. The principals' monitoring and supervision of instruction has to be skilfully exercised so that teachers will respond positively to constructive criticism and diligently seek to improve quality and efficiency of teaching and learning. Excellence in teaching, vibrant schools and excelling learners all point to the ability of the school leader: the principal.

However, Du Plessis (2013:S82) states that IL embraces "core technology" in teaching and learning while Marishane and Botha (2011:85) opine that IL describes the role of the principal in search for effectiveness in education. They go on to say that the principal influences the tone of the school and quality of school academic outcomes. Marishane and Botha (2011:87) pointed out that there is need for IL to create synergy between teaching and learning and capacity building. Different authors have described IL in different ways; however, it emerged in all these definitions that teaching and learning is central to IL. The principal should therefore focus on instruction to be effective. This includes creating a proper environment for conducive teaching and learning.

2.3.2 Models of instructional leadership

Over the years, studies on IL and leadership in general have led to the emergence of different models and definitions of the concepts. A number of IL models have emerged from studies by different researchers. These models have resemblances and variations. The models discussed here originated from Hallinger and Murphy (1985), Murphy (1990) and Weber (1996).

2.3.2.1 Hallinger and Murphy (1985)

The most commonly used model of IL is the one designed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985). They identified three dimensions in this model which include defining a school's mission, which focuses on the functions of framing the school goals and communicating those goals. These functions concern the principal's role in working

with staff to ensure that the school has a clear mission and that the mission is focused on the academic progress of its students. The principal does not define the school's mission alone. This dimension proposes that the principal is responsible for ensuring that such a mission exists and is effectively communicated to the school's stakeholders.

The second dimension, managing the instructional programme, focuses on supervision and evaluating of instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress. These IL responsibilities must be shared with teachers and other school administrators; the framework assumes that coordination and control of the academic programme of the school remains a key leadership responsibility of the principal (Al-Mahdy and Al-kiyumi 2015:1507).

The third dimension, promoting a positive school climate, focuses on functions of protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, developing high expectations and standards and providing incentive for learners. This dimension is broader in scope and intent than the second dimension. Through enactment of these functions, successful principals create an 'academic press' and a culture that fosters and rewards, continuous learning and improvement (Marks & Printy, 2003; Al-Mahdy and Al-kiyumi 2015:1507). These dimensions were further classified into ten descriptors (Hallinger 2005:5) which were used to create appraisal instruments for the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS).

The two dimensions, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school climate as described by Hallinger and Murphy, form the basis of this inquiry. Both these dimensions and their descriptors are discussed further in the subsequent sections below.

2.3.2.2 Murphy's model (1990)

Murphy further developed the Hallinger and Murphy framework by adding a fourth dimension: creating a supportive working environment which focuses on the instructional leader organising structures and processes that support the teaching and learning process. He identified the following dimensions of IL:

- developing the school mission and goals
- managing the educational production function of the school, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating curriculum, instruction and assessment;
- promoting a climate for learning and
- creating a supportive working environment.

Murphy's first dimension remains the same as the one he developed with Hallinger; however, Murphy developed the second dimension further, managing the educational production function by incorporating five roles: promoting quality instruction, supervising and evaluating instruction, allocating and protecting instructional time, coordinating curriculum and monitoring student progress. Promoting quality instruction was new in this dimension while the rest were similar to Hallinger and Murphy's 1985 model.

The last dimension, "developing a supportive work environment", was categorised into five roles: creating a safe and orderly work environment, providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement, developing staff collaboration and cohesion, securing outside resources in school goals and forging links between home and the school. Thus, Murphy's framework contains four dimensions instead of the three he developed with Hallinger, and sixteen roles instead of eleven. Murphy's (1990) framework, however, remained similar in many ways to the Hallinger and Murphy 1985 model. Murphy (1990) concluded that principals in achieving schools demonstrated IL directly and indirectly.

2.3.2.3 Weber's model (1996)

In his study on IL Weber researched shared leadership and the empowerment of informal leaders. He expanded the Hallinger and Murphy 1985 model to five dimensions instead of three. He concluded that a principal's effectiveness depends on that principal's ability to delegate duties. Weber (1996) identified five dimensions of IL as:

- defining the school's mission
- managing curriculum and instruction
- promoting positive learning climate

- observing and improving instruction
- and assessing the instructional programme.

According to Weber, the school's mission binds the stakeholders in a common mission. Both Murphy (1990) and Weber's (1996) models exhibit similarities to the Hallinger and Murphy (1985) model which is widely used and was also employed for the purpose of this study. The dimensions in Hallinger and Murphy's model are discussed in detail below.

2.3.3 Dimensions of instructional leadership

2.3.3.1 Defining the school mission

The principal is responsible for ensuring that a mission exists in a school, for communicating it extensively to staff and making sure that there is a common purpose underlying staff efforts to improve teaching and learning (Hallinger and Lee 2013:306). Hallinger and Lee (2013:306) suggest that a school vision begins with the principal's desires for the school, leading to the formulation of a mission. This dimension consists of framing the school goals and ensuring that they are communicated to stakeholders (Hallinger 2005:5). It is important for the principal to be aware of how teachers respond to the communicated goals as this will lead to effective and improved achievement of these goals. In this way the teachers will align themselves with the goals of the school and develop a positive perception of the principal's instructional role.

2.3.3.2 Managing the instructional programme.

The second dimension of managing the instructional programme deals with the principal "managing the technical core" of the school (Hallinger and Lee 2013:306). According to Hallinger (2009:9) this dimension deals with the coordination and control of instruction and curriculum. It includes supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress (Hallinger 2005:6). Managing the said programme also requires the principal to be committed to improving the school. According to Hallinger (2005:6) this requires that the principal be deeply involved in stimulating, supervising and monitoring teaching and learning, which requires her or him to have superior expertise in these activities.

As the principal engages in these tasks, teachers react to the way she or he conducts these duties, for instance, how he/she monitors student progress, supervises and evaluates instruction. For instance, teachers may display a positive or negative attitude towards him/her as he/she requires and checks learners' workbooks. Knowledge of how teachers feel, whether they appreciate his/her IL or not, will guide the principal as he/she executes his/her duties. Awareness of teachers' impressions of what she/he does may empower the principal to be more effective, since it might lead to improved quality of supervision, monitoring and evaluation of instruction. However, in high schools, due to lack of expertise in all learning areas, the principal can delegate the monitoring and developing of the school instructional programme as he/she may not be the only person involved in monitoring (Hallinger and Wang 2015:31; Hallinger and Lee 2013:307). This dimension is further subdivided into the following:

2.3.3.2.1 Supervising and evaluating instruction

This task is described as a process used by instructional leaders to improve student learning through working with teachers and by supporting staff (Wanzare 2012:192). This entails activities that provide instructional support to teachers and monitor classroom instruction through class visits. Wanzare (2012:189) believes instructional supervision involves activities directed towards maintenance and improvement of teaching and learning. It is necessary to know how instructional supervision is conducted and perceived. Hence, it is paramount for the principal to be sensitive to teachers' reactions as he/she works with them.

However, supervision of instruction may be negatively affected by some aspects. Wanzare (2012:210) identified some of these as:

- lack of consistency and professionalism
- lack of productive feedback and follow-up support on matters regarding supervision of instruction
- teachers' general negativity to practices of supervision.

These aspects may lead to frustration amongst teachers if the principal turns a blind eye to teachers' responses. Teachers may also then develop a negative attitude towards supervision of instruction and place less value on supervision which may lead to poor quality of instruction. On the other hand, if the principal reacts positively, by giving positive and constructive feedback as well as modelling, an improved quality of instruction will be evident.

Hallinger (2009:6) and Prytula, Noonan and Hellsten (2013:6) concur that it is essential for instructional leaders to understand teaching, learning and assessments in their institution. According to Wanzare (2012:186) supervision of instruction is the driver towards improving teaching and learning. Nonetheless, we may not know the effect of supervision of instruction without the perspective and response of teachers.

2.3.3.2.2 Coordinating curriculum

Wanzare (2012:192) believes that curriculum embraces all issues such as student learning activities, social activities, field trips, assemblies and learning resources among others. Curriculum therefore encompasses all school activities; the principal needs to create opportunities for development for teachers and learners. The instructional leader needs to encourage teachers to participate in these activities so that, they in turn, also encourage learners to take part and enjoy an enriching educational experience. Dimmock (2013:6) believes that increased teacher participation generates greater commitment to the curriculum.

The instructional leader has the role of ensuring curriculum implementation, development and co-ordination (Wanzare 2012:192). According to Hallinger and Wang (2015:32) schools with a well-co-ordinated curriculum are effective ones. Learners must be taught the right content of the curriculum and the instructional leaders need to ensure that the necessary instructional resources are available to make delivery possible (Wanzare 2012:206; Kotirde et al 2014). Learners' progress and performance is determined by assessments on work covered.

Southworth (2002:87) believes that IL requires one to have a good understanding of curricula. Without this knowledge the instructional leader will not be able to determine whether the teachers are doing the right thing or not.

2.3.3.2.3 Monitoring student progress

Monitoring student progress involves determining current student achievements and benchmarking performance that should be attained within predetermined time frames. Instructional leaders monitor learners' progress, supervise and evaluate instruction, coordinate and control instruction and curriculum (Hallinger 2005:6). Student progress can be assessed within different time frames such as weekly, monthly and per term, depending on school and departmental requirements. According to Prytula, Noonan and Hellsten (2013:6) leaders need student performance data to inform them about student learning progress and achievements.

2.3.3.3 Promoting a positive school climate

The third dimension examines the promotion of a positive school climate. The atmosphere displayed by a school is referred to as 'the school's climate' (Duze and Rosemary 2013:53). The National School Climate Council (NSCC, 2007) defines the school climate as the character and quality of school life. The principal has a central role to play in the creation of a positive one which is conducive to teaching and learning. From my experience, the quality of teaching, availability of resources, high levels of professionalism and the proper execution of leadership tasks contribute to a positive learning atmosphere. This creates an environment for good academic achievement with which teachers proudly identify.

Osma (2012:950) describes a school climate as "the set of internal characteristics that distinguishes one school from another and influences the behaviour of its members". An effective school creates a positive climate and success, while the failure of a school is determined by its climate (Osma 2012:950). Duze and Rosemary (2013:54) opine that in a school with a positive climate people feel connected to each other and learners are attached to one or more adults. They further believe that a sense of security among learners and teachers nurtures quality relationships and reduces aggression. This dimension embraces aspects of protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers developing high expectations and standards, creating incentives for

learning (Hallinger 2009:10). The attitude of teachers towards the way the principal executes these tasks is of great value as it will underpin good practices and dampen poor ones.

2.3.3.3.1 Protecting instructional time

Rogers and Mirra (2014:5) describe instructional time as the time when students are directly involved in productive learning of relevant academic content. Instructional leaders have a role to manage instructional time through planning and prioritising school activities. How they do this has an effect on the teachers who are directly involved in the actual teaching. Teachers are either inspired or discouraged by their instructional leaders as they manage instructional time. Inspiring teachers will lead the teachers to be more productive during contact time. Time is a critical resource in teaching and learning and should be guarded jealously by all stakeholders. Principals are able to protect instructional time by, for instance, minimising disruptions caused by loudspeaker and intercom announcements and scheduling maintenance of buildings outside teaching and learning time.

2.3.3.3.2 Promoting professional development

The principal as the leader of a school promotes and facilitates his/her teachers' professional growth and development. The aim of staff development is to improve productivity and job satisfaction which ultimately leads to improved instruction (Molla 2015:162). Teacher professional development impacts positively on quality of education. It is therefore imperative that a system is in place to develop teachers professionally.

Professional development training must include practical sessions such as planning and preparing interesting lessons for the training to be effective (Gulamhussein 2013:16). This helps to bring out the best in teachers. Programmes such as in-service courses, workshops and seminars are important but may be meaningless if the school environment does not support and consolidate the knowledge and skills obtained (Duze 2012:114). The Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and

Training (2011:1) have put a plan in place to improve the quality of teacher education and development as a way of improving quality of teaching.

According to the Department of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training (2011:4) poor content knowledge contribute to a low quality of teaching in South Africa. Teacher training, professional development and a conducive school environment enhance teacher understanding. Mkhwanazi (2013:185) and Bantwini (2010:88) also emphasise that professional development enables teachers to know what is expected of them. Prytula, Noonan and Hellsten (2013:17) believe improved teaching would occur if there were additional professional development in specific areas, including learning different teaching strategies and improving assessment strategies. As principals monitor teaching and learning to ensure that set goals are achieved, areas of development should also be identified (Marishane and Botha 2011:90). Professional development programmes must meet the needs of the school. Therefore, the principal has a responsibility to identify these needs and develop appropriate developmental programmes. Such programmes empower teachers in their weak areas. Should appropriate programmes be developed and lead to teacher growth, teachers will look forward to the next training session. Implementation of what is learnt will improve teaching and learning.

Developmental programmes help educators to identify ways of enhancing their professional skills and performance (Deventer and Kruger 2012:211). Teachers can request support for their weak areas or the latter could be identified during appraisal and supervision; developmental programmes can then be designed accordingly. How the principal designs these strategies is important as they have an effect on teacher empowerment.

2.3.3.3.3 Providing incentives for teachers

Principals should strive to develop a positive attitude in staff members and to inspire them to maximise efforts to achieve educational goals through effective teaching and learning (Kotirde, Yunos and Anaf 2014:3). Principals need to put systems and structures in place to reward teachers. The response of teachers to how the principal

praises and rewards them will encourage the principal to either continue or find better ways. It is important for teachers to feel appreciated for their effort as this will encourage them to continue working hard. It is widely believed that money is not the sole reward system. The rewards may range from public acknowledgement to praise, and awards. Rewards for teachers act as reinforcements for a job well done, hence encouraging one to put in more effort. If teachers appreciate and respond positively to the reward system used, they will work hard to maintain the rewards.

2.3.3.3.4 Providing incentives for students

From experience I have observed that some students set targets and goals for themselves if they are rewarded for their achievement. Rewards give them momentum and motivation to continue working hard. Incentives help create an atmosphere in the school where learners value academic achievement. Reward systems reinforce academic achievement and good behaviour for some students. Principals could influence student attitudes through the reward systems they put in place in their schools (Hallinger and Murphy 1985:223). These may come in different forms such as certificates of achievement, merit badges, vouchers, trophies, bursaries, praise and acknowledgement. It is important that the incentives be systematic and continuous. These reward systems need to be effective in the eyes of both the learners and teachers.

2.4 Literature Review

2.4.1 Principals as instructional leaders

In South Africa, the Employment of Educators Act 1998, the South African Schools Act of 1996 and the Educators Law Amendment Act of 2007 are some items of legislation that deal with the role of principals not only as managers but also leaders of their schools. However, leaders do not work in isolation (Neumerski 2013:312). Teachers, learners, school administrators, parents and other stakeholders all come into play in building an effective school. It is imperative that teachers work co-operatively with the principals for effective teaching and learning. If they support their

principal or their attitude is positive towards the principal's IL, then there is no doubt that effective teaching and learning will occur.

Effective principals turn struggling schools (Leithwood, Louis and Anderson 2004:5) around, while teachers directly drive results for learners as they function under the leadership of an effective principal. It is the quality of instruction that students receive in classrooms that matters as regards their learning (Sebastian and Allensworth 2013:630). Should teachers be dissatisfied with the way the principal executes her/his IL tasks, as a result he/she may not gain maximum support and cooperation from the staff. It is the response of teachers to- and their perception of- the principal's tasks that will inform the principal as whether to continue in the same way or not. Teachers will respond to the way their principal supports and develops them as well as motivates learners. Teachers are influenced by the behaviour and characteristics of principals (Walker and Slear 2011:2).

Research has proven that it is vital that teachers and students have a positive perception of the role of their principal in sustaining a school culture that is conducive to learning and achieving school goals (Holyfield 2010:45) However, it is necessary to uncover more about how, why and when instructional leaders are successful in eliciting teaching and learning (Neumerski 2013:27).

Webber and Scott (2013:98) identifies some competencies of instructional leaders as: the capacity to listen, to manifest emotional intelligence, to balance assertiveness and facilitation and to deal successfully with difficult people and situations. A successful school has competent and sound school leadership (Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi 2011:3). Nonetheless, some circumstances such as perceptions of teaching staff towards leadership prevent instructional leaders from becoming the leaders they wish to be (Isaiah and Isaiah 2014:114). Positive perceptions of teachers will inspire and reassure the instructional leader while negativity hinders certain actions by the principal. Lack of confidence in the leadership of the principal will affect the quality of teaching and learning while confidence in the principal's leadership will be a source of motivation and inspiration for the teachers to do better.

Adegbesan (2013:15) asserts that although sound educational plans, a solid school programme, adequate staff and facilities may exist, what is more important is good leadership to align everything for the progress and success of the school. It is important that principals have the ability to understand and articulate what is required of them so as to be effective and successful in their tasks. Instructional leaders concentrate on teaching and learning to effectively and purposely manage schools. An effective IL role provided by the principal will lead to the achievement of the school's goals and objectives (Adegbesan 2013:14). Norviewu-Mortty, Campbell-Evans and Hackling (2014:67) believe that successful leaders need dispositions such as being good listeners, open-minded and caring, sympathetic towards the concerns of others, inspiring as well as team players to create a positive response to their initiatives. These dispositions help establish good working relations between the instructional leader and the staff, which will create a more conducive working atmosphere. Possessing such characteristics, the instructional leader will be able to gain the support of teachers and they will no doubt pursue the same school goals.

Instructional leaders are goal oriented (Hallinger 2005:4). The principal has a duty to co-ordinate subordinates towards goal achievement (Adegbesan 2013:14). As she or he does so, the way he/she executes the task is critical as teachers will respond to this. The impact the principal creates determines the co-operation of subordinates. The principal is able to define the direction of the school, to inspire others to join in its achievement, and to focus not only on leading, but also on management (Hallinger 2005:4).

In addition to meeting school goals, principals need to achieve national goals (Merchant, Ärlestig and Garza 2012:430). This is effected through a wide range of principals' activities that are goal orientated. Higgins and Bonne (2011:801) identify reshaping the organisation as a way to support teachers and students as one of the functions of leadership. Arguably, IL is central to successful school leadership (Southworth 2002:76).

Instructional leaders make decisions on resource distribution, staffing and monitor usage of instructional time (Hallinger 2011:128; Bush and Glover 2016:4; Lynch

2012:41). It is important that the principal makes these decisions without bias and favouritism, otherwise teachers will react negatively. Equitable resource allocation eliminates the struggle for resources which leads to harmony in the school. In addition to this, principals as instructional leaders need to resolve problems in line with student and teacher behaviour. In making these decisions, principals' actions are informed by their personal values (Hallinger 2011:129). Isaiah and Isaiah (2014:114) are of the opinion that principals play a major role in influencing how effectively schools respond to the challenges. As the instructional leader employs personal values in dealing with challenges in the school, it is important that these values be aligned to what is generally accepted by the teachers, as the contrary might lead to deteriorating situations. The magnitude of challenges faced by the school may differ, while the response of teachers to how the principal resolves these challenges is important as this will determine whether the principal has support or not.

The principal's knowledge of curriculum will equip instructional leaders in their efforts to develop and support teachers in their struggles with a new curriculum and other area of teaching and learning. On the other hand, knowledge of assessment programmes empowers the instructional leader in determining whether learner progress is assessed appropriately. Leaders of instructionally effective schools implement strong IL (Hallinger 2005:3). Teachers' responses to the principal's IL influence the effectiveness of her or his leadership.

2.4.2 Creating the culture of teaching and learning

2.4.2.1 The principal and the culture of teaching and learning

It is the principal's obligation to create conditions in the school in which learners can benefit from quality instruction where teachers dedicate their time to classroom teaching and student learning (Du Plessis P2013:S82; Wanzare 2012:192; Marishane and Botha 2011:92).

Kruger in Deventer and Kruger (2012:3) defines the culture of teaching and learning as the attitude of all the stakeholders towards teaching and learning and the presence of quality teaching and learning in schools. The author further describes a culture of

teaching and learning as the state of affairs that prevails in schools (Deventer and Kruger 2012:3). Clearly, the culture of teaching and learning is not a 'one man band', it involves all parties in a school. The instructional leader, though, amongst other things, drives the culture of the school and sets expectations for both teachers and learners. The culture of teaching and learning involves the capacity to be involved in teaching and learning excellence (Chris 2014:221).

With learners as the focus of learning there is need for instructional leaders to encourage teachers to create an environment that promotes teaching and learning. Teachers will collaborate with the instructional leader if the leader is sensitive to their views. An alliance between teachers and principal will then be guaranteed in creation of an environment conducive to learning.

A sound culture of teaching and learning is vital for proper learning to take place and for the school to meet its organisational goals. The presence of such a culture is evidenced by a number of factors including effective IL and highly professional behaviour of teachers. Southworth (2010:77) noted that some versions of IL emphasise that organisational issues such as school culture impact teacher behaviour.

From personal experience I am aware that the quality of teaching and learning, accessibility of resources, high levels of professionalism and the proper execution of leadership tasks lead to a positive culture of teaching and learning in a school. The principal as an instructional leader is therefore a key to the creation of a positive culture in a school which influences the way teachers deliver. Learner performance is positively related to the existence of a positive culture of teaching and learning. Deventer and Kruger (2012:4) identify the following as characteristics of a sound culture of teaching and learning:

- Positive school climate
- Sound classroom environments
- Sound home-school relations
- Effective leadership
- Management and administration

- Neat buildings and facilities
- Availability of resources
- High professional standards among educators and
- Effective IL and healthy relationships between role players.

A poor culture of teaching and learning in a school refers to a school situation where proper teaching and learning has broken down (Deventer & Kruger 2012:4). This partly indicates the failure of the principal as an instructional leader. Christie (2010) in Weeks (2012) identifies factors exacerbating lack of a culture of teaching and learning in schools as ranging from the “legacy of apartheid” to stakeholders such as parents, teachers and students, not collaborating to establish such a culture.

In a debate in parliament on “Enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in our schools.....” (2010), the then Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces identified absenteeism, poor management, lack of infrastructure in schools, lack of discipline among some teachers and learners, mismanagement of scholar transport, and lack of qualified teachers especially for subjects such as Maths and Science as reasons for poor results in schools. These issues also lead to a crumbling culture of teaching and learning.

Phetla (2013) echoed that the democratisation of South Africa, in 1994, came with its own difficulties, such as unequal distribution of resources and lack of development of schools, among others. A weak culture of teaching and learning can only lead to weak academic performance. Learners with poor academics have difficulty competing in the job market; hence the school will not have produced “a quality product”. Deventer & Kruger (2012) state that the products of a school should be learners who have acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes to cope in a competitive world. Such learners mostly emerge from schools with sound teaching and learning environments. Employing IL can create a sound culture, rescue struggling schools and improve the quality of students produced by the schools. IL leads to transformation of a school, and successful change is subject to perceptions of teachers on the roles of the principal (Isaiah and Isaiah 2014:113).

The following section presents a discussion on the perspectives of teachers on the principal's IL role.

2.4.3 Teachers on principals' instructional leadership role

Instructional leaders need to interact with teachers either formally or informally to establish a platform for discussions on instructional issues (Blasé and Blasé 2000:133). Such a platform is breeding ground for excellence in instruction for teachers as they will have an opportunity to learn directly from their leader. Teachers are seen as levers to promote better instruction (Wahlstrom and Louise 2008:464). A positive attitude and perception of the principal's assistance in improving instructional skills, for instance, results in teachers respecting the principal for her or his competence. This leads to teachers improving their expertise as they look forward to impressing the principal when they strive to meet his/her expectations.

A study conducted by May and Supovitz (2011:344) revealed that 10% of the teachers being investigated had no instructional contact, while 68% reported some contact and 22% had high instructional contact, with the principal. It was concluded that teachers with the highest change in instructional practice were in the latter group and that the principal's impact on instructional enhancement was related to his/her interaction with teachers (May and Supovitz 2011:344). It is evident that instructional leaders are not doing enough to guide teachers as only a small percentage are enjoying high contact with principal for instructional purposes. Should 68% of teachers enjoy high contact, the competency of some of those teachers would be higher. Effective instructional leaders therefore need to recognise those teachers who have an interest in instructional guidance (May and Supovitz 2011:348).

Studies on teachers' perspectives show that suggestions made by the principal about the teacher's instructional practice had positive effects on their motivation, satisfaction, self-esteem, efficacy, sense of security, and feelings of support (Blasé and Blasé 1999:133). Positive response to IL therefore cultivates an effective teacher. Teachers viewed effective principals as those who demonstrated teaching techniques in classrooms and also displayed positive interactions with students.

Blasé and Blasé (2000:133) concluded that teachers studied felt that effective principals valued interaction, giving feedback, modelling, motivation and encouraged teachers to reflect through making suggestions. These principals made suggestions to teachers through non-threatening formal and informal ways (Blasé and Blasé 2000:133). Principals gave feedback based on classroom observation and provided praise, expressed caring and interest. Such feedback increased teacher reflection, creativity, instructional excellence, risk taking, better planning for instruction, and improved teacher motivation, effectiveness, sense of security, and self-confidence (Blasé and Blasé 2000:134). Partnership between teachers and principal resulted in improved teacher motivation, self-esteem, effectiveness, and reflective behaviour, such as risk taking, instructional variety, and creativity. A non-threatening environment encourages teachers to learn while they are at ease. It then becomes simpler for teachers to put suggestions made into practice. A harmonious relationship between the instructional leader and teachers leads to collaboration between the two parties and, consequently, instructional goals are achieved with minimum difficulty.

According to Blasé and Blasé (2000:134) teachers believed that effective principals demonstrated teaching techniques in the classroom and “enhancing effects” on teachers, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviourally. This gives rise to motivation and self-reflection for teachers. Praising teachers significantly improved their motivation, self-esteem, and efficacy (Blasé and Blasé 2000:134). Teachers also reported that effective principals used different strategies for promoting professional growth and provided staff development opportunities which addressed needs for teachers (Blasé and Blasé 2000:137) These authors concluded that effective IL should avoid restrictive and intimidating approaches to teachers, allowing them to teach in a variety of ways and that IL was embedded in the culture of the school. A positive perception towards different aspects of instructional roles indicates high IL while a negative emotional perception points to dissatisfaction of teachers as regards the performance of the principal’s instructional duties (Isaiah and Isaiah 2014:113).

A study conducted in Botswana on teachers’ perspectives on IL revealed that principals do not monitor learners’ progress by checking teachers’ work books such as scheme books and record books, but however instil discipline (Isaiah and Isaiah 2014:119). Consequently, principals are not doing enough for issues that enhance

learner performance. More needs to be done by instructional leaders to make their role more effective. Though principals are overwhelmed with the running of the school there is need for them to shift more of their attention to their instructional roles (Isaiah and Isaiah 2014).

2.5 Summary

This chapter has looked at the conceptualisation of IL, the role of an instructional leader, the teachers' on the principal's IL role and the culture of teaching and learning. The next chapter focuses on the research design and methodology used to conduct this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study was formulated with the aim of investigating and exploring the perceptions and responses of teachers to principal's IL. The research objectives of the study were to investigate:

- what educators perceive as the core and responsibilities of the principal;
- the educators understanding of instructional leadership;
- how educators respond to the way principal manage instructional programmes;
- how educators respond to the way the principal promote a positive school learning climate.

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research, the research paradigm for the study, the sampling strategy and data collection instrument used and data analysis. It ends with issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations. Details of the methodology will be elaborated and reasons for choosing qualitative instead of quantitative research will be explained.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) that deals with ultimate or first principles (Brennan, Voros, and Brady 2011:103). This refers to the lens through which the researcher looks at reality. Everyone uses a particular paradigm knowingly or unknowingly. There are basically three paradigms: interpretivism, positivism and post-positivism. It is argued that research cannot be properly or even competently undertaken in the absence of a solid understanding of the paradigm (Brennan, Voros, and Brady 2011:103).

My research was based on the interpretivist paradigm as it focuses on the perceptions and assumptions of teachers concerning IL. Ritchie, Lewis and Nicholls (2014:13) defines interpretivism as a school of thought that emphasises the importance of interpretation and observation in understanding the social world. The interpretivist

paradigm can also be called the “anti-positivist” paradigm because it was developed as a reaction to positivism and is also sometimes referred to as constructivism because it emphasises the ability of the individual to construct meaning (Mack 2010:7; Ritche, Lewis and Nicholls 2013:12).

Academic research stems from a philosophical tradition of systematic knowledge development, the underlying premise of which is that any knowledge claim is only defensible within a wider set of assumptions about the nature of reality (Bunniss and Kelly 2010). As an interpretivist researcher I sought to understand social phenomena. According to Mack (2010:8) the following are the ontological assumptions of the interpretivist paradigm:

- Reality is indirectly constructed based on individual interpretation and is subjective
- People interpret and make their own meaning of events
- Events are distinctive and cannot be generalised
- There are multiple perspectives on one incident
- Causation in social sciences is determined by interpreted meaning and symbols.

3.3 Research Design and Methodology

3.3.1 Research design

A qualitative research methodology was used. As the aim of the study was to establish the responses of educators to IL, data was gathered in the form of words. According to Denzil and Lincoln (2011:8) qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational constraints.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:12); Yin (2011:8) concur that qualitative research is concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the participants' perspective. On the other hand, Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2013:32) believe that qualitative researchers seek to understand a phenomenon by focusing on the total picture than breaking it down into variables. A qualitative method was used as it is also based on constructivism which assumes that multiple realities are socially

constructed through individual and collective perceptions or views of the same situation, as opposed to quantitative research where social facts concerning a single reality are used (McMillan and Schumacher 2010).

Qualitative designs place emphasis on gathering data on a natural phenomenon where the data is in the form of words, not numbers (McMillan and Schumacher 2010). In this case data was collected from the natural setting of a high school in Gauteng. Qualitative research enabled me to obtain information directly from the participants as I was the observer and interviewer, unlike a quantitative researcher who is detached from the study to avoid bias. Participant-observation, for example, does not mean simply observing; it means actively participating, reflecting and observing, writing about the observation and being assimilated into the community under consideration (Brennan, Voros and Brady, 2011:102). In view of this, as a qualitative researcher I was involved with the participants and “immersed in the situation studied”, (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:12). According to Mack (2010:8) in qualitative research, one is subjective in the sense that you are not using a hypothesis and you are involving yourself in the research.

The type of qualitative design that I used was a case study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:344) define a case study as an in-depth analysis of a single entity. Mills, Durepos and Wieber (2010:839) support the notion that in case study research, sample selection has a profound effect on the quality of the case study. Case studies are helpful when the researcher deals with how and why questions (Mills, Durepos and Wieber 2010:839).

A case study allowed me to use multiple sources of data, which are observations of meeting, morning briefings and interviews to increase reliability and validity (McMillan and Schumacher 2010). I selected respondents in my case study by inviting voluntary participants who are teachers from the different learning areas in Grade 10 to 12 in this particular high school. These consisted of three female teachers and three male teachers.

3.3.2 Participant and setting sampling

3.3.2.1 Setting selection

I conducted an instrumental case study at a high school in Gauteng. The researcher preferred this school as it has been rated as one of the highest-performing schools ever since 2006. The fact that the school is doing well may be an indication of collaboration between the principal and the teachers. This might also indicate that the teachers are responding positively to the principal's IL. The researcher is also familiar with this setting since she works in the same setting. This made it easy for her to rapidly make sense of what the participants were saying. The fact that the researcher also works at this school eliminated costs such as travel costs and made it easy to access participants.

Consent was sought to undertake the study at this site, which was appropriate in terms of my resources of time and mobility. Having been teaching in the school since 2005 I have considerable knowledge of the setting I wished to study. Being an insider enabled me to establish relationships with the participants. Good relationships helped participants to be more comfortable with the researcher; hence they shared as much information as possible. Being an insider also enabled me to be an observer on an ongoing basis. Focusing on this school helped me learn whether teachers in the same school experience the principal's IL the same way as each other or differently.

3.3.2.2 Participant selection

Participants for qualitative research were selected utilising purposeful sampling (Marguerite, Lodico and Spauding 2010). A small sample of six teacher participants was employed. Voluntary participation in the study was requested from them. I selected participants who were best able to provide information essential for the study, but most importantly who were willing to share their information and experiences. Qualitative researchers are more interested in selecting information rich cases (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:138). Purposeful sampling was made use of as participants are selected on the grounds that they have characteristics and experiences that are typical of others (Marguerite et al 2010).

The following criteria were used to select participants:

- Participants who had been in the school for at least three years as they have, presumably, experienced the IL in the school for a while.
- The participants who have attained a teaching qualification higher than a diploma as they probably had a more knowledgeable approach on issues concerning IL
- Participants were from different learning areas of the Further Education and Training phase (FET)
- Participants had been appointed at the school on a permanent basis as this might minimise the chance of them leaving before the study was completed
- They majored in the learning areas they are teaching as they probably have gained a deeper understanding of what is expected of them.

Table 3.1 below summarises the characteristics of the selected participants.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of Study Participants

| Teacher | Age group | Gender | Subject taught | Employment status | Qualification |
|---------|-----------|--------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Black | 30-40 | Male | Technology/Geography | Permanent/ | BA Ed |
| Green | 40-50 | Female | Afrikaans | Permanent/ | B.Ed. |
| Red | 40-50 | Male | Mathematics | Permanent/ | BSC+PGDE |
| Peach | 40-50 | Female | Afrikaans | Permanent | |
| White | 40-50 | Female | Economic and Management Sciences | Permanent | B.Ed. |
| Brown | 50-60 | Male | Geography | Permanent | Masters' in Education |

3.3.3 Data collection methods

The methods used to conduct this study were interviews and observations. According to Hansen (2011:126) researchers use multiple data sources as a resource that can strengthen a case study.

3.3.3.1 Interviews

I conducted semi structured interviews. This allows the respondent to provide individual responses which are open ended. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:206) state that a semi-structured question is open ended but fairly specific in its intent. I initially conducted one session of interview with each participant. The sessions were about forty-five minutes long. Follow-up interviews were carried out where the need arose; hence two sessions of interviews were conducted with some participants. Follow-up interviews lasted for five to ten minutes. I spread my interviews over a period of two months as participants had busy schedules. Initial interviews were conducted in a classroom after school. However, follow up interviews took place during breaks. Thus interviews took place in the actual school setting. In total, I held nine interviews.

Questions addressed to teachers focused on what they thought about IL activities at the school and their perception of IL. The interaction of the teachers and principal was also explored during the interviews. Data collected from interviews were recorded using a tape recorder while notes were also taken. I utilised an interview guide that contained all the questions which I asked my participants.

3.3.3.2 Observation

Observation was employed to verify data that was collected during interviews. In observation I relied on what I heard and saw. Attention was given to issues that were addressed during staff meeting and morning briefings. Staff meetings were not usually scheduled close to each other, so just one was observed. Morning briefings were more frequent, hence six briefings were observed. The content of the meeting verified the perceptions and responses of teachers concerning the principal's method of managing the learning programme and issues concerning improvement of teaching and learning. The way in which morning briefings were conducted, the environment created during morning briefings and staff meetings and staff-principal interaction were all observed and attention was also paid to issues raised and discussed.

3.3.4 Data analysis

Inductive analysis was used to analyse data. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:367) define analysis of this type as “moving from specific data to general categories and patterns”. In qualitative studies there is usually a great amount of data to be analysed, summarised and interpreted (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:367). In view of this I analysed data as it was collected as well as after collection so as to establish patterns in the behaviour of participants. My data collection and analysis relied on each other as the analysis affected what had to be collected.

As the data was being analysed, in some cases this led to follow up questions and the need for clarifying arose. Inductive analysis enabled me to synthesise and derive meaning from the data. This process gave me room to refine my analysis and interpretation of data. Due to pieces of data that were missing, I returned to the field to seek additional data so as to be able to arrive at a comprehensive conclusion. I started by identifying units of data in the form of key concepts, themes or phrases that form a common pattern. The next step was to read each transcript to gain a sense of what was happening there. I created codes for the main features of each transcript. Similar codes from all the scripts were then grouped together under appropriate themes. Theories were generated by linking the themes together.

3.4. Issues of trustworthiness

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:330) describe validity in qualitative research as the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world; validity is the degree to which interpretations have mutual meaning between participants and researcher. Should another researcher carry out a similar study using the same approach the research should yield the same results.

Member checking involves checking observations and meaning through casual conversations with participants and during informal situations (McMillan and Schumacher 2010). Participants were asked to review or modify their information or data obtained. This was done to ensure accuracy. Information obtained from

interviews was compared to what was observed during meetings and staff morning briefings.

Bias was avoided to enhance validity. In an attempt to avoid bias a volunteer sample of six teachers was used. These were participants who were willing to take part and did not feel coerced in any way. They were all asked the same set of semi-structured questions.

3.5. Ethical considerations

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that the researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who take part in the study. Informed consent was obtained from the school, the Gauteng Department of Education, the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the participants themselves. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:117) state that researchers must be open and honest with participants about all aspects of study. Bunniss and Kelly (2010) emphasise that participants should be made aware of the purpose of the research and provide prior consent in keeping with normal research ethics procedures. Therefore, as the researcher I clarified the purpose of the study, which was purely for my graduate studies. Participants were also informed that they could decide to withdraw from the study or interviews if they felt they could not continue. Since participants are fellow colleagues, it was therefore important that I maintained the relationships and respect I have for other staff members. Anonymity and confidentiality was maintained. Information concerning the identity of the participants was not made available to any other person except the researcher and her supervisory committee.

Participation in this study was voluntary as “people should not be coerced to participating” (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:118). Participants were given a form which they read and signed before the commencement of the study. I explained clearly to participants that they would remain anonymous and that data collected was to be used solely for research purposes. On completion of the study a copy of the dissertation will be given to the school, the district office and to UNISA. As the researcher I ensured privacy by ensuring that firstly, data collected from participants was protected by locking up all notes and gadgets when not in use. Passwords were

also used on documents that were on the computer. Secondly, I ensured anonymity of participants by using pseudonyms and thirdly, ensured confidentiality by not sharing any information provided by my participants with anyone except my supervisor. I committed to causing no harm or risk to all the participants in this study by keeping their identity anonymous.

3.6 Limitations and Delimitations

This study was confined to Gauteng Province alone. It was basically conducted in one high school. Data collected in this setting cannot be extended to other populations with the same degree of certainty.

Although participants seemed to be free and comfortable with the researcher they seemed in some instances to be withholding data as the researcher is an insider. In such instances probing questions were asked. A professional though relaxed atmosphere was maintained to enable participants to take the exercise and the interviewer seriously. Participants were also constantly reminded that the information shared with the interviewee will not be shared with anyone else except university supervisory committee. I avoided bias by keeping to what the participants said and not adding personal views to that. I remained as neutral as possible during the interviews by refraining from presenting personal preferences, experiences, feelings or opinion on the topic. Approaching each interview and observation without preconceived ideas helped me to promote objectivity. I also avoided showing emotions on what the interviewees presented. Participants were also required to review their data after transcribing to ensure that the researcher did not present ideas in her own way.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the research methodology used, the research paradigm, the participant selection and ethical considerations. The reasons for the choice of research methods used in the study of response of educators to IL were given. The following chapter is based on the findings of the study.

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from participants and observations. Four themes emerged from the data: 1) Core duties and responsibilities of the principal; this theme focuses on what teachers perceive as the main duties and responsibilities of the principal. 2) Understanding IL). How and what teachers understand about IL emerged as the second theme. 3) Management of instructional programme. The focus of this theme is placed on how teachers perceive and respond to the principal's management of this programme. 4) Promotion of a positive school learning climate. This theme examines how teachers perceive and respond to the way the principal creates such a climate.

Findings are presented: firstly, a brief background of the school and secondly, the chapter addresses the themes which emerged from the research questions.

4.2 Profiling of research site and participants

4.2.1 The school

The school where the research was conducted is in an urban area and uses English as the medium for instruction. It is situated in a historically white dominated area. At the time of study, the enrolment stood at 1 582 learners with 64 teaching staff members and 19 support staff.

The catchment area (the physical area from which students are entitled to attend a local school) of the school is supposed to consist of the areas surrounding the school, nevertheless, a good number of learners come from afar. They live in high density areas but are willing to travel in search of good quality education and good resources. Consequently, the learners come from very different economic backgrounds as some

are from the immediate surrounding areas which fall within the average and above average income bracket, while others come from below average income areas.

The SMT of this school consists of fifteen members: the principal, two deputy principals, eight HODs and four subject heads. HOD 1 is responsible for Mathematics and Mathematics Literacy; her/his department has nine teachers. HOD 2 is responsible for commercial subjects i.e. Economic and Management Sciences, Accounting and Business Studies. There are eight teachers in this department. HOD 3 is from the Afrikaans Department with eight teachers, while HOD 4 is from the English Department which also has eight teachers. Geography and History fall under HOD 5. This department has five teachers. Engineering Graphics and Design fall under HOD 6 and has three teachers. HOD 7 is from the Science Department which consists of Natural and Physical Sciences as well as Consumer Studies. There are seven teachers in this department and HOD 8 is head of Life Orientation and there are five teachers in this department.

HODs are tasked with controlling their departments. This entails monitoring teaching and learning through supervision of classroom activities. In this particular school, monitoring of teaching and learning is mostly delegated to Heads of Departments and subject heads. Included in this scope is book control, monitoring teacher preparedness, class visits, moderation of tasks, tests and examinations. HODs compile reports and submit these to the principal for analysis, areas of concern are discussed with the principal and teacher concerned if need be. The principal is responsible for running the entire school's activities, while the deputy principals are responsible for administrative and curriculum issues respectively. There are sixty-one teachers in this school. Some of these teachers serve more than one department and teach more than one subject. All teachers in this school are qualified with the majority of them holding a bachelor's degree in teaching and quite a number have honour's degrees while one has attained a master's degree and another a doctoral degree.

The school acquired a new principal in September 2014 and was going through a transitional period during the time of the study. The former principal resigned over what seemed to be political issues. With the legacy of apartheid just behind us, the learners there are now almost all black and it was increasingly becoming difficult to enforce

discipline without the “racial card” being pulled. Amid all of this, pressure was mounting for the transfer of power from whites to blacks. One of the major reasons cited on informal platforms for the change in leadership was failure to deal with teacher absenteeism and levels of truancy for learners. With this backdrop, the arrival of the new principal was viewed with very high expectations, both at school and at district level. As a newcomer, the new principal needed time to acclimatise to the school. Due to the huge size of the school and his limited years of experience, the new principal encountered various challenges he had to deal with.

The change in leadership was accompanied by many changes in the school as there are no two leaders who are exactly the same. The former principal mostly used a top-down type of leadership which to a greater extent got things running without questions asked. His level of visibility was very low and this tended to exacerbate some of the problems of learner discipline experienced in the school. On the other hand, he was very supportive of teacher development and professional growth. Monitoring of teaching and learning was heavily delegated to HODs and subject heads. Allocation of resources was done at school and department levels.

The new principal employs the democratic open-door policy which most people embrace. His level of visibility within the school is very high and there is a huge difference compared to the former principal. Supervision of instruction is still heavily delegated to HODs and subject heads. Teacher support and motivation has been boosted while teacher development has decreased. Reward systems for learners are still the same while those for teachers have improved. There is a tendency among teachers to compare the leadership of these two principals, especially with reference to the level of visibility.

4.3 The findings

4.3.1 Teachers’ perceptions of the core duties and responsibilities of the principal

This theme concerns what teachers consider to be the core duties and responsibilities of the principal. These duties, if effectively executed, lead to a well performing school.

Nguyen and Wong (2015) identify the role of the principal as providing leadership, influencing student learning and creating school vision. Other duties of the principal include student discipline and managing teaching and learning.

Participants were asked to describe what they perceive as the core duties and responsibilities of the principal. Most of them mentioned the following:

- Manager and overseer of everything
- Ensuring that teaching and learning takes place
- Coordinating with the SMT, SGB and community
- Inspiring both teachers and learners.

The duty most emphasised was that of being a manager and overseer of the school. The notion that the principal plays a managerial and leadership role was confirmed by most of the participants as they pointed out different areas where they think the principal should manage. Teacher Black had this to say:

..... the principal is the manager of the school therefore is the overseer of everything in the school starting from environment of teaching and learning going to how the school functions socially, financially and economically. Basically what I am saying is that the principal is supposed to be the overseer and manager of the school.

Another participant (Teacher White) had this to say:

The Principal's core duties are to see the overall running of the school i.e. to make sure that teachers are teaching, learners attend and that the support staff execute relevant duties assigned to them. The principal also liaise with the SGB and the department to ensure that everything is done according to the legal framework.

Teachers White, Peach and Black articulated the principal's role as one of ensuring that there is teaching and learning taking place as this is the heart of a school. For effective teaching and learning to take place there are other activities carried out in the background that are also very important. Such activities include data capturing,

photocopying activities and cleaning. Hence, Teacher White pointed out that the principal must ensure that “*the support staff execute relevant duties assigned to them*”.

Communication with the district office and SGB was another role identified that influences efficient running of the school, for the purposes of ensuring that the school keeps in touch with expectations and developments taking place in the education system. Instructional leaders must hold meetings with stakeholders since they are a link between the school and the community (Marishane and Botha 2011).

Uko (2015:64) believes it is the principal’s responsibility to manage educational facilities and resources to meet the objectives of the institution. Teacher Brown agreed with this view because he pointed out that the principal should, amongst other things:

.....see to the maintenance of the infrastructure and grounds of the school. I think another role is also the health, safety and security of learners and teachers. The principal also liaise with the parents and community.

Inspiring teachers and learners was another role identified by the participants. The principal has a duty to keep both teachers and learners focused on achieving school goals. Teacher Red had this to say:

In our case the role of the principal shouldn’t be just administrative, a principal should not just be a manager, a principal should be a leader, a visionary leader, someone who is going to inspire both teachers and learners. Someone who is passionate about education. They have high expectations of their teachers as well as learners. That’s what I consider a good principal.

Being a manager and overseer of all the activities that take place in school was prioritised by teachers in this study. School principals are considered to be managers as well as leaders of teaching and learning in their schools (Southworth, 2002). Despite the pressure upon principals to become instructional leaders, they are still responsible for the overall management of the school. According to the teachers in

this study, an effective principal should perform both the managerial and the professional core duties and responsibilities effectively.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Teachers' understanding of instructional leadership

This theme examines what IL looks like for teachers in this school. It considers how they interpret this concept in general.

Instructional leadership focuses on that aspect of the principal's work which is directed at improving teaching and learning (Hallinger 2005:6) According to Hallinger, it has three dimensions: defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme and promoting a positive school climate (Hallinger 2005:6).

Six teachers were interviewed using semi-structured, open-ended questions. They were asked to express what they understand by IL. Their views of IL were varied, although some agreed on certain aspects. Three of the teachers (Green, White and Black) depicted a vague understanding of what IL is as they pointed out among other things that "an instructional leader gives instructions that must be followed by the subordinates". One of them (Teacher Black) observed:

My sentiment on instructional leadership, the way I understand it, is whereby the manager or who is in charge is able to disseminate information or instructions to whoever is supposed to get the instruction clearly without being a dictator and should be rational about the instructions and how people feel.

This teacher further believes that instructions given must be followed up to make sure they are implemented. A second teacher (Teacher White) believes that instructions given must be related to policy. She put this as follows:

I think it is the kind of leadership which is policy driven. One leads by following rules and regulations regarding your position. Instructions to subordinates are based on what policy say.

Contradicting this, another group of teachers seemed to have a good idea of the concept as they explained it through what the instructional leader does. Teachers

Brown, Red and Peach shared the view that IL has to do with teaching and learning. They also believe that IL is a responsibility whereby the principal and all stakeholders make sure that the learners receive quality education constantly. The views these three teachers hold appear to be similar to each other. Teacher Peach expresses this:

An instructional leader must be intensively involved in the curriculum and instructional issues that directly affect student achievement. Instructional leaders wear many hats. They must be administrators, they must be managers, they must be diplomats, they must be teachers and they must be curriculum leaders.

Teacher Peach was referring to the principal's role in managing instructional programme when she talked about intensive involvement in curriculum and instructional issues. This teacher indicated the wide array of tasks principals must perform. It seemed that this understanding is based on the teacher's experiences as they see the principal juggling between tasks. Du Plessis (2014:82) also stated that principals juggle between issues of curriculum, instruction, and management.

Teacher Brown simply said:

It is the leadership task of the principal that deals with teaching and learning.

While this explanation of IL was brief it however touched on the core of IL. Teaching and learning are basically the factors which form the fundamentals of a school. Teacher Brown's statement agrees with Southworth (2002:79) that the nature and character of IL is strongly concerned with teaching and learning.

It is apparent that teachers have a different understanding of IL, considering the ways in which they defined it. Some have a partial understanding while others are not clear. The literature ascertains that it is still not clear whether principals themselves understand their IL roles or not (Bush & Heystek, 2006). Consequently, it is understandable that some teachers might have an inadequate understanding of this notion.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Managing instructional programme

This theme focuses on how teachers perceive and respond to the principal's IL role with reference to management of the instructional programme. It focuses on how teachers view what the principal does. Managing the instructional programme focuses on the coordination and control of instruction and the curriculum. It includes supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress (Hallinger 2005). This study focuses only on the supervision and evaluation of instruction and monitoring of student progress. Teachers' experiences and attitudes to principal's management of these two functions were explored and the findings are as follows:

4.3.3.1 Supervision and evaluation of instruction

This sub-section focuses on how the teachers perceive the way in which their principal ensures the supervision and evaluation of teaching. Supervision and evaluation of instruction is described as a practise used by instructional leaders to improve student achievement (Wanzare 2012:192). It entails engaging with teachers in their classrooms with the intention of monitoring how teaching and learning takes place and also providing room for the instructional leader to mentor teachers. The form of supervision which was identified was the class visits.

Class visits

A class visit takes place when the principal or a member of the SMT goes to a classroom during contact time to assess how teaching and learning takes place. This is done to determine the level of teaching and learning and also identify areas needing support.

The six teacher participants were asked about their principal's supervision of instruction. All participants agreed unanimously that this task is delegated to HODs. The principal does not ordinarily undertake class visits and evaluation of learners' work. The principal only gets feedback on what transpires in the classrooms from

HODs through the HODs' written and verbal reports that they provide to the principal after the class visit. Teacher Brown said:

The supervision is done mostly through HOD who do class visits and report to the principal. Rarely does the principal conducts class visits.

This agrees with what emerged in a study conducted in Botswana which revealed that School Heads do not spend time with teachers in classrooms (Isaiah and Isaiah 2014:117). It appears that the principal in this study mostly delegates class visits to HODs though not all HODs seem to be fulfilling their duties, leading to insufficient supervision. Teacher Red had this to say:

Not enough supervision is happening. I will give an example, this year my HOD hasn't visited me to check on anything since January. Just to come and observe and evaluate my lessons and also to monitor my lesson plans that is not happening, that's why I said I will give the school a six out of ten. There is room for improvement.

Teacher Black alone seemed quite satisfied with the way class visits are done in his department. He had this to say:

As far as I am concerned in my department after a class visit there is always feedback, one, there is a form that the HOD would have completed with comments from the classroom. We normally have meetings on whatever problem is found in the classroom. If it's content then we help each other with notes or how to teach that topic. That has been happening in our department I wouldn't say for the whole school how the departments work but I would think the same thing is happening.

The other five teachers were not satisfied with how supervision is carried out and made suggestions on how supervision could be effectively performed. While responding to a question on what he would want done differently on class visits, Teacher Red agreed with others that "*there is need for more constant class visits from both the HODs and the principal*".

This seem to suggest that Teacher Red wants the principal to be directly involved with teachers in supervision and evaluation of instruction. Class visits are intended to raise standards of classroom practice; therefore teachers who wish to be visited have a desire to grow professionally (Bush 2010:10).

Though participants felt that it is the principal's responsibility to ensure that teaching and learning is taking place, the principal in this setting does not directly involve himself in monitoring and evaluation of instruction. However, principals are increasingly encouraged to be hands-on in terms of monitoring and supervising curriculum (Marishane and Botha 2011:87).

4.3.3.2 Monitoring student progress

Learners' progress in this school is assessed on a term by term basis using tools such as tests, assignments, orals, examinations and others. All teachers agreed that learners' progress is monitored. However, there was no mention of the principal's active involvement in tracking learners' progress in their day to day activities. This is in agreement with Isaiah and Isaiah (2014:119) who reported that teachers viewed school heads as not monitoring students' progress and not adequately addressing student performance issues. Instead teachers talked generally about the analysis of results in this school which is often done by teachers at class level and analysed by HODs at department level, only subsequently by the principal at school level (see 4.4.2 below).

Teacher Black explained that:

.....we have some assessments that are taken. First term we have cycle tests and school based assessments (SBA), we also have mid-year exams in June, we have cycle test in September and we have end of year exams. All these tasks are recorded and analysed and we have what we call diagnostic analysisThe analysis is based on how many learners have passed and how many learners have failed the paper.

Teachers also mentioned that analysis of results is done to indicate which concepts/topics were grasped well or badly by learners. The principal uses this analysis to determine whether learners are improving or not. The principal also utilises the analysis to determine teacher performance in different learning areas. Although this analysis does not necessarily point to teachers' skills, it may afford a rough indication of teacher's good or poor teaching skills. This was supported by the principal during the researcher's observation of the staff meeting when he explained to the staff how he captures and analyses the Curriculum Management Model (CMM); (see 4.4.2 below).

Most teachers agree on the way assessments are done in the school but they think that it would be more effective if assessments are administered more often to keep learners working. However the systems the teachers referred to for monitoring learner progress are laid down by the Department of Education. While the principal fully supports the systems in place, he does not seem to put in place any systems of his own that he could use or encourage teachers to use, to monitor learner progress.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Promoting a positive learning climate

This theme focuses on how the principal creates a climate conducive to supporting teaching and learning. Teachers' perceptions on how the instructional leader aligns his activities to their expectations and how he influences individuals in the organisation will be presented in this theme. These activities include protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and developing high expectations and standards as well as providing incentives for learners (Hallinger 2009:10). The participants alluded to the following:

4.3.4.1 Protecting instructional time

Instructional time is that time when teachers are in contact with learners. It is also referred to as contact time. The principal should ensure that teachers and learners are in the classrooms on time to avoid wasting the same. Late coming and absenteeism for both teachers and learners leads to loss of contact time. Interruptions such as

announcements during contact time should be minimised. Repairs within the classroom should also be scheduled outside of instructional time. It is critical that the use of this contact time is maximised to achieve the academic goals of the school.

It appears that the principal is struggling to control teacher absenteeism as was supported by observations during morning briefings where a number of teachers were absent each day (see section 4.2.7.1 below). This might suggest the principal's lack of competence to deal with both difficult people and situations (Webber and Scot 2013:98).

Teacher Green felt that it is the principal's duty to control absenteeism within the school. This maximises contact time as it is the time when students are directly involved in productive learning relevant academic content (Rogers and Mirra 2014:5). Teacher Green highlighted the fact that some teachers do not attend to classes and come late for school. She expressed this in the following words:

.....Solving the problem of late coming on the side of teachers and making sure that teachers attend classes and also co coordinating with the HOD to make sure that work is done since the school is very big.

The principal needs to bring disciplinary issues under control for a conducive learning climate to prevail. However, the majority of the participants agreed that the principal is always chasing learners to class. When answering the question on visibility, Teacher Black had this to say:

The principal is quite visible, he is always moving up and down the grounds running and chasing after the kids who are bunking or late for class. You always see him on the grounds unless otherwise he is stuck in the office in meetings.

This indicates that the principal is working hard to make sure that learners take advantage of the contact time available to them although he has challenges of teacher absenteeism.

4.3.4.2 Promoting professional development

The purpose for teacher development or professional development (PD) is to enhance skills and competences required to improve teaching and learning. Teacher development may take the form of workshops conducted within the school or away from it. These PD programmes could be in the form of seminars, conferences and in-service training courses. The programmes may be designed as support strategies to address what has emerged during class visits and class observations.

In this study teachers were asked whether their principal promotes staff development, and if so, how. Participants differed in their opinions of whether the principal provides opportunities for teacher development or not. Most of the participants agreed that there is little in the way of teacher development programmes designed by the principal in this school. They indicated that the principal seldom organises developmental programmes for teachers and added that the training programmes they attended were usually organised by the department. However an in-house training on e-learning was mentioned by Teacher Green. It seemed that this training was the only training that the principal had organised in the school.

Yah, yes here we have some workshops like we had recently on eLearning. I mustn't say they are a lot just here and there, not often.

While responding to a question on whether the principal promotes staff development Teacher Red remarked:

.... In principle yes, but very little is being done. If he can do more. I will give you an example of myself I need training in I.C.T (Information Communication Technology) the use of computers to deliver lessons with projectors those, basic things. I haven't seen it in the three years I have been here besides district content training. We need such things as I.C.T. training.

Teacher Green even suggested days in the school calendar that could be dedicated to professional development. She had this to say:

..... what I think is those two days when we reopen in January when the learners are not here at school they are days that should be reserved for staff development and also at the end of the year when we are done and we relax

they should be used for staff development. For me here there aren't a lot of staff development except the ones from the department where we have to go during the holiday.

What also emerged was that the teachers understood the concept of staff/teacher development differently. Teacher Black understood professional development as a way of broadening one's scope of work. Deventer and Kruger (2012:217) identifies increased responsibilities as one way to achieve human resources development in a school. The author further states that through increased responsibility individuals get to learn from others and experience personal growth. Hence, Teacher Black believed teacher development occurs through delegation by the principal. He explained his view like this:

For example the introduction of new committees and the introduction of grade tutors which means not every disciplinary issue will go straight to him (principal). Other teachers are given that responsibility. Teachers are given tasks with safety and security and bunking so I think with that delegation that's professional development as far as I am concerned apart from teaching they have other responsibilities.

The rest of the participants understood it as a way of learning something new, either within or outside of the school through workshops, seminars and in-service training. One teacher felt that the principal needs to motivate teachers to develop themselves academically; Teacher Peach responded:

The principal must encourage academic development of staff members. If maybe teachers can be recognised for their academic achievement in the staffroom then others get inspired. But we hardly talk about our academic development.

It appears as if most of the teachers perceive the principal as less involved in their professional development. Principals, who are effective instructional leaders, should encourage and put maximum effort into developing their teachers from both within and outside the school (Glanz, 2006).

4.3.4.3 Principal visibility, support and learner discipline

The behaviour of learners makes it possible or impossible for teachers to conduct lessons in a conducive atmosphere. One of the problems that was acknowledged by most teachers was the ill-discipline of learners: hence the importance of the principal's visibility in the school. This in turn offers some form of support to the teachers in terms of discipline. Teacher Red also cited emotional abuse of teachers by learners as a problem encountered in the school.

Participants differed in their view of the principal's level of visibility. Most of the participants were quite happy with the level of visibility and support offered by the principal due to his presence on the ground. This is in terms of how the principal's presence affected the discipline of learners. One teacher, however, felt that the level of principal's visibility was merely moderate. Most of the participants concurred with teacher Black (see extract in 4.3.4.1 above) in terms of how the principal through his visibility on the ground supported them with regard to discipline of learners. When answering a question on such visibility Teacher Red noted:

I think he is doing his best. He is someone who is always on his toes He is all over so he is available. He is not someone who sits in the office. He is there for the teachers and for the learners.

However, Teacher Peach and White differed in their views from these teachers. Teacher Peach felt the principal's level of visibility is too great, that he is everywhere unnecessarily. This teacher felt that the principal should delegate some of the minor tasks he attends to and just concentrate on major issues. She puts it this way:

He is visible, he is visible, and he is all over the school which sometimes is a good thing. But for me it must not happen always. He must not always be the one to tell learners and teachers to go to classes. Sometimes he must be in the office and things must happen even if he is not there. For me it must not happen always.

Teacher White however, felt that the principal’s visibility was at a minimum, possibly because of the location of her class which is on the top floor and right at the corner and the principal might not frequent that area. Due to the position of Teacher White’s classroom it is likely that the principal rarely visits this area; thus he may not be aware of the disciplinary problems there. The teachers’ views on the principal’s level of visibility and support concerning discipline are depicted in the diagram below.

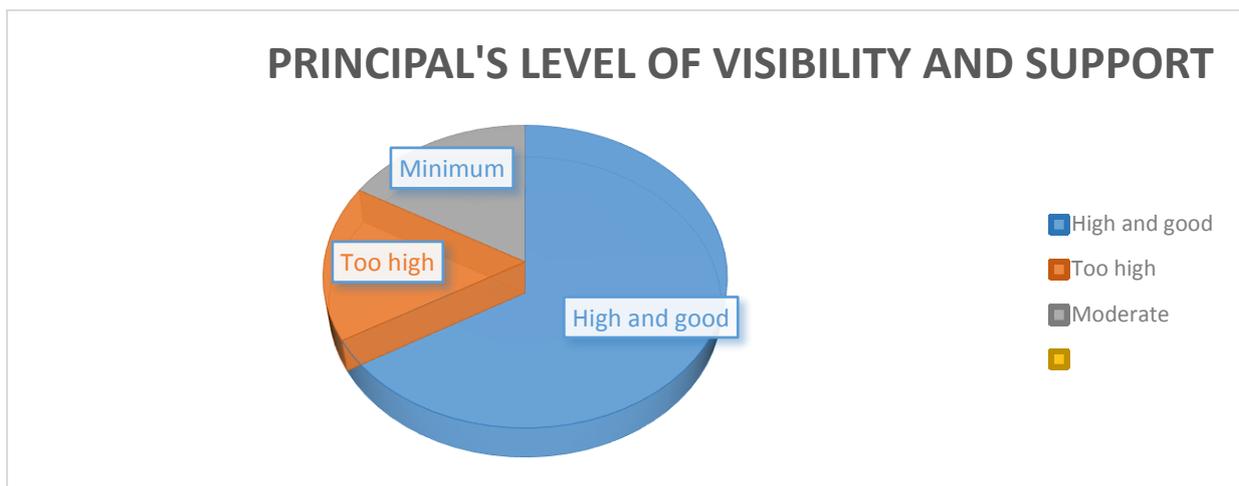


Figure 4.1 Principal’s level of visibility and support

It was also pointed out by Teacher Black that the principal has put in place committees to deal with discipline as a way to assist teachers with disciplinary problems. Grade tutors have also been appointed to assist with these issues. As Teacher Black put it:

For example the introduction of new committees and the introduction of grade tutors which means not every disciplinary issue will go straight to him.

Most teachers generally agreed that the principal is quite visible on the school grounds and is helpful with disciplinary issues that teachers face.

4.3.4.4 Providing incentives for teachers

All of the six participants interviewed agreed that their principal motivates the staff in one way or the other. They were quite satisfied with the way the principal motivates

them; four (Teachers Black, Red, Peach and Green) of them referred specifically to the extrinsic motivation. These teachers were gladdened by being recognised by the principal, either publicly in the staffroom or at personal level, for the good work that they do. Teacher Black pointed out:

It's always difficult to motivate people especially in this stressful time and era we are in. In most cases I heard the principal thanking people, saying thank you for the assembly, thank you for a job well done, for sports, thank you for probably exams that went well. There will always be flaws here and there but he is trying to motivate even on a one on one chat. When you speak to him on a one on one chat he will always have a positive perspective even if it's a class that has been disruptive he will say "don't worry we will work on it, it will come right", so motivation is there.

Teacher Peach concurred:

.....but sometimes appreciate for example if the school run properly he would say thank you for running the school properly, thank you I see many learners are now in classes, thank you I can see there is teaching and learning going on.

Praise significantly affects teacher motivation, self-esteem, and efficacy (Blasé and Blasé 2000:134). The teachers in the study clearly agree that their principal acknowledges all the effort that they put out, and takes time to chat to teachers, even on a one on one basis, and the teachers greatly appreciate his effort. Southworth (2002) reported that teachers are positively influenced by individual or group praise. Teacher Black mentioned that the principal is “*positive*”, giving the impression that he believes that the school can improve. This teacher believes in the principal as he acknowledges stressful times in the school, flaws on the part of the principal and eventually acknowledged “he is trying”. He goes on to say that the principal said, “*don't worry we will work on it*”. The use of the word “we” indicates that the principal believes in team work, with which the teacher identifies.

Teacher Brown and Teacher White focused on material rewards. Teacher White puts it this way:

The principal gives credit where it is due, for example those involved in extra-curricular activities are given soccer jerseys and the whole staff is taken out for lunch at the end of the year.

Although Teacher Brown agreed that the principal motivated staff he evidently felt that not enough was being done and that more could be put in place to motivate teachers. Teachers Red, Peach and Brown offered suggestions on how to improve motivation in the school. Teacher Red agreed with Teacher Brown that “*those teachers who go an extra mile and get hundred percent pass rate must be recognised*”. Teacher Peach mentioned that “*teachers must be motivated to improve themselves academically as some were trained a long time ago*”.

Generally, the principal’s level of motivation was appreciated by all the participants. Though some indicated that there was still room for improvement, the behaviour of the principal enhanced the teachers’ motivation (Blasé and Blasé 2000).

4.3.4.5 Providing incentives for learners

This is yet another area where all the participants agreed unanimously. They concurred that the principal has set systems in place to motivate learners. They agreed that learners are given certificates, trophies and book vouchers during different ceremonies to acknowledge their achievements. They also stated that learners are recognised for good performance by being given certificates. Recognition is also accorded during valediction for the matriculants during the honours evening and the sports evening. The principal sustains and supports the systems for learner motivation that are in place.

Teacher Peach agreed, stating that:

We have sports evening where learners are given trophies for participating in sport.There is also the valediction, this is an event for the matriculates. Those that have done well are given certificates. There are even learners who even get certificates because their marks have improved by a certain percentage.

Teacher Peach is happy that learners are acknowledged even for non-academic achievements, that is, sports, as this develops a holistic learner as required by the mandate of a school. It also emerged from this teacher that learners are also recognised for improving their marks by certain percentages. This could encourage learners to achieve more as principals may influence student attitudes through the reward systems they put in place in their schools (Hallinger and Murphy 1985:223).

4.4 Observations

Observations were conducted to gain insight into and understanding of teachers' perceptions and responses from the interviews. Six observation sessions of the morning briefings were conducted. One staff meeting was also observed. These activities were carried out to verify what had emerged during the interviews.

4.4.1 Morning briefings

The observation of morning briefings started during the second half of July 2015 and ended during the first week of August 2015. Morning briefings are always done in the staffroom and are usually information sessions where the principal and deputies update or inform the staff on issues pertaining to teaching and learning, examinations, disciplinary issues and other matters arising. They usually took fifteen to twenty minutes. During the morning briefing the principal always stands out in front, behind the counter. This might show a position of control and authority. Teachers sit around tables according to social groupings of about eight to ten. Staff-principal interaction, issues raised or discussed and the way teachers reacted to some of these issues were some of the factors observed. As a staff member in this setting and at the same time a researcher, I requested permission from the principal to be part of these briefings as an observer for a specified period.

On the first day of observations the bell rang at 07.30 am to signal the start of the day. There were five teachers absent on this day. Teachers continued to trickle in after the

meeting had started. This was the general trend throughout all briefing observations. This trend supported what had emerged during interviews on the late coming of teachers. The principal then discussed a newsletter that was to go out to parents for a function that would take place in the school. During this briefing the principal did not say anything related to teaching and learning.

During the second day of observation the principal talked about a learner (PS) who had missed the June examination and had been absent for more than ten consecutive days. PS is a learner who by this time was on conditional acceptance, he had transgressed the school's code of conduct on several occasions. Due to the fact that he had been absent for ten consecutive days he was supposed to be deregistered, according to the departmental policy, hence his case was raised in the briefing. The principal reported that he was struggling to secure a meeting with the parents of the learner, had since suspended the child until the parents came to school and that this information had been relayed to the parents. This confirms that the principal is involved in solving disciplinary issues of learners, thereby promoting a positive learning climate. Deventer and Kruger (2012:5) identify order and discipline as one of the characteristics of a school with a culture of teaching and learning.

The principal then mentioned a report that he had received from one of the teachers about grade twelve learners that were not doing their work in class. As he went to check on this situation he discovered a group of boys that were not in class. He proceeded to say that he was going to address the grade twelve learners concerning their attitude and performance as they seemed not to realise that time is running out for them. He then encouraged teachers to motivate learners. The principal also indicated that he was going to spend some time with the grade twelve learners during which he would show them the statistics for their June examinations and try and use this as a basis for motivating them. The fact that he had analysed their results seems to support the fact that he analyses results to determine learner progress.

During the observation an issue that arose but which was not mentioned in the interviews, is that the principal motivates learners. The principal indicated that he took time to walk around. The fact that he did so verifies the high level of visibility that the

teachers were referring to in the interviews. The principal acknowledged teachers for their effort as a way of motivating them, the latter acknowledged this during the interviews. He also encouraged teachers to support one another and respect the structures for discipline that staff had put in place. He particularly mentioned grade tutors as one of those structures in place. This verifies what emerged during the interviews on the establishment of grade tutors. The principal also mentioned an invitation that he had received from a community member about a prayer meeting.

During the third day of observation it emerged that five teachers were absent, thus supporting the issue of teacher absenteeism that was raised during the interviews. The briefing started with two announcements from teachers. One follows:

Mr Po: On Saturday we took our boys to the regional soccer finals, unfortunately the under 15 were knocked out and the under 17's went through and are now going to the provincial this Saturday (staff applaud).

Principal: Thank you Mr Po and your team. We fully support you we will try our best to attend these games as well. Maybe I must also attend netball (staff laughs).

Both the principal and the deputy principal acknowledged the teacher for the work and effort he puts in. This supports what had emerged during the interviews, that the principal praises teachers for the work they do as a way of motivating them. He then reminded teachers about a staff meeting scheduled for the afternoon of that day.

On day four of the observations seven teachers were absent. Then the principal requested teachers to be supportive as many teachers were absent:

Principal:I think we realise that today we will be over stretched because there are quite a number of educators who are absent. One way or the other we need to help one another. We need to keep these guys in class so that we can try and manage the situation otherwise it's going to be chaotic.

This supports the view that there is a need for the principal to solve the teacher absenteeism problem. There is also an element of protecting instructional time on the part of the principal, as he pleads for learners to be kept in class.

Day five of observations again started with the deputy head giving a few announcements. The principal subsequently introduced a new teacher and promised to support him. The principal thereafter announced his absence during the day as he would be attending training. He then requested that one of the HODs be acting principal for the day and requested staff to refer any issues to her. The principal once again appealed to teachers for support. The delegation of principalship to an HOD supports the fact that he assigns work to teachers as a way of professionally developing them which emerged in the interviews.

The sixth and last observation started on the same note except that the principal was the first to address the staff instead of the deputy principal. He indicated that he had held a meeting with the deputies the previous day and discussed issues of class visits. He indicated that as the year planner indicated dates for such visits he was expecting these to have been done. Although he requested reports on these visits he did not receive all of them.

The principal acknowledged that class visits had not been carried out by him and the HOD's. It appears as if the deputies undertake class visits for HODs. There was however, no clear indication whether the principal himself would be involved in these visits. However he indicated that the outcome of the class visits would be utilised to design support strategies.

4.4.2 Observation of staff meeting

Staff meetings are usually not scheduled one after another so just one staff meeting was observed. This was held in the staff room during the afternoon. I attended the meeting as an observer. I did not participate in the proceedings of this meeting. The meeting took one and a half hours. All teaching staff were expected to attend, but not everyone did, although the majority were present.

On the agenda of the meeting were: minutes of previous meeting, staffing, I.Q.M.S, class visits, corporal punishment and academic performance. The meeting was chaired by the principal. The fact that he scheduled the meeting outside school hours

is an indication that he was conscious of the need to protect instructional time. The meeting started with a few announcements from the deputy; thereafter the minutes of the previous meeting were read. The principal subsequently spoke about teachers that had resigned, retired or were booked for long sick leave periods and therefore appealed to staff for assistance as the school needed replacements.

The next item discussed was I.Q.M.S. and class visits. The principal reiterated what he had mentioned in one of the morning briefings that he was expecting HODs to have done class visits as well as moderation of tasks and consequently should submit the appropriate reports. He also emphasised that class visits are not a witch hunt but a way to identify areas of needed support. Again, the issue of using class visits as a way to design support strategies came up. Educators were also advised by the principal to take their I.Q.M.S. files and complete them.

It is apparent that the principal is not directly involved in class visits but indicates that these should be carried out by HOD's.

After this the principal advised teachers that though learners may intentionally provoke teachers, the latter should refrain from using corporal punishment. They were encouraged to use structures in place such as grade tutors when dealing with disciplinary problems. This confirms what teachers had mentioned during interviews concerning grade tutors. He also indicated that some of the learners use drugs but emphasised that disciplinary problems should be solved while learners are in class.

The principal again emphasised the fact that learners should be kept in class during instructional time, further supporting the fact that he is conscious of the importance of protecting instructional time. The last issue on the agenda was academic performance. The principal provided an analysis of results for the June examinations in comparison with the first term's results. The analysis was performed for all grades from 8 to 12. In his statement, the principal indicated that he had undertaken the analysis and was aware of teacher performance per learning area. Neither the principal nor the teachers were satisfied with the results.

4.5 Conclusion

Participants did not have a clear idea of what IL is but rather explained it by indicating what the instructional leader does. They have no clear understanding of IL as a concept. However, some understanding was shown when they discussed what the instructional leader does.

The principal partially involves himself with managing of instruction. Class visits and book evaluations are delegated to the HODs.

The principal's promotion of a positive learning climate was in some instances effective but in other instances it did not meet teachers' expectations. The next chapter presents the study's summaries, conclusions and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to furnish the summary, conclusions and recommendations which emanated from the research findings in Chapter 4. There are six sections. The first presents an overview of the study. Following this is the summary of the empirical research findings and the recommendations stemming therefrom. Next is the section that considers the limitations of this study, followed by the recommendations for further studies. Finally, concluding remarks are made.

5.2 Overview of the Study.

The aim of the study was to investigate and explore the perceptions and response of educators to IL at a high school in Gauteng. The main research question of this study was:

How do educators respond to the way principals manage instructional programmes and promote positive school learning climate at one high school in Gauteng.

It was further subdivided into the following sub-questions:

- How do teachers perceive the core duties and responsibilities of the principal?
- What do educators understand about IL?
- How do teachers perceive the principal's management of the instructional programme?
- How do educators view the principal's promotion of a positive school learning climate?

The theoretical framework focused on the following concepts which framed the research study:

- Conceptualisation of IL
- Dimensions of IL
- Principals as instructional leaders
- Creating a culture of teaching and learning.

A qualitative research method was used in this study. Six participants were purposefully sampled from one school. Participants were drawn from different learning areas in the school. Data was collected using interviews and verified through observations of staff meeting and morning briefings. Key concepts were identified, after which themes that form a common pattern were identified.

5.3 Summary of the Research Findings

The summary of the findings is presented in four themes that emerged in this study.

5.3.1 Teachers' perceptions of the core duties and responsibilities of the principal

The results indicated that teachers believe that the most important duty of the principal is to be the manager and overseer of the school. This is consistent with the research by Al-Mahdy and Al-kiyumi (2015) who observed that principals were considered as line managers in a national education system. Hallinger 2005:4 also indicate that the principal should not only concentrate on leading but also on managing.

There is a clear expectation by the teachers that the principal should ensure that teaching and learning takes place in the school. This is consistent with Du Plessis (2013:S80); Marishane and Botha (2011:87) who believe that the principal is crucial in achieving the teaching and learning outcomes.

5.3.2 Teachers' understanding of instructional leadership

The study findings demonstrated that not all teachers have a sound understanding of IL. Half of the teachers interviewed had a vague understanding of this concept while the other half had a solid understanding of IL as their comprehension centred on the role of the principal in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place.

5.3.3 Managing the instructional programme

The study revealed that the principal is partially involved in managing the instructional programme. Teachers indicated that there was not enough supervision of teaching and learning by the principal in the school. The results indicated that he is not involved in class visits but rather delegates this activity to the HODs of the different departments. This was confirmed during observations as there was no evidence of the principal being involved in class visits and in interviews as no teacher highlighted that. It was also established that not all HODs fulfil this duty.

This finding was consistent with a study by May and Supovitz (2011:344) which revealed that very few teachers have instructional contact time with their principal. Only one teacher was satisfied with the way class visits were carried out in his department while others were dissatisfied and wished for more consistent class visits.

The study also revealed that the principal does not actively involve himself in tracking learners' daily progress but, nevertheless, was involved in the analyses of results using the department's tools. A study conducted in Botswana also revealed that principals do not monitor learners' progress (Isaiah and Isaiah 2014:119).

5.3.4 Promoting a positive learning climate

The participants indicated that the principal, to some extent, contributes to the promotion of the positive learning climate. For example, he tries his best to protect the instructional time despite negative factors such as teacher absenteeism and lack of learner discipline. The results indicated that the principal encounters difficulty in controlling teacher absenteeism as teachers were constantly absent according to the numbers revealed during observations and what teachers alleged during interviews. The principal hardly attended to this problem.

Regarding teacher professional development, the results demonstrated that there is little involvement in this by the principal. There was a general desire among teachers for more developmental programmes. They were on the whole not content with the

principal's efforts in this area. In support of this nothing pertaining to developmental programmes came out during observation.

The findings depicted the principal as highly visible, which pleased most teachers as his visibility reduces learner disciplinary problems. Furthermore, they established that teachers appreciated the way the principal praised and motivated them either as individuals or as teams. However, there was an indication that there is a need for improvement, especially for those teachers who work harder than others.

It was also evident that the principal has put systems in place for learner motivation. Different systems were identified as motivational tools in place for learners. It was also made clear that learners are also motivated even for non-academic achievements such as in sporting activities.

In conclusion, teachers in this study generally believed that the principal's major role is to manage activities in the school as well as ensuring that teaching and learning takes place in the school. As IL is a fairly new concept in South Africa, some teachers revealed a lack of understanding of this concept. The instructional leader partially fulfils the dimension of managing the instructional programme. The principal exhibited some strengths in areas such as motivation of both teachers and learners. His involvement in creating a positive learning climate partially impressed the teachers.

5.4 Recommendations for Principals as Instructional Leaders

Without proper leadership it is difficult for a school to achieve its goals (Adegbesan 2013:15). Principals need to take more time to supervise teaching and learning in the classroom and mentor teachers. Every principal is encouraged to make use of informal class visits which should be a common occurrence to ensure teaching and learning consistently takes place. He or she is also encouraged to reward teachers as individuals and as departments for their achievements at personal and school level.

The principal is also encouraged to motivate their staff to develop themselves professionally and academically as this has an impact on their performance in the classroom.

5.5 Recommendations to the Department of Education (DoE)

May and Supovitz (2011) concluded that teachers with high instructional contact with the principal display a remarkable change in their instructional practice. The department is therefore encouraged to put measures in place to ensure that principals have instructional contact with teachers. It is the responsibility of the department to ensure that learners receive the best quality instruction to improve the country's matriculants' results and the country's academics in general. The department therefore needs to improve the amount of time principals spend in classrooms mentoring teachers. This could be enforced by making it mandatory for principals to write reports on their own findings from lesson observations and indicating support strategies for teachers if need be. It is important that principals know exactly what the developmental needs of their staff are so as to design appropriate developmental strategies as well as formulating proper mentoring processes. The DoE should also introduce incentives for those principals who spend more time mentoring teachers. Sebastian and Allensworth (2012); Parsons and Beauchamp (2012) agree that principals can inspire instruction directly through interacting with teachers in the classroom or indirectly through improvement of teacher capacity.

The DoE could also fund and hold seminars on IL to empower instructional leaders as there is no formal training for principalship in South Africa. Instructional leadership is a fairly new concept in this context and is considered a reputable concept linking leadership and learning (Bush 2013:6).

5.6 Recommendations to the Government

Policy development is critical to improvement of supervision of teaching and learning. There is a need for more policies that enforce the supervision of teaching and learning as well as curbing teacher absenteeism. It is recommended that the government

reintroduces the school inspectors to monitor teaching and learning in schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

5.7 Limitations of the study

This study was restricted to one high school in Gauteng district; as a result, findings cannot be generalised. In any case, this study aimed to provide insight on teacher responses towards their principal's IL in a specific case rather than to offer any generalisation. The duration of the study was also another limitation as the data collection was undertaken over a short period of time. A longer period of time might have yielded different results.

Due to the fact that the participants were known to the researcher they might not have been completely honest in their responses or might have withheld information for fear of victimisation. However, she avoided this by remaining objective and constantly reminding the participants that their identities would remain anonymous and the information collected from them would be kept confidential.

5.8 Recommendations for further studies

This study concentrated on the response of educators to their principal's IL as this response informs the instructional leaders as how they conduct themselves. The principal is not the only instructional leader in a school.

Therefore, another study could also be performed on a broader scale, for instance more schools, districts and provinces could be involved. Furthermore, studies might examine the response of educators to IL of heads of departments and deputy principals as they also play important roles in teaching and learning.

5.9 Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that certain teachers have mixed views on their principal's IL. They are pleased with some activities such as the level of visibility but dissatisfied with certain activities such as teacher development. Teachers on the other hand are critical for the day to day, actual execution of teaching and learning; hence their response to what the principal does is important.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Research Ethics Clearance Certificate



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

13 May 2015

Ref#: 2015/05/13/34610286/31/MC
Student #: Mrs A Mtanga
Student Number#: 34610286

Dear Mrs Mtanga,

Decision: Approved

Researcher
Mrs A Mtanga
Tel: +27 82 819 1764
ranganai.alice@yahoo.com

Supervisor
Dr Mkhwanazi
Department of Educational Leadership and Management
College of Education
Tel: +27 12 352 4166
mkhwatse@unisa.ac.za

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
2015 -05- 2 2
Office of the Executive Dean

Proposal: Educators' responses to the principal's instructional leadership task in a selected high school in Gauteng Province

Qualification: M Ed in Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted for 2 years.

For full approval: The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the CEDU ERC on 13 April 2015.

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

- 1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
- 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the



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existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.

- 3) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

Note:

The reference number **2015/05/13/34610286/31/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters] with the intended research participants, as well as with the College of Education RERC.

Kind regards,



Dr M Claassens
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
mcdtc@netactive.co.za



Prof VI McKay
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN



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APPENDIX B: Research approval letter from Gauteng Department of Education



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no: D2015/371

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Date: | 12 January 2015 |
| Validity of Research Approval: | 9 February 2015 to 2 October 2015 |
| Name of Researcher: | Mtanga A. |
| Address of Researcher: | 20 Busduif Street; Vorna Valley; Midrand; 1686 |
| Telephone Number: | 082 829 1764 |
| Email address: | ranganai.alice@yahoo.com |
| Research Topic: | The response of educators to principal's instructional leadership at a High School in Gauteng |
| Number and type of schools: | ONE Secondary School |
| District/s/HO | Ekurhuleni North |

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to the Principal, SGB and the relevant District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted. However participation is VOLUNTARY.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher has agreed to and may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE

- Alfred O
2015/01/13*
1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter;
 2. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB.)

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

APPENDIX C: Permission letter to principal

OBSERVATION OF PROTOCOL FOR THE SCHOOL

The Principal/SGB Chairperson
P. Bag X 04
1621
10/11/14

Dear Sir

Re: Request for permission to conduct interviews with teachers, observe morning briefings and a staff meeting at the School.

This letter serves to request for permission to interview teachers, observe six morning briefings and one staff meeting at the school. The observations will be restricted to the interaction between teachers and principal. Interviews will be done after school.

I will take responsibility for the observation and interviews. Necessary precautions will be taken to ensure that no personal integrity, respect and rights of teachers and the principal will be compromised. I will take due care not to cause harm.

For any clarity please feel free to contact me on 0828291764 or email address ranganai.alice@yahoo.com.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Your faithfully
Alice Mtanga

APPENDIX D: A letter requesting an adult to participate in an interview.

TITLE OF STUDY: Educators' responses to the principal's instructional leadership task at a selected high school at Gauteng Province.

Dear Sir /Madam

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, Alice Mtanga am conducting as part of my research as a master's student at the University of South Africa. The study is entitled "Educators' responses to the principal's instructional leadership task in a selected high school in Gauteng province". Permission for the study has been given by Department of Education and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic.

I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you should agree to take part. Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve two separate sessions of interviews of approximately 45 minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password protected

computer for twelve months. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at 082 829 1764 or by e-mail at ranganai.alice@yahoo.com.

I look forward to speaking with you very much and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form which follows on the next page.

Yours sincerely

Alice Mtanga

APPENDIX E: Consent form

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study in education. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and add any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses. I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous. I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Participant's Name (Please print):

.....

Participant Signature:.....

Researcher Name: Alice Mtanga

Researcher Signature.....

Date: 09/04/15

APPENDIX F: Interview schedule

Alice:

The principal's role in the running of the school is very important. What do you regard as the core duties of the principal in a school?

Teacher:

Alice: What problems do you experience in the classroom as a teacher in terms of teaching and learning?

Teacher:

Alice: Describe the form of support you get from the principal in terms of the problems that you encounter.

Teacher:

Alice: Instructional leadership role of the principal contribute to the culture in a school. Can you kindly explain to me what you understand by instructional leadership?

Teacher:

Alice: Supervision of instruction is one of the aspects of principal instructional leadership task. Comment on the way supervision of teaching and learning is done by the principal.

Teacher:

Alice: What would you want to be done differently in terms of supervision and why?

Teacher:

Alice: The main purpose of the school is to provide education to learners. Does the principal put in place any measures to ensure that learner's progress is monitored? If so what are these measures? How do you perceive the way learners' progress is monitored?

Teacher:

Alice: Is there anything that you would want done differently in terms of monitoring of learners' progress and why?

Teacher:

Alice: Another aspect of instructional leadership is structuring of learning programmes. What's your perspective of the way learning programmes are structured in this school?

Teacher:

Alice: Does the principal promote staff professional development if so how?

Teacher:

Alice: How does the principal motivate the staff? What do you think about the way teachers are motivated?

Teacher:

Alice: Are there any incentives that the principal put in place in the school to motivate learners and what do you think about these incentives?

Teacher:

Alice: How visible is the principal? What do you feel about this level of visibility?

Teacher:

Alice: How does the principal ensure that there is order and that the environment is conducive to learning?

Teacher:

APPENDIX G: Observation schedule

| What to be observed | Comments |
|---|----------|
| 1. What issues are being discussed/reported? | |
| 2. Is there room for discussion? If not what could be the reason. | |
| 3. Who is dominating the discussion? | |
| 4. How is the rapport in the meeting? | |
| 5. Are there any background issues to the issues at play? | |
| 6. How is the teachers' response to ideas being suggested? | |
| 7. Are teachers accepting ideas? | |
| 8. What is the tone of the meeting? | |
| 9. How are ideas flowing? | |
| 10. What are the discussions after the meeting? | |
| | |

Observation guide for morning briefings

COMMENTS

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. What are the announcements about/issues discussed? | |
| 2. What is the reaction to announcements if any? | |
| 3. Are there any issues discussed? | |
| 4. Are there any background issues to the issues at play? | |
| 5. How is the educators' response to ideas being suggested? | |
| 6. What are the educators' views on issues tabled? | |
| 7. Are teachers accepting ideas? | |
| 8. What is the tone of the discussions? | |
| 9. How are ideas flowing? | |
| 10. What are the discussions after the announcements? | |
| 11. Are time frames adhered to in terms of starting and finishing the briefings? If not what are the reasons and impact? | |

APPENDIX H: Editing certificate

expertenglisheditorscc

CERTIFICATE

D N R LEVEY (PROF.)
FREELANCE LANGUAGE EDITOR AND CONSULTANT
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that I have edited the following document for English style, language usage, logic and consistency; it is the responsibility of the author to accept or reject the suggested changes manually, and interact with the comments in order to finalise the text.

Author: Alice Mtanga
Institution: College of Education: Department: Leadership and Management, UNISA
Degree: Master of Education, in Educational Management and Leadership
Title: The Response of Educators to the Principal's Instructional Leadership at a High School in Gauteng

Sincerely

DAVID LEVEY

Electronically signed

2016-11-04

Members: D Levey; J Levey. Reg. No: 2007/147556/23